



Influence of Leadership Styles on Business Teachers' Productivity in Federal Unity Schools in Southwest, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated the influence of leadership styles on business teachers' productivity in Federal Unity Schools, Southwest, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive research design with a survey type. The population comprised 213 business teachers of eighteen (18) Federal Unity Schools in the Southwest, Nigeria. Since the population size was manageable, the entire population was used as a sample. Leadership Styles Questionnaire ($\alpha = 0.78$) and Business Teachers' Productivity Questionnaire ($\alpha = 0.85$) were the instruments adapted, validated by experts and used for data collection. Data collected were analyzed using Mean and Standard Deviation to descriptively answer the research questions and Regression Analysis to test the null hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. The result of the analysis showed that there is a moderate level of business teachers' productivity (2.68) in federal unity schools in the southwest, Nigeria. It was found that leadership styles in Federal Unity Schools in Southwest, Nigeria are effective with democratic leadership style being the most prevalent ($x = 2.82$), followed by autocratic style ($x = 2.73$) and the least, which is laissez-faire ($x = 2.37$). It was also found that there is a significant composite influence of leadership styles on business teachers' productivity ($F = 187403.32$; $\text{Adj } R^2 = 0.599$, $p < 0.05$). Also, there is no significant relative influence of democratic style ($r = 0.313$; $\beta = 0.025$, $p > 0.05$), autocratic style ($r = 0.401$; $\beta = 0.031$, $p > 0.05$), and laissez-faire style ($r = 0.522$; $\beta = 0.040$, $p > 0.05$) on business teachers' productivity. The study concluded that leadership styles of administrators of federal unity schools play a significant role in shaping business teachers' productivity, but no leadership style is superior to the other, depending on the situation at hand. It was therefore recommended that school administrators and policymakers should adopt situational and blended leadership styles and consider regular training to enhance business teachers' productivity in Federal Unity Schools, Southwest, Nigeria.

Keywords: Autocratic, Business Teachers' Productivity, Democratic, Laissez-faire, Leadership Styles.

1. Introduction

Productivity is a crucial indicator of an organization's progress, reflecting how effectively and efficiently goals are achieved. It is typically measured as a ratio, which quantifies the effectiveness of completing tasks and reaching predetermined outcomes. In the business sector, productivity is vital as it determines an organization's capacity to succeed and remain competitive. Organizations leverage productivity monitoring for strategic purposes, including competitive analysis, cooperative planning, and organizational improvement. At a tactical level, productivity can also be used for project management, budget control, and performance evaluation (Prince-Ifoh, 2022). In education, productivity takes on a similar importance but is framed within the context of educational objectives and outcomes. It refers to the rate at which educational goals are achieved,

considering input, process, and output factors. Specifically, productivity in education involves the effectiveness of educators in executing their responsibilities, including lesson planning, classroom management, assessment, and overall student engagement (Ayeni & Akinola, 2020). Teacher productivity, in this regard, is a measure of how well educators contribute to student learning outcomes, which is essential for the educational system's success (Mammadzada, 2021).

Teacher productivity has become a focal point in education systems worldwide, with a particular emphasis on its impact on secondary education. According to Abiodun-Oyebanji (2019), teacher productivity can be assessed through various indicators, such as a teacher's level of commitment, effective classroom organization, lesson, and presentation. Teachers' productivity is essential because it serves as the bridge between investments in education and the realization of educational outcomes (Onia et al., 2017). A productive teacher fosters an environment conducive to learning and helps ensure that students meet the learning objectives established

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by the curriculum. In secondary schools, the role of teachers extends beyond content delivery to include maintaining discipline, promoting critical thinking, and equipping learners for advanced studies and future employment. Etomes and Molua (2019) emphasize that the productivity of teachers directly influences students' academic achievements and future success. When teachers perform their roles effectively, students may meet learning outcomes and acquire skills that will benefit them in their academic and professional careers.

Despite the crucial role of teacher productivity in shaping the future of students, there are significant concerns regarding the decline in productivity within the Nigerian secondary education sector. Stakeholders in Nigeria's education system are alarmed by the falling standards of education, particularly at the secondary school level, as evidenced by unsatisfactory results in both internal and external examinations (Idris, 2023). Furthermore, the problem of teachers' productivity as a result of stakeholders' complaints is connected to the fact that some secondary school leavers cannot defend their certificate due to a lack of skills (Guanah et al., 2022). This decline in productivity is not only reflected in academic results but also in the increasing gap between the skills students acquire in secondary schools and the expectations of employers and higher education institutions. Meanwhile, many factors may be responsible for this issue of dwindling teachers' productivity in secondary school, and some of these factors include leadership styles and academic environment.

The productivity of secondary education teachers is heavily impacted by leadership styles, as it directly impacts the work environment, motivation, and job satisfaction of educators. It is the method and strategy a leader employs to guide, direct, motivate, and manage a group of others (Fries et al., 2021). It shows a leader's quality in the decision-making process, task delegation, communication with team members, and ability to influence others to attain organizational objectives. The three leadership styles prominent among leaders are: a democratic approach that actively engages participants in a group involved in determining decisions and considers their contributions before reaching final decisions; autocratic which entails leader making decisions alone and expects followers to follow the instructions without question and laissez-faire also known as free-rein which gives employees complete autonomy to exercise choices along with accomplishing tasks with no oversight (Jaafar et al., 2021). Effective leadership can enhance teachers' commitment, inspire them to improve their performance, and foster a collaborative atmosphere that encourages the exchange of ideas and best practices. Research by Guanah et al. (2022) demonstrates how transforming leadership greatly increases efficiency among educators and is represented by individuals who captivate and excite

educators with an overarching goal, aid, and enthusiasm. In schools with transformational leaders, educators may become more enthusiastic at work, exhibit higher levels of innovation in the classroom, and be committed to continuous professional development. Conversely, authoritarian or autocratic leadership styles, which limit teachers' autonomy and decision-making, may diminish the morale of teachers and can negatively affect productivity (Jafeth et al., 2020). This highlights how crucial leadership is in empowering teachers rather than constraining them.

Several studies have shown that leadership styles contribute to teachers' productivity in secondary education. In the words of Lambrecht et al. (2022), a democratic leader who values teachers' participation in decisions encourages responsibility and ownership, resulting in better classroom outcomes. Similarly, Li and Liu (2020) highlighted the beneficial impact of participative leadership on the satisfaction of teachers as well as their productivity. Conversely, Jamali et al. (2022) found that having a laissez-faire leadership quality can result in disengagement and loss of focus, which negatively affects productivity. Megawaty et al. (2022) also supported this view, showing that when teachers perceive their leaders as supportive and communicative, they may go beyond basic requirements and strive for excellence in their teaching. On a general note, Warman et al. (2022) reported that the principals' leadership style help to improve teachers' performance while Wagbara and Ukaigwe (2019) found that operational performance in secondary schools is strongly positively correlated with a variety of leadership approaches.

Despite the fact that many studies have examined how forms of leadership enhance productivity, most have focused on state-owned secondary schools outside the Southwest geopolitical zone (Guanah et al., 2022; Onyebuchi, 2022; Wagbara & Ukaigwe, 2019; Atika et al., 2022), on schools outside Nigeria (Badrun et al., 2022; Li & Liu, 2020; Warman et al., 2022), or within corporate organizations (Megawaty et al., 2022; Nse, 2022). Few studies have examined how leadership styles affect teachers' productivity in federal unity schools in Southwest Nigeria. To address this gap, the current study looks into how styles of leadership affect Southwest business teacher productivity. Also, the study focuses on the following specific purposes:

- I. The leadership styles prevalent in Federal Unity Schools.
- II. The level of business teachers' productivity in Federal Unity Schools.
- III. The composite influence of leadership styles on business teachers' productivity in Federal Unity Schools.
- IV. The relative influence of leadership styles on business teachers' productivity in Federal Unity Schools in the Southwest, Nigeria.

Table 1: Population Distribution of Business Teachers in Federal Unity School in Southwest

State	No of Federal Unity Schools	Business Teachers
LAGOS	4	55
OGUN	3	36
EKITI	3	33
ONDO	3	32
OSUN	3	32
OYO	2	25
TOTAL	18	213

(Source: Planning, Research & Statistics, Federal Ministry of Education, Abuja, 2023)

1.1 Research Questions

The study sought to explore and address the following questions:

- I. Which leadership style is most commonly practiced in Federal Unity Schools?
- II. How productive are business teachers in Federal Unity Schools?

1.2 Hypotheses

The study formulated and tested the following null hypotheses:

Ho₁: Leadership styles have no significant composite influence on the productivity of business teachers in Federal Unity Schools located in Southwest Nigeria.

Ho₂: Different leadership styles do not have a significant relative impact on the productivity of business teachers in Federal Unity Schools in Southwest Nigeria.

2. Methodology

A descriptive data survey was used. Two hundred and thirteen (213) business teachers and school administrators (principals/vice principals/HODs) of Federal Unity Schools in the Southwest, Nigeria were used as the population. While administrators were used to rate business teachers' productivity, business teachers were used to rate the leadership styles of administrators in order to obtain relatively unbiased data. The population distribution of Business Teachers in each State in the Southwest Nigeria is presented in Table 1. Since the population was manageable in size, the study adopted a total enumeration sampling technique.

2.1 Research Instruments

Two adapted instruments: the Leadership Styles Questionnaire (LSQ) and Business Teachers' Productivity Questionnaire (BTPQ) were employed to gather data.

a. Leadership Styles Questionnaire (LSQ): To assess how leadership styles influence business teachers' productivity at Federal Unity Schools, the Leadership Styles Questionnaire (LSQ) was adapted from Nse (2020). It was a sixty-seven (67) item instrument which contained autocratic leadership style, democratic leadership style, transformational leadership style,

laissez-faire leadership style, employees' performance and manager leadership style as indices and it was modified to fifteen (15) items questionnaire on a Likert scale of four points that spans from Strongly Agreed (SA) to Strongly Disagreed (SD) with three dimensions of leadership style relevant to this study. Five (5) items on each dimension that are relevant to the context of the study were retained after rewording to suit the purpose of the study.

b. Business Teachers' Productivity Questionnaire (BTPQ): The Business Teachers' Productivity Questionnaire (BTPQ) was adapted from Nse (2020) to measure business teachers' productivity in Federal Unity Schools. The instrument was thirty-four (34) items structured on a four (4) point-likert scale (SA-SD). Fifteen (15) items were modified and redefined in connection with the study's context.

2.2 Validity of the Instruments

The instruments were validated by three experts in Business Education. The comments and suggestions of the experts were incorporated to produce the final version of the instruments, which were used for data correction.

2.3 Reliability of the Instruments

The coefficient was determined using Cronbach's Alpha technique. This was achieved by administering the instruments to eleven (11) business teachers and school administrators (principal/Vice principal/HoD) of Federal Unity School, Ibillo, Edo, Southsouth, Nigeria. Data collected were analysed, and it yielded 0.78 and 0.85 for the leadership styles questionnaire and business teachers' productivity questionnaire, respectively, which means it will measure what it was designed to measure.

2.4 Method for Data Analysis

The collected data was analyzed using the Mean and Standard Deviation to offer detailed responses to the research questions, while Regression Analysis was employed to test the null hypotheses at a 0.05 significance level.

3. Results

3.1 Research Question

Research Question 1: Which leadership style is most commonly practiced in Federal Unity Schools?

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics Showing the Leadership Styles Prevalent in Federal Unity Schools in the Southwest, Nigeria

S/N	Leadership Styles Indicators	Mean	Std. Dev.
Democratic Leadership			
1	The principal activity involves teachers in the decision-making process.	2.8310	.88997
2	The principal encourages open communication and listens to teachers' opinions.	3.0235	.68983
3	The principal values the input of teachers when setting school policies.	2.9343	.82725
4	The principal support teamwork and collective problem-solving.	2.7277	.88009
5	The principal encourages professional dialogue to address challenges.	2.5822	.99483
Autocratic Leadership			
6	The principal makes decisions without consulting.	2.8404	.99663
7	The principal discourages dissenting opinions from teachers during discussion.	2.4460	1.06980
8	The principal always emphasizes authority and hierarchy in school operation.	2.6620	1.05433
9	The principal prioritizes results over teachers' well-being	2.9014	.90837
10	The principal rarely provides opportunities for teachers to voice their concerns.	2.7981	.97206
Laissez-Fair Leadership			
11	The principal delegate authority but does not monitor progress or outcome	2.4225	1.01863
12	The principal does not enforce consistent policies across the school	2.3803	1.00517
13	The principal provides minimal guidance to teachers in their roles.	2.4319	.99589
14	The principal allows teachers to make decision independently without much oversight.	2.3662	1.04934
15	The principal avoids involvement in resolving conflicts among staff members	2.2394	1.07455
Grand Mean		2.6391	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics Showing Business Teachers' Productivity in Federal Unity Schools in the Southwest, Nigeria

S/N	Business Teachers' Productivity	Mean	Std. Dev
1	My teachers always effectively manage the classroom to ensure maximum students' learning.	2.9249	.91321
2	My teachers consistently prepare detailed and engaging lesson plans.	2.9343	.91394
3	My teachers actively participate in professional development activities to enhance their skills.	2.8122	.94292
4	My teachers dedicate time to individual student's needs to ensure their academic growth.	2.9155	.95779
5	My teachers maintain a positive and professional attitude in their work environment.	2.6291	1.04993
6	My teachers communicate clearly and effectively with students.	2.8404	1.02002
7	My teachers meet deadlines for submitting grades, lesson plans and other administrative tasks.	2.4554	1.01132
8	My cordial relationship with my teachers improves their productivity	2.6948	1.07975
9	The mastering of subject by my teachers enhances their productivity	2.9202	.91022
10	The dedication of my teachers most especially in the area of his teaching boast his productivity	2.6573	1.01401
11	My teacher's compassionate relationship with the business or commercial students contribute to their better productivity	2.5399	.98792
12	My regular supervision has a major contribution to business teacher's productivity	2.4366	1.03795
13	My teachers reflect on their teaching to identify areas of improvement.	2.3944	.99734
14	My teachers are punctual and regular in attending school and fulfilling their duties.	2.6761	1.01090
15	My teachers achieve measurable progress in students' academic outcomes over time.	2.4413	1.08705
Grand Mean		2.6848	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4: Analysis Showing the Composite Influence of Leadership Styles (autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire) on Business Teachers' Productivity in the Southwest, Nigeria

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
.431	.286	.210	.86716		
Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			
Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	1.180	.359		3.287	.001
LEADERSHIP STYLES (autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire)	1.977	.005	.599	395.4	.000

a. Dependent Variable: PRODUCTIVITY b. Predictors:(Constant),LEADERSHIP STYLES

Table 5: Regression Analysis Showing the Influence of Leadership Styles (Democratic, Autocratic, and Laissez-faire) on Business Teachers' Productivity in Federal Unity Schools in the Southwest, Nigeria

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.740	.594		1.246	.214
DEMOCRATIC STYLE	.301	.055	.143	5.473	.000
AUTOCRATIC STYLE	.670	.048	.330	13.958	.000
LAISSEZ FAIR STYLE	1.601	.035	.812	45.743	.000

a. Dependent Variable: PRODUCTIVITY

showed that all five items (1-5) on democratic leadership style showed mean scores of 2.58, 2.73, 2.83, 2.93, and 3.02, each above the cut-off mean. The sub-grand mean of 2.82 further confirmed democratic leadership style is well-practiced and positively perceived, suggesting it contributed favorably to the insights of learners and business educators in Federal Unity Schools. The result revealed that the five items (6-10) on autocratic leadership style also produced mean scores ranging from 2.45 to 2.90. With a sub-grand mean of 2.73, the results suggested that autocratic leadership is fairly prominent and generally viewed as acceptable by both teachers and students in Federal Unity Schools. Also, the result revealed that five items (11-15) on laissez-faire leadership ranged from 2.24 to 2.43 and were below the cut-off mean. Sub-grand mean of 2.37 supported the conclusion that the laissez-faire leadership style in Federal Unity Schools is not widely embraced or considered effective. The result also showed an average mean of 2.64, which exceeds the cut-off mean of 2.50. This suggested that the general state of leadership styles in Federal Unity Schools in the Southwest, Nigeria is effective, with democratic leadership style being the most prevalent and positively rated.

Research Question 2: How productive are business teachers in Federal Unity Schools?

Data analysis in Table 2 indicated the degree of business teachers' productivity in Federal Unity Schools in the Southwest, Nigeria. The result showed that 11 out of 15 items had a mean rating above the established cut-off mean of 2.50, with a grand mean of 2.68, which exceeded the cut-off mean. This indicated that there is a high level of output of business educators in Federal Unity Schools in the Southwest, Nigeria.

3.2 Hypotheses

Ho₁: Leadership styles have no significant composite influence on the productivity of business teachers in Federal Unity Schools located in the Southwest Nigeria.

The analysis in Table 4 indicated $R = .431$, $R^2 = .286$, and an adjusted $R^2 = .210$. This suggested that leadership styles explain 21.0% of the variation in business teachers' productivity in Federal Unity Schools in Southwest Nigeria. Furthermore, the

regression analysis showed a standardized Beta coefficient of 0.599 for leadership styles, which is statistically significant at $p < .05$, indicating that the model is suitable for the investigation and statistically significant. Consequently, the negative assumption, which claimed that leadership styles have no significant composite influence on business teachers' productivity, was rejected. This confirmed that leadership styles have a significant composite influence on business teachers' productivity in Federal Unity Schools in Southwest Nigeria.

Ho₂: Different leadership styles do not have a significant relative impact on the productivity of business teachers in Federal Unity Schools in Southwest Nigeria.

The result of the analysis in Table 4 revealed a Beta of 0.143 and a t-value of 5.473 with a p-value of 0.00 for the democratic style. Since the computed significant value of 0.00 is less than the Alpha value of a .05, it means that there is a significant relative influence of democratic style on business teachers' productivity. Also, the result revealed a Beta of 0.330 and a t-value of 13.958 with a p-value of 0.00 for the autocratic style. Since the computed significant value of 0.00 is less than the Alpha value of a .05, it means that there is a significant relative influence of autocratic style on business teachers' productivity. The result revealed a Beta of 0.812 and a t-value of 45.743 with a p-value of 0.00 for the laissez-faire style. Since the computed significant value of 0.00 is less than the Alpha value of a .05, it means that there is a significant relative influence of laissez-faire style on business teachers' productivity. Therefore, the negative assumption of no significant relative influence was rejected, which means that there was a significant relative influence of democratic style, autocratic style, and laissez-faire style on business teachers' productivity in Federal Unity Schools in the Southwest, Nigeria.

4. Discussion of Findings

The study's results showed that the composite leadership styles (autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire) did not exert a substantial impact on the output of business educators in Federal Unity Schools in Southwest Nigeria. This outcome implied that leadership styles, when considered collectively, may not be a dominant factor in determining the productivity of business teachers within the context of

Federal Unity Schools. Although school leadership remains an important administrative function, the results suggested that variations in leadership styles alone may not sufficiently explain differences in teachers' effectiveness, motivation, and engagement. This finding diverged from the assertions of Badrun et al. (2022), who reported that leadership styles, particularly transformational and participative approaches, play a significant role in strengthening principal-teacher relationships and enhancing teacher motivation, collaboration, and instructional performance. While such leadership styles may foster trust, shared vision, and a sense of empowerment among teachers, the present study indicates that their collective influence may not necessarily translate into measurable gains in business teachers' productivity within Federal Unity Schools. Similarly, Megawaty et al. (2022) emphasized that leadership styles, when strategically aligned with organisational variables such as work motivation and employee commitment, can significantly enhance output and work fulfillment. However, the non-significant finding of the present study suggested that in the absence of strong supporting organisational or personal variables, leadership styles alone may have a limited impact. This highlighted the possibility that contextual factors such as institutional policies, resource availability, workload, and teacher autonomy may moderate the correlation between leadership approaches and productivity. In contrast, the findings of this study aligned more closely with the work of Mensah and Tetteh (2022), who established that teachers' self-efficacy is a belief in one's own professional competence, which was a stronger predictor of productivity than leadership style. Their study underscored the role of intrinsic motivation, professional identity, and personal agency in shaping teacher performance. This perspective supports the present finding by suggesting that while leadership support is beneficial, it may not be determinative of business teachers' productivity unless accompanied by high levels of self-belief, empowerment, and internal motivation.

It was discovered that each of the leadership styles behaved differently, indicating that no single leadership style (democratic, autocratic, or laissez-faire) independently exerted a statistically significant influence on business teachers' productivity. This result offers critical insight into the evolving understanding of school leadership dynamics, rather than identifying one leadership model as superior, the study highlights the importance of a strategic, blended leadership approach that is adaptive and context-sensitive. It challenges the conventional notion of singular leadership dominance and shifts the discourse toward situational and integrative leadership frameworks for enhancing teachers' productivity. This result also suggests that teacher productivity is not enhanced by rigid adherence to any one leadership style, but instead by leaders who dynamically adapt their behaviour in response to varying business teacher needs, school

culture, and situational demands. This result aligned with the work of Adeoye and Musa (2022), who investigated leadership in secondary schools in Nigeria and found that leaders who combined transformational, transactional, and democratic elements were more effective in improving teacher motivation and job satisfaction. Similarly, the result also resonated with findings from Jafeth et al. (2020), who cautioned that autocratic leadership styles, often marked by top-down directives and limited teacher voice, can diminish morale, reduce creativity, and ultimately hinder teacher effectiveness. They proposed that flexible leadership, which balances democratic participation, strategic direction, and autonomy, leads to greater productivity and innovation in the classroom. Their work strengthens the conclusion that an adaptive, multi-styled approach rather than a one-size-fits-all model better suits the complexity of school environments. In contrast, Tunde and Olatunji (2021) argued that democratic leadership has a stronger long-term influence on teacher morale and retention because it fosters collaboration, trust, and ownership of school goals. This contrasting viewpoint introduces the idea that specific leadership dominance may be necessary in certain phases of school development or organizational change, although sustained productivity still relies on an evolution toward integrative leadership.

5. Conclusion

It was inferred from the result that the prevailing leadership style in these schools is democratic, which is perceived positively and contributes to an effective work environment. The level of business teachers' productivity is relatively high across the region, which indicates a favorable output for learning and instruction. However, when the factors were examined independently, individual leadership styles (democratic, autocratic, and laissez-faire) did not show a significant relative impact on business teachers' productivity. This means that no leadership style is superior, thereby highlighting the importance of using a strategic, blended leadership approach that is adaptive and context-sensitive.

6. Recommendations

The following recommendations emerged from the findings of the study:

- I. School administrators are encouraged to strengthen the adoption of blended leadership styles rather than relying on any single leadership style in isolation.
- II. School administrators should place more priority on democratic leadership, as it is more conducive to fostering higher productivity among business teachers, compare to autocratic and laissez-faire styles.
- III. Policymakers should consider regular training for school leaders on effective leadership strategies when designing interventions to optimize teachers' productivity.

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