Transformative Educational Leadership: A Catalyst for Educational Growth and Development in South-West, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

In the south-west of Nigeria, this research looked at transformational educational leadership as a driver of educational development. The intended sample included 40 department heads, five vice deans, and five deans from the College of Education in Ikere. A self-made questionnaire served as the data gathering tool. At a significance threshold of 0.05, the obtained data were examined using descriptive (mean & standard deviation) and inferential (PPMC) statistics. The findings demonstrated that inspiring motivation, idealized influence, and intellectual stimulation are transformational leadership traits that act as a catalyst for educational growth and development in South-West Nigeria. Therefore, in order to improve performance, the government, university administration, and management should guarantee the availability of contemporary research facilities and promote faculty mentorship and idea-sharing.

Keywords: Leadership, Education, Growth, Development, Transformative

INTRODUCTION

The motor of a country's growth and development is education. The competitiveness of a nation's economy is increased by a population with high levels of education. In order for any country to exist and advance, the education sector must expand. According to Angwaomaodoko (2025), education is the foundation of any society and a tool for constructing a country. It is impossible to overstate the role that high-quality education plays in the development of a country, yet this role is reliant on transformative educational leadership in the educational institutions.

Transformational leaders are those that motivate and enthuse people to produce extraordinary results while also growing as leaders themselves. A change is included in the leadership style known as transformational leadership. In order to lead change, you must be able to lead people because change simply cannot occur in a school or a country, it only occurs with people (Opatunde & Oredein,, 2023). Transformational leaders are able to motivate people to alter expectations, attitudes, and motives in order to strive toward shared objectives via the power of their vision and personality. The main tenet of the transformational leadership theory is that the leader must be able to inspire the followers to go above and beyond what they had originally intended to do (Adeoye & Ainnubi, 2024).

According to Bass (1985), transformation leadership consists of four elements: idealized influence, inspiring motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual concern.According to Ozopelide, Binuyo & Akpa, 2024), the capacity of the leader to create and communicate a common vision is related to idealized influence and inspiring motivation. The idealized impact of a transformational leader acts as a role model for followers, who copy this person and internalize their beliefs because they respect and trust the leader. The appreciation of followers' inspiration, creativity, and invention demonstrates the intellectual stimulation of transformative leadership. While taking each follower's wants into account, the leader creates a friendly environment in which they pay close attention to each person's demands.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Factors of Transformational Education Leadership

According to Balyer (2018), there are four components that make up transformational leadership. The first element has to do with how inspirational leaders energise and inspire their people. This element, referred to as inspiring motivation, has to do with the transformational leader's ability to provide an example that others in the organization must imitate. Effective transformational leaders are ones who are seen as people who take their own advice seriously. The rules set for followers apply to the transformative leader as well.

The charisma of the leader is also a factor in this aspect of transformational leadership. The leader must exude enough charm to compel followers to embrace the group's mission. The impacts of transformational leadership may not stick with a specific organization's followers if the leader doesn't set an example and lacks charm (Balyer, 2018). Individualized attention is the second attribute of transformational leadership. The importance of connections is emphasized in this aspect of transformational leadership. It calls for the development of strong relationships between transformative leaders and their followers. These ties and connections provide leaders the chance to win the trust of their followers.

These connections are mutual. For instance, transformational leaders must be able to instill a feeling of trust and understanding in their followers if they hope to win their respect and trust (Babalola, 2024). The bond between them will grow if transformational leaders are able to comprehend their unique backgrounds and problems as members of the organization. This will increase the influence of transformational leaders' actions and attitudes. Additionally, transformational leaders will be better able to assess how to effectively use a specific follower's talents and abilities for the success of the business if they have a thorough understanding of each individual follower (Balyer, 2018).

Idealized influence is the third component of transformational leadership. This aspect relates to the leader's ability to set an example for followers, just like the first element did. This aspect has to do with how idealized the leaders become in the eyes and perceptions of the followers inside the organization, as well as their moral superiority. For the benefit of the organization and the success of the organization, leaders must make sure that their actions are the model for followers of the organization, providing them with something to strive towards. Intellectual stimulation is the fourth component of transformational leadership (Balyer, 2018). The needs of followers to advance within the organization should be understood by the transformative leader.

Therefore, intellectual stimulation and challenge are key skills for transformational leaders. They should be able to engage their followers in conversations and assignments that require them to come up with original answers or use their skills in novel ways. Therefore, for a transformative leader, having an awareness of the unique talents of the followers is crucial. This pertains to the second aspect of transformational leadership, which emphasizes the importance of the relationship between the leader and their followers. The leaders can only comprehend the unique talents and capacities of their followers through these connections.

Because of this awareness, the leader may assign duties to subordinates in a way that will help them develop their talents and promote progress. According to Avolio (2019), transformational leadership is a style of management that inspires employees to go above and beyond their regular responsibilities by making them aware of the significance of the organization's overall direction. According to the transformational method, leaders are visionaries and change agents. This idea relates to how society interprets leadership (Northouse, 2017). Leadership is shown in transformational models as a collaborative process between followers and leaders. Unlike other leadership strategies,

The needs of the followers are emphasized as the primary emphasis of transformational leadership. Extrinsic motivation of subordinates is the emphasis of transactional leadership. The transformational method, in comparison, goes a step further and places more emphasis on the need for and development of followers

(Avolio, 2019). According to the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), transformational leadership may be applied in a range of circumstances and has a favorable impact on followers' happiness, motivation, and performance. The MLQ has also been shown to assist leaders in critically evaluating their own leadership styles and pinpointing opportunities for development, according to Avolio and Bass (2014).

In light of this, "Building on the work of Burns (2018), Bass (2015) and Leithwood (2014) developed the transformation model of school leadership" (Marzano, 2015). The fact that "transformational leaders not only manage structure but also purposefully impact the culture in order to change it" (Harris, 2013) is significant to keep in mind. Engagement between leaders and followers who have a same goal is a key component of transformational leadership (Burns, 2018). The performance of followers must be improved, and followers must be fully developed, according to transformational leaders (Avolio, 2019). A significant and remarkable impact may be had on followers by transformational leaders because they can motivate followers to go beyond their own self-interests (Robbins & Judge, 2015). According to Feinberg, Ostroff, and Burke (2015), transformative leadership primarily inspires followers.

Transformational Education Leadership as a Catalyst for Educational Growth and Development

Burns described transformative leadership as a process in which "leaders and followers help each other to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation" (p. 1). This method leads to major change in the lives of individuals and companies by redesigning perceptions and values, as well as employee expectations and goals (Burns, 2018). The transformational strategy is built on the leader's personality, qualities, and capacity to effect change via setting an inspiring example, articulating a demanding vision, and motivating team members to achieve those goals. Insofar as they serve as a moral model for working for the good of the group, organization, and/or community, transformative leaders are idolized. "Transformational" was a term that Bass (2015) introduced in place of "transforming."

In the four elements of transformative leadership proposed by Bass (2015), there are five behaviors of a transformational leader that are ingrained. These elements consist of intellectual stimulation, specific consideration, idealized influence, and motivating inspiration. A leader's capacity to act as a role model for followers is known as idealized influence. They imitate the leader and absorb his or her values because they respect and trust them. Senior academics should act as role models for junior academics since mentorship is so important. To encourage dedication and promote the advancement of Nigerian academia, the government and university authorities should resolve any integrity-related concerns and win the faculty's trust.

When it comes to personalised attention, transformational educational leadership entails providing assistance and inspiration to specific followers. Individualized consideration was defined by Udegbe (2017) as providing individualized coaching, guidance, and treatment for every employee. It is important to provide faculty members individualized attention so they may address challenges that are unique to them. Effective coaching and mentoring of junior faculty members by senior academics can achieve this. Every professor will have the chance to advance at their own rate and have any concerns fully explained.

Statement of Problem

Competent and highly qualified leaders are inextricably linked to educational success. Research supports the notion that transformative educational leadership contributes to educational growth and development (Akpan&Archibong, 2015; Goddard & Miller, 2014; Robinson, Lloyd & Rowe, 2014). Federal policy makes effective leadership central to educational improvement and reform. This dynamic has placed increased pressures on education leaders to perform at their highest abilities. However, many leaders seem not to be meeting these challenges.

The strides Nigeria government have made in improving educational system in south-west, Nigeria is worthy of study. Certainly, these improvements in education sector were made with the transformative educational leadership. However, more research is necessary to explain how transformative educational leadership contribute to educational growth and development in South-West, Nigeria. A study of transformative

educational leadership as catalyst for educational growth and development would contribute to the body of knowledge on educational leadership.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate transformative educational leadership as catalyst for educational growth and development in South-West Nigeria with a view to ascertain:

1. The extent to which transformative educational leaders possess intellectual stimulation for educational growth and development in South-West, Nigeria
2. The extent to which transformative educational leaders possess individualized consideration for educational growth and development in South-West, Nigeria.
3. The extent to which transformative educational leaders possess idealised influence for educational growth and development in South-West, Nigeria.
4. The extent to which transformative educational leaders possess inspirational motivation for educational growth and development in South-West, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions are raised from the purpose of the study.

1. To what extent do transformative educational leaders possess intellectual stimulation for educational growth and development in South-West, Nigeria?
2. To what extent do transformative educational leaders possess individualized consideration for educational growth and development in South-West, Nigeria?
3. To what extent do transformative educational leaders possess idealised influence for educational growth and development in South-West, Nigeria?
4. To what extent to do transformative educational leaders possess inspirational motivation for educational growth and development in South-West, Nigeria?

Hypothesis

H_{01}: There is no significant correlation among the components of transformational leadership(intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, idealised influence and inspirational motivation) as catalyst for educational growth and development in South-West, Nigeria.

METHODS

The population for the study comprised all Deans of Faculties, Vice Deans, and Heads of Departments in selected Colleges of Education in Southwest Nigeria. At the time of this study, the following institutions were sampled: College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti; College of Education, Ijero-Ekiti; Michael Otedola College of Primary Education (MOCPED), Epe; Havard Wilson College of Education, Ikorodu; Tai Solarin College of Education (TASCE), Omu-Ijebu; Federal College of Education, Osiele, Abeokuta; Rufus Giwa College of Education; Osun State College of Education, Ila-Orangun; Federal College of Education (Special), Oyo; and Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo. In total, the study involved five Deans, five Vice Deans, and forty Heads of Departments. No sampling technique was applied, as the entire population within the selected institutions was used as respondents for the study. The instrument used for data collection was a self-designed questionnaire titled: Transformative Educational Leadership for Educational Growth and Development (TELEGD). The questionnaire has two sections, A and B. Section A of TELEGD comprises the subjects' bio-data. Section B contains questions that give a measure of how transformative education leadership enhance educational growth and development. A four likert scale questionnaire items was provided to elicit responses from the participants. The scores obtained from each respondent were used to analyze the data.Data analysis was conducted using descriptive (mean & standard deviation) and inferential statistics(PPMC) at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1

To what extent do transformative educational leaders possess intellectual stimulation for educational growth and development in South-West, Nigeria?

Table 1: Extent of Possessing Intellectual Stimulation

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
1.	Transformative educational leadership possess value for creativity and innovation for educational growth and development	3.24	0.89	**HE**
2.	Transformative education leadership challenge the status quo and promote ingenuity among followers for educational growth and development	3.33	0.65	**HE**
3.	Transformative educational leadership encourages followers to explore new ways of doing things and new opportunities to learn.	3.25	0.80	**HE**
4.	Transformative educational leadership possess skill to bring positive change for educational growth and development	3.50	0.67	**HE**
5.	Transformative educational leadership possess intellectual capacity to bring educational growth and development	3.16	0.38	**HE**
Total		**3.29**	**0.68**	**High Extent**

Source: Field Study, 2021

The data shown in Table 1 revealed that the mean opinions of the respondents ranged from 3.16 to 3.50. The table shows that all the variables (1-5) have a high extent of possession of intellectual stimulation. The result shows that transformative educational leaders possess high intellectual stimulation for educational growth and development in South-West, Nigeria.

Research Question 2

To what extent do transformative educational leaders possess individualized consideration for educational growth and development in South-West, Nigeria?

Table 2: Extent of Possessing Individualized Consideration

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
6.	Transformational educational leadership offers support and encouragement to individual followers for educational growth and development	3.09	0.67	**HE**
7.	Transformative educational leadership gives personal attention, coaching, advice, and treating each employee individually for educational growth and development	3.31	0.86	**HE**
8.	Transformative educational leadership gives one-on-one attention in order to solve issues peculiar to each of them for educational growth and development	3.33	0.67	**HE**
9.	Transformative education leadership enhances effective mentoring and coaching of junior faculty members to bring about educational growth and development	3.10	0.52	**HE**
10.	Transformative educational leadership gives opportunity to develop at his or her pace and have all issues effectively clarified	3.03	0.38	**HE**
Total		**3.17**	**0.62**	**High Extent**

Source: Field Study, 2021

The data shown in table 2 revealed that mean opinions of the respondents ranged from 3.03 to 3.33. The table shows that all the variables (6-10) have a high extent of possession of individualized consideration. The

result shows that transformative educational leaders possess high individualized considerationfor educational growth and development in South-West, Nigeria.

Research Question 3

To what extent do transformative educational leaders possess idealized influence for educational growth and development in South-West, Nigeria?

Table 3: Extent of Possessing Idealized Influence

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
11.	Transformative educational leadership has the ability of leader to serves as a role model for followers to bring about educational growth and development	3.11	0.62	HE
12.	The followers trust and respect transformative educational leader for the purpose of educational growth and development	3.24	0.72	HE
13.	Followers emulate transformative leaders and internalize his or her ideals for educational growth and development	3.17	0.66	HE
14.	Transformative educational leadership stand to be a mentor and serve as role models to junior academics for educational growth and development	3.06	0.54	HE
15.	Transformative educational leaders possessed ideas that will engender commitment and foster the development of education	3.22	0.44	HE
Total		3.16	0.59	High Extent

Source: Field Study, 2021

The data shown in table 3 revealed that mean opinions of the respondents ranged from 3.06 to 3.24. The table shows that all the variables (11-15) have a high extent of possession of idealized influence. The result shows that transformative educational leaders possess high idealized influence for educational growth and development in South-West, Nigeria.

Research Question 4

To what extent to do transformative educational leaders possess inspirational motivation for educational growth and development in South-West, Nigeria?

Table 4: Extent of Possessing Inspirational Motivation

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
16.	Transformative educational leadership have a clear vision for educational growth and development	3.16	0.38	HE
17.	Transformative educational leadership is able to articulate followers to bring about educational growth and development	3.46	0.49	HE
18.	Transformative educational leadership helps followers experience the same passion and motivation to fulfil the goals of education.	3.21	0.65	HE
19.	Transformative educational leadership clearly communicating high expectations to bring about educational growth and development	3.17	0.66	HE
20.	Transformative educational leadership stressed on the importance of the educational mission, and using symbols such as slogans and pins to focus subordinates efforts for educational growth and development	3.33	0.65	HE
Total		3.23	0.56	High Extent

Source: Field Study, 2020

The data shown in table 4 revealed that mean opinions of the respondents ranged from 3.16 to 3.46. The table shows that all the variables (16-20) have a high extent of possession of idealized influence. The result shows that transformative educational leaders possess high inspirational motivation for educational growth and development in South-West, Nigeria.

Test of Hypothesis

H_{01}: There is no significant correlation among the components of transformational leadership (intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, idealised influence and inspirational motivation) as catalyst for educational growth and development in South-West, Nigeria.

Table 5: Correlational Matrix for components of transformational leadershipas catalyst for educational growth and development in South-West, Nigeria.

Variables	IS	IC	II	IM
intellectual stimulation (IS)	1			
individualized consideration (IC)	0.87	1		
idealized influence (II)	0.76	0.65	1	
inspirational motivation (IM)	0.72	0.67	0.71	**1**

$P<0.05$ (Significant)

The correlational matrix in table 5 revealed that there exist high correlation among the component of transformational leadership. It was revealed that the r-coefficients for IS & IC (0.87), IS & II (0.76), IS & IM (0.72), IC & II (0.65), IC & IM (0.67) and II & IM (0.71) are high and significant at 0.05 level of significance. This led to the rejection of the hypothesis. Hence, there is a significant correlation among the components of transformational leadership (intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, idealised influence and inspirational motivation) as catalyst for educational growth and development in South-West, Nigeria.

DISCUSSION

The finding of the study revealed that transformative educational leaders possess high intellectual stimulation for educational growth and development in South-West, Nigeria. These leaders were found in the study to possess value for creativity and innovation for educational growth and development; they challenge the status quo and promote ingenuity among followers for educational growth and development; they encourages followers to explore new ways of doing things and new opportunities to learn; they possess skill to bring positive change for educational growth and development; and possess intellectual capacity to bring educational growth and development. These intellectual stimulation qualities mention afore were described by Omo (2017) as instrumental for educational growth and development.

The finding of the study again revealed that transformative educational leaders possess high individualized considerationfor educational growth and development in South-West, Nigeria. The study revealed that educational leaders in tertiary institutions offer support and encouragement to individual followers for educational growth and development; they give personal attention, coaching, advice, and treat each employee individually for educational growth and development; they give a one on one attention in order to solve issues peculiar to each of them for educational growth and development; they enhance effective mentoring and coaching of junior faculty members to bring about educational growth and development; and they give opportunity to develop at his or her pace and have all issues effectively clarified.This finding is in line with the study of Udegbe (2017) that individualized consideration of transformative leader makes every faculty members have the opportunity to develop at his or her pace and have all issues effectively clarified.

Another finding of the study was that transformative educational leaders possess high idealized influence for educational growth and development in South-West, Nigeria. The study revealed that transformative

educational leadership with idealized influence has the ability to serves as a role model for followers to bring about educational growth and development; the followers trust and respect leader for the purpose of educational growth and development; followers emulate transformative leaders and internalize his or her ideals for educational growth and development; they stand to be a mentor and serve as role models to junior academics for educational growth and development; and they possessed ideas that will engender commitment and foster the development of education.

Finally, the study revealed that transformative educational leaders possess high idealized influence for educational growth and development in South-West, Nigeria. The study showed thattransformative educational leadership have a clear vision for educational growth and development; they can articulate followers to bring about educational growth and development; they helps followers experience the same passion and motivation to fulfil the goals of education; they communicating high expectations to bring about educational growth and development; and stressed on the importance of the educational mission, and using symbols such as slogans and pins to focus subordinates efforts for educational growth and development.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that transformative educational leadership traits namely intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, idealized influence, and inspirational motivation, serve as critical catalysts for educational growth and development in South-West Nigeria. Transformative leaders foster innovation, provide personalized support, serve as role models, and articulate clear visions that motivate staff and students alike. These qualities collectively contribute to the advancement of educational institutions by enhancing staff performance, promoting professional development, and improving institutional outcomes. Therefore, it is imperative for educational leaders to be fully empowered and equipped to embrace and practice transformative leadership in order to elevate the quality and effectiveness of education in the region. Hence, the following recommendations are made:

1. Government and tertiary education regulatory bodies should regularly organize training and leadership development programs focused on transformative leadership principles to equip educational leaders with the skills required to drive intellectual stimulation, individualized mentoring, and visionary leadership.
2. University and college management should institutionalize structured mentoring systems, where senior faculty serve as role models and coaches for junior staff, thereby fostering a culture of personalized professional development aligned with the principle of individualized consideration.
3. Institutions should encourage a culture of creativity and innovation by establishing regular academic colloquia, seminars, and research forums, where educators can exchange ideas, challenge norms, and collaborate on new educational strategies—fostering intellectual stimulation across departments.
4. Government and education stakeholders should invest in modern teaching and research facilities, and incorporate inspirational tools such as academic recognition programs, symbolic artifacts (e.g., educational slogans, mission badges), and motivational campaigns that align staff efforts with the institution's educational vision.

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