

**LEADERSHIP CORRELATION TO HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN  
NIGERIAN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS: IMPERATIVE FOR ADULT EDUCATION**

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**Abstract**

This paper explores the critical correlation between leadership and human resource management (HRM) within Nigerian Tertiary institutions, emphasizing the imperative role of adult education in fostering effective leadership practices. The Nigeria higher education landscape faces numerous challenges, including resource constraint, governance issues and quality assurance concerns. Effective leadership is essential for addressing these challenges and driving institutional excellence and sustainability. Drawing on relevant literature and empirical evidence, this paper examines the interconnectedness between leadership and HRM functions such as recruitment, training, performance management and employee development. It highlights the imperative of strategic leadership in aligning HRM practices with institutional goals, fostering a culture of innovation and promoting staff engagement and motivation. Moreover, the paper underscores the significance of adult education in equipping leaders with the necessary knowledge, skills and competences to navigate complex organizational dynamics promote ethical leadership principles and foster inclusive and participatory decision-making processes. By investing in leadership development, initiatives grounded in adult education principles. Nigerian tertiary institutions can contribute a cadre of effective and visionary leaders who are equipped to address the diverse challenges facing higher education and drive institutional transformation. This paper concludes with practical recommendations for integrating leadership development and HRM strategies within the context of adult education to enhance organizational effectiveness and promote sustainable development in Nigeria tertiary institutions.

**Keywords:** Leadership, Human Resource Management, Tertiary Institutions, Adult Education, Adult Learners.

## **Introduction**

Tertiary institutions in Nigeria are designed for enhancement of human resources, which guarantees job performance but without inclusion of human resource management in the institution's developmental goals and strategies, it will not be accomplished. National Policy on Education (NPE, 2013.81a) states the goals of tertiary institutions in Nigeria (81a) includes; "contribute to national development through high level manpower training", this therefore implies that development of manpower in the tertiary institutions is very essential as human resources coordinate and make decisions for other resources of the institutions. For the objectives of the tertiary institutions to be met, a quality leadership must be played, such that will influence human resource management for high manpower performance and improved results.

In tertiary institutions in Nigeria, there are many setbacks in the utilization of human resources management due to lack of capacity building, lack of periodic training and retraining of academic and non-academic staff, lack of motivation and compensation of good performance and poor leadership style of tertiary institution heads and management. Adejare (2020) opined that training and development of employee is an essential determinant of employee's effectiveness and efficiency in the organization. It is expedient that tertiary institution leaders exhibit quality styles and methods that will spur their subordinates to become efficient and effective tools that will lead their organization to achieve stated objective in terms of productivity and profitability. Therefore, this paper emphasis is to bridge the gap between human resource management of tertiary institutions and human resources through effective adult learning.

## **Concept of Leadership**

A leader is someone who takes charge, guides others and inspires them to work towards a common purpose. In any given group, organization, community, institution among others, there is always someone who controls, directs, instructs, organises, hires, supervises/coordinates the affairs and all the activities of such group and it's manpower for enhancement and achievement of the organizational vision, mission and objectives. Leadership is the ability to guide, inspire and influence others to achieve common goals. This involves effective communication, good decision making, and fostering a positive and productive environment within a group or organization. Broden (2023), explained leadership to include leaders method and behaviour when directing, motivating and managing others; Cooperate Finance Institute (CFI) (2022)

supported that leadership involves behavioural approach employed by leaders to influence/motivate and direct followers in any organization. Leadership therefore involves the patterns of attitude which the leader exhibits in influencing his subordinates as they carry out their day-to-day activities in an organization.

### **Types of Leadership Style**

1. **Autocratic Leadership Style:** This is where a leader makes decisions without much input from team members. The leader has significant control over the decision-making process and often delegates tasks and expectations. Broden (2023) refers it as a leadership style where the chief executive enforces decisions and authority to impose on his followers. According to Dickson (2001), this style of leadership has all authority centered on the manager.
2. **Democratic leadership style:** Democratic leadership style involves a collaborative approach where the leaders seek input from team members before making decisions. Dickson (2018) opined that democratic leadership style is human related approach where all members of the group are seen as important contributors to the final decisions, members opinion and views count and all members are allowed to participate in decision-making.
3. **Laissez-Faire Leadership Style:** This is from a French word. Dickson (2018) referred it as a type of style where the leader attempts to exercise very little control or influence over group members, a member is given a goal and left alone to describe how to achieve it without supervision. This explanation only portrays I don't care attitude, when a leader leaves workers to do as they like, he creates low morale and sets no goals hence, productivity would be very low and work becomes sloppy, presence of such leader in a tertiary institution will not only bastardize human resource of the institution but will make the organizational goal not to be achieved (Broden, 2022). There is often lack of unity and uniformity in achieving the goal of the organization.
4. **Transactional Leadership Style:** CFI (2022) described it as a "give and take" kind of leadership style where the team leader agrees to follow their leader on job acceptance, the transaction involves payment for services rendered. These workers are paid according to the work they have done, this is mainly found among sales and marketing jobs, and it is target oriented. This very type is a no no no for tertiary institution, it will promote eye services and unhealthy competition among personnels.

5. **The Servant Leadership Style:** Gomez (2022) explained that it is a type of leadership style that works towards meeting the greater good and needs of followers first and who leads his subordinates by example. Such leader does not prioritize his own objectives; employees here are more likely to feel their voices heard. This is the style of Jesus Christ, the role model of Christian religion, who is said to lead the flocks, a servant leader do not drive the flocks, or dominate, abuse or use harsh words on them. Here you see team spirit at work, employee satisfaction, adaptability, motivation, transparency, communication, authenticity, accountability and availability. This type of leader builds deeper and trust based relationship, boosts morale across team and earn respect from team, he develops future leaders.
6. **Visionary Leadership Style:** Michigan State University (MSU) (2022) describes it as the type where leader inspires his workers, they work with a common goal through collaboration and acceptance of their innovative ideas. The leader accepts changes and takes responsibility for failures. This type of style is a very good one that will foster fast productivity and results.

Others include but not limited to pace setting, charismatic, coaching leadership style, situational leadership style, strategic leadership style. For a harmonious organization, the leadership style to be employed by top management of institutions is very crucial and should be such that is receptive to needs of human resources, that ensures communication and feedback in the system. Moreso, such leader should apply all the styles mentioned above when necessary as the situation calls for. Broden (2023) opined that a leaders style determines how they strategize and implement plans while accounting for the expectation of stakeholders and the wellbeing of their team.

### **Concept of Human Resource Management**

Human resources management (HRM) is an organizational activities where the human capital and the organization come together for the achievement of organizational goals. It focuses on managing the manpower in the organization and ensuring that all resources are employed to meet set goals, beyond this definition, Flippo (2023) defined human resource management as planning, organizing, directing, controlling of procurement, development, compensation, integration, maintenance and separation of human resources to the end that individual, organization and social objective are achieved.

For a clearer explanation of this paper, human resources management (HRM) definition by united nations conference on trade and development (UNCTD, 2012), discipline of hiring and developing employees so that they become more valuable to the organization. According to UNCTD HRM includes; conducting job recruitment, planning personnel needs and recruitment, selecting the right people for the job, orienting and training, determining and managing wages, providing benefits and incentives, appraising performance, resolving disputes and communicating with all employees at all levels.

### **Human Resources Functions**

HRM functions encompass a wide range of activities aimed at managing an organization's personnel effectively. The functions are imperative for developing, attracting and retaining talented skills as well as for creating a good/conducive work environment towards actualization of organizational goals. They include:

1. **Recruitment and selection:** This involves engaging qualified candidates and selecting the best fit for available job positions within the organization. Ike, Ihebereme, Ikwuegbu & Emenalo (2006) defined recruitment and selection as the process of securing competent staff moves from the recruitment to the selection phase. After prospective applicants have been recruited, a systematic effort is made to identify the most suitable applicants who meet the established qualifications to fill identified positions.
2. **Training and development:** It aims to enhance employees skills, knowledge and abilities to carry out their duties effectively and to ensure the growth of the career within the organization. According to Ike, Ihebereme, Ikwuegbu & Emenalo (2006) staff development is very essential to the life of every worker in an organization and for the attainment of the organizational goal in higher institutions.
3. **Performance management/evaluation:** involves setting clear expectations, providing feedback and asserting the performance of faculty and staff members to ensure alignment with departmental and institutional goals.
4. **Compensation and reward administration:** It involves administering competitive salary and reward packages to attract, motivate and retain faculty, staff and personnel. Yonlofoun (2018) opined that human resource are responsible to reward based on: The impact and effectiveness of sharing knowledge and their experience as a person. Madu and Obiozor confirmed that organizations climates that considers reward for good performance makes learning dear and appealing. Behaviours that are recognized and praised are more likely to be repeated and maintained.

5. **Employee relation and compliance:** This one focuses on fostering positive relationship between institution, staff, administrators, addressing conflict among members and to ensure compliance with relevant stakeholders, regulations and policies.
6. **Evaluation/assessment:** It involves the review of employees performance, according to duties assigned to him, and so employees shortcomings and accomplishment are measured. Invariably, it helps to measure and judge the worth of achievements and performance.

### **Importance of effective human resource management**

Effective HRM is very imperative to organization as it plays a central role to maintaining the potential of their most valuable asset, their people.

#### **Some of its importance**

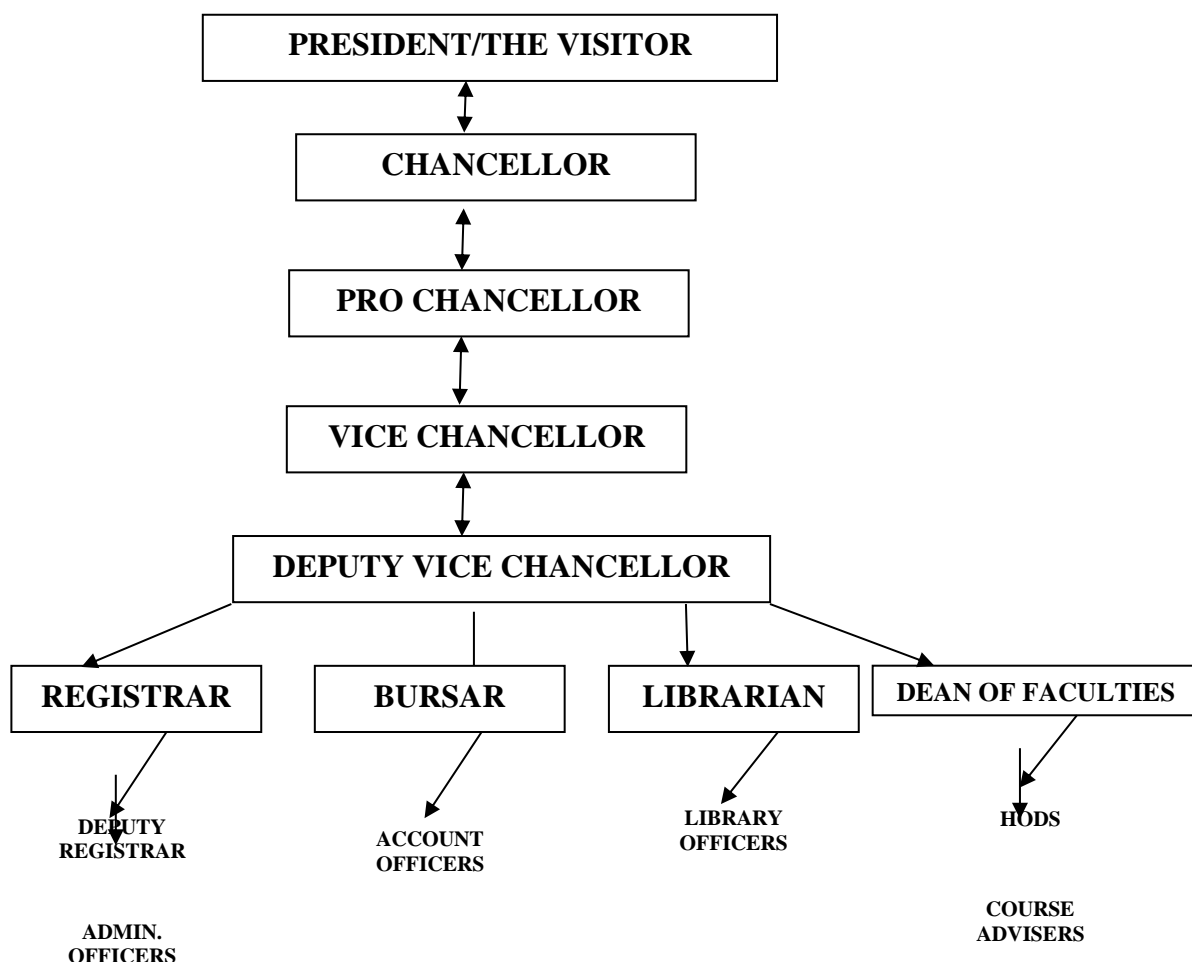
1. **Talent acquisition and retention:** HRM plays a critical role in attracting, selecting and retaining top talent, high-quality employees and contribute to organizational performance and innovation (Guthridge, Komm & Lawson, 2008).
2. **Employee development, skill and competences:** An effective HRM initiatives including training programmes facilitates employee development and engagement, performance feedback, such employees becomes more productive and committed to their jobs resulting to organizational growth. Nice (2006) explains that HRM initiative, including training programmes, skill development workshops and performance engagement system helps employees enhance their skills competence and work performance.R
3. **Promotion of team spirit among the workforce:** Effective HRM practices, such as team building activities, collaborative work environment and communication strategies, promotes sense of belonging and among employees (Katzenback & Smith, 2008). When this comes to play, oneness of purpose is ensured and accomplishment of organizational goal is ensured.
4. **Orientation/on the job training:** It is very crucial to train and retrain personnel for enhanced competence and more productivity. According to Bauer and Erdogan (2006) effective on boarding processes and on the job training programmes ensure that the new employees are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skill to perform their roles effectively.
5. **Organizational culture and climate:** HRM helps in shaping organizational culture and climate by influencing an employee attitude, behavior and performance. Shein (2000)

opined that a positive work environment fosters creativity, collaboration and employee well being.

### **Tertiary Institutions (University in Particular)**

In Nigeria, Tertiary Institutions stand for educational Institutions that offer higher kinds of activities in colleges of education, polytechniques and Universities among others which secondary school leavers or completers enroll in furtherance of higher/advanced learning. It could also be said to be a learning Institution where degree holders or workers enroll in to advance in their status for certification and to gain promotion in their places of work. According to the Nigeria National Policy on Education (NPE, 2013: 80) tertiary education is the education given after post Basic Education in Institutions such as Universities and inter-university centres like the Nigeria French Language Village, National Institute of Nigerian Languages, Nigerian Arabic Language Village, Institutions such as Innovation Enterprise Institutions (IEIS) and colleges of Education, Monetechnics, polytechnics and other specialized Institutions such as colleges of Agriculture, Schools of Health and Technology and the National Teachers Institute (NTI) Including Institutions offering corresponding courses.

### **Organizational Structure of University**



### **Inherent Vices and Short falls in Tertiary Institutions**

Vices are ill/deviant behaviors and crimes by individuals which stand against actualization of quality education and improved manpower in tertiary Institutions in Nigeria. Some vices can lead to diseases, broken homes and relationships, injury and death of an individual; some of the vices and many others include robbery, examination malpractice prostitution, cultism, pocket picking, hooliganism, indecent dressing, smoking, betting/gambling, thuggery, drug addiction, illicit sex before marriage, these are problems that can destabilize and destroy any tertiary institution from achieving its mandate.

In the case of short fall, it involves inefficiency, truancy, and poor performance of tertiary institution workers which can lead to total breakdown of law and order/activities and the end results is non - achievement of set goals. According to our Adajare (2020) training and development of employee is an essential determinant of employee's effectiveness and efficiency in the organization this implies that vices and short falls among University staffers could be caused by negligence and poor leadership styles and tertiary institution power holders.

### **Below are the determinants of workers efficiency in an organization such as tertiary institutions**

1. Training and Development of Employees, Adajare (2020) stated that training and development of employee for better performance in an organization determines whether organization will succeed or not because employee's determine usage of organizations resources.
2. Competence of management of an organization contributes a great deal in an organizational goal Lee, lee and Wu (2010) as cited by Adajare (2020) opined that managerial incompetence of non - academic staff contributes to the dissatisfaction experience by students and stake holders in domestic and international communities.
3. Promotion by Merit/ Recognition- employees promotion means to be cheered in other to help non-performing employees examine their grey areas and worked towards meeting set performance standard in the organization.
4. Motivation of Staffers – workers should always be reinforced with compensation, timely promotion/wages and be provided with other welfare packages for effective and better services delivery, according to Obiozor and Madu (2018) motivation refers to a force that energizes and pushes one to perform an action, any condition which initiates,

guide or maintains a response. Therefore, with motivation of manpower in tertiary institution workers input will yield great result.

5. Use of democratic/servant leadership style in leading workers, such leaders are flexible and allow their subordinates ideas and corrections, moreover, they lead by example; it will foster sense of belonging and willingness to do their best among the staffers.

### **Characteristics of Adult Learners**

According to United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and National Mass Education Commission (NMEC, 2014:p 21-22) there are six characteristics of Adult learners that influence their learning, they include:

1. **Economic Characteristics of Adult Learners:** The above characteristic is very essential as it could have strong influence on the learner's learning activities. NMEC (2014) emphasized that it is a well known fact that adults have the responsibility to cater for the family and hence, an adult learner is economically self reliant and needs job or better job. According to Cerver and Wilson (2001) economic factors can significantly influence adult learners access to education and training opportunities, financial constraints, employment status and socio economic background may impact their ability to enroll
2. **Psychological Characteristics of Adult Learners:** The adult learners is often faced by changes in advancing age such as changing self concept and anxiety about coping with changes of learning itself. (NMEC and UNESCO, 2014).  
In another view, Ryan and Dec (2000) opined that adult learners psychological characteristics such as motivation, self efficiency and learning styles influence their approach to learning. It can affect their confidence, resilience and willingness to engage in challenging tasks or obstacles.
3. **Social Characteristics of Adult Learners:** According to NMEC and UNESCO (2014) the scope of adult learner's social characteristics is wide. Their concepts determine these social characteristics. They are social roles, developmental tasks and social status. Invariably, an adult learner could be a religious leader, a citizen, community leaders/ members with one position or the other, hence he needs to ameliorate his deficiencies and get more important positions and respect; NMEC and UNESCO integrated that once

an adult could not have such respect, the setting may not be conducive for learning and could lead to learners withdrawal from the program.

4. **Physical And Physiological Characteristics Of Adult Learners:** Human beings are essentially physical beings and bodies and lives to nourish and protect. Adult educators needs to learn about the physical and physiological characteristics of the adult learners and use the information to help the learner fulfil their learning needs. Learning is facilitated by the use of five human senses namely; seeing, hearing, touching, smelling and tasting which are largely determined by the physical condition of the learner (NMEC and UNESCO, 2014).

This implies if the human sense organs of any learner do not function well, educators are to employ strategies, styles and also ensuring that the physical defect of any learner do not become a barrier to his/her programme.

According to Tayler (1994), physical attributes of such health status, mobility and sensory abilities may affect the learners engagement and activities in the programme.

5. **Experiential Characteristics of Adult Learner:** According to NMEC and UNESCO (2014), this is a characteristics that has tremendous effect on adult learning, as people mature, a growing reservoir of experience is accumulated, it becomes an expanding resource for learning. Adult learners unlike children have experienced most of what may be taught to them, though they may lack the organizational analytical skills, therefore, adult educators should approach the teaching of adult learners with the view of paying attention to their experience, such will make the learning easier.

In this same view, Sapolsky (2004) added that physiological factors such as sleep patterns, nutrition and stress levels can impact adult learners cognitive functioning and over all well-being. Adequate rest, healthy life style habits and stress-management strategies are essential for optional learning performance.

6. **Commitment of Adult Learners:** NMEC & UNESCO (2014) emphasized that as people mature, their readiness to learn becomes focused on the developmental task of their social roles and therefore exhibits more commitment, when an adult embarks on a course or joins a literacy class, he or she is showing a great deal of commitment. As for Bean & Metzner (1998), adult learners commitment to their educational goals and aspirations is a critical characteristics that influence their persistence and success.

### **Adult Education in Re-Orienting the Leaders of Tertiary Institutions**

Adult education plays a crucial role in re-orienting the leaders of tertiary institutions through provision of opportunities for professional development fostering leadership skills, ‘ innovative practices and facilitating continuous learning and growth. Leaders in tertiary institutions are not exempted from learning as learning is a continuous process. It cannot be contested that the most principal role of tertiary institutions is to develop human resources, national policy and education (NPE 2013, No 81a), states that tertiary institutions shall contribute to national development through high level of manpower training; to this end, suffice me to say that you cannot give what you don't have, to ensure effective growth of tertiary institutions, leaders should be pacesetters by embracing training and re-training/ learning programmes immediately they assume office. A leader ought to be goal oriented, visionary, he should stand to inspire his followers and accept them and their ideas, empower them when necessary. An effective leader is such that is flexible and does not prioritize his objectives but allow his followers voices to be heard, he is a true servant leader who transforms his followers through motivation, ensuring good sense of belonging. Moreso, Adult education can contribute in re-orienting leaders in tertiary education through; professional development, leadership skills enhancement, promotion of innovative practices, facilitation of continuous learning, facilitate collaborative learning network, support diversity and inclusion.

### **Conclusion**

To achieve effective style of leadership, transformed human resource in tertiary institutions, some challenges in the university community should be addressed, such as inadequate funding for manpower development and other resources which will further harness understaffing among workers, negligence, poor personnel administration among many others. The place of human resource development in tertiary institutions and the society at large cannot be over emphasized, therefore, all hands should be on deck, everyone should make effort that is geared towards giving the best in what he/she is assigned to do or redeployed to serve. For any country, where manpower is developed is sure to have a developed society.

Additionally, adult education promotes ethical leadership principles such as integrity, transparency, accountability and social responsibility among leaders in tertiary education. By instilling a commitment to ethical conduct and values based decision-making, adult education contributes to the cultivation of responsible and ethical leaders who prioritize the well-being of their institutions and stakeholders. Overall, adult education serves as a catalyst for reorienting leaders within tertiary institutions by equipping them with knowledge, skills and mindset

needed to navigate complex challenges, drive institutional innovation and lead their organizations towards excellence and sustainability in an ever changing educational landscape.

## **Recommendations**

Based on our discussion on the role of adult education in reorienting leaders within tertiary education institutions, the following recommendations are made:

1. Invest in continuous professional development: Tertiary education institutions should prioritize investment in continuous professional development programs for their leaders. Those programs should be designed to address specific leadership competencies, current trends and emerging issues in higher education administration.
2. Promote a culture of lifelong learning: Institutions should foster a culture of lifelong learning among leaders, encouraging them to engage in ongoing self directed study, reflective practice and collaborative learning initiatives. This can be facilitated through the provision of resources, support network and recognition for professional growth.
3. Encourage innovation and experimentation: Leaders should be encouraged to explore innovative approaches to teaching, learning and management of institutions. The institutions can create platforms for sharing best practices, piloting new initiatives and recognizing innovative and digital achievement.
4. Integrate ethical leadership principle: Institutions should integrate ethical leadership principles into leadership development programs and organizational practices, which includes integrity, transparency, accountability and social responsibility among leaders and providing opportunities for ethical reflection and decision making.
5. Facilitate collaborative learning networks: Leaders should be encouraged to participate in collaborative learning networks, both within and across institutions. These networks provide opportunities for peer support, knowledge exchange and collective problem solving, fostering a sense of community and shared learning.
6. Support diversity and inclusion
7. Evaluate and adapt programs:

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