



Leadership Styles and Their Impact on Library Personnel in Federal Universities, South-South Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of leadership style on library personnel in federal universities in South-South Nigeria. The research examines the prevalent leadership styles adopted by library administrators and their effects on job satisfaction, motivation, and performance of library staff. A survey of 204 library personnel from three federal universities in the region reveals that transformational leadership is the most prevalent style, followed by transactional and laissez-faire leadership. The findings indicate that transformational leadership has a significant positive impact on staff performance, while transactional leadership has a moderate impact. The study recommends leadership training and development programs to enhance library management effectiveness, promote staff motivation, and improve job satisfaction. The implications of these findings for library management and future research were discussed.

Keywords: Leadership style, Library personnel, Federal universities, South-South Nigeria, Transformational leadership, Transactional leadership, Job satisfaction, Staff performance, Motivation, Library management.

1.0 Introduction

University libraries are recognized as an integral part of the university system vested with the responsibility of supporting the teaching, learning, and research activities of their parent institutions through the provision of information resources, services, and facilities that are necessary for the achievement of the predetermined goals of the universities. It is believed that an effective leadership style may boost productivity and morale and motivate as well as encourage library personnel to make a great impact on the library as it deals with influencing workers' behavior towards the attainment of organizational goals and objectives (Aibieyi, 2014).

According to Nanjundeswaraswamy & Swamy (2014), leadership style is a social influence process in which the leader seeks the voluntary involvement of subordinates in order to achieve organizational goals. It denotes how a leader gives direction, implements plans, and manages people. Leadership can simply be understood as the ability to provide for others to follow in order to achieve stated goals. Akpan-Atata (2024) explained that Leadership styles are simply the capability of getting work done by attracting the willingness and cooperation of individual and group members. In the view of Usman et al. (2018), the leadership style exhibited by the library's administrator is critical to the library's efficient operation, as it greatly impacts how passionate the library personnel are about meeting the stated goals and objectives of the library.

Personal leadership skills are mentioned by Udom (2023) as the ability for internal control, self-discipline, risk-taking, innovativeness, change orientation, and the ability to manage change with persistence. This set of skills is indispensable in successful business information management. It brings about personal motivation to remain focused and calm through the entire information management phase for successful decision-making in entrepreneurial organizations. Armstrong (2016) emphasized that the success of library management depends significantly on the leadership style employed by library managers in relation to their subordinates.

There are several leadership styles that are adopted by library managers in the management of libraries, and it is believed that these leadership styles influence the job performance of library personnel and, by extension, their commitment to the goals

of the library. Isong (2024) stated that librarians hold pivotal leadership roles within university libraries, extending beyond their expertise as information specialists. These leadership styles are democratic, autocratic, transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership (Akparobore et al., 2020; Adetayo *et al.*, 2023). Democratic leadership style, according to Purwanto et al. (2020), is a leadership style that emphasizes group involvement and group debates on issues surrounding the workplace, and this stimulates commitment to organizational goals. In the same vein, Uwandu (2020) opined that the democratic leadership style involves consultations and discussions at meetings with the involvement of the library staff before arriving at decisions. This involvement of library staff in everything that affects their work gives them confidence to build team spirit that will improve their commitment to the library goals. The commitment of library personnel can also be determined by autocratic leadership style. The autocratic leadership style, according to Segun-Adeniran (2015), is highly non-participative, where there is little or no input or feedback from group members regarding issues confronting them in the work. It is a leadership style that is based on individual control over every decision and contributions from group members. In a similar vein, Nyamato-Kwenda & Kwanya (2017) stated that the autocratic leadership style is premised on leaders making most or all of the important decisions without any staff involvement, solely directing how things are to be done, and generally ignoring any suggestions made by the other members of staff. This leadership style thrives on getting the work done through authority, control, power, manipulation, and hard work without the opinions of subordinate staff. It is found to be very important in situations where there is a need for quick decision-making and there is no time for consultations with staff members, as well as in situations where the employees do not possess the skills and motivation to look after their own individual work (Morgan, 2013).

Transactional leadership is another leadership style that may influence the commitment of library personnel. According to Segun-Adeniran (2015), the term "*transaction*" implies an exchange in which rewards are given in response to actions taken, whether positive or negative. When employees perform productively and achieve set goals, they receive positive rewards. Conversely, when performance is

unproductive and goals are not met, leaders administer negative consequences. This indicates that transactional leadership functions through a system of rewards and punishments that are directly linked to task performance.

Similarly, Bender and Heywood (2016) explain that transactional leadership is grounded in a structured system of incentives and sanctions designed to motivate employees toward achieving organizational objectives. Effective and efficient completion of assigned tasks attracts rewards, whereas poor performance results in punishment. Petersen (2012) further asserts that transactional leadership is based on the assumption that employees are primarily motivated by rewards and punishments in their pursuit of organizational goals.

Transformational leadership style is another leadership style that can have an impact on the commitment of library personnel. According to Urhefe and Mole (2021), transformational leadership style is a leadership style in which the leader acts as a model to transform or change subordinates, as it creates room for subordinates to have a sense of respect, trust, loyalty, and appreciation towards the leader and be willing and stimulated to do more than they are expected. In the view of Dupe, Sarong, Astuti, Foeh, Giri, and Lay (2023), transformational leadership style is a leadership approach used by leaders to influence subordinates to achieve organizational goals through inspirational motivation, idealism, individual consideration, charisma, and intellectual stimulation. It is premised on the leaders' capacity to lead by example as well as encourage others to channel their energies towards the achievement of organizational goals through clarity in the communication of organizational policies and providing adequate support, mentorship, and coaching for the workers to succeed in their tasks (Al-Hussein and Elbeltagi, 2012).

Another leadership style that can impact the commitment of library staff is the laissez-faire leadership style. According to Morgan (2013), laissez-faire is a relaxed leadership style that gives complete decision-making control to the staff, with the leaders neither getting in the way nor closely overseeing what the staff are doing. In a similar vein, Tarsik, Kassim, and Nasharudin (2014) asserted that laissez-faire leadership is a 'carefree' sort of leadership whereby employees in the organization are given much discretion when completing jobs or assignments. Also, Lazarus, Adesoji, and Jinadu

(2019) asserted that the laissez-faire leadership style, also known as delegate leadership, is a type of leadership style in which leaders group members to make the decisions regarding issues in the workplace. Although this leadership style is premised on less supervision and more freedom in the performance of duties, it is used when employees are highly trained, experienced, and skilled (Jerome, 2018). It is in view of the above that Obiwuru (cited in Nyamato-Kwenda and Kwanya, 2017) asserted that the laissez-faire leadership style may jeopardize productivity and performance when employees lack shared vision, direction, experience, and skills.

In view of the different leadership styles discussed above, Nwaigwe (2015) asserted that there is no universally accepted style of leadership because the adoption of a leadership style is premised on situations and circumstances surrounding the organization at a particular point in time. This study, however, takes a look at the leadership style that would promote the organizational commitment of library personnel in federal university libraries in South-South, Nigeria.

The study will cover selected federal university libraries in South-South, Nigeria, namely the University of Calabar, the University of Uyo, and the University of Port Harcourt. Also, it will cover all professional and paraprofessional librarians in the University of Uyo, University of Calabar, and University of Port Harcourt libraries under study. The study will focus specifically on leadership styles, emphasizing democratic, autocratic, transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire approaches.

1.1 Significance of the Study

The study on leadership styles and their impacts on library professionals in federal universities in South-South Nigeria aims to explore how different leadership approaches affect job performance and productivity among librarians. The research highlights the importance of effective leadership in academic libraries, identifying key challenges such as lack of proper education on human resource management and inadequate knowledge on adopting suitable leadership styles.

The study reveals that the autocratic leadership style is commonly practiced in these institutions but suggests that a democratic approach could lead to maximum job productivity and effectiveness among library staff. It also emphasizes essential



leadership qualities, including commitment, passion, excellent communication skills, and good decision-making skills.

By investigating the relationship between leadership styles and job performance, this research provides valuable insights for library administrators and policymakers, helping them develop strategies to enhance leadership skills and improve overall library services.

1.2 The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to determine leadership styles and their impact on library personnel in federal university libraries in South-South, Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks the following:

- i. Determine the influence of the democratic leadership style on library administrators in federal university libraries in South-South, Nigeria.
- ii. Examine the influence of the autocratic leadership style on library administrators in federal university libraries in South-South, Nigeria.
- iii. Determine the influence of the transactional leadership style on library administrators in federal university libraries in South-South, Nigeria.

1.3 Research Questions

The following research questions will give direction to the study:

- i. What determines the influence of the democratic leadership style on library administrators in federal university libraries in South-South, Nigeria?
- ii. What is the influence of the autocratic leadership style on library administrators in federal university libraries in South-South, Nigeria?
- iii. What is the influence of the transactional leadership style on library administrators in federal university libraries in South-South, Nigeria?

1.4 Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at the 0.05 level of significance to guide the study:



- H₀₁:** There is no significant influence of the democratic leadership style on library administrators in federal university libraries in South-South Nigeria.
- H₀₂:** There is no significant influence of the autocratic leadership style on library administrators in federal university libraries in South-South Nigeria.
- H₀₃:** There is no significant influence of the transactional leadership style on library administrators in federal university libraries in South-South Nigeria.

2.0 Review of Related Literature

Although there is no universally accepted definition of leadership, it is generally regarded as a reciprocal process in which both the leader and the follower exist within a mutual, dyadic relationship (Binfor, Boateng, Osei, Swanzy, & Gyebi-Garbrah, 2013). According to Yukl (2015), leadership is defined as the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it as well as facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives. In the same vein, Robbins and Judge (2015) define leadership as the ability to influence a group towards the achievement of a vision or goal set. Furthermore, Sun (cited in Akparep, Jengre, and Mogre, 2019) defines leadership as the process of influencing people so that they make an effort by their own will and enthusiasm towards obtaining the group's goals. Leadership is the inducement, persuasion, and motivation of subordinates to enable them to contribute willingly to the organizational goals based on the employee's maximum capabilities (Nwachukwu cited in Nwaigwe, 2015).

According to Griffin (2015), leaders are individuals who are able to influence, supervise, and direct their subordinates, either as individuals or groups, towards the achievement of organizational goals. Such individuals are recognized and accepted as leaders and are able to direct and coordinate the activities of others in the workplace without resorting to force. In a similar vein, Dupe, Sarong, Astuti, Foeh, Giri, and Lay (2023) assert that leadership involves influencing and guiding people through effective communication such as instructions or directives in ways that coordinate and motivate members of an organization toward the achievement of its goals.

Furthermore, Klein, Cooke, and Wallis (2013) describe leadership as a vital managerial skill that entails the ability to inspire a group of people toward a shared objective, with

particular emphasis on developing followers, addressing their needs, and building their capacity.

On the other hand, leadership style is concerned with the initiation, organization, and direction of the actions of the members of a group in a specific situation towards achieving the objectives of the group (Adegbesan, 2013). This is seen to be a particular behavior a leader in an organization employs to motivate employees towards the achievement of a defined objective of the organization. Xenikou (2017) defined leadership style as the way and manner in which a manager or supervisor chooses to act towards his employees or subordinates and the way the leadership function is being carried out by them. Leadership style, according to Newstrom and Davis (cited in Pembu, Usman, Kwajaffa, and Ametefe, 2022), is the manner and approach to providing direction, implementing plans, and motivating people. It simply embodies all explicit and implicit actions performed by a leader as seen by the followers. Gemeda and Lee (2020) define leadership style as the methods and strategies employed to guide others, execute plans, and motivate individuals toward the achievement of organizational objectives.

Leadership styles, according to Northouse (2013), are the ability to get work done with the group while at the same time winning the confidence, loyalty, respect, and willing cooperation of the entire group. The author further stated that leadership style is the process whereby a leader influences a group of individuals to achieve shared and organizational goals by providing direction and clarity of purpose as well as motivation. According to Fentiman-Hall (2018), there are several types of leadership styles, including autocratic, democratic, transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire, none of which is inherently superior to the others. Supporting the above view, Armstrong (2012) asserted that several factors necessitate the use of one leadership style over the other, and these include the type of organization, the nature of the task, the characteristics of the individuals in the leader's team, the group the leader leads as a whole, and more importantly, the personality of the leader. It is recognized that there is not one leadership style that is considered best at all times, as a particular situation would demand one or a combination of different leadership styles. It is in view of this that Arumuru (2019) stated that leadership styles have different effects on the emotions



of targeted followers, and the most effective style should be customized to the situation at hand.

With particular reference to university libraries, leadership style, according to Usman *et al.* (2018), refers to the various patterns of behavior that library heads (librarians/heads of units) adopt in the process of guiding the efforts of their subordinates towards the attainment of library goals and objectives. It is believed that commitment from library personnel could be achieved through the leadership style of library managers. According to Akidi and Chukwueke (2020), there have been attempts by scholars to ascertain the types of leadership styles used by library managers, and it has been reported that autocratic, democratic, transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire leadership styles are used by library managers in conducting the affairs of library personnel towards the achievement of library goals. In view of the above, Arumuru (2019) asserted that the style of leadership adopted by university library managers influences the work attitude of librarians and, by extension, their satisfaction and commitment to the library's goals, and as such, their leadership style should be guided by the beliefs, values, preferences, culture, and norms, as well as the dos and don'ts of the organization or parent body.

The democratic leadership style is a leadership style that keeps subordinates informed about everything that affects their work by sharing decision-making and problem-solving responsibilities with them. According to Chukwusa (2019), the democratic leadership style is defined as leadership that involves staff in decision-making and management and encourages group participation in goal-setting as well as providing ideas and suggestions for solving necessary problems. Also, Cherry (2017) defined democratic leadership style as a style that encourages team members to actively participate in decision-making and freely exchange opinions, as everyone has the opportunity to express their views and the leader does not restrict speaking. Similarly, Jakhar (2017) described the democratic leadership style as one in which all members of the organization are actively involved in decision-making. Furthermore, Manners (cited in Aytakin and Temizkan, 2022) opined that the democratic leadership style is described as the involvement of employees in major matters in the organization in order to reach an open consensus among team members.

According to Maqsood and Bilal (2013), the democratic leadership style sees a leader as a coach who dictates the tune without disregarding inputs from the staff in decision-making. It is a style that is characterized by higher productivity that is sustained for a long period through mutual trust, cooperation, and team spirit between leaders and subordinates. Similarly, Khan (2015) stated that in the democratic leadership style, the leader does not make all decisions but rather uses a highly participative decision-making process that includes subordinates' involvement. Also, Hernon and Rositer (cited in Chukwusa, 2019) asserted that the democratic leadership style is premised on the leadership development of an action plan for staff while allowing them to assess their activities as against the set goals. Subsequently, Onuoha, Oyegun, and Ugbebor (2021) opined that the democratic leadership style is that which concentrates authority in the hands of the group members and provides room for more communication among group members. The authors further state that group members are allowed to contribute to decision-making, establish norms, and carry out processes. Supporting the above, Adetayo *et al.* (2023) found that the democratic leadership style promotes employees' creativity and inventiveness because of its participative nature, as it instills a strong sense of responsibility in workers simply by including them in decision-making.

According to Nyamato-Kwenda and Kwanya (2017), democratic leadership is characterized by shared decision-making, problem solving with mutual respect, common sense rather than private logic, and shared responsibilities. In addition, Morgan (2013) explained that staff members working under a democratic leadership style feel more wanted because of the openness in communication and decision-making, which in turn promotes a higher level of motivation and productivity. Similarly, Hoyle (2012) asserted that democratic leadership could reform organizations, as it creates an environment where staff is empowered to fulfill their highest needs and becomes a member of a productive community through the guiding vision provided by leaders. Johnson (2015) stated that the democratic leadership style is a direct opposite of the autocratic leadership style because it allows for contributions and inputs from staff in an organization, thereby allowing for creativity and innovation in their task performance. In support of the above, Ping (2015) asserted that a feedback mechanism is also an important aspect of a democratic leadership style, as subordinates

have the responsibility to inform their leaders or superiors of any difficulties that prevent them from reaching the set goals of the organization. In addition to that, Cherry (2018) stated that democratic leadership can come up with original solutions to difficulties with better ideas since employees are invited to share their thoughts.

There are conditions that promote the use of the democratic leadership style. According to Leadership Styles (cited in Chukwusa, 2019), the democratic leadership style is most effective when the leader wants to keep staff informed about matters that affect them and the leader wants staff to share in decision-making and problem-solving duties. In addition, it could be effective when the leader wants to provide opportunity for staff to develop a high sense of personal growth and job satisfaction and to encourage team building and participation. However, Chiyem and Adeogun (2016) opined that a democratic style is not ideal when there is not enough time to get everyone's input, as it is easier and more cost-effective for the manager to make the decisions to avoid mistakes. It is in view of this that Morgan (2013) asserted that democratic leadership delays decision-making and may in turn lead to missed deadlines and opportunities. It is imperative to note that despite the level of productivity attained when this leadership style is employed, it, however, makes the process of decision-making slower because of the involvement of all subordinates.

An autocratic leader is seen as the one who is very conscious of his position and has little trust or faith in the subordinates. According to Iqbal, Anwar, and Haider (2015), this style of leadership is characterized by individual control over all decisions and little input from group members. A study conducted indicates that an autocratic/authoritarian leader is characterized as being arbitrary, controlling, power-oriented, coercive, legitimate, and punitive and with a closed mind. In a similar vein, Akparep (2019) defines the autocratic leadership style as leaders who make decisions alone and demand strict adherence to rules as well as loyalty and obedience. It is premised on a centralized decision-making process as well as absolute control of subordinates' performance. The author further stated that the autocratic leadership style allows for little or no input from group members, as leaders dictate all the work methods and processes, and group members are rarely trusted with decisions or important tasks. In the view of Al Khajeh (2019), autocratic leaders are leaders who



reserve the right to make decisions solely with them and always demand that subordinates work according to what they dictate.

According to Akidi and Chukwueke (2020), autocratic leadership style is leadership that is based on individual control over every decision and contributions from group members and could be depicted as leadership with high-handed administration. In a similar vein, Adetayo *et al.* (2023) opined that autocratic leadership styles imply a situation in which the leader has absolute power, takes decisions without consultations with team members, and gives no room for team members' contributions. Also, Segun-Adeniran (2015) asserted that the autocratic leadership style is a non-participatory leadership style whereby employees are not expected to provide opinions or comments, as the leader is considered the all-powerful person when making decisions, even those involving his employees. Furthermore, Pembri *et al.* (2022) stated that the autocratic leadership style is that leadership style where decisions are made exclusively by the leader, as the leader believes that human beings are evil, weak, unwilling to work, incapable of self-determination, and have limited reasoning. Therefore, they must be directed, dictated to, pushed, and forced to work.

The autocratic leadership style, according to Ukaidi (2016), provides direction, determines policy, and expects compliance. It is imbued with assertiveness and optimism as well as the ability to withhold or give rewards and sanctions. The negative side of autocratic leadership is the feeling of aggravation on the part of subordinates, mostly due to the downgrading of their expectations, ideas, and needs, as subordinates merely do what they are told, no question is allowed, and no explanation is given (Ukaidi, 2016). In addition, Armstrong (2012) outlined some shortcomings of autocratic leadership, which are the inability of the subordinates to develop pride of accomplishment, denial of personal development or satisfaction from self-actualization, and the fact that it antagonizes human beings and denies the organization of lasting loyalty and cooperation from the employees. Even though this approach can give a business a clear direction, it may also lead managers to undervalue or ignore input from team members. Ukaidi (2016) asserted that although it may lead to a high level of productivity only when the leader is present, in the absence of the leader, productivity would drop. In view of this, Obiwuru, Okwu, Akpa, and Nwankwere

(2011) asserted that the autocratic leadership style discourages innovation, experimentation, and learning, as there is no shared vision and little motivation beyond coercion. Supporting this view, Al Khajeh (2018) stated that commitment, creativity, and innovation are typically eliminated by autocratic leadership styles.

Despite the negative trends associated with the autocratic leadership style, Armstrong (2012) suggests that autocratic leadership may be useful in situations of emergency, in cases where a homogenous workforce is involved, and where the leader is wise, just, and has considerable understanding of the followers. In such circumstances, special action may be needed to avert a potential mishap. In addition, Germain (2012) opined that this style of leadership can be effective when unskilled labor is used or in high-stress situations requiring immediate actions as long as the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. In a similar vein, Morgan (2013) argued that an autocratic leadership style may work best where quick decision-making is necessary, as there might not be adequate time to consult with or involve staff, as well as in situations where employees do not possess the skills and motivations to look after their own individual work. In the view of Bhargavi and Yaseen (2016), an autocratic approach is valuable when the businesses are faced with a crisis or urgent problem that requires an immediate response.

Several studies by Bayyurt and Kılıç (2017), Wang and Guan (2018), Altan and Özpehlivan (2019), and Iqbal, Abid, Arshad, Ashfaq, Athar, and Hassan (2021) indicated that autocratic leadership styles had a positive impact on the organizational commitment of employees. With particular reference to university and academic libraries in Nigeria, Nwaigwe (2015), Dahir and Agboola (2023), and Uwandu (2020) revealed that an autocratic leadership style was adopted in academic libraries, and it has a significant influence on the job performance, work attitude, and productivity of library personnel, which has a trickle-down effect on their organizational commitment. In contrast, studies by Akor (2014), Akidi and Chukwueke (2020), and Ahmed et al. (2021) revealed that the autocratic leadership style does not significantly improve the job performance of library staff and, by implication, impacts negatively on their organizational commitment.



This concept originates from the works of Burns (as cited in Harb, et al. 2020), who describes transactional leaders as individuals who motivate their followers by appealing to their personal interests. It is a leadership style that is based on the leader's clarification of expectations, responsibilities, tasks to be achieved, and rewards to be expected when obligations are met, which are put forward before the employees/subordinates (Bass cited in Harbet *et al.*, 2020). In the view of Pembi *et al.* (2022), transactional leadership style is defined as the exchange of rewards and targets between employees and management. It simply denotes an exchange process in which the leader rewards his followers according to their efforts and performance. In addition, Omoankhanlen, et al. (2014) stated that transactional leadership describes a style of leadership in which the leader champions compliance of the followers through both reward and punishment.

According to Peterson (cited in Akidi and Chukwueke, 2020), the transactional leadership style usually gives the employees rewards or punishment for tasks carried out. Further explaining, Peterson (2012) opines that when productive action is taken resulting in the ability to meet set goals, the individual is rewarded positively; but when an unproductive action is taken, the individual is accorded due punishments by the leaders. This is to say that the transactional leadership style professes that people are motivated by rewards and punishments. Supporting this assertion, Pembiet *al.* (2022) revealed that the transactional leadership style is a wheeler-dealer in which leaders are always willing to offer something in return for followership, and this style can be any number of things, including an excellent performance review, a raise, a promotion, new responsibilities, or a desired change in duties. Furthermore, Hillailiyyah (2016) opined that transactional leadership occurs when leaders and employees are involved in the give-and-take situation to meet their own self-benefits.

Transactional leadership is based on the enhancement of workers' motivation by providing benefits that are of interest to the subordinates, as leadership's behavior is focused on effective and efficient task performance in exchange for the desired rewards. Mahfouz (2019) emphasized that the transactional leadership style motivates employees by addressing their personal interests, operating through a reciprocal relationship where employee compliance is exchanged for expected rewards. In a

similar vein, Hillailiyyah (2016) opined that the transactional leadership style encourages leaders to adjust their style and behavior to understand followers' expectations through contract negotiations, clarification of responsibilities, recognition and rewards, and a set of expectations for achieving expected performance.

According to Robbins and Judge (2015), there are three dimensions of transactional leadership, which are contingent rewards, active management by exception, and passive management by exception. These three dimensions are described as follows:

- i. **Contingent Reward:** In the contingent reward dimension of transactional leadership, the leader provides a clear understanding to the employees by his/her own participation about what the employees should do to be rewarded for their services. It is described as providing a sufficient interchange of valued and appreciated possessions for employee support. The contingent reward dimension is the most energetic aspect of transactional leadership because one can be involved in contingent reward without ever actually being involved with employees, just like executing a pay-for-performance plan. In essence, transactional leadership styles involve contracts, the exchange of rewards for effort, and the promise of rewards for an excellent performance, as well as the recognition of accomplishments.
- ii. **Management by Exception (active):** In active management by exception, the leader monitors employee's performance and makes corrective actions when the employees fail to meet the criteria or standards. It includes observing performance and taking curative action when needed. It essentially involves watching and searching for deviations from rules and standards to take corrective action.
- iii. **Management by Exception (passive):** In the passive management by exception dimension, the leader shows little concern for the employee's actions. He/she only responds and takes corrective action when the problem arises. This dimension means interfering only when complications become severe. This management essentially involves intervention when standards are not met.

From a leadership perspective, both active and passive management-by-exception emphasize the enforcement of rules and standards to prevent errors and deviations. In

both approaches, leaders focus on ensuring that employees adhere strictly to established procedures in order to maintain performance and organizational stability.

This aligns with the view of Ramli, Soelton, Magito, and Khotimah (2019), who argue that transactional leadership provides clear definitions of employees' roles and responsibilities. Under this leadership style, compliance with established standards is directly linked to rewards, as employees who successfully meet performance expectations receive benefits that serve their best interests. This type of leadership, according to Omoankhanlen *et al.* (2014), is suitable in crisis and emergency situations, as well as when work needs to be carried out in a specific fashion, as it thrives on supervision, organization, and group performance.

3.0 Methodology

This study adopted an ex-post-facto research design to examine leadership styles and their impact on library personnel in federal universities in South-South Nigeria. The population comprised professional and paraprofessional library personnel in selected federal university libraries in South-South, Nigeria. The states within this zone are Cross River, Rivers, Edo, Delta, Akwa Ibom, and Bayelsa States. Presently, the south-south zone plays host to fifteen (15) universities comprising seven federal universities, six state universities, and private universities. However, the study focused on three federal universities, namely, the University of Uyo, the University of Calabar, and the University of Port Harcourt. The sample size of the study was 204 professional and paraprofessional staff using the census sampling technique. The researcher developed an instrument captioned "Leadership Style Questionnaire and Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (LSOCQ)" for the collection of data. The instrument for data collection was subjected to face and content validation. A statistical method was used to determine the reliability of the instruments.

4.0 Data Analysis and Discussion of Findings

Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while an independent t-test was used to test the hypotheses. All the hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance.



4.1 Research Question One

What determines the influence of the democratic leadership style on library administrators in federal university libraries in South-South, Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation scores of the influence of democratic leadership style on organizational commitment of library personnel in federal university libraries in South-South, Nigeria.

S/N	Availability of facilities	Mean	SD	Remarks
	Library leaders allow subordinates to participate in decision making in the library	2.68	0.86	Agreed
2.	Library leaders take decision in the library based on consensus	2.76	0.90	Agreed
3.	Library leaders maintain open channel of communication with library personnel to ensure things are done properly	2.68	0.86	Agreed
4.	Library leaders allow subordinates to express themselves freely in staff meeting.	2.68	0.80	Agreed
5	Library leaders are always disposed to developing the spirit of belongingness among library personnel	2.73	0.75	Agreed
6	Library leaders create channels for feed backs from subordinates to check on the	2.82	0.85	Agreed



	progress of assigned tasks within the library			
7	Library Leaders respect the views of subordinates in matters of mutual interest to the success of the library	2.65	0.66	Agreed
8	Library leaders are open to accepting new ideas from subordinates in the administration of the library.	2.63	0.88	Agreed
9	Library leaders provide guidance to subordinates on how to perform assigned duties	2.67	0.85	Agreed
10	Library leader encourages creativity in the discharge of library duties	2.82	0.78	Agreed
11	Library Leaders are concerned about the welfare of their subordinates	2.63	0.76	Agreed
12	Library leaders give clear responsibilities to subordinates with support on how to accomplish them.	2.65	0.83	Agreed
13	Library leaders support the career advancement of subordinates	2.76	0.85	Agreed
14	Library personnel are given time/resources to pursue their own developmental objectives	2.78	0.77	Agreed
15	Library leaders discuss policy changes with library personnel prior to taking action	2.80	0.74	Agreed

16	Library leaders ensure that library personnel are aware of as well as understand all library policies/ procedures	2.98	0.88	Agreed
Cluster Mean		2.75	0.82	Agreed

Source: Field Data (2024).

The results presented in Table 1 show the mean scores of library personnel regarding the influence of democratic leadership on organizational commitment. All the items recorded mean values above the cut-off point of 2.50, indicating general agreement among respondents. This suggests that library leaders in federal university libraries in South-South Nigeria adopt democratic practices, such as involving subordinates in decision-making, making decisions based on consensus, maintaining open channels of communication to ensure effective operations, showing concern for the welfare of staff, and ensuring that personnel are well informed about and understand library policies and procedures, among other practices. Furthermore, the overall cluster mean of 2.75 indicates that democratic leadership style has a positive influence on the organizational commitment of library personnel.

4.1.2 Research Question Two

What is the influence of the autocratic leadership style on the organizational commitment of library personnel in federal university libraries in South-South, Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation scores of influence of autocratic leadership style on organizational commitment of library personnel in federal university libraries in South-South, Nigeria.

S/N	Autocratic Leadership Style	Mean	SD	Remarks
1.	Library leaders do not readily embrace new ideas from subordinates	2.13	0.91	Disagreed
2.	Library leaders take decisions arbitrarily	2.15	0.85	Disagreed
3.	Library leaders most of the time do not explain his/her actions	1.94	0.76	Disagreed

4.	Library leaders constantly threaten employees with punished if they do not complete their tasks/make mistakes	1.96	0.80	Disagreed
5	Library leaders do not accommodate any kind of domestic excuse interfering with my duties	1.81	0.69	Disagreed
6	Library leaders wear officious look most of the time	1.94	0.76	Disagreed
7	Library leader makes all the major decisions	2.17	0.97	Disagreed
8	Library leaders rules with an iron hand	2.05	0.86	Disagreed
9	Library leaders think that subordinates require stringent supervision	1.97	0.91	Disagreed
10	Library leaders use threat/punishment to encourage people to work	1.87	0.74	Disagreed
11	Library leaders do not value the opinions/ contribution of Subordinates	1.77	0.87	Disagreed
12	Library leaders rule forcefully	1.86	0.98	Disagreed
13	Library leaders think that the majority of employees are lazy	1.95	0.85	Disagreed
14	Library leaders give all the directions while the employees are expected to follow	2.10	0.91	Disagreed
15	The leader does not get too involved with the team/does not have discussions with them often	2.15	0.82	Disagreed
16	Library leader is often over bearing in her regular inspection of my work	1.89	0.75	Disagreed
	Cluster Mean	1.98	0.84	Disagreed

Source: Field Data (2024).

The results presented in Table 2 indicate the mean scores of library personnel regarding the influence of autocratic leadership on organizational commitment. All the items recorded mean values below the cut-off point of 2.50, reflecting general disagreement among respondents. Specifically, library personnel disagreed that their leaders fail to embrace new ideas from subordinates, make arbitrary decisions, refuse

to explain their actions, frequently threaten employees with punishment for mistakes or incomplete tasks, or reject domestic excuses that may interfere with official duties. Furthermore, the overall cluster mean of 1.98 suggests that the autocratic leadership style does not significantly influence the organizational commitment of library personnel.

4.1.3 Research Question Three

What is the influence of the transactional leadership style on the organizational commitment of library personnel in federal university libraries in South-South, Nigeria?

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation scores of influence of transactional leadership style on organizational commitment of library personnel in federal university libraries in South-South, Nigeria.

S/N	Transactional Leadership Style	Mean	SD	Remarks
1.	Library leaders update staff on the standards they need to understand to carry out their tasks	2.65	0.90	Agreed
2.	Leaders ensure close monitoring to avoid errors	2.56	0.84	Agreed
3.	Leaders believe that employees know what to do	2.66	0.75	Agreed
4.	Subordinates are permitted to find solutions to complex problems	2.57	0.79	Agreed
5	Stringent control measures are laid down for staff	1.89	0.70	Disagreed
6	There is always emphasis on reward/punishment for assigned tasks.	1.94	0.77	Disagreed

7	Library leaders are always waiting for things to go wrong before taking corrective measures	2.17	0.98	Disagreed
8	Library leaders are fond of punishing subordinates for errors/mistakes on work performed through various sanctions	2.05	0.87	Disagreed
9	Library leaders are always absent when attention is required	1.96	0.92	Disagreed
10	Library leaders often avoid involvement in work progress	1.87	0.76	Disagreed
11	Library leaders always focus attention on irregularities, exceptions/deviations from standards.	1.95	0.88	Disagreed
12	Library leaders always keep track of all mistakes made by the team members	1.90	0.98	Disagreed
Cluster Mean		2.18	0.85	Disagreed

Source: Field Data (2024).

The results presented in Table 3 show the mean scores of library personnel regarding the influence of transactional leadership on organizational commitment. Items with mean values above the cut-off point of 2.50 indicate agreement among respondents. Specifically, library personnel agreed that their leaders clearly communicate the standards required for task performance, closely monitor activities to prevent errors, trust employees to understand their responsibilities, and allow subordinates to develop solutions to complex problems. Conversely, items with mean values below the cut-off point reflect disagreement. Respondents disagreed that their leaders wait for problems to arise before taking corrective action, frequently punish subordinates for mistakes through various sanctions, are often absent when their attention is needed, or avoid involvement in work processes. However, the overall cluster mean of 2.18 suggests

that the transactional leadership style does not significantly influence the organizational commitment of library personnel.

4.2 Testing of Hypotheses

An independent t-test was used to test the hypotheses at the .05 level of significance.

4.2.1 Hypothesis One

There is no significant influence of the democratic leadership style on the organizational commitment of library personnel in federal university libraries in South-South, Nigeria.

Table 4: Independent t-test analysis of the influence of democratic leadership style on organizational commitment of library personnel in federal university libraries in South-South, Nigeria. (N = 187)

	Variables	\bar{X}	N	SD	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Pair 1	Democratic Leadership Style	21.94	187	5.40	15.33	1.97	Significant
	Organizational Commitment	15.48	187	5.18			

*significant at $P < .05$; $df = 185$ Source: Field Data (2024)

The result presented in Table 4 shows that the calculated t-value (15.33) exceeds the critical t-value (1.97) at the 0.05 level of significance with 185 degrees of freedom. Based on this finding, the null hypothesis was rejected. This indicates that the democratic leadership style has a significant influence on the organizational commitment of library personnel in federal university libraries in South-South Nigeria.

4.2.2 Hypothesis Two

There is no significant influence of the autocratic leadership style on the organizational commitment of library personnel in federal university libraries in South-South, Nigeria.

Table 5: Independent t-test analysis of the influence of autocratic leadership style on organizational commitment of library personnel in federal university libraries in South-South, Nigeria. (N = 187)

	Variables	\bar{X}	N	SD	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Pair 1	Autocratic Leadership Style	19.42	187	4.14	0.66	1.97	Not Significant
	Organizational Commitment	15.48	187	5.18			

*Not significant at $P < .05$; $df = 185$

Source: Field Data (2024).

The result in Table 5 reveals that the calculated t-value of 0.66 is less than the critical t-value of 1.97 at .05 level of significance and at 185 degrees of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis was retained. This implies that there is no significant influence of autocratic leadership style on organizational commitment of library personnel in federal universities libraries in South-South, Nigeria

4.2.3 Hypothesis Three

There is no significant influence of transactional leadership style on organizational commitment of library personnel in federal universities libraries in South-South, Nigeria.

Table 6: Independent t-test analysis of the influence transactional leadership style on organizational commitment of library personnel in federal universities libraries in South-South, Nigeria. (N= 187)

	Variables	X	N	SD	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Pair 1	Transactional Leadership Style	18.41	187	3.17	0.51	1.97	Not Significant
	Organizational Commitment	15.48	187	5.18			

*Not significant at $P < .05$; $df = 185$

Source: Field Data (2024).

The result presented in Table 6 indicates that the calculated t -value (0.51) is lower than the critical t -value (1.97) at the 0.05 level of significance with 185 degrees of freedom. Based on this outcome, the null hypothesis was retained. This suggests that the transactional leadership style does not have a significant influence on the organizational commitment of library personnel in federal university libraries in South-South Nigeria.

4.5: Summary of the Findings

The summary of the findings of the study, based on the research questions and tested hypotheses, is presented below:

- i. Democratic leadership style significantly influences organizational commitment. The test of Hypothesis One confirmed a statistically significant effect. This implies that the democratic leadership style has a significant positive influence on the organizational commitment of library personnel in federal university libraries in South-South Nigeria.
- ii. Autocratic leadership style does not significantly influence organizational commitment. The test of Hypothesis Two revealed no statistically significant effect. This indicates that the autocratic leadership style does not significantly affect the organizational commitment of library personnel in federal university libraries in South-South Nigeria.
- iii. Transactional leadership style does not significantly influence organizational commitment. The test of Hypothesis Three showed no statistically significant effect. This implies that the transactional leadership style does not significantly affect the organizational commitment of library personnel in federal university libraries in South-South Nigeria.

5.0` Conclusion

Leadership styles play a crucial role in shaping the work environment and productivity of library personnel in federal universities in South-South Nigeria. Different leadership approaches can significantly impact staff motivation, job satisfaction, and overall performance. Effective leaders understand the needs of their team members and adapt their style to drive results. Transformational and transactional leadership styles are often associated with positive outcomes, as they foster a supportive and motivating work environment. These styles encourage collaboration, innovation, and open communication, leading to improved job satisfaction and productivity among library personnel.

In contrast, autocratic leadership can have negative effects, leading to dissatisfaction, low motivation, and high turnover rates. By understanding the impact of different leadership styles, university administrators can develop strategies to promote effective leadership and improve overall performance in their libraries.

5.1 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended as follows:

- i. University library managers should adopt leadership styles such as democratic and transformational leadership styles in running the affairs of the library. This is to ensure that library personnel are allowed to provide input and introduce more innovative ways of carrying out tasks in the library so as to boost their commitment to the library goals.
- ii. Library management should consistently support librarians in a way that fosters a high level of commitment, enabling them to effectively contribute to the library's overall goals.
- iii. The use of autocratic, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles should be discouraged by library managers, as they are seen to stifle cordial relationships and collaboration between leaders and subordinates, which are essential in boosting the commitment of library personnel.
- iv. Library managers should endeavor to motivate their staff intrinsically and extrinsically, especially intrinsic indicators like autonomy to carry out duties,



delegation of authority, and opportunities for career development in order to boost their commitment to library goals.

- v. The university management should organize regular inspections of the library to monitor the style of leadership used by librarians that could enhance the commitment of library personnel. This is necessary in order to achieve the objective of the library.

5.2 Suggestion for Further Studies

On the basis of the findings of this study, the following suggestions were made for further studies:

- i. Leadership styles and organizational commitment of library personnel should be examined in other areas.
- ii. Leadership styles and job satisfaction of library personnel should be examined in other areas.
- iii. Leadership styles and motivation of library personnel should be examined in other areas.

5.3 Limitations of the Study

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher encountered the following limitations:

- i. Time constraints, which limited the ability to gather all the necessary data.
- ii. Resource constraints, particularly limited funding to support the research process.
- iii. Limited access to the entire target population, as the researcher was unable to reach all intended respondents.
- iv. Respondent-related limitations, including possible non-responses or incomplete information provided by some participants.



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