

Impact Of Leadership Styles On Construction Project Success In Benin City

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Abstract: Globally, project failure rates are estimated to be very high. These failures can be linked to various factors, including insufficient understanding of how leadership styles impact project success and the timing and application of the appropriate leadership style needed for successful project completion. This study examined the various leadership styles prevalent in the construction industry and their specific impact on project success, explored the factors influencing leadership styles and examined the effects various leadership styles have on project success. The aim of this research was to investigate the impact of leadership styles on the success of projects within the construction industry in Benin City, Edo State of Nigeria with a view to optimizing strategies for improved project success. This study employed a descriptive research design to obtain quantifiable data that facilitates achieving the research aims by applying relevant statistical tests. The most prevalent leadership style is the Democratic leadership style, with a mean item score (MIS) of 4.14, ranked first among the respondents. The second most prevalent leadership style is the Transformational leadership style, with a MIS of 4.02. The Transactional leadership style is the third most prevalent, with an MIS of 3.96. The Laissez-Faire leadership style and the Autocratic leadership style are tied for the fourth and fifth positions, both with an MIS of 3.64. Democratic leadership style leads to improved communication within the team, with a mean item score of 4.08, which is ranked as the top positive effect. It also fosters openness to change among team members, with a mean item score of 3.92, as the second most significant positive effect. Furthermore, this leadership style results in increased innovation, with a mean item score of 3.92, ranked as the third positive effect. The democratic leadership style is associated with higher team morale, with a mean item score of 3.90, which is the fourth most notable positive effect. It is strongly advocated that the democratic leadership style should be practiced.

Keywords: Leadership; Leadership styles; project success ; statistical analysis

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1. INTRODUCTION

Northouse (2010) defines leadership as “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal”. The success of construction projects is not solely determined by technical expertise but also by effective leadership, the styles, traits, competencies and skills (Ogunlana, 2011). There exist various leadership styles, such as the

transformational leadership style highlighted by Ebrahim (2018), which emphasizes enhancing employees' overall value system through skill development, motivation, and ethical standards. Another style is the transactional leadership, described by Uchenwamgbe (2013), where leaders offer incentives such as salary increases, promotions, new responsibilities, performance evaluations, and welfare programs in exchange for performance and compliance.

The laissez-faire leadership style, as described by Sharma and Singh (2013), involves group members taking full responsibility for setting goals, making decisions, and solving problems independently. The autocratic leadership style, on the other hand, centers around leaders who see their influence as crucial in major decisions or outcomes (Mgbeze, 2014). In contrast, democratic leadership style, according to Mgbeze (2014), involves decentralized decision-making shared among subordinates. Globally, project failure rates are estimated to range from 66% to 99% (Standish Group, 2009). These failures can be linked to various factors, including insufficient understanding of how leadership styles impact project success and the timing and application of the appropriate leadership style needed for successful project completion.

According to Toor and Ofori (2008), effective leadership plays a crucial role in the successful completion of construction projects. The leadership style chosen by project managers can greatly impact team performance, collaboration, and project results (Yang, 2011). Previous studies suggested that the leadership behaviors and styles employed by construction professionals influence project success in this sector (Ling, 2008). However, there is a lack of comprehensive research on which specific leadership approaches are most effective for achieving construction project success, particularly in the context of Benin City, Nigeria.

Local context and organizational culture can influence how leadership styles affect project outcomes (Avolio, 2009). Exploring the specific leadership behaviors that contribute to successful construction projects in Benin City would offer valuable insights for practitioners working in this area. This study investigated the influence of various leadership styles utilized by construction professionals on measures of project success within the distinct organizational and cultural setting of Benin City, Nigeria. The aim of this research was to investigate the impact of leadership styles on the success of projects within the construction industry in Benin City with a view to optimizing strategies for improved project success.

The study objectives were to;

1. Examine the prevalent leadership styles within the construction industry in Benin City,
2. Investigate the factors affecting leadership styles in the construction industry in the study area; and
3. Examine the effects of various leadership styles on project success in the construction industry in the study area.

1.1 Leadership styles and project success

Benin City, located in Edo State, Nigeria, has experienced rapid urban growth and development over the past decades. Numerous construction projects of varying sizes and complexity are undertaken in the city each year. This provides an interesting backdrop to examine how different leadership approaches affect key project success metrics including schedule performance, cost performance, quality, and stakeholder satisfaction. Project success can be defined in many ways, but ultimately it refers to the degree to which a project achieves its objectives and meets stakeholder expectations. Some key factors that influence project success include having clear goals and requirements upfront, strong executive sponsorship, adequate resources, effective communication and stakeholder engagement, and proper risk management (Pinto and Slevin, 1988). However, project success criteria can be complex, multi-dimensional, and dependent on the perspective of different stakeholders (Baccarini, 1999). Some researchers break down project success into different components like project management success focusing on efficiency of execution, and product success focusing on quality of project deliverables or outcomes (Baccarini, 1999; Mir and Pinnington, 2014). Others distinguish between success criteria (meeting goals) and success factors (elements that lead to success) (Cooke, 2002). Key factors that positively influence perceptions of project success include: top management support, clear goals/objectives, detailed plans, customer involvement, team competencies, monitoring and feedback, effective change management, and proper technical task execution (Hyvari, 2006; Mir and Pinnington, 2014).

1.1.1 Transformational leadership style

Transformational leadership originates from the leader's personal values and motivates subordinates to exceed expectations (Bass, 1985). According to Ebrahim (2018), transformational leaders focus on developing followers by considering their needs and general value systems, including building skills, motivation, and morals. In transformational leadership, subordinates trust, admire, and absolutely respect the leader, becoming motivated to go beyond their initial expected contributions (Obiwuru, 2011). Bass and Avolio (1994) explain that transformational leaders encourage critical thinking and new approaches from followers, fostering intellectual stimulation. Podsakoff et al. (1996) found this leadership increases performance, satisfaction, and commitment to organizational goals. Bass (1990) identified four key components of transformational leadership: charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and

individual consideration, as Obiwuru (2011) summarized in Fig. 1.

Firstly, Charisma or idealized influence, which involves having a vision and sense of mission that instills pride, gains respect and trust, as Humphreys and Einstein (2003) state. Charismatic leaders inspire employees to transcend self-interest for the team's sake, provide reassurance to overcome obstacles, and build confidence in achieving goals (Howell and Frost, 1989). Followers place immense confidence and trust in charismatic leaders, according to Howell and Avolio (1993).

Secondly, inspirational motivation, involves leaders setting high standards to serve as role models (Obiwuru, 2011). Bass (1985) stated that followers look up to inspirational leaders who provide emotional appeals to raise awareness of shared goals, as noted by Obiwuru (2011). Inspirational leaders communicate high expectations, express goals simply, talk optimistically about the future, and paint an exciting vision of organizational change, according to Bass and Avolio (1994). Bass (1990) explained that inspirational leaders give meaning and challenge to followers' work, arousing individual/team spirit and generating enthusiasm and optimism as cited by Obiwuru (2011).

Thirdly, Intellectual stimulation, here, intellectually stimulating leaders provide followers with novel concepts that encourage them to move away from conventional thinking patterns (Obiwuru, 2011). This type of leader promotes intelligence, logical reasoning, and methodical problem-solving, and careful analysis. Bass and Avolio (1994) emphasized that such leaders seek diverse viewpoints when addressing challenges, propose new methods for completing tasks, and promote the re-examination of traditional ideas.

The fourth element of transformational leadership is individualized consideration. This aspect focuses on developing followers through coaching and mentoring, as outlined by Obiwuru (2011). Leaders pay close attention to the unique characteristics and needs of each follower, taking on a mentoring role to support their growth and development. The leader mentors and assists others in identifying and cultivating their strengths, while also actively listening to their concerns (Bass and Avolio, 1994). Bass (1985) emphasized the importance of individually addressing followers to enhance their maturity levels and develop effective approaches to achieving their goals and overcoming challenges.

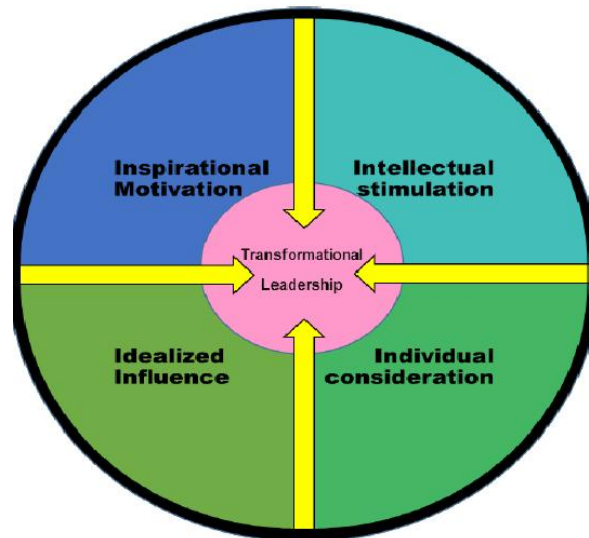


Fig. 1. Transformational leadership model (adapted from Renjith et al., 2015)

According to Bass and Avolio (1994), transformational leadership exemplifies superior leadership performance. Transformational leaders are effective and productive for several reasons, such as their ability to be charismatic and motivate employees, meet employees' emotional needs, and intellectually stimulate them (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Research conducted by Wang

et al. (2011) found a positive association between transformational leadership and individual-level follower performance. The study also indicated a positive relationship between transformational leadership and team performance at the organizational level. Xu and Wang (2008) suggested that performance results from the application of knowledge, motivation,

skills, and abilities toward specific behaviors. Their research highlighted that transformational leadership contributes to the overall growth and development of followers, fostering a self-defining and gratifying relationship between followers and leaders or groups. Jyoti and Bhau (2015) discovered a positive correlation between transformational leadership and organizational performance. Sofi and Devanadhen (2015) asserted that transformational leadership exerts a substantial influence on organizational performance. Their study, conducted in banking organizations using statistical tools like the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), concluded that transformational leadership directly enhances organizational performance. Research shows that transformational leadership can positively impact team performance, job satisfaction, creativity, and commitment to organizational change initiatives (Gumusluoglu and Ilsev, 2009).

1.1.2 Transactional leadership style

Uchenwamgbe (2013) notes that transactional leaders provide rewards like promotions, pay raises, new responsibilities, and benefits in return for performance. Ojokuku et al. (2012) define it as an exchange of

targets and rewards between managers and employees. Longe's (2014) study found transactional leadership can positively impact organizational performance by creating an optimal environment through setting expectations and offering rewards. However, Sofi and Devanadhen (2015) concluded it does not directly improve performance or encourage innovation. Obiwuru (2011) describe transactional leadership as a process where followers acquiesce to leaders' requests in exchange for rewards, not because of enthusiasm for the goals. Boehnke et al. (2003) state transactional leaders aim to get internal actors to complete tasks needed for organizational goals by clarifying expectations, removing barriers, and providing motivation through contingent rewards and consequences.

Obiwuru (2011) explain transactional leaders exhibit constructive behaviors like contingent rewards and corrective behaviors like active management-by-exception. The former involves simplifying work requirements and using incentives, while the latter refers to closely monitoring for mistakes and taking corrective action.

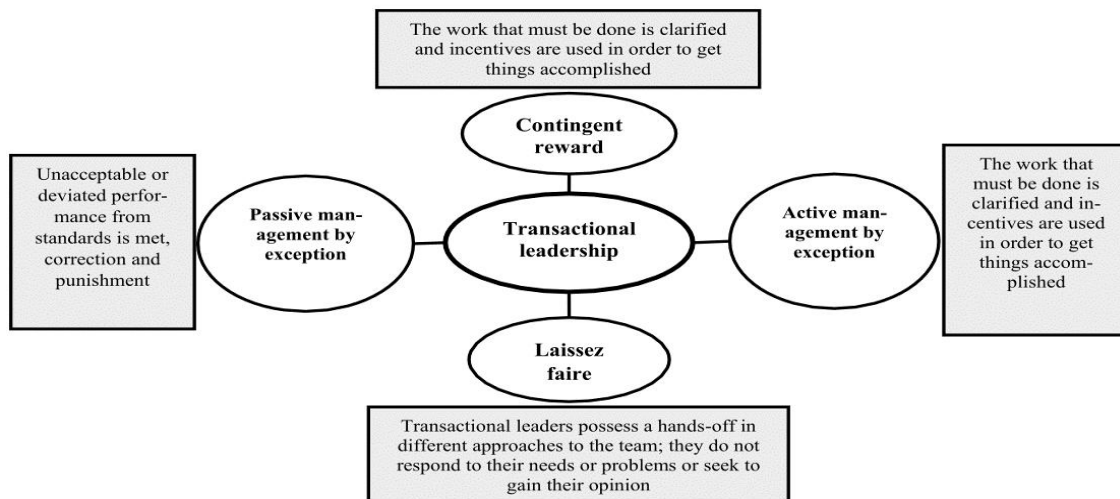


Fig. 2: Elements of transactional leadership (adapted from Belmejdoub, 2015)

1.1.3 Laissez-Faire leadership style

Laissez-faire leadership, as characterized by Bass and Avolio (1995), signifies a lack of active leadership involvement in organizations, often manifesting as "the absence of leadership, avoidance of intervention, or both." Laissez-faire leaders refrain from making decisions, avoid expressing opinions, hesitate to take action, and may be absent when required (Bass and Avolio, 1994; Judge and Piccolo, 2004; Hinkin and Schriesheim, 2008). Laissez-faire leadership is often

perceived as the most passive style with potentially detrimental effects on employees (Bass and Avolio, 1997; Hinkin and Schriesheim, 2008; Skogstad, 2014; Hu, 2022; Parveen, 2022). For instance, in terms of the relationship between laissez-faire leadership and motivation, Chaudhry and Javed (2012) found a positive but statistically insignificant association, while Zareen (2015) and Fiaz (2017) identified a significant positive impact on motivation.

1.1.4 Autocratic leadership styles

Ebrahim (2018) notes autocratic leaders force followers to execute strategies narrowly defined by the leader. Iqbal (2015) study found autocratic leadership lacks creativity, harms motivation and satisfaction, and promotes one-sided communication. Bhargavi and Yaseen (2016) found autocratic leadership positively impacts organizational performance for deadline-driven projects. Igbaekemen and Odivwri (2015) describe autocratic leaders as determining activities, techniques and policies for employees to follow with little faith in subordinates.

1.1.5 Democratic leadership styles

Rukmani et al. (2010) point out a weakness is assuming all have equal expertise in group decisions. Elenkov (2000) found democratic leadership positively impacts organizational performance by enabling employee participation and objective praise/criticism. Bhargavi and Yaseen (2016) also found it improves performance by allowing creative ideas and involvement. A key advantage is developing future leaders.

1.2 Effects various leadership styles have on project success

The success or failure of a project is heavily influenced by the leadership style employed by the project manager or leader (Aga, 2016; Müller and Turner, 2007). The way a leader interacts with team members, delegates tasks, handles conflicts, and communicates goals can significantly impact team morale, productivity, and overall project performance (Aga, 2016; Chiniara and Bentein, 2016). By recognizing the strengths and weaknesses of each approach, they can make informed decisions and implement strategies that maximize the chances of achieving successful project outcomes (Aga, 2016; Müller and Turner, 2007).

1.3 Transformational leadership style

Transformational leaders articulate a compelling vision and foster a sense of purpose among team members, leading to higher levels of commitment, dedication, and effort towards achieving project goals (Aga, 2016; Yang, 2011). By encouraging creativity, innovative thinking, and intellectual stimulation, transformational leaders can improve problem-solving abilities and lead to higher performance levels among team members, ultimately contributing to project success (Aga, 2016; Keegan and Den Hartog, 2004). Studies have shown a positive correlation between transformational leadership and increased project success rates, as this leadership style's ability to inspire, motivate, promote collaboration, and foster a shared vision can significantly increase the likelihood of project success (Aga, 2016; Yang, 2011). Transformational leaders

often act as role models, demonstrating ethical behavior and consideration for team members' needs, which can foster a sense of trust and cohesion within the team, leading to better communication, collaboration, and conflict resolution, essential for project success (Keegan and Den Hartog, 2004; Northouse, 2021). By encouraging intellectual stimulation and new perspectives, transformational leaders can promote innovation and creative problem-solving within the project team, leading to better solutions, adaptability to changing project circumstances, and overall project success (Aga, 2016; Keegan & Den Hartog, 2004). While transformational leadership has positive effects on project success, the appropriate leadership style may also depend on factors such as the project's complexity, team dynamics, and organizational culture (Müller and Turner, 2007; Northouse, 2021).

1.4 Transactional leadership style

This leadership style can be effective in projects with clear and specific goals, as leaders provide direction and monitor progress closely, offering rewards or taking corrective action as needed (Müller and Turner, 2007). Effective project leaders often combine elements of transactional and transformational leadership styles, tailoring their approach to the specific needs of the project and team (Müller and Turner, 2007; Northouse, 2021).

1.5 Laissez Faire leadership style

The laissez-faire leadership style is characterized by a hands-off approach, where leaders provide minimal guidance and direction, allowing team members to work independently with little supervision (Northouse, 2021). This style can promote autonomy and creativity among team members, which may be beneficial in projects that require innovative solutions or where team members are highly skilled and experienced (Yang, 2011). Studies have found that laissez-faire leadership is often associated with lower team performance and project success rates compared to more active leadership styles, such as transformational or transactional leadership (Yang, 2011; Müller and Turner, 2007). While laissez-faire leadership may be appropriate in certain situations with highly self-motivated and experienced teams, it is generally not recommended as the primary leadership style for most projects, as it can contribute to a lack of cohesion, direction, and ultimately, project failure (Müller and Turner, 2007; Yang, 2011).

1.6 Autocratic leadership style

The autocratic leadership style is characterized by a leader who makes decisions independently, with

minimal input or involvement from team members (Northouse, 2021). However, the lack of team participation and autonomy can lead to resentment, lack of commitment, and stifled creativity among team members, which can negatively impact project success (Müller and Turner, 2007). Studies have found that autocratic leadership can hinder project success, particularly in projects that require collaboration, innovation, or a high level of expertise from team members (Yang, 2011). While autocratic leadership may be appropriate in certain high-pressure situations or when dealing with a team of novices, it is generally not recommended as the primary leadership style for most projects, as it can stifle creativity, innovation, and team commitment, all of which are critical for project success (Müller and Turner, 2007; Yang, 2011).

1.7 Democratic leadership style

The democratic leadership style involves leaders who encourage participation and collaboration from team members in the decision-making process (Northouse, 2021). Studies have shown that democratic leadership can positively influence project success rates, as the collaborative environment and shared decision-making process can lead to better problem-solving, improved decision quality, and increased team cohesion (Yang, 2011; Müller and Turner, 2007). Effective project leaders often adopt a flexible leadership approach, combining elements of democratic and other styles to suit the specific needs of the project and team (Müller and Turner, 2007).

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

With a population of 1.9 million, Benin City is the fourth largest city in Nigeria. The city is also home to many prominent and large construction companies because of its substantial population size. As such, Benin City provides an ideal location to examine leadership styles and project success in the construction industry given the abundance of major building and infrastructure projects undertaken by sizable contractors in the city. This study employed a descriptive research design to obtain quantifiable data that facilitates achieving the research aims. The research incorporated both qualitative and quantitative methods, applying relevant statistical tests to further analyze and determine the significance of the collected data. The target population of this study are the professionals in the construction industry. Both purposive and random sampling were utilized in this research to gather samples from the general populace. Purposive sampling was based on the researcher's judgement regarding factors such as firms' experience, distance, and age. Out of the hundreds of firms in the city, a number of firms were selected purposefully and

questionnaire were distributed to them both manually and technologically (e-mail). The study made use of descriptive statistics only to analyze the data using mean item scores.

Questionnaires were used for this study. The development of the questionnaires was done in such a way that each question was clearly phrased to avoid ambiguity and checked for expression. The questionnaire was designed in three (3) parts. The first part deals with general questions to the respondents with regards to their status in the construction industry, educational qualification, years of experience in the industry, respondents' profession. This background information helped in ascertaining the reliability and credibility of data from the survey. The second part of the questionnaire dealt with information on the various leadership styles and their impact on project success which respondents used as a guide on their assessment.

2.1 Population of the study

To ensure adequate and reliable data collection, a sample is required to be homogenous and comprehensive and should give a true representation of the population. Therefore, the target populations of this study were respondents that are construction professionals. Purposive sampling was used to select the respondents relevant to the study.

To ensure that adequate representation of information was collected, the sample frame used was drawn using the snowballing method. To this end a systematic sampling was used for selection of the participants that were issued the structured questionnaires through hand delivery to their offices. The systematic sampling is a statistical method involving the selection of elements from ordered sampling frame. In systematic sampling procedure each element in the population has a known and equal probability of selection.

Analytical and quantitative statistical approaches were adopted to examine, identify, and to categorize the leadership styles. The major leadership styles identified from the literature were assessed based on the perceptions of the required participants. Questionnaires were delivered to participants in person to obtain primary data. This approach removed any undue pressure from the respondents and gave them the freedom to fill in the questionnaires as truthfully as possible. The Likert rating scale was used in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed in such a way that the stratification of the data was easy for analysis. The questions involve recording the contribution of each variable on a rating scale of: 1 –

Very Low; 2 – Low; 3 – Moderate; 4 – High; 5 – Very high. The questions concentrated on past or present phenomena in civil engineering projects. The interest was to show how the past events had affected the projects.

2.2 Data analysis Technique

The data obtained from the questionnaire survey were analysed using mean index. Descriptive and analytical method were adopted to analyse the collected data. Validity and reliability tests were carried out using the

Cronbach’s alpha method to test the internal consistency of the data collected. This study adopts the mean index for the rating of the leadership styles and the impact on project success. SPSS and Excel were used in the analysis of the data. The mean scores were computed from the respondent’s ratings.

A summary of the processes undertaken are summarized in Fig.3.

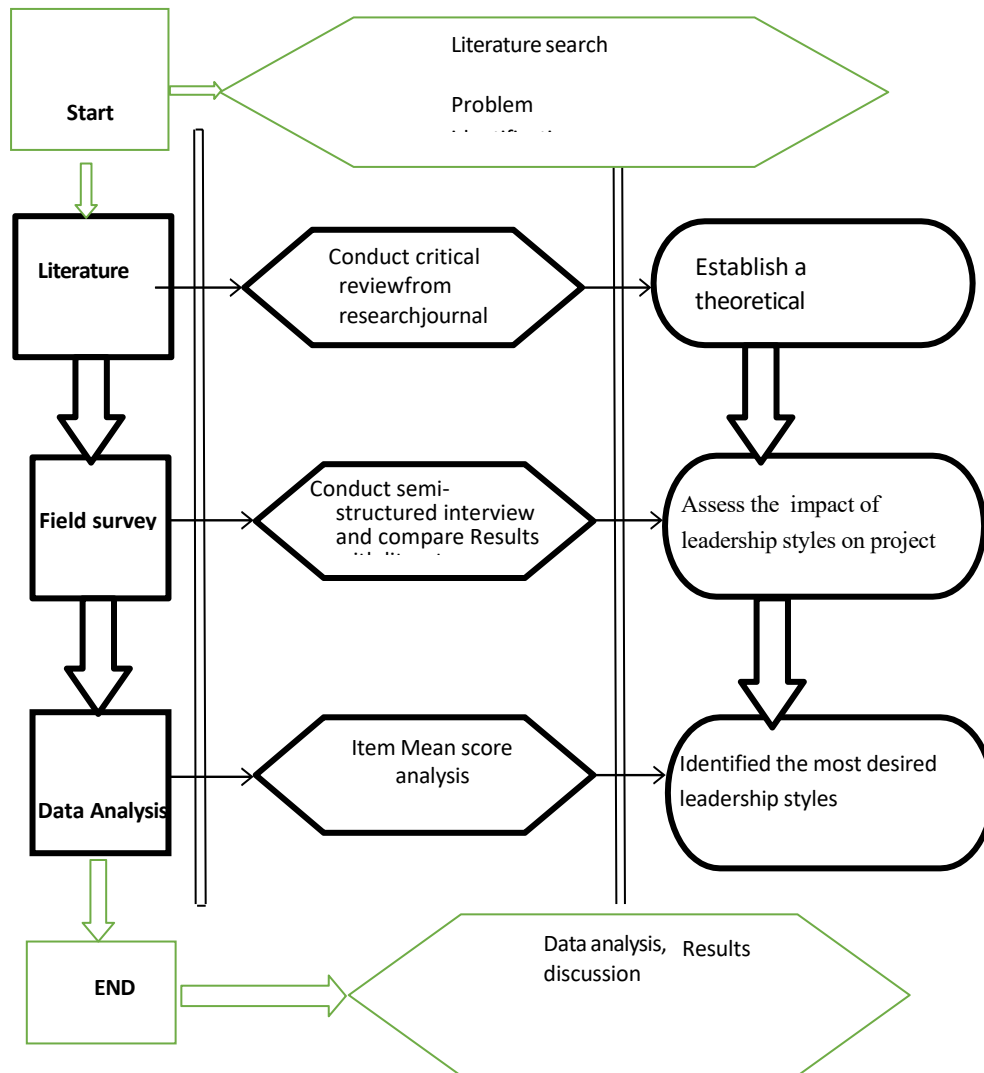


Fig.3: Summary of processes undertaken

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Background Data

From the Table 3.1, 34% (17) were Quantity Surveyors, 22%(11) were Architects, 24%(12) were Engineers and 20%(10) were Builders. 48%(24) of the respondents had 0-5 years of experience, 24%(12) had 6-10 years of experience, 16%(8) had 11-15 years of experience, 10%(5) had 16-20 years of experience and 2%(1) had above 20 years of experience. 20% (10) of the respondents had H.Nd as their academic qualification,

4%(2) had PGD, 50%(25) of the respondents had B.Sc as their academic qualification, 20%(10) of the respondents had M.Sc as their academic qualification and 6%(3) of the respondents had Ph.D as their academic qualification. Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement of the prevalent leadership styles within the construction industry. The following information was the analysis of the obtained data.

Table 3.1: Background information of respondents

Category	Description	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Designation of respondents	Quantity Surveyors	17	34
	Architects	11	22
	Engineer	12	24
	Builder	10	20
	Total	50	100
Years of experience	5 below	24	48
	6 – 10	12	24
	11 – 15	8	16
	16 – 20	5	10
	Above 20	1	2
	Total	50	100
Academic qualification	HND	10	20
	PGD	2	4
	BSc	25	50
	MSc	10	20
	PhD	3	6
	Total	50	100

Table 3.2: Prevalent leadership styles

S/N	PREVALENT LEADERSHIP STYLES WITHIN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY	MIS	RANK
1.	Democratic leadership style	4.14	1
2.	Transformational leadership style	4.02	2
3.	Transactional leadership style	3.96	3
4.	Laissez-Faire leadership style	3.64	4
5.	Autocratic leadership style	3.64	4

From table 3.2 above, the most prevalent leadership style is the Democratic leadership style, with a mean item score (MIS) of 4.14, ranked first among the

respondents. The second most prevalent leadership style is the Transformational leadership style, with a MIS of 4.02. The Transactional leadership style is the

third most prevalent, with an MIS of 3.96. The Laissez-Faire leadership style and the Autocratic leadership style are tied for the fourth and fifth positions, both with an MIS of 3.64. In summary, the respondents perceive the Democratic leadership style to be the most

prevalent within the construction industry in Benin City, followed by the Transformational and Transactional leadership styles. The Laissez-Faire and Autocratic leadership styles are perceived to be the least prevalent among the construction industry leaders in the area.

3.2 Investigate the factors affecting leadership styles in the construction industry

Table 3.3: Factors affecting leadership styles

S/N	FACTORS AFFECTING LEADERSHIP STYLES IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY	MIS	RANK
1.	Technological factors	3.76	1
2.	Leader’s personality	3.68	2
3.	Employee’s roles	3.68	2
4.	Communication style	3.66	4
5.	Leader’s experience	3.64	5
6.	Organizational environment	3.64	5
7.	Organizational resources	3.64	5
8.	Team dynamics	3.58	8
9.	Organizational culture	3.52	9
10.	Legal constraints	3.52	9
11.	Situational factors	3.50	11
12.	Followers expectations	3.48	12
13.	Industry norms	3.48	12
14.	Resource availability	3.46	14
15.	Ethical considerations	3.40	15
16.	Employee’s diversity	3.32	16
17.	Generational differences	3.30	17

Based on the data provided in Table 3.3, the technological factors, with a mean item score of 3.76, have the highest impact and are ranked as the most significant factor affecting leadership styles in the construction industry. The leader's personality and employee's roles are tied with a mean item score of 3.68 as the second most influential factors. The communication style, with a mean item score of 3.66, is the fourth most important factor, followed by the leader's experience with a mean item score of 3.64. Other notable factors include organizational environment (mean item score: 3.64), organizational resources (mean item score: 3.64), team dynamics

(mean item score: 3.58), organizational culture (mean item score: 3.52), and legal constraints (mean item score: 3.52). Factors such as situational factors (mean item score: 3.50), followers' expectations (mean item score: 3.48), industry norms (mean item score: 3.48), resource availability (mean item score: 3.46), ethical considerations (mean item score: 3.40), employee's diversity (mean item score: 3.32), and generational differences (mean item score: 3.30) have lower mean item scores, indicating that they are perceived as relatively less influential in affecting leadership styles in the construction industry.

3.3 Effects various leadership styles have on project success

Table 3.4: Effects of transformational leadership styles

S/N	TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP STYLE	MIS	RANK
1.	Inspires commitment	4.18	1
2.	Enhances teamwork	4.10	2
3.	Achieves goals	4.02	3
4.	Drives performance	3.94	4
5.	Fosters innovation	3.84	5

Data gotten from table 3.4 shows the transformational leadership style is highly effective in inspiring commitment among team members, with a mean item score of 4.18, which is ranked as the top effect. It also strongly enhances teamwork, with a mean item score of 4.10, as the second most significant effect. Furthermore, the transformational leadership style is effective in

achieving goals (mean item score: 4.02) and driving performance (mean item score: 3.94), ranked as the third and fourth effects, respectively. Additionally, this leadership style fosters innovation within the team, with a mean item score of 3.84, making it the fifth most notable effect.

Table 3.5: Effects of transactional leadership style

S/N	TRANSACTIONAL LEADERSHIP STYLE	MIS	RANK
1.	Rewards performance	3.82	1
2.	Maintains structure	3.78	2
3.	Clear expectations	3.64	3
4.	Monitors deviations	3.60	4
5.	Short-term focus	3.50	5

From table 3.5 above, the transactional leadership style is most effective in rewarding performance, with a mean item score of 3.82, which is ranked as the top effect. It also maintains structure within the team, with a mean item score of 3.78, as the second most significant effect. Additionally, this leadership style sets clear expectations for team members, with a mean

item score of 3.64, ranked as the third effect. The transactional leadership style monitors deviations from established processes and goals, with a mean item score of 3.60, making it the fourth most notable effect. However, this style tends to have a short-term focus, with a mean item score of 3.50, which is ranked as the fifth effect.

Table 3.6: Effects of laissez-faire leadership style

S/N	LAISSEZ-FAIRE LEADERSHIP STYLE	MIS	RANK
1.	Lacks accountability	3.14	1
2.	Cost overruns	2.94	2
3.	Lacks direction	2.92	3
4.	Project failure	2.90	4
5.	Low productivity	2.82	5

Table 3.6 above shows, the laissez-faire leadership style is characterized by a lack of accountability, with a mean item score of 3.14, which is ranked as the top negative effect. It also leads to cost overruns, with a mean item score of 2.94, as the second most significant negative effect. Furthermore, this leadership style

results in a lack of direction for the team, with a mean item score of 2.92, ranked as the third negative effect. The laissez-faire leadership style increases the likelihood of project failure, with a mean item score of 2.90, which is the fourth most notable negative effect. Additionally, this leadership style is associated with

low productivity among team members, with a mean

item score of 2.82, making it the fifth-ranked negative effect.

Table 3.7: Effects of Autocratic leadership style

S/N	AUTOCRATIC LEADERSHIP STYLE	MIS	RANK
1.	Poor communication	3.56	1
2.	Resistance to change	3.42	2
3.	Low team morale	3.28	3
4.	Lack of innovation	3.16	4
5.	High employee turnover	3.14	5

Data from table 3.7 above shows, the autocratic leadership style is associated with poor communication within the team, with a mean item score of 3.56, which is ranked as the top negative effect. It also leads to resistance to change among team members, with a mean item score of 3.42, as the second most significant negative effect. Furthermore, this leadership style results in low team morale, with a mean item score of

3.28, ranked as the third negative effect. The autocratic leadership style fosters a lack of innovation, with a mean item score of 3.16, which is the fourth most notable negative effect. Additionally, this leadership style is associated with high employee turnover, with a mean item score of 3.14, making it the fifth-ranked negative effect.

Table 3.8: Effects of democratic leadership style

S/N	DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP STYLE	MIS	RANK
1.	Improved communication	4.08	1
2.	Openness to change	3.92	2
3.	Increased innovation	3.92	3
4.	Higher team morale	3.90	4
5.	Low employee turnover	3.58	5

Table 3.8 above shows the democratic leadership style leads to improved communication within the team, with a mean item score of 4.08, which is ranked as the top positive effect. It also fosters openness to change among team members, with a mean item score of 3.92, as the second most significant positive effect. Furthermore, this leadership style results in increased

innovation, with a mean item score of 3.92, ranked as the third positive effect. The democratic leadership style is associated with higher team morale, with a mean item score of 3.90, which is the fourth most notable positive effect. Additionally, this leadership style leads to low employee turnover, with a mean item score of 3.58, making it the fifth-ranked positive effect.

4.4 Discussion of Findings

4.4.1. The most prevalent leadership style

The findings from this study highlighted the prevalent leadership styles and their effects on project success in the construction industry. The results indicate that the democratic leadership style is perceived as the most prevalent within the construction industry in Benin City, followed by the transformational and transactional leadership styles (MIS scores of 4.14,

4.02, and 3.96, respectively). This aligns with previous research suggesting that the democratic and transformational leadership styles are commonly preferred in the construction industry due to their emphasis on collaboration, team empowerment, and shared decision-making (Toor & Ofori, 2008; Odusami, 2003).

4.4.2. The factors affecting leadership styles

The study also identified several key factors that influence leadership styles in the construction industry. Technological factors, such as the adoption of new construction technologies and digital tools, emerged as the most significant factor (MIS: 3.76). This finding is

consistent with the rapidly evolving technological landscape in the construction industry, which necessitates leaders to adapt their styles to effectively manage and leverage these technological advancements (Ozorhon, 2014; Hosseini, 2018).

4.4.3 The effects of various leadership styles on project success

The study examined the effects of different leadership styles on project success. The transformational leadership style was found to be highly effective in inspiring commitment (MIS: 4.18), enhancing teamwork (MIS: 4.10), and achieving goals (MIS: 4.02), corroborating previous research that highlights the positive impact of transformational leadership on project performance and team motivation (Aga, 2016; Zheng, 2020).

and a lack of direction (MIS: 2.92), which aligns with previous findings that this hands-off approach can lead to project failures and poor team performance (Zaman, 2017; Nauman, 2019).

In contrast, the laissez-faire leadership style was associated with negative effects such as a lack of accountability (MIS: 3.14), cost overruns (MIS: 2.94),

The democratic leadership style was found to improve communication (MIS: 4.08), foster openness to change (MIS: 3.92), increase innovation (MIS: 3.92), and enhance team morale (MIS: 3.90), consistent with existing literature that highlights the positive impact of democratic leadership on employee engagement, creativity, and overall project success (Alzahrani & Emsley, 2013; Awan, 2015).

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The research identified the most prevalent leadership style in the construction industry in Benin City as the democratic leadership style, followed by the transformational and transactional leadership styles and the autocratic leadership style was the least favored. The most significant factor influencing leadership styles was technological factors such as the adoption of new construction technologies, while the least significant factor affecting leadership styles is generational differences. The transformational leadership style was highly effective for inspiring commitment, enhancing teamwork, and achieving goals. The laissez-faire leadership style was associated with negative effects like lack of accountability, cost overruns, and lack of direction. The democratic

leadership style improved communication, openness to change, innovation, and team morale. The findings provide insights into common leadership approaches, factors shaping leadership, and leadership impacts on project success which can inform effective leadership practices tailored to the construction industry.

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

Numerous studies, including those by Wang (2011), Jyoti and Bhau (2015), and Sofi and Devanadhen (2015), have demonstrated that the transformational leadership style yields a direct positive impact on organizational performance which will in turn lead to the success of projects. Similarly, Longe's (2014) study

found the transactional leadership style positively influences organizational performance. In contrast, research by Iqbal (2015) concluded the autocratic leadership approach fosters organizational conflicts, negatively impacting overall performance which may lead to failure of projects. Additionally, studies by Elenkov (2000) and Bhargavi and Yaseen (2016) indicated the democratic leadership style directly and positively impacts organizational performance leading to project success. Based on the empirical findings, it is evident that the most favored leadership styles among survey respondents are democratic and transformational leadership styles, as shown in Table 4.2. Conversely, the least favored leadership styles are autocratic and laissez-faire leadership styles, also indicated in Table 4.2. This suggests that the predominant leadership style adopted by many construction professionals in Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria, is democratic leadership.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended to the professionals that those individuals occupying leadership positions ought to adopt and implement an effective management approach and leadership style that can suitably accommodate and involve all subordinates under their charge, irrespective of the personal differences, unique characteristics, and individual distinctions that may exist among them. It is strongly advocated that the democratic leadership style, which is characterized by the inclusive involvement of subordinates in decision-making processes and the consideration of their perspectives, should be embraced and practiced, rather than the autocratic leadership style, which is marked by an authoritarian and unilateral approach. Adopting a democratic approach is instrumental in ensuring that the employees experience a sense of being valued, included, and recognized as integral contributors to the organization, thereby fostering a heightened sense of belonging and responsibility towards the collective goals and objectives of the enterprise. Additionally, it is recommended that the channels of communication between the management echelons and the employees should consistently maintained in a state of harmony, facilitating the smooth and unimpeded flow of information and ideas. Any gaps or deficiencies in the communication of information between the upper, middle, and lower strata of management should be avoided at all costs, as this is essential to ensure coherence, coordination, and synergy across the various hierarchical levels within the firm.

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