

# Impact of Leadership Self-Efficacy on Organizational Citizenship Behaviour: A Qualitative Analysis on Academic Leaders Perceptions

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**Abstract** -- Higher education institutions are renowned for producing the right and qualified human capital needed for holistic development. Academic leaders play a vital role in attaining goals of higher education institutions. Their self-efficacy can make or mar an organization. It also account for the behavior exhibited by followers in an organization. This study explore the impact of leadership self-efficacy on organizational citizenship behaviour of staffs in public higher education institutions. It adopted a qualitative case study research design. 10 academic leaders whom were randomly selected across 10 different higher education institutions in Lagos State were sampled in this study. The findings of the study indicated that academic leaders developed their self-efficacy through personal development, interaction with the society and experience. It was also found that self-efficacy of leaders contributed greatly to staffs' commitment and motivation. These later impacts on the staffs' display of organizational citizenship behaviour. In order to improve the performance of staffs in higher education institutions, academic leaders must strive to develop positive attitude to work, display high self-efficacy and enhance their leadership competencies.

**Keywords** -- Academic leaders, Leadership self-efficacy, Organizational citizenship behaviour

## I. INTRODUCTION

Education is seen as the cornerstone of national development. It plays a vital role in economic and technological development while removing illiteracy and poverty. It helps in the development of a culturally and socially tolerant people who are able to exercise ethical and moral considerations in national and local affairs, imbibed with community spirit (Jegede, 2000). It is generally believed that the post-secondary education sector contributes significantly to the development of a country's human resources, and investment in the sector has played a vital role in economic growth (Fagbamiye, 2004). The post-secondary school sector has also been responsible for establishing the expanding research infrastructure and has served as a forum for generating, discussing and disseminating new ideas (Bolu & Egbo, 2014). Therefore, academic leaders must possess skills that will enable them to impact positively on followers and achieve organizational goals (Yukl, 2010;

McCaffery, 2006). Also, Bambacas and Patrickson (2008) argued that successful administration rest on technical, human and conceptual skills of leaders. The technical skill reflects in effective handling of physical resources in the institution. The human resources stresses the leader's ability to relate well with people within the organization while the conceptual skill entails the ability of the leader to put things together. Commenting on the human resources skill, Fullan (2005) discovers that if enough leaders across the same system engage in permeable connectivity, they change the system itself. Similarly, Bandura (1997) opines that the belief and self-perception leaders hold about their capabilities will definitely affect their performance within the organization.

Nigeria is a country blessed with a lot of human and non-human resources needed to attain educational growth but this does not reflect in the current situation of the country as a result of poor leadership. This manifests even in our educational institutions. Anya (2013) decries the pathetic situation of Nigerian university education, shifting blame on failure of the system to uphold the spirit of academia which universities stand for. Looking at the current situation, Okoroma (2006) discovers that higher education in Nigeria has not yet produced a critical mass of persons with the requisite generic skills that can be associated with the development of the Nigeria state. In another study by Nakpodia (2012), he also notes that many of those saddled with the responsibility of leadership in higher institutions of learning in the country are not living up the expectation. Failure on the part of some academic leaders manifest in some negative attitude displayed by some staffs in higher institutions of learning. Therefore, this study explores perceptions of academic leaders on the impact of their self-efficacy on staffs' organizational citizenship behaviour. As a result, this study answered the following research questions;

1. How do academic leaders develop their self-efficacy as a way of meeting up with contemporary challenges in higher education management and leadership
2. What are the impact of leadership self-efficacy on staffs' organizational citizenship behavior

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## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### ***Concept of Self-Efficacy***

Self-efficacy refers to people's judgements about their capability to perform particular tasks. Bandura (1997) conceived self-efficacy as the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute course of action required to manage prospective situations. Lunenburg (2011) conceived self-efficacy as the task-specific version of self-esteem which influences people's ability to learn, motivation and performance. Kanter (2006) conceived self-efficacy as confidence possessed by people. Base on this, people tend to do those tasks which they believe they will be successful at. This is in line with the finding of Van der Bijl and Shortridge-Baggett(2002) when they found that individual are more likely to engage in activities for which they have high self-efficacy and less likely to engage in those they do not and that one's belief in the likelihood of goal completion can be motivating in itself..

### ***How to Build Employees Self-Efficacy***

Lunenburg (2011) and Bandura (2004) suggested that the leader in an organization can build the self-efficacy of his subordinates by setting small and simple goal or target for them to achieve. Leaders must also ensure that they continuously assure their employees that they can achieve the small target or goal. Once the employees strive and accomplished the targeted goal, their effort must be acknowledge by the leader and they can be rewarded for a job well done (Nilankant & Ramnarayan, 2006). This recognition will serve as a form of motivation for the employee to give their best. After accomplishing the small target, then, he can set a bigger target and encouraged them towards attain it. The second step is review past experience and past successes. This involves the leader to cast his mind back to past success he has achieved(Airola,2014). With this, he will be able to build confidence in the minds of the employees in the organization.

In addition, self-efficacy can be built by visualizing success. Leaders must always be positive and look beyond the present (Lepard & Foster, 2003). They must think about the success of the targeted goal. With this, they will be able to harness all their resources towards attaining their set goals (Gunter, 2001; Bush & Coleman, 2000). Fourthly, leaders in an organization can also develop the self-efficacy of their employee by serving as a role model to their staff (McCaffery,2006). This is in line with the position and suggestion of Nilankarant and Ramarayan (2006) who opined that leaders must lead the way for subordinates to follow. In order to lead the way, leaders must serve as role model to their followers. The followers or employees must see them as a friend, a confidant and partner in progress (Owens & Valesky,2011). These will help to improve level of commitment and loyalty of staff in an organization. It is only

when staffs see their leaders as a role model and partner in progress that they will be ready to work freely with them. Once this is assured, then leaders can assist their subordinates to develop positive attitude towards work, develop their confidence level and improve their performance at work (Bandura, 2007). Also, leaders need to interact with their society as a way of wining hearts of people and achieving organizational goals (Brown & Keeping,2005)

Finally, the leader must provide positive social support to employee. This includes intrinsic and extrinsic motivation of workers. Once employees are motivated, they will deliver their best and produce desired result which will enhance organizational development ( Bandura,2007; Latchem & Hanna,2003).

### ***Leadership Self-Efficacy and Employee's Organizational Citizenship Behaviour in Educational Institutions***

Leadership play a vital role in an organization as it determines and influences the outcome and performance of both employees and the organization itself (Wang et al., 2005). Their belief, attitude and style have a great influence on the existence of the organization. Based on this, different past studies confirmed that a strong and positive relationship exists between the attitude, behaviour and style of leaders and the performance of their subordinates (Latchem & Hanna,2003;Bandura,2007; Lunenburg,2011). Irrespective of the type of the organization involved, the leaders behaviour usually determine the success and otherwise of an organization (Owens & Valesky, 2011).

Obiwuru et al. (2011) as found from their study on selected small scale enterprises in Ikosi-Ketu Local Council Development Area of Lagos State. They discovered that the leadership style of leaders in these companies influence the performance of the staff. Similarly, Vigoda-Gadat (2007) found that a strong and positive relationship exists between leadership style and performance of staff in an organization most especially in relation to the Organizational citizenship behaviour of workers. Furthermore, Lunenburg (2011) discovered from his finding that self-efficacy has direct effect on workers level of commitment and level of persistence when dealing with or faced with complex situation.

All these, are in line with the position of Bandura (1997) who opined in his theory of self-efficacy that leadership self-efficacy influences the goals which the staff choose for themselves; the level of commitment displayed by workers to work; attitude towards learning and dealing with complex tasks. If leaders show positive attitude to difficult tasks, it will transit to the followers. They will also display such attitude to work and will strive not to give but if the leader displays a low self-efficacy, the subordinate will tend to turn a lukewarm attitude to task. Based on this Bandura and Locke(2003) summarized the impact of leadership self-efficacy as the most important determinant factor which influences performance of workers and influences their organizational citizenship behaviour.

### III. METHODOLOGY

This research is a qualitative study. It involves collecting data from a natural setting, using the researcher as the key instrument for data collection, use of variate data, use of inductive and deductive data analysis, flexibility and originality of information (Creswell, 2014). Based on this, this research study tries to explore from experts the impact of the Islamic finance model as an alternative sources of financing higher education in Nigeria. The population for this study consists of experts including: financial experts, Islamic finance experts, lawyers, economics, lecturers, educational planners and administrators. The sample for this study is a random sample. Random sample enables each member of the population to be selected for the study (Neuman, 2014; Emmel, 2013). Therefore, this study examined opinions of 10 academic leaders who were randomly selected from 10 public higher education institutions in Lagos State, Nigeria.

Interview method was used for collecting data from these 10 selected respondents. The criteria for selecting these respondents are that they are all involved in management of different higher education institutions in the State. The interview lasted for 60 minutes with each respondent. Fraenkel et al. (2015) conceived interview method as a form conversation between the interviewer and interviewee in which questions about a particular phenomenon are being asked. The essence of the interview is to seek the perception of informants or respondents about the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell, 2014). The interview protocol consists of five questions which centers on the topic of this research study. Letter of participation was sent to ten respondents out of which only seven gave their consent to take part in the study. Hence, the reason for sampling these seven respondents. The researchers told the respondents to fix any convenient time and place for the interview and the respondents were met at their convenient zones. The interview session was conducted and responses from the informants were recorded with a tape recorder. Later, the recorded information were transcribed and coded. Themes were generated from the information provided by these respondents. At the end, the following themes were generated from the interview: These shall be discussed in detail in under the next heading.

### IV. FINDINGS

The result of findings in this study is presented below. Effort was made to present the findings based on the two research questions set for this study as contained below:

**Research Question 1;** How do academic leaders develop their self-efficacy as a way of meeting up with contemporary challenges in higher education management and leadership.

As indicated in the first research question, this study explores measures adopted by academic leaders in building

and developing their self-efficacy. Themes that emanated from this research question include: personal development, use of past experience and interaction with the society. Respondents argued that these are the means through which academic leaders adopted in developing their leadership self-efficacy in higher education institutions. These are discussed in the detailed in succeeding paragraphs:

**A. Personal Development:** Some of the respondents said that they develop and build their leadership self-efficacy by ensuring constant personal development. They tried to develop themselves ahead of the challenges embedded in higher education leadership. They were able to develop themselves through having strong focus, determination, developing high level of discipline and ensuring good personality as contained in the statements below:

“In the first place, is that you must have a focus. A leader needs to know where he is heading to. Also, a leader should have determination. For example, as HOD of a department, to develop your self-efficacy, you need to have a program on ground that will guide you. Always ask yourself, how will I do something that will have impact on the present and others coming. So that others will be able to learn from you and know that when he was there, he has done something. In essence, a leader must have a focus...” (R1, 14072016, DU-12).

One of the respondents argued that the belief he has in himself was actually responsible for his performance. This is evident in the statement below:

“Firstly, I have absolute belief in myself that I can accomplish any task. Secondly, I ensure adequate discipline. I don't allow side attractions. I don't allow unnecessary things to derail me from my focus. Thirdly, I always remain focus and develop plans for my office. I also ensure fairness in my dealings with my staffs” (R5, 24082016, DU-6).

Apart from self-discipline and belief, respondent 6 opined that leaders can develop their self-efficacy through their behavior. According to him, the behavior of a leader matters a lot in developing self-efficacy. As contained in his statement below:

“In addition, I develop it through my behaviour. I mean by trying to put up a positive attitude towards people at home, work and the society. I know and also believe that once attitude will determine once altitude. This implies that my attitude as a leader will inform the kind of efficacy I will put up at work. If the attitude is positive, then, I will have a high self-efficacy

but if it is negative, I will show a low self-efficacy”(R6,01092016, DU-6)

In addition, some of these respondents argued that they developed their self-efficacy through training. According to them, the training programs they were able to attend assisted them in the leadership positions they were holding. This is evident in the statement below:

“...Secondly, I developed my self-efficacy through participation in training programs. I did this by attending training programs organized by local and international organizations. I have attended a lot of workshops and seminars on leadership training both local and international levels”(R2, 22072016, DU-6).

“... training is a key. What do I mean by training? By attending academic training programs that will develop me in meeting up with the demand of the role and duty of head of department. I do go for conferences and workshops that will improve me”(R3, 23072016, DU-6).

“...attending conferences, seminar, workshops, interacting with contemporaries, comparing notes with colleagues. All these rolled together are ways through which I develop my self-efficacy”(R8, 21092016, DU-10).

One of the respondents further argued that through the conference and training programs, he learn from colleague. This is contained in the statement below:

“I develop my self-efficacy by attending different development programs like conferences, seminars, leadership summit and so on, I was able to learn more about the demand of leadership in an organization. From these, I was able to learn from other colleague from other institutions. These programs assisted me in developing my leadership self-efficacy”(R9, 03102016, DU-10).

Furthermore, respondent 3 argued that in spite of the training program a leader might have attended, his or her personal ability is vital. The statement below shows this:

“Also ability of the individual is important. Without it, whatever training you have, your

ability to deliver is also important”(R3, 23072016, DU-6)

**B. Experience:** Experience is a vital factor in learning. These academic leaders argued that leadership self-efficacy can be developed through past experience and learning from the success story and failure of others. With their wealth of experience and exposure they were able to develop a high leadership self-efficacy. This is evident in the statement of respondents 4 and 6 below:

“I develop my self-efficacy through experience. Knowing the nature of the position I am learning from others. Firstly, my ability to relate the past to the present. My ability to remain focus on the nature of the task ahead of me. I know that as a leader in higher institution, I have to control the students. Not only that I have to control the staffs. All these people have different attitude towards their jobs. The students believe that if they are not there, the staff will not be here and the staffs belief that students should respect them. You need to harmonize all these which will give you the experience that will give you the experience to be focus and help you in developing your leadership self-efficacy”(R4, 15082016, DU-6)

“I develop my self-efficacy through past experience. Experience is the best teacher. I use my past experience as a teacher, lecturer and subordinate in relating with people. I try to treat them well just like the way I would like to be treated when I was subordinate”(R6,01092016, DU-6)

Furthermore, some of these respondents argued that they also developed their leadership self-efficacy through learning from the success and failure of past leaders. They were able to learn from the success stories of great and successful leaders. With this, they were able to build their own self-efficacy which assisted them in their current position. According to respondent 5, experience need to be merged with interaction with leader’s society or environment. This is expressed in his statement below:

“...Lastly, I developed my self-efficacy through experience and interaction with people. Whenever I meet people, I watch their positive attitude which help them in attaining and achieving great things in life and try to imbibe it in my practice”(R5, 24082016, DU-6).

**C. Interaction with society:** Some of the respondents opined that they developed their own leadership self-efficacy through their contact and relationship with their society. By interacting with people in the society, leaders can learn how to build their self-efficacy. These leaders' network and interaction with others as a way of building and developing their self-efficacy as shown in the following expression:

“...Furthermore, I develop my self-efficacy through interaction with the community. When I interacted with different people in academic community. Through my interaction with different people from diverse background, I was able to develop a thick skin and learn to remain committed in the face of any challenge or difficulty” (R6, 01092016, DU-6)

“First, I develop my self-efficacy through networking. I always network with others and learn from their success and failure. I consult people before taking decision. I even consult my staff as a leader before passing any judgment” (R7, 07092016, DU-12).

Respondent 10 believes that interacting with various kind of people has really shape his leadership style and assist him in developing his self-efficacy as a leader. This is contained in the statement below:

“I believe in social interaction. As a leader, I developed my self-efficacy by interacting with all kinds of people around me. I have some people with positive attitude, I learn from them. Even people with negative attitude, I also learn from them. I learn the effects of negative attitude and not to behave in such a manner. Putting together my diverse interaction, I was able to build my self-efficacy which assisted me in my current position in my institution” (R10, 05102016, DU-6).

In summary, these respondents agreed that these three ways have assisted them in building their self-efficacy in higher education institution in Lagos State. It therefore implies that in order to build or develop leadership self-efficacy, one needs to develop his or personality, acquire requisite experience and interact well with the society.

**Research Question 2:** What are the impact of leadership self-efficacy on staffs' organizational citizenship behaviour?

The second research question explores the impact of leadership self-efficacy on staffs' organizational citizenship behaviour. Themes that emerge from this question are:

increased staff commitment and motivation. Academic leaders proposed that their self-efficacy has helped to increase staffs commitment and enhanced staff motivation in higher education institutions as expressed below:

**A. Increased staff commitment;** Respondents argued that when academic leaders display high self-efficacy, it will enhance the commitment they will get from their followers. This is contained in the responses below:

“To be candid with you, I observed that whenever I show high self-efficacy as a leader, my subordinates are always ready to give their best and this stimulates their commitment to work and attainment of organizational goals” (R1, 14072016, DU-14).

“...as a Dean, I know that the leader plays a vital role in commitment of staffs and achieving targeted goals in an organization. These followers are human being and as such, they look up to their leaders in most of the things they do. Behaviour of these leaders determine the kind of response or feedback they will get from their subordinates” (R5, 24082016, DU-12).

**B. Motivation:** Some of these respondents stressed that self-efficacy of academic leaders will serve as a form of motivation or motivating factor for staffs in displaying organizational citizenship behavior. This is contained in the expression below:

“Beliefs hold by leaders about their ability to accomplish any given task either easy or difficult will go a long in encouraging the followers to give their best to their organization or even go beyond their primary duties” (R7, 07092016, DU-16).

“My self-efficacy has also help in motivating my staffs towards their work and creating an enabling and viable work environment which helps in realizing goals of my organization” (R4, 15082016, DU-15).

In summary, self-efficacy of leaders' impact meaningfully on the commitment of staffs and it serves as a means of motivating staffs towards displaying organizational citizenship behavior in higher education institutions.

## V. DISCUSSION

One of the ways adopted by academic leaders in higher education institutions in Lagos State in developing their

leadership self-efficacy is personal development. By personal development, leaders look inward into their strength and weaknesses, then, they try to adjust where necessary in order to accomplish their numerous tasks. This is in consonance with the view of Nilakarant and Ramnarayan(2006) who opined that leaders must take time to reflect and think about their action and re-action in order to checkmate their self-efficacy. Also, personal development enables leaders to mobilize their resources towards attaining the goals of their organization(Bandura, 2004).

Furthermore, experience was identified as another measure of developing leadership self-efficacy. Experience was described as a moving force in learning. Through experience of these academic leaders, they were able to correct their mistakes and develop a high self-efficacy needed in meeting up with the numerous tasks in their workplaces. This is in agreement with the position of Airola et al(2014) stressed that experience will manifest in the way a leader manages and leads human and non-human resources in an organization. In the same vein, Nilakant and Ramnarayan(2006) supported the view when they argued that experience of a leader will determine how far and how well he or she can lead a successful team. Lastly, Bandura (2004) identified experience as a source of self-efficacy.

In addition, interaction was found from this study as the third measure adopted by academic leaders in higher education institutions in developing their leadership self-efficacy. Through interaction with the society, leaders will be able to act as a role model to followers. As Kouzes and Posner(2013) opined that leaders will be able to win the heart of their followers when they serve as mirror or model to their followers. Also, through the interaction with their society, they will devise ways of motivating their followers in achieving the goals of their organizations. This is in compliance with the view of Brown and Keeping (2005) who found that leaders who motivate their followers stand to gain love, support and likeness of their followers and improve performance of organization.

Lastly, the finding in the second research question revealed that self-efficacy of academic leaders influence and determine the level of commitment of their staffs. This is in consonance with the position of Wang et al.[2005]; Bandura [1997] who stressed that the self-efficacy of leaders will reflect on the attitude and commitment of their subordinates.

## VI. IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

This research findings has a lot of implication in higher education management and leadership. First, it shows that the self-efficacy of academic leader is vital in attaining goals of higher education institutions and enhancing the performance of staffs and organization. In addition, the personality of the academic leader, ability to interact with the society and experience will help them in developing a high self-efficacy which will help them achieve their targeted goals and improve the performance of their organizations. Furthermore,

when academic leaders display a high self-efficacy, this will result in increase staffs' commitment and also motivate staffs and students towards achieving goals and objectives of higher education in the country.

## VII. CONCLUSION

The self-efficacy of leaders in higher education institutions is very important in accomplishing goals of education and achieving mission and vision of HEIs. Academic leaders developed their self-efficacy through: personal development, experience and interaction with their societies. This self-efficacy enhances commitment of staffs and stimulates staffs' motivation. In order to make higher education more responsive to needs to the stakeholders, academic leaders must display high self-efficacy and assists their followers in displaying organizational citizenship behaviour.

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