

# Assessing Leadership Style of Stakeholders in the Nigerian Construction Industry

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## Abstract:

Leadership is defined as the method employed by the project managers to conduct themselves with respect to their role in order to obtain the best possible performance from the project team they are managing. The industry is estimated to contribute about 7% percent to countries GDP. Generally, it is agreed that regardless of the construction project in question the style of leadership employed is key to the success of such project from literatures. This research has x-rayed the issue of leadership style in the construction industry in Nigeria from the perspective of construction stakeholders within the construction industry who find themselves managing these projects. Paul Hersey and Kenneth H Barnard's Leadership Effectiveness and Adaptability Description (LEAD) was used for the survey. The survey result among other things reveals that coaching leadership style is most popular with 44% and delegating is the least with 10%. This leadership style was more popular among civil engineers with 72% and least popular among Urban planners with 10%. Directing leadership style was the second popular style with architects and Urban planners preferring this method with 51% and 47% respectively, Surveyors had 31%. But it was unpopular to civil engineers with 10%.

**Key words:** Construction; Leadership Style; Leadership; LEAD; Stakeholders

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Construction is an industry which is very diverse in its makeup, it encompasses activities like mining, quarrying and forestry to the construction of infrastructure and buildings, products manufacturing and its supply, also maintenance, operation of structures and its disposal [1]. Adequate leadership style is a vital key to the success and performance of any business venture, and as such the construction industry is not an exception [2].

Ogunlana[3], states that there are varied factors that impacts on the successful completion of construction projects and these includes personality

of the leader, competency, skills and leadership style, amongst others. All these have significant impact on the outcome of construction project. Müller and Turner [4], said there is increasingly realization of the diversities of construction projects and that these different types of project requires different methods for their leadership and management.

Turner & Pearce [5] opined that leadership styles and competence are paramount to successful performance of construction companies; other similar studies have also confirmed that there exists a relationship between various leadership styles and construction performance. Zhang [6] further affirmed that the relationship between leadership

styles and construction project success may also to a large extent depend on the type of project.

Generally, it is agreed that regardless of the construction project in question the style of leadership employed is key to the success of such project from the above commentaries.

## **II. METHODOLOGY AND SCOPE OF STUDY**

The data used in this research were derived from both primary and secondary sources. The secondary data was collected via a detailed review of related literature. The primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire by the leadership style questionnaire adapted from Paul Hersey and Kenneth H Barnard's Leadership Effectiveness and Adaptability Description (LEAD).

The questionnaire was distributed to some stakeholders / professionals within the construction industry in Nigeria which include; Civil Engineers, Land Surveyors, Architects, Builders, Estate Surveyors and Urban & Regional Planners within Benin City, Edo State. The group consisted of lecturers, supervisors, project managers, superintendents, and anyone else acting in a supervisory capacity. A total of 300 survey questionnaires were distributed, but 268 were completed and returned given about 89 percent response rate.

## **III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Leadership is a quality of influencing people, so that objectives are attained willingly and enthusiastically [7]. Bresnen et al [8], posited that very little attention has been paid to the study of and understanding of leadership issues in construction.

Leadership is defined as the method employed by the project managers to conduct themselves with respect to their role in order to obtain the best possible performance from the project team they are managing [9]. Leadership is also seen as an art and there is no one simple answer as to which type of

leadership style is best suited and most effective to the construction industry.

The multidisciplinary nature of the construction industry ensures operating within many different boundaries and collaborating closely with many industry players and professionals which includes architects, engineers, surveyors, constructors, owners, and agencies of government. Construction project and organizational success depends on the ability to develop a very high interpersonal skills working at different levels to meet varying challenges of leadership and performance demands [10].

Study of leadership style and their effectiveness in managing construction projects is quite apt to the industry because of its diversity and construction/project managers are often confronted with divers' circumstances which require them to wear different hats at different circumstances.

A leadership style is the ability of a leader in providing direction, implementing plans, and motivating his team. Leadership can be derived from a combination of various factors, studies of leadership have produced theories involving these factors: traits, situational interaction, function, behaviour, power, vision and values, charisma, and intelligence, among others [11, 12, 13].

Different situations call for different leadership styles, a leader's style of ensuring that a job is done by way of directing, implementing plans and motivating people [14, 15]. According to Clark [16] (2004) and Clark [17], Kurt Lewin[18] led a team of researchers to identify different leadership styles, this early study established or identified three major leadership styles which have been very useful in studying the issue of leadership:

- Autocratic,
- Participatory, and
- Free-rein or Laissez-faire.

There are two extremes identified in the leadership styles and these are the autocratic and free-rein (laissez-faire). The autocratic pattern type, which is a manager- or boss centred leadership style, and the free-rein pattern or laissez-faire is a type, which is a subordinate-centred leadership style. In-between these two extremes is the participatory leadership style that is a middle ground of both these leadership styles, allowing subordinates to be involved in decisions while also benefiting from the leader's input.

While Goetsch and Davis [19] highlighted five leadership styles in quality management for production, processing, and services as autocratic, participative, democratic, goal-oriented and situational leaderships.

According to the National School Boards Association [20] in leading a group understanding the following characteristics of a team are important keys to note, which applies to any firm, organization, company and even construction project due to the large number of people and disciplines involve:

### ***Characteristics of a Team***

The followings are key factor indicators of a good team:

- There must be an awareness of unity on the part of all its members.
- There must be interpersonal relationship. Team members should have the opportunity to make contribution, and learn from and work with others.
- Team members must have the ability to act and work together toward a common goal.

*The Ten characteristics of well-functioning teams:*

- i. Purpose: Members proudly share a sense of why the team exists and are invested in accomplishing its mission and goals.
- ii. Priorities: Members know what needs to be done next, by whom, and by when to achieve team goals.
- iii. Roles: Members know their roles in getting tasks done and when to allow a more skilful member to do a certain task.
- iv. Decisions: Authority and decision-making lines are clearly understood.
- v. Conflict: Conflict is dealt with openly and is considered important to decision making and personal growth.
- vi. Personal traits: members feel their unique personalities are appreciated and well utilized.
- vii. Norms: Group norms for working together are set and seen as standards for everyone in the groups.
- viii. Effectiveness: Members find team meetings efficient and productive and look forward to this time together.
- ix. Success: Members know clearly when the team has met with success and share in this equally and proudly.
- x. Training: Opportunities for feedback and updating skills are provided and taken advantage of by team members.

Leaders who are able to show persistence, tenacity, determination, and synergistic communication skills will bring out the best quality and attitude from their groups and lead a team to achieve success [21].

### **IV. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS**

The survey tool adopted for this research was Leadership Style and Adaptability Effectiveness by Paul Hersey & Kenneth Blanchard. It is a set of twelve questions representing various situations. The respondents are

expected to assume they are involved in each of the twelve situations. Read each carefully and think what they would do in each circumstance. Circle the letter of the alternative that they think would most closely describe their behaviour in the situation presented.

The result of the returned questions are analysed in the section below.

Table 1 is a description of the result of the questionnaire distributed, returned and the data which is used for the remainder of the section for analysis.

Table 1: Survey sample information

Description	Number	Percentage
Distributed	300	100
Returned	268	89.3
Not returned	32	10.7
Used for data analysis	268	89.3
Females given	45	15
Males given	255	85

**Gender Sample information**

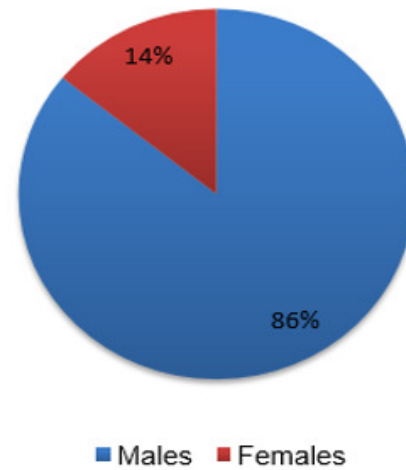


Fig 1: Survey Gender response

Fig 1 gives a description of the gender distribution of respondents in the survey. It is observed that males make up 86% of respondents and females just 14%.

**Age Sample Information**

Table 2: Age distribution of Respondents

Age	Number	Percentage
Under 25	13	5
26-35	20	7
36-45	96	36
46-55	114	43
56 and above	38	14
	268	100

The age distribution shows that respondents under 25 years is 5% which is the lowest, while those within age range of 46-55 years with 43% and age range of 36-45 years is 36%.

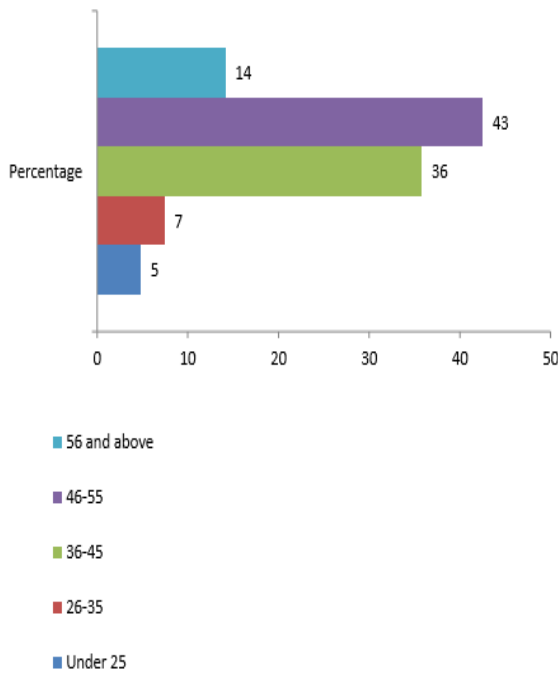


Fig 2: Graph showing the age distribution of respondents

Table 3 and fig 3 is a description of the total questionnaire distributed and the numbers returned by respective stakeholders in the construction industry involve in controlling and managing construction projects. Its shows that civil engineers had a 100% response rate indicating that all distributed questionnaires was returned and used for analysis. The others are as follows Estate managers 96%, Architects 94%, Builders 92%, Surveyors 78% and Urban Planners 76%.

Table 3: Showing response by construction stakeholders

Sector	No of Questionnaires	No Returned	Percentage
Civil Engineers	50	50	100
Estate Managers	50	48	96
Surveyors	50	39	78
Builders	50	46	92
Architects	50	47	94
Urban Planners	50	38	76
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>268</b>	

**Construction Sectors Stakeholders**

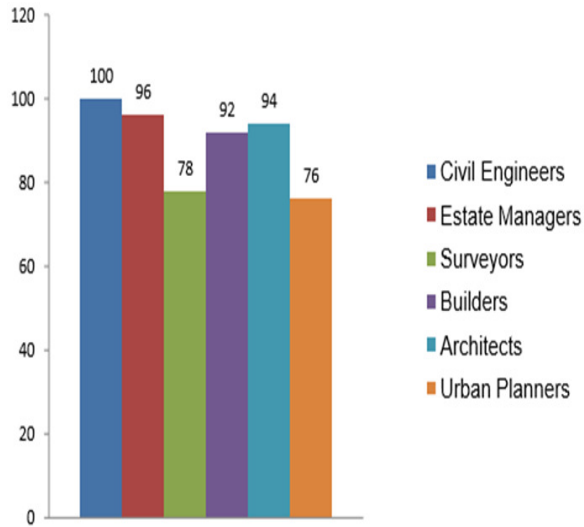


Fig 3: Graph showing stakeholders response

### Scoring & Interpretation Leadership Style

The perception of their leadership style may be determined from Table 4. Circle the letter of the alternative action they chose for each situation and then total the number of times an action was used in each of the four columns. The alternative action choices for each situation are not distributed alphabetically but according to the style a particular action alternative represents.

Style scores from table 4 should be transferred to the “Basic Leadership Styles” table in Table 5.

The DOMINANT leadership style is defined as the style under which most responses fall. The SUPPORTING style or styles is that which you tend to use on occasion. A score of at least 2 is necessary for a style to be considered a supporting style.

The dominant style plus the supporting styles determine your STYLE RANGE

Table 4

SITUATIONS	No.	ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS			
	1.	A	C	B	D
2.	D	A	C	B	
3.	C	A	D	B	
4.	B	D	A	C	
5.	C	B	D	A	
6.	B	D	A	C	
7.	A	C	B	D	
8.	C	B	D	A	
9.	C	B	D	A	
10.	B	D	A	C	
11.	A	C	B	D	
12.	C	A	D	B	
Style	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	
Style score					

### Four Basic Leadership Styles





Style 1 = Directing-The leader provides specific instructions and closely supervises task accomplishment.

Style 2 = Coaching-The leader continues to direct and closely supervise task accomplishment, but also explains decisions, solicits suggestions and supports progress.

Style 3 = Sharing-The leader facilitates and supports subordinates efforts toward task accomplishment and shares responsibility for decision-making with them.

Style 4 = Delegating-The leader turns over responsibility for decision –making and problem solving to subordinates.

Table 5: Basic Leadership Styles

1	2	3	4
<b>DIRECTING</b>	<b>COACHING</b>	<b>SHARING</b>	<b>DELEGATING</b>
			

planners, 32% of Architects and 50% of Estate managers adopting this style.

Table 6: Basic leadership style representation of stakeholders

	Civil Engineers	Builders	Surveyors	Urban Planners	Architects	Estate Managers	Total
Directing	10	8	12	18	24	12	84
Coaching	36	18	15	10	15	24	118
Sharing	4	12	8	3	8	4	39
Delegating	0	8	4	7	0	8	27
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>268</b>

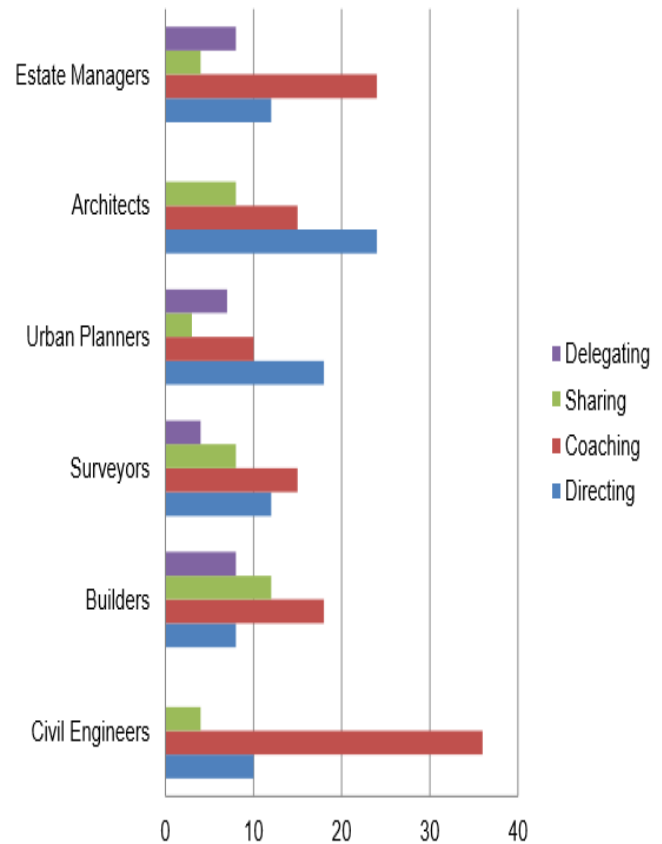


Fig 4: Bar chart representation of basic leadership of stakeholders

Table 6 and Figure 4 gives the analysis of the leadership style looking at each the basic leadership styles as collated from respondents.

Directing leadership style by stakeholders show from the analysis that the adoption rates are as follows 20% of Civil engineers, 17% of Builders, 31% of Surveyors, 47% of Urban planners, 51% of Architects and 25% of Estate managers.

Coaching leadership style upon analysing the respondents' questionnaires shows the following, 72% of Civil engineers, 39% of Builders, 38% of Surveyors, 26% of Urban

Sharing leadership style analysis from respondents shows the following breakdown, 8% of Civil engineers, 26% of Builders, 21% of Surveyors, 8% of Urban planners, 17% of Architects and 8% of Estate managers adopts this leadership style.

Delegating leadership style adoption rate from analysis shows 0% for Civil engineers and Architects, while Builders is 17%, Surveyors is 10%, Urban planners is 18% and Estate managers is 16%.



## V. CONCLUSION

Having established the fact that leadership style is an important ingredients in managing and supervising construction projects it is also important to determine the most used or as it were most popular leadership style or method used by construction stakeholders peculiar to the Nigerian construction industry which is the essence of this research study. In achieving this, the leadership style questionnaire adapted from Paul Hersey and Kenneth H Barnard's Leadership Effectiveness and Adaptability Description (LEAD) was used.

From the analysis it can be concluded that delegating leadership style is the least popular among construction stakeholders in the Nigerian construction industry with 10%, then Sharing, Directing with 15%, 31% respectively and the most popular been Coaching leadership styles with 44%.

The survey result among other things reveals that coaching leadership style is most popular with 44% and delegating is the least with 10%. This leadership style was more popular among civil engineers with 72% and least popular among Urban planners with 10%. Directing leadership style was the second popular style with architects and Urban planners preferring this method with 51% and 47% respectively, Surveyors had 31%. But it was unpopular to civil engineers with 10%.

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