UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTES AND SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS IN NIGER STATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS, NIGERIA

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By

GARBA BAGOBIRI

Thesis submitted to school of graduate studies, Faculty of educational studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in Fulfillment of the requirement of Master of Science

February 2015

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my beloved family, friends and best wishes

Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of the Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science

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February 2015

Chairman: Soaib Asimiran, PhD
Faculty: Educational Studies

Principals' leadership has been a part of discussion on the effectiveness of school for the past decades, based on the assumption that no school can success without effective leadership of the principal. This resulted to the various researches on principals' leadership and school effectiveness worldwide. Contemporarily, majority of principals cannot meet up with the mandated proficiency levels of student performance in Nigeria. The objective of this survey research is to determine the relationship between the principals' leadership attributes and school effectiveness in Niger state secondary schools, Nigeria. This is a quantitative research, survey method and utilizes Leader Attributes Inventory (LAI) and School Effectiveness Index (SEI) as the instruments. The study involved 230 secondary schools, comprising the senior and assistant senior masters in Niger state secondary schools, which gives the total population (N) of 460. 136 schools were chosen and simple random sampling technique was used to select the sample size (S) of 272. SPSS (V20) was used to run the analysis.

Descriptive analysis was used to determine the level of the principals' leadership attributes and school effectiveness. Correlation analysis was used to determine the relationship between the principals' leadership attributes and regression analysis was used to determine the contribution of the principals' leadership attributes to school effectiveness. The level of principals' leadership attributes is moderate (mean = 3.54, sd = 0.68). The level of school effectiveness is also at a moderate level (mean = 3.50, sd = .83). The correlation analysis shows that there is high positive significant relationship between the dimension of principals' leadership attributes and school effectiveness, management skills ($r = .676$, $p = .01$), personal characteristics ($r = .616$, $p = .01$), and social skills and characteristics ($r = .686$, $p = .01$). Regression analysis shows that, two dimensions of principals' leadership attributes have significantly contributed to school effectiveness, management skills ($\beta = .356$, $t = 4.188$, $p = .000$) and social skills and characteristics ($\beta = .340$, $t = 3.483$, $p = .001$).

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It is concluded that, principals' leadership attributes in Niger state secondary schools as found out in the study are still at the moderate level and needs further improvement. Principals should possess effective leadership attributes. They play a vital and critical role in directing the schools, and teaching and learning towards school effectiveness. Therefore, there are needs to develop programs with a substantial package to improve the leadership attributes of the principals systematically and continuously so as to prepare them for the multifaceted roles towards school effectiveness in the future.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sains.

CIRI KEPEMIMPINAN PENGETUA DAN KEBERKESANAN SEKOLAH DI SEKOLAH MENENGAH NEGERI NIGER, NIGERIA
Oleh

GARBA BAGOBIRI

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Kepemimpinan pengetua sejak beberapa dekad yang lalu telah menjadi topik perbincangan mengenai keberkesanan sekolah dengan andaian bahawa tiada sekolah boleh berjaya tanpa kepemimpinan pengetua yang berkesan. Ini menyebabkan pelbagai penyelidikan mengenai kepemimpinan pengetua dan keberkesanan sekolah di seluruh dunia dilaksanakan. Pada masa ini majoriti pengetua tidak dapat membawa pelajar mencapai tahap prestasi penguasaan yang diamanahkan. Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk menentukan hubungan di antara ciri kepemimpinan pengetua dan keberkesanan sekolah di sekolah-sekolah menengah negeri Niger, Nigeria. Pendekatan kajian ini ialah kuantitatif melalui kaedah tinjauan menggunakan Inventori Sifat Pemimpin (LAI) dan Indeks Keberkesanan Sekolah (SEI) sebagai instrumen. Populasi kajian ini melibatkan 230 sekolah menengah, dijalankan ke atas guru kanan dan penolong guru kanan, yang memberikan jumlah populasi (N) 460 guru. 136 sekolah telah dipilih dan pemilihan sampel dibuat secara rawak mudah yang menjadikan bilangan sampel (S) adalah 272. SPSS (V20) telah digunakan untuk menganalisis data.

Analisis deskriptif digunakan untuk menentukan tahap ciri kepemimpinan pengetua dan keberkesanan sekolah. Analisis korelasi digunakan untuk menentukan hubungan antara ciri kepemimpinan pengetua dan keberkesanan sekolah, dan analisis regresi digunakan untuk menentukan sumbangan ciri kepimpinan pengetua kepada keberkesanan sekolah. Tahap ciri kepemimpinan pengetua berada pada tahap sederhana (mean =3.54, sd = 0.68). Tahap keberkesanan sekolah juga adalah sederhana level (mean = 3.50, sd = .83). Analisis korelasi menunjukkan terdapat hubungan signifikan positif yang tinggi di antara dimensi ciri kepemimpinan pengetua dan keberkesanan sekolah, kemahiran pengurusan (r= .676, p = .01), ciri peribadi (r = .616, p = .01), dan kemahiran dan ciri sosial (r = .686, p = .01). Analisi regresi menunjukkan bahawa, dua dimensi ciri kepemimpinan pengetua menyumbang secara signifikan kepada keberkesanan sekolah, iaitu kemahiran pengurusan (β = .356, t = 4.188, p = .000) dan kemahiran dan ciri sosial (β = .340, t = 3.483, p = .001).

Kesimpulannya, ciri kepemimpinan pengetua di sekolah menengah negeri Niger masih berada pada tahap sederhana dan memerlukan peningkatan. Pengetuan seharusnya memiliki ciri kepemimpinan pengetua berkesan. Mereka memainkan peranan yang diperlukan dan kritikal dalam menentukan hala tuju sekolah, dan pengajaran dan pembelajaran untuk mencapai keberkesanan sekolah. Oleh itu, terdapat keperluan untuk membangunkan program yang menyeluruh bagi meningkatkan penguasaan ciri kepemimpinan pengetua secara sistematik dan berterusan bertujuan untuk menyediakan pengetua dengan pelbagai peranan ke arah pencapaian sekolah berkesan pada masa hadapan.

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This thesis was submitted to the Senate of the Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science.

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Declaration by graduate student

I hereby confirm that:
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This is to confirm that:
- the research conducted and the writing of this thesis was under our supervision;
- supervision responsibilities as stated in the Universiti Putra Malaysia (Graduate Studies) Rules 2003 (Revision 2012-2013) are adhered to.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AERA	American Education Research Association
B.A	Bachelor of Art
B.SC.	Bachelor of Science
HND:	Higher National Diploma
LAI	Leaders Attribute Inventory
M.A	Master of Art
M.SC	Master of Science
NASS	National Association of secondary school principals
NCE	Nigeria Certificate in Education
NECO	National Examination Council
OHI	Organization Health Inventory
PLSESSQ:	Principals Leadership Style Secondary School Questionnaire
SEI	School Effectiveness Index
WAEC	West African Examination Council
WASC	West African School Certificate

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

School effectiveness is concerned with the structures and culture of an institution and expressing the manners in which plans, policies and practices are related to improving the overall objectives of the school and teacher effectiveness at the classroom level (Hargreaves, 2001). It encompasses the overall achievement of the students in all the three domains of learning (Ekundayo, 2010; Akinola, 2013). School effectiveness has been characterized by the overall student achievement with no significant gaps in that achievement across the major subgroups in the student population. School effectiveness is built on the foundation of high expectation of students, strong educational leadership, quality teaching, healthy environment and frequent monitoring of student achievement (Ekundayo, 2010; Lezotte, 2011). There is a general belief among the educators that, strong educational leadership is among the predicting factor that determine the level of school effectiveness, it is generally accepted that, no secondary school can be successful in the absence of strong principals' leadership. Studies, vigorously indicated that, principals' leadership impacts student success in schools (Hallinger& Heck, 1996; Leithwood, 2006).

Principals' leadership attributes concerned with the personal qualities that constitute effective leadership, to bring about high teachers' commitment and improvement in student achievement with minimum time and energy investment (Marcia Ford Seiler, 2010). Principals' leadership attributes is described as the largest collection of characteristics such as value, competencies, behaviors, and skills (Ross, 2006). Among the effort of educational reform in both developing and developed countries is focusing on the importance of the leadership responsibilities and attributes of the principal for the achievement of school effectiveness (Hallinger, 1996; Mark, 2003). Principal is the leader of the secondary school as an organization, and success of school depend on him. Principal's leadership attributes serve as a critical indicator of school performance (Cheng, 1994). Many literatures reveal the relationship between the principals' leadership skills, attributes and behaviour (Akinola, 2013).

Leithwood, (2006) assert that, strong principals' leadership has been found, among the characteristic of school effectiveness. Identification of leadership attributes in the educational environment was developed by Leithwood and Montgomery (1984) and later by Begley (1990) and Begley and Murray (1993). Researches show that, excellent principals' leadership is strongly related to the effectiveness of the secondary schools world-wide (Akinola, 2013).

This chapter comprises of the background of the study, statements of the problems, the purpose of the research, objectives of the research, research question, the significance of

the study, the scope of the study, limitations and delimitations and followed by definition of terms.

School effectiveness is the degree to which school is able to accomplish its pre-determined objectives with an effort to solve its targeted problem that might hinder the smooth running of the school (Hargreaves, 2001; Osakinle, 2006; Ekundayo, 2010). It is also referred as the degree at which the school system is able to achieve its stated goals (Ekundayo, 2011). School effectiveness referred to as improving and realizing the school ability to achieve its objectives and promotes teachers' efficiency (Hallinger, 1998; Ololube, 2005). School effectiveness is in association with numerous numbers of variables or factors that have great influence on the development and improvement of the school. Among of them includes learning environment, parents' involvement in school administration, principals' leadership, availability of school facilities, teachers' quality, expectation on students' success and monitoring of students' progress (Ekundayo, 2010; Lezotte, 2011). In this study, principals' leadership attributes is the independent variable while school effectiveness is dependent variable. Because most researchers agree that principal leadership is a critical variable affecting the level of school effectiveness (Mattar, 2012).

Principals' leadership attributes is concerned with the personal qualities which enhance the effectiveness of discharging the leadership responsibilities by the principals and directing the teachers' commitment towards improving students' academic achievement (Marcia Ford Seiler, 2010). Principals' leadership attributes involves the collection of characteristics such as value, competencies, and skills (Ross, 2006). Principals in Nigerian secondary schools are regarded as human resource managers, need to set up mechanisms for bringing up and strengthen of educator's potential so as to improve the effectiveness of secondary schools as well as students' academic achievements (Obemeata, 1984; Arikewuyo, 2009; Emeka, 2012). As has been highlighted in the Nigerian Educational Policy, the major goals of secondary school education are to prepare the young generation to positively contribute towards the development of the nation and prepare them for advanced learning. This stage of learning processes needs to be properly handled by highly trained and skilled principals possessing adequate leadership attributes so as to meet up with the societal objectives (Federal Ministry of Education, 2006). It is strongly pertinent for the principals to possess such leadership attributes to overcome the challenges that might hinder the realization of the stated schools' goals and objectives. Such attributes include effective communication, proper management of instruction and creating a unity of purpose (Federal Ministry of Education, 2006). Researchers highlighted that, considering the situation of the leadership of secondary school principals in Nigeria, where majority of them have been blamed of not adequately, leading their schools to meet up with the mandated proficiency level of students' academic performance, it is therefore recommended for a strategy of improving the attributes of secondary school principals to meet up with the contemporary challenges facing them (Blessing, 2005).

Principals' leadership attributes is very essential in improving the quality of school outcomes. It is of the great decisive in assisting the school principals to modify their

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leadership behavior in order to move forward toward accomplishing schools' goals. Effective principals' leadership helps subordinate staff to adequately discharge their potentials towards goal achievements (Westley, 2005). Adeyemi and Bolarinwa, (2013) opined that, principals must be trained to enable them to possess the knowledge and attributes of influencing, correcting, and training the members of staff towards the realization of the school goals and objectives, thus enhances students' achievement which is one of the greatest signs of school effectiveness.

A survey was carried in Frankfort, Kentucky in U.S.A on leadership of school principals and the response was adequately stood as a reason for the need to improve the attributes of school principals. Based on the result, more than 70 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that, the attributes of principals prepare them to perform their duties effectively towards school effectiveness (Marcia Ford Seiler, 2010).

Based on the highlighted literatures on the importance of principals' leadership towards student achievement, strengthen and energized the researcher to conduct a study on the relationship between the principals' leadership attributes and school effectiveness in Niger state senior secondary schools. Because studies reveal that, Niger state principals are faced with escalating challenges in meeting up with the demands and aspiration of the Niger state government, as regards to the performance of students in the state. For instance, in the year 2010/2011, the result of students on (West African Examination Council) was very poor (Herald, 2013). Consequently, it urges the researcher to carry out an investigation and study the relationship between the principals' leadership attributes and school effectiveness in Niger state secondary schools in Nigeria. It can be inferred from the foregoing that effective principals' leadership attributes has a great influence on the performance of staff and school effectiveness, leadership attributes stands as a means of assisting the principals in the diligently delivery of the leadership function in school (Marcia Ford Seila, 2010). Principals are viewed as the head of the secondary schools, expected to carry out all responsibilities associated with the leadership tasks to bring about school development (Marks & Printy, 2003).

Secondary Schools in Nigeria

At the early stage, only three forms of secondary schools were recognized in Nigeria, which is comprised of Grammar secondary school, Modern secondary school and Commercial secondary school. But nowadays secondary education in Nigeria is influenced by the introduction of 6-3-3-4 system of education. This means that, six years in primary school, three years in junior secondary school, three years in senior secondary schools and four years in University (Akporehe, 2011). Primary and junior secondary school was made compulsory and free for all citizens and serves as an avenue to senior secondary schools (Arikewuyo, 2009). The senior secondary schools end of the Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE), which prepares the students for tertiary education. The secondary school curriculum is made up of six core subjects with additional of three elective subjects. Core subject includes: English; Mathematics; one major Nigerian language (Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba); one subject out of (Biology,

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Chemistry, Physics or Integrated science); one subject out of (English literature, History, Geography or Social studies); Agricultural Science or Vocational subject; with additional of three elective subject of which may include Islamic Religion Studies/Christian Religion Studies with other two elective subjects which resulted to the total of nine subjects at the senior secondary school level (Akinola, 2013). Currently, there are various categories of secondary schools in Nigeria; Such includes Government secondary schools, Government technical college, commercial secondary school, comprehensive secondary schools and government science colleges, some of these secondary schools are funded and manage directly by the federal government while others are funded by the state government (Arikewuyo, 2009).

These categories of secondary schools aimed at meeting up the academic achievements of students based on their capabilities, to enable them to be productive citizens and contribute towards the developments of the nation (Federal Ministry of Education, 2006) . Secondary education occupies an integral potion in the Nigerian system of education; it is an avenue of engrossing the graduates of primary schools as well as placing them into the various categories of secondary schools according to the ability of each and every student. These categorizations of students according to their abilities augment the contribution of the entire students towards the developments of the society based on their capacity (Adeyemi, 2010; Akinola 2013). It also serves as a feeder to the various colleges of education, polytechnics and universities, in which the graduates of such tertiary institutions improve the numbers of skilled workers, thus determine the workforce in the future. It is clearly believed that, increase in the number of workforce predicts the development of any nation (Ekundayo, 2010). Therefore quality secondary education in Nigeria is a critical stage that requires an effective leader with adequate leadership attributes in order to reward high students' performance (Adeyemi, 2010).

1.2 Statement of Problems

Secondary education is an integral part in the Nigerian system of education, it is the stage that connects the primary and tertiary institution and therefore, there is need to be handled by highly skilled personnel (Leigba, 2000). This is openly expressed in the National Policy on Education in 1981. The policy explained that, the government shall take measures towards improving the quality of secondary education by giving support to the school administration through improving the leadership attributes of the principals with induction courses (Oluremi, 2013). This is because there is general belief that, principals' leadership is a major contributing factor of secondary school effectiveness. The quality of the school outcome depends on the principals' leadership (Riehl, 2000). Principals' leadership attributes has been widely accepted as being the key constituents in securing the effectiveness of secondary schools. Leadership attributes shape the behavior of the principals, in order to bring about the success of their schools. It is the attributes of the leader that shape his behavior towards the effectiveness of his organization (Moss Jr & Liang, 1990). Leadership attributes assist the organizational leaders to know on how to use the leadership style such as transformational and transactional leadership style (B. M. B. Bass, Ruth, 2009). Principals' leadership

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attributes concerned with the overall student's achievements and general good condition of the school (Oluremi, 2013). Studies have shown that, it is also concerned with the total improvement, success of the school and the academic achievements of every student (Viviane M Robinson & UniServices, 2007). It is generally accepted that, due to the importance of principals in schools, no school can be successful in the absence of strong principals' leadership. Studies indicated that, principals' leadership impacts students' success in schools (Hallinger& Heck, 1996; Leithwood, 2006).

However, principals in Nigeria face great challenges in leading their schools to meet up with the mandated proficiency levels of student performance due to the lack of adequate leadership attributes (Adeyemi, 2010). Majority of this study was carried out in the southern part of the country, whilst this study is conducted in the northern part of the country. The majority of secondary school principals in Nigeria are lacking of sufficient leadership attributes thus enables them to face the challenges of poor students' academic achievements (Ekundayo, 2010). Policy makers focus their attention on principals with the anticipation that excellence principals' leadership attributes will improve students' academic achievements (Isaacs, 2003). The major reason that has been contributing towards poor performance of secondary school education is that, principals are not appropriately skilled and trained to strengthen their leadership attributes (Mathibe, 2007). Thus, this serves as a yardstick for calling towards improving the leadership attributes of school principals. For instance, Niger state government has been allocated an adequate amount of funds to the educational sector in the state, yet the performance of staff and student achievement does not meet up with the aspiration of the parents and the Niger state government (Desert Herald, 2013).

This is rooted from the frequent poor performance of students in the internal promotion examination and eventually leads to the poor performance in WAEC and NECO too. In the year 2007 and 2008, only 7% and 18.7% respectively of students passed WAEC and NECO examination in Niger state, which is extremely poor in terms of students' achievement (Desert Herald, 2013). Niger state government had paid the sum of #440.4 million for its candidates that sat for West African Examination Council and National Examination Council in the year 2010/2011 while parents contributed the sum #191.6 million, but the performance of students was not admirable and encouraging. Niger state commissioner for Education said, 17, 550 students in Niger state have failed their promotion examination out of the 57,510 registered students in the year 2011/2012. (Premium Time, 2012).

In Nigerian system of education, West African Examination Council (W.A.EC.) serves as the standard measure of determining the level of students' academic achievement. The result obtained in the West African Examination Council serves as the yardstick of determining the successful and unsuccessful students. Those that pass their WAEC) have the golden opportunity of furthering their education in the tertiary institutions (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004). The significant of principals' leadership in Niger state secondary schools cannot be overlooked, it has been detected that the Nigerian government does not give much emphasis to principals' leadership training in order to develop their leadership skills and attributes, rather teacher are given the highest priority

in terms of professional training in the Nigerian education policy, neglecting that principals' leadership as the main key to high school effectiveness (Ross, 2006; Sackney, 2006; Oyegoke, 2012).

From the above we can infer that, despite the importance of principals' leadership attributes towards school effectiveness, not much knowledge is known, as it has been given very little attention in Nigeria. There were scanty empirical studies on the relationship between the principals' leadership attributes and school effectiveness in the northern part of the country. Most studies conducted on the effectiveness of secondary schools in Nigeria focused on the principals' leadership styles, rather than principals' leadership attributes, and majority of the study was carried out in the southern part with very scanty research in the northern part of the country. Therefore, the reason for this study is to fill in this gap, due to the absence of adequate research to explore whether principals' leadership attributes can be considered as a predictor of school effectiveness in the northern part of the country, through assessment of the principals' leadership attributes by the senior and assistant senior masters in Niger state, which is among the states in the north central part of the country. Therefore, needs to improve principals' leadership attributes becomes necessary in order to bring about high school effectiveness in Niger state secondary schools, because principals' leadership warrant for the school success (Machuma, 2008).

1.3 Purpose of the Research

The main purpose of this study is to find out the relationship between the principals' leadership attributes and school effectiveness in Niger state secondary schools, Nigeria.

1.4 Objectives of the Research

The objectives of this research work can be viewed in two angles, namely general and specific objectives.

The general objective is to find out the relationship between the principals' leadership attributes and school effectiveness, in Niger State Secondary Schools. While the specific objectives are being identified as follows:

1. To determine the level of principals' leadership attributes in Niger state secondary schools.
2. To determine the level of school effectiveness in Niger state secondary schools.
3. To determine the relationship between the principals' leadership attributes and school effectiveness in Niger State Secondary Schools.
4. To determine the contribution of principals' leadership attributes to school effectiveness in Niger state secondary schools.

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1.5 Research Questions

The major research question of this work is to find out whether there is a relationship between the principals' leadership attributes and school effectiveness in Niger state secondary schools, Nigeria. Based on this motive, the following specific research questions are raised to guide the study?.

1. What is the level of principals' leadership attributes in Niger state senior secondary schools?
2. What is the level of school effectiveness in Niger state senior secondary schools?
3. Is there any relationship between the principals' leadership attributes and school effectiveness in Niger State senior secondary schools?
4. What is the contribution of principals' leadership attributes to school effectiveness in Niger state?

1.6 Research Hypothesis

H1: There is a significant relationship between the Principals' Leadership Attributes and School Effectiveness in Niger state secondary schools

H2: Principals' leadership attributes significantly contributed to the school effectiveness in Niger State Secondary Schools

1.7 Significance of the Study

The relationship between the principals' leadership attributes and school effectiveness is very vital towards students' achievements. Effective use of leadership attributes by the principals will definitely lead to the effectiveness of senior secondary schools in Niger state.

Therefore, the significant of this study shall be discus in two angles, namely theoretical and practical:

Theoretical: The study shall assist in the application and adaptation of the framework, knowledge and theories used in the research towards improving school effectiveness.

Secondly, the result of this finding may fill in the gap and provide adequate empirical information concerning the principals' leadership, because most of the research on principals' leadership in Nigeria is based on leadership style, while the present research focused on the leadership attributes which is broader than the leadership style

Thirdly, result obtained shall increase the number of empirical evidences on the principals' leadership attributes and school effectiveness and provide reference information to those conducting research on similar discipline, the present study explored and used two instruments. Leader Attributes Inventory (LAI) was used to measure principals' leadership attributes while School Effectiveness Index (SEI) was

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used to measure school effectiveness. Whilst amongst the practical significant is that, the result of this study may serve as a guide to Niger state government in drafting a policy of determining the appropriate training that would reward effective leadership attributes for school principals.

Secondly, the study may enlighten the Niger state government that, apart from the long year of teaching experience which is the existing yardstick in the selection of principals, certification in educational leadership should be incorporated among the process of principal leadership in the state. This will enable the Niger state principals to be more knowledgeable on the leadership attributes that may lead to the effectiveness of their respective schools.

Thirdly, the usefulness of this study may not be restricted to Niger state only; it may also be of great value at the national level by using the appropriate national policy on the issue of appointing principals, being that principals' leadership is a national challenge facing the Nigerian secondary schools as whole (Ololube, 2005; Oyegoke, 2012).

Fourthly, the present study may provide many evidences that, the existing policy on giving teachers priority in term of training in Nigeria, should be replaced by the principals; this may lead to the increase of their leadership attributes and thereby increasing the level of school effectiveness (Arikewuyo, 2009).

1.8 Scope of the Study

The study is restricted only to senior secondary schools in Niger state; it focused on all the 25 Local government within the state. The participants included in the study were only 272 schools' senior masters and assistant senior masters from different schools of 136, of different gender, age, qualification and level of experience. Below figure 1.1 is indicating the map of the study area.

Figure 1.1 Map of the study Area

1.9 Limitations of the Study

1. The study was limited senior secondary schools only, based on economic constraints that are beyond the control of the researcher.
2. Senior and assistant senior masters are the respondents of this study which have been appointed by the principals, there are fear of bias,
3. Only simple random sampling technique was used in the study in determining the sample size.

Delimitations of the study include the followings:
1. Only principals with five years and above working experience were included in the study.
2. Only senior and assistant senior masters were included in the study.

1.10 Definition of Terms

The key terms used in this study, were conceptually and operationally defined in order to give a clear comprehension and direction in conducting this research.

1.10.1 Principals' Leadership Attributes:

This is concerned with the personal qualities that enhance the effectiveness and efficiency to discharge the responsibilities of school principals in directing the teachers' commitment towards improving students' academic achievement (Marcia Ford Seiler, 2010). Principals' leadership attributes involves the collection of characteristics such as value, competencies, behaviors, and skills (Brockmeier, Starr, Green, Pate, & Leech, 2013). This is concerned with the personal qualities and acquires characteristics that constitute effective leadership in schools, in order to bring about high teachers' commitment and improvement in student achievement with minimum time and energy investment (Ross, 2006).

In this study principals' leadership attributes is viewed as the management skills, personal characteristics and social skills and which shape leadership behaviours of the school principals towards improving students' academic achievement. This study employed the use of Leader Attributes Inventory (LAI) in measuring Principals' leadership attributes developed by Moss, Liang & Judith (1990). Because the instrument has been used by vocational educators and others who are in leadership activities with high reliability and validity, the instrument measure 37 leader attributes; this indicated that the instrument has 37 items (Moss, 1991).

1.10.2 Management Skills.

This comprises of organisational and cognitive and each of them is further sub-divided into the followings: organisational comprises of the followings; planning, organising, team building, networking and time management. Cognitive comprises of the problem solving and gathering and management of information.

1.10.3 Personal Skills

Personal skills involve the three major categories, namely visionary, action oriented and energetic. They are further sub-divided. Visionary comprises of insightful, creative and decision. While Action-oriented involved the followings; achievement oriented, accepts responsibility, assertive initiating, venturesome risk taker, courageous, resolute persistent, enthusiastic optimistic and confident, self-accepting.

1.10.4 Social Skills and Characteristics

Social skills and characteristics were divided into three clusters, including ethical, interpersonal and intellectual. Ethical comprises of the commitment to the common good, personal integrity and highest values and moral standard. Interpersonal includes Communication, Coaching, Motivating others, Use appropriate leadership styles, Tactful, sensitive, respectful, Emotionally balanced, Trustworthy, dependable, reliable, Conflict management, Ideology beliefs appropriate to the group. Finally, intellectual comprises of the followings; Intellectual with practical judgment, Adaptive, open, flexible, Tolerant of ambiguity and complexity, Tolerant of stress and frustration and finally Stress management.

1.10.5 School Effectiveness

School effectiveness is concerned with the structures and culture of an institution and expressing the manners in which plans, policies and practices are related to improving the overall objectives of the school and teacher effectiveness at the classroom level (Thomas, 2001). School effectiveness referred to as improving and realizing the school ability to achieve its objectives and promotes teachers' efficiency (Hallinger, 1998; Ololube, 2005). School effectiveness encompasses the overall achievement of the students in all the three domains of learning such includes psychomotor, effective and cognitive domain (Ekundayo, 2010; Akinola, 2013).

In this study, school effectiveness is viewed as the extent to which school is able to attain its objectives, both academic achievement and moral behavior of the students in respect to the excellent teaching and effective principals' leadership. The researcher decided to use the School Effectiveness Index (SEI) in this study. Because School Effectiveness Index (SEI) is the most appropriate instrument to be used in measuring school effectiveness, if compare to Organisational Health Inventory and Organizational Climate Description (Hoy, 2005).

1.10.6 Principal

In this study, principal is the chief executive of the school who is responsible for all that happens in the school, being him the chief executive; he assigns duties to those who could perform the duties effectively, though all responsibilities still resides in him as the accounting officer.

1.10.7 Senior and Assistant Senior Master

These are categories of teaching staff with minimum of 5 years working experience normally assisting in many school administrative activities; they are selected by the school principals.

11

1.11 Summary

This chapter presents a general view of principals' leadership attributes, school effectiveness, study context, a statement of the problems, the purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions and significance of the study. Principals' leadership plays a vital role towards improving the level of school effectiveness. Yet the priority given to the school principals in Nigeria in terms of improving their leadership attributes is very little, despite of the disclosure on the importance of principals' leadership attribute to school effectiveness by many literatures.

The study of the relationship between the principals' leadership attributes and school effectiveness in Niger state secondary schools employed the use of four objectives which is also associated with the explanation of five research questions? The main objective of this research is to determine the relationship between the principals' leadership attributes and school effectiveness. The chapter concluded with definitions of major terms so as to enable the readers to have foresight in understanding the thesis and serves as a link to the next chapter.

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