

# RETRAINING THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS: LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES FOR EFFECTIVE PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION IN NIGERIAN SCHOOLS

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## **Abstract**

$P=f(CS+HS+TS)$ . It is not hypocritical statement that the demands being put on the school system is intense. In the pursuit of a better method to improve the sport skills of our youth in schools, effort must be relentless in the search to improve teachers' relationship competencies. In this article, compelling pre-requisite that will prove the cutting edges of performance excellent for physical education teachers are pulled to view. The triads are conceptual, human and technical skills. The rubrics of the general are respectively, an insightful understanding of work operations, team work for mutual group allegiance and a dynamic awareness of the discrete and total professional cognate scene. This paper ascribes to the post-modernist philosophy that the acquisition of new idea is indissocable from the old view, but the edge is that the acquisition of a new idea is leading from the front. The point that the best of both theories are advocated if they are purpose-driven that is aimed at effective and efficient leadership for high job performance. The postulation is summed-up in the formula, which explained that job performance (P) is a function (f) of three interrelated leadership categories, conceptual, human and technical skills abbreviated as CS, HS and TS respectively.

## **Introduction**

The Industrial Revolution (IR) of 1760-1810 was very significant in world history. The IR could be distinguishing from previous evolutionary periods because of the enormity of the impact of the attendant change which took place and because of the invention and innovation that led to rapid world major transformational improvements. While the period is generally acknowledged merely in terms of the invention and resulting mass production potential, in reality, it was a culmination of multi sectorial events forming a major movement, which resulted in an overall change in the structure in our society. One of the paradoxes of consequence of the revolution was a labour liberalization, which led to educational diversification and specialization. Physical education (PE) was one of the academic disciplines, which entered the educational lexicon. Zeigler (2005) describes physical education as a core educational discipline because of the emphasis on mind-body unity. Nonetheless, PE like its academic counterparts entered the Nigerian education "stock-market" with super chronic deficiency.

The pioneers of the western education in Nigeria were the European missionaries. Their aim was to train the youths on how to read and write-making of the burlesque aristocrats. PE was introduced under the reprobate title, physical training. The set-up then characterized a frill tagged onto the school curriculum to make the learners sweat, get poised and remain alert for "important academic work" in the classroom. That was in the official profile of PE until the 1969 National Curriculum Conference which gave birth to the 6-3-3-4 Educational system in Nigeria, (FRN, 1998). With the Federal Republic of Nigeria, new educational innovation, the colonial education deficiency legacy (CEDL), remains a malignant and a quintessential albatross around the educational pillars of the nation.

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Teachers of physical education studies are in a sense subject technocrats (ST) with the complex, difficult and enormous responsibility to groom; nurture and raise the learner to become reputable citizens. But adept observers of teacher education programme in Nigeria may realized that the pressing concern, is on pedagogic training, pedantic thorough breeding with non or very little emphasis on leadership foundation. The root of the leadership formation freeze could be traced to the CEDL enmeshed in the teacher preparation canvass of the nation. In the process, the schools produce sapient graduands but who demonstrate insipience. The consequence is the attendance in “men of letters” (ML), literally “grammarians” in our society and conspicuous decrease of “philosopher kings” and Plato’s metaphor for “leaders of the republic”. The phantom of the CEDL has to be isolated from educational psyche of the country so that the scions of the new 6-3-3-4 educational system may have a new outlook.

The purpose of this article is to suggest what would be a more rewarding leadership attribute of the teacher of physical education to enhance his expertise in sports administration. It is a good thing at this point to note some of the traits of the archetype administrator as widely acknowledged particularly in the service industries. Briscoe and Gorton (1993) identified good judgment, Austin (1998) enlisted a good plan of action, which ensures unity continuity, flexibility and precision. In a related contribution, Glassman and McAfee (1999) observed that enthusiasm is most appropriately a strong motivational factor which fire passion. On the other hand, the virtue of the teacher as an administrator in the school organization are presumptuous. Readily, the high rated qualities of the teacher administrator are such “worn-out” phrases as; good teaching ability, love of children, dedicated to duty and discipline, (Daragani, 2004). These time-honoured stereotypes are satisfactory but they tend to ellipse the modern day realities.

### **Administration**

The word administration is construed as leadership. In this context leadership is based on the germane administrative skills the physical education teachers (PET) can exhibit for job effectiveness. Skill is pragmatic, it is developmental and may not be genetic. The bottom line of administrative skillfulness is positive results. The literature on leadership is loaded with quality trademarks of the ideal leader. In their contribution, Uduk (1985) identified job satisfaction, Covery (1992) pointed out goal oriented, Katz (2000) mentioned respect for others and Maxwell (2000) referred to Charisma while Tomey (2004), came up with clearly defined vision and task as well as resourcefulness.

The meeting point of the leadership criteria is human behaviour or character-quality. Maxwell (1999) captured it succinctly when he wrote, “leaders are effective because of who they are on the inside in the qualities that make them”. Viewed through the prism of character-quality leadership is the capacity to inspire confidence and to rally men and women to a common purpose. The important departure of this contribution is considering leadership as an adoption of mutually complementary trilateral categories to weave the human structural and economic elements of an organization toward an envisioned goal. As a result of the paradigmatic shift, the concept leadership is substituted for the more conventional term administration.

Matters related to efficiency, dedication and improvement of teaching quality have always been considered as part of the problem of the Nigerian school system. So often it appears any action is restricted to standard operating procedures manifested in lame complaint of falling standard of education. Today when the ugly situation is apparently exacerbated, it is well to take a new look on what can be done to check the decline so that we can specifically administer school physical education and sport programme for improved and increase efficiency. As a matter of fact, if we do not work toward efficiency in the classrooms, we are working toward oblivion. For Nigeria to achieve greatness

***Retraining The Physical Education Teachers: Leadership Competencies For Effective Programme Implementation In Nigerian Schools***

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and remain great, is to stop the “falling standard of education mystique” as a national moral responsibility. To act now is strategic as the educational system is lomatose or terminally ill, before it is certified dead.

Peter Drucker, the doyen of modern management thought in a keynote address to the international management congress at Tokyo, Japan in 1969, said “management is generic properly handled will stand for the quality of life of a society as much as for its standard of living”. (Briscoe & Gorton, 1993); Mr. Drucker was correct. This provides a fresh verification of his prediction. If means are not found to expedite the development of a new genre of teachers, the quality of life and perhaps the standard of living of society are almost certain to go down.

**Performance Factor**

This suggests the categories of effective leadership. Three unique but inter-related performance factors support effective leadership as a concept. The model obviates the one-way behaviour approach but provides a three-factor (trilateral) process approach in understanding leadership. It is assumed that leadership, and in this context the physical education teacher (PET) is one who:

- (i) Directs the learning activities of students and
- (ii) Undertakes the responsibilities to achieve the mission of the school.

Enveloped within this rubric, leadership is considered to rest on three fundamental skills, namely: conceptual, human and technical. Though they are interrelated there is merit to examine each skill independently. Conceptual skill (CS), as used in this articles involves the ability of a leader to have a holistic view of the operations. The PET recognizes the inter-dependent functionality of the mutually exclusive components of the enterprise. The ability to understand the miniscute details of the operational logistics, facilities, the comprehension of the matrices. Reinforced with a corporate insight, the PET can visualize the cause and effect, actions and reactions, social, psychological, political and cultural forces in the operating milieu.

The recognition of the inter/interrelations and sensitivity to the significant elements of the prevailing kaleidoscope enhances flexibility, clear vision, focus and sensible interpretation of policy swings. The cryptic cliché “the sum of the parts are bigger than the whole”, may illuminate the imagination of the teacher administrator. The point is the more the PET can accurately synthesize the overall relationships implications of policy thrust the higher his efficiency coefficient. Consequently, excellence in conceptual skill is a plus factor in administrative sensing. In other words, PET with a keen conceptual skill is versatile in corporate personality analysis which is a dependable leadership potential. What does this add-up to? The PET with penetrating conceptual skill is clairvoyant in administrative logistics, which is a lofty pro-establishment asset.

**Human Skill**

This is second of the trilogy of performance skills. The possession of human skill, (HS), is the ability to work effectively with the staff and students (including community members) to build bridges of co-operation in the system. The more the PET is imbued with HS, the confidence inspired the more passionate is the followership and co-operation. The teacher leader who wields a positive influence in human components in the organization readily carries stakeholders along towards the organizational vision. The point made here is that, the PET with a highly developed human skill is disposed to appreciate and understand the attitude assumption, feelings and few points of others (superiors, co-equals and subordinate) in the establishment. And his sensitivity to the needs and

motivation of the system operators is not in doubt. As a result, it creates an atmosphere of approval openness and solidarity-a necessary ingredient of participatory leadership.

The PET should not in dealing with others become vulnerable to a selective and random application of human skills. Human skill must be natural, it should not be a “sometime thing”. To be effective the skill must be unconsciously yet consistently demonstrated in the teacher’s actions and demeanor. Human skill must remain as integral part of the teachers whole being. Human skill is the “human relation image” of the leader. A positive image increases the institutional operations and the reverse holds for a negative image. The point is human skill sets the operational tone in the establishment. It represents the “human face” in the trilogy.

### **Technical Skill (TS)**

Technical skill is the third of the performance skill for effective leadership. The placing does not suggest any prioritization of the skills though some research studies (Bass, 1981, Gardner, 1984, & Tappan, Welss & Whitehead 2004) rank conceptual, human and technical in the reverse order. Although all three are important at any level of leadership the consensus is that conceptual skill is emphasizes for top level administrators, human skill, middle level and technical, lower level.

TS is demonstrable and pragmatic. It implies an understanding of proficiency and skillfulness in activities particularly those involving methods, processes, procedures, dexterity and movement techniques. TS involves specialized knowledge and analytical process within that specialty and facility in the use of equipment and supplies of a specific game/play or activities. TS is concrete though ostracized in the aesthetics. It is developed through practice, use repetition and perfected through spatial efficiency. TS is indispensable for an effective psychomotor operations. It is the distinct capacity every PET should posses that keeps him ahead of “conventional” teachers. PET with a generous technical skill is enable to care for an refine the whole body of “clientele” caress their soul and stimulate their mind while sculpturing their body.

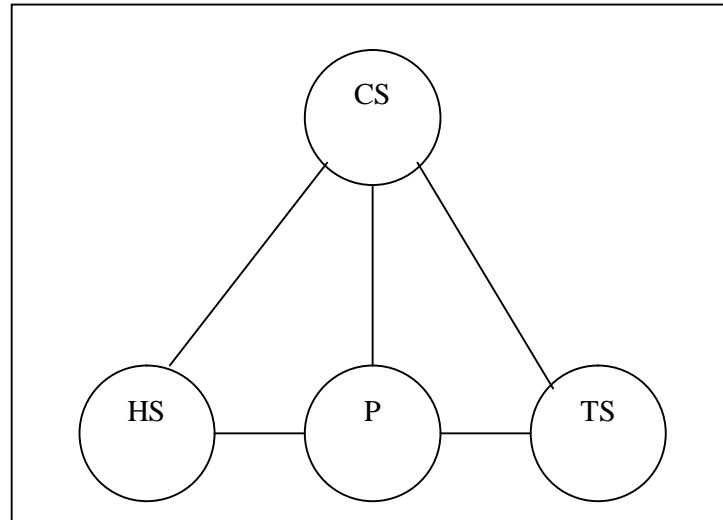
### **Conclusion**

This work is on Job Performance. Precisely, it is on performance categories necessary for improve leadership thrust in educational organization and their allied agencies. Good organizations either educational or manufacturing pay a good deal of attention on improved job performance of its members.

Effective leadership is innovative and crucial to the success of implementing organizational goals through executive guidance. If physical education teachers (PETS) is to remain relevance in Nigerians schools being confronted with the “great challenges” of diminishing patronage, PETS have to rise to the occasion through creative leadership or they will run the risk of becoming irrelevant.

In sum, all the three categories: Conceptual Skill (CS), Human Skill (HS) and Technical Skill (TS), must be possessed by the physical education teacher on high job performance to occur. The idea could be expressed as an equation  $P = F (CS+HS+TS)$  as a model.

**Figure 1**



**The Determinants of High Job Performance**

This equation or model show that performance (P) is a function (F) of three interacting leadership categories; conceptual skills (CS), human skills (HS) and technical skills (TS), if any of these categories is missing or is rated low in value job performance or leadership effectiveness declines.

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