

# ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT IN DELTA STATE, NIGERIA

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**Abstract:** This empirical study examined the extents to which organizational leadership influence employee commitment in Nigeria. Survey design was used and questionnaire was the main data collection which was administered to one hundred and ten (110) academic and non-academic staff in College of Education, Warri, Delta State. The study used two (2) leadership styles – transactional and autocratic leadership styles; data obtained were analyzed via descriptive, regression diagnostics and inferential statistical tools. The dependent variable is employee commitment while independent variables are leadership styles (transformational and autocratic leadership). Multiple regression results revealed that while transformational leadership style (t-value = 9.77; p-value. = 0.000) significantly positively influence employee commitment, autocratic style of leadership (t-value= -6.04; p-value.=0.000) significantly negatively affect commitments of academic and non-academic staffs. The study recommends among others that management of monotechnics should possess transformational leadership style that can encourage academic and non-academic staff in realizing significant outcomes on the job and leader-employee exchange benefits, which would in turn result to increased employee commitment. On the other hand, management of monotechnics should further discourage the use of autocratic leadership style as it would decrease staff self-confidence on the job as well as decreasing efficiency in decision-making.

**Keywords:** Organizational leadership style; Employee commitment; Transactional leadership; Autocratic leadership style.

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## Introduction

Practically, organizational leadership is a system where an individual (known as a leader) assists, influences, stimulates and supervises employees (known as subordinates) in order for them to achieve individual, group and organizational goals. As observed by Hilton, Madilo, Awaah and Arkorful (2023), because leaders behave in certain ways, it give birth to diverse leadership styles such as democratic, transformational, transactional, autocratic, laissez-faire, authentic, among others. In the wake of 21<sup>st</sup> century, there has been series of revolution demanding acclimatization and new approaches to organizational leadership (Khan, Rehmat, Butt, Farooqi & Asim, 2020).

According to Khudhair, Rahman, Adnan and Khudhair(2022), one of the foremost contest or challenges facing corporate organizations is how well management of organizations are able to lead, motivate, satisfy and have employees who are committed to realizing the goal of the organization; this as noted by Klein(2023) leaves management of organization with constant evaluation, adaptation and experimentation of the diverse behaviour, culture and attitude of employees by leaders. Mahmood and Ali (2021) believed that approaches to leadership style could enhance employees' commitments, satisfaction and other job-related outcomes.

Extant literature on styles of leadership suggests numerous leadership styles considered suitable for organizational management; the literature broadly categorized these styles of leadership as behavioural paradigms (authoritative, laissez-faire, and democratic); and Likert system(exploitative-authoritative,

benevolent-authoritative, participatory, authentic consultative) (Mulyati, Febrian, Rajab & AR, 2023; Mwesigwa, Tusiime & Ssekiziyivu, 2020). In other literatures, leadership styles can be grouped as situational, contemporary, traits, among others.

Notwithstanding the broad categorizations of styles of leadership, leadership styles are defined as behaviours leaders' exhibit in the workplace and envisaged by subordinates (Peerman, 2023). Prior studies indicate that leadership style is one of the most imperative factor influencing employee commitment and performance (Saad & Abdulaziz, 2023). In the views of Skopak and Hadzaihmetovic (2022), it is essential to investigate if there is a decipherable leadership style that can influence employee commitment and innovative behaviours.

Furthermore, leadership theorists argued that when leaders can lead with the appropriate leadership style that fits organizations, it could lead to increased employee commitment, performance and satisfaction (Suliman & Al-Shaikh, 2020; Tijani & Okunbanjo, 2020). Consequently, this sought to provide novel insights on how organizational leadership styles (transformational and autocratic styles) can influence employee commitment. Udin (2021) sees transformational leadership style refers to a political leader who transforms its followers' values through inspiration, motivation; ideas; consideration and intellectual-stimulation.

On the other hand, autocratic leadership style is a tyrannical, dictatorial, repressive and domineering style of influencing subordinates (employees) to realize goals of employees and the organization (Udin, 2023). Researching on the interface

between transformational and democratic leadership styles and employee commitment are predominantly anchored on self-interests (Ibrahim, 2020; Hosna, Islam & Hamid, 2021). Consequently, this study examined how organizational leadership styles (transformational and autocratic styles) affect employee commitment in Nigeria.

## Review of Related Literature

### Transformational Leadership

Leaders must adopt the right leadership style to inspire workers to work if they want to affect their behaviour (satisfaction, commitment and involvement) and other work-related outcomes (performance and productivity). Success is attributed to transformational leaders that inspire vision and align the goals of their subordinates with those of the organisation (Az, 2017). The four (4) main components of transformational leadership are intellectual stimulation, idealised influence, individualised consideration, and inspiring motivation, according to Azim and Islam (2020).

Furthermore, it is believed that transformational leaders increase their staff members' drive, excitement, and hope for the future (Belias, Rossidis, Papademetriou & Mantas, 2022). This is because inspirational-motivation not only brings the ability to communicate an organization's goals vividly, but it also aims to inspire employees to realise essential organisational goals (Udayanga, 2020). An idealized-influence leader is someone who sets a good example for their staff by upholding strict moral standards and prioritising the good of the group over the good of the individual (Semedo, Coelho & Ribeiro, 2019)

Personalised leaders, on the other hand, approach each employee as an individual with specific demands and appropriately address those needs (Ajana, Nereida & Natasa, 2019). Therefore, transformational leadership's primary goal is to help employees grow and change (AlKahtani, et al, 2021). In order to tackle challenges in new ways, intellectual-stimulation leadership also means fostering employees' creativity and critical thinking skills (Aruoren, Odiri & Igemohia, 2021)

Consequently, via intellectual stimulation, transformational leadership fosters a culture of active thinking that encourages people to actively participate in organisational activities (Iqbal, et al, 2019). Transformational leadership, according to Lumbantoruan, Kurniawan and Sihombing (2020)., improves and increases employee-customer orientated behaviour by treating people well, giving them particular attention, and giving work and products/ services greater meaning for both customers and employees.

### Autocratic Leadership Style

Leaders have clear expectations on how and when the job needs to be done. In order to accomplish a goal, a leader using an autocratic leadership style tells his people what needs to be done (Sunarsi, et al, 2021). This type of leader does not need to motivate followers, as it is predicted that they are motivated to get the job done. In this type of leadership, which is similar to directive leadership, followers are motivated, but they do not know the job, so they are willing to get instructions and learn how to do the job efficiently (Taborosi, et al, 2020); these leaders are seen to be controllers. Followers have to do the tasks in the way that the leader has specified.

It is forbidden for followers to take part in the decision-making process. To complete the task, they must follow the leader's directions. These followers have little opportunity to develop their creativity (An, Meier, Ladenburg & Westergård-Nielsen, 2020). Sometimes they fear to be fired and that is why they perform certain tasks. Autocratic leadership style is present in many organizations. Followers know only a small amount of information depending on how much trust the leader has created with them, and leader is the one who knows everything (Albashiti, Hajjaj & Thabet, 2017)

Leaders tend to strictly supervise their followers. Autocratic leadership is considered useful mainly in the military and prisons, as people must follow the rules in very strict manner. Hence, autocratic leaders do not create channels of communication. This leadership is strict, what leaders want from followers is to obey rules without argumentation (Yukl, O'Donnell & Taber, 2009). With autocratic leaders, all decision-making authority is centralised. Autocratic leaders can utilise their official status to legitimately reward and coerce adherents (Albashiti, et al, 2017)

By restricting followers' involvement in the organization's decision-making, they preserve their position. These leaders desire followers who are incompetent and incapable of coming up with greater ideas than they do; all they want to hear is "yes." That is why many followers tend to leave these organizations, as they go there only for extrinsic satisfaction, which is money. Also, autocratic leadership tends to be effective only when the leader watches followers closely, so they can perform efficiently (Sunarsi, et al, 2021).

Autocratic leadership is considered to be similar to transactional leadership. This means that followers obey the influential leader in order to get compensated. In this way, followers are limited to enhance their knowledge in the organizations, as they only perform the tasks required. These tasks are usually in short terms and there is no need for deep analysis and creativity. Passive management, which by exception is a factor in transactional leadership, is linked to autocratic leadership style (Sunarsi, et al, 2021).

### Employee Commitment

According to management literature, top management views employee commitments and organisational leadership styles as important elements of effective human resource (HR) (Abdelwahed, Soomro & Shah, 2023; Abd-Rahman, 2021). Employee commitment is increased by organisational leadership styles, according to earlier research. According to

Akkaya (2020), organizations that prioritise leadership styles are more likely to have emotionally invested employees. According to other authors (An, et al, 2020; Az, 2017), organisational leadership styles foster a reciprocal social exchange between the workforce and the organisation, wherein the workforce harbours positive intentions and feelings of affection for the organisation.

The term "employee commitments" describes a worker's dedication to the company's objectives, recognition, and corporate values (Belias, Rossidis, Papademetriou & Mantas, 2022). Employee commitment arises from a variety of behavioural manifestations that have been characterised as affective, normative, and continuity commitments in management research. Personal experiences and work-related characteristics are examples of

affective commitment (An, et al, 2020); continuance commitment is the organization's and employees' tenacity in preserving social-exchange relationships (Abd-Rahman, 2021).

Normative commitment is the organization's readiness to provide workforce incentives, both monetary and non-monetary (Akkaya, 2020). Regarding employees' commitments, some studies (Albashiti, et al, 2017) found that this construct was a one-sided concept; thus, other studies (AlKahtani, et al, 2021; Almuzaini & Alfallaj, 2020) institute a multidimensional nature of the variables of employees' commitment (affective, normative and continuance) in assessing their relationship with organizational leadership style. On the basis of the above discuss, the following model was conceptualized:

## Theoretical Framework

The Douglas McGregor Theory X served as the study's pivot. In his 1960 book "Human Side of Enterprise," McGregor was the first to recognise and support the theories X and Y. McGregor's theory has been widely applied in human resource management (HRM) and focuses on what motivates employee (Abd-Rahman, 2021; Akkaya, 2020). Two (2) different attitudes towards labour are explained by the hypothesis (Abdelwahed, Soomro & Shah, 2023). According to the belief, workers should be constantly observed and guided on important duties; management must force and guide workers because the typical worker dislikes their job and would always avoid jobs (Alghamdi, Algarni & Saeed, 2020)

Therefore, leaders must adopt the right leadership style to inspire workers to work if they want to affect their behaviour (satisfaction, commitment, and involvement) and other work-related outcomes (performance, productivity) (Ikhaldi, Mgbemena

& Alghamdi, 2021). According to the concept, a leader who adopts rules and regulations—a characteristic of a transactional leadership style - will be able to enforce compliance at work and not oppose change (Almuzaini & Alfallaj, 2020). Hence, McGregor's theory X could be associated with organizational leadership styles (particularly transformational style of leadership), which shows a pessimistic outlook of employee's nature in the workplace.

## Research Methods

The study employed survey design because it is hinged on the fact that it enables the researcher to obtain information on the perception of people about how organizational styles of leadership influence employee commitment. The population of study comprised the entire employees (academic and non-academic) of College of Education, Warri, Delta State resulting to two hundred and ten (210). On the basis of the study population, a sample of one hundred and twenty-six (126) was drawn; this was made up of seventy-three (73) non-academic staff and fifty-three (53) academic staff.

The study used structured questionnaire as the main data collection instrument; the structured questionnaire used designed to obtain information on two (2) leadership styles -transformational and autocratic and employee commitment. The questionnaire was validated by research supervisor to ensure that items in the questionnaire are able to accurately measure variables of transformational and autocratic leadership styles and employee commitment. Towards ascertaining the reliability of the instrument, a pilot test was carried out on twenty (20) employees of another monotechnic college in Edo State. Data obtained in the pilot test were evaluated using Cronbach alpha and results are shown as follows:

**Table 1: Cronbach Alpha Coefficients**

Parameters	Coefficients	Remark
Employee Commitment	0.87	Reliable
Transformational Leadership Style	0.81	Reliable
Autocratic Leadership Style	0.79	Reliable

**Source: Compiled by the Researcher (2025)**

This study used two (2) measures of organizational leadership style – transformational and autocratic styles of leadership (independent variables) and employee commitment (dependent variable); hence the empirical model is given as shown below:

$$\text{EmComm} = f(\text{Tls}, \text{Als}) \text{eq. 1}$$

$$\text{EmComm}_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Tls}_i + \beta_2 \text{Als}_i + \varepsilon_i \quad \text{eq. 2}$$

Where: EmComm is employee commitment; Tls is transformational leadership style; Als is autocratic leadership style;  $\beta_1$ - $\beta_2$  are coefficients of regression;  $\varepsilon$ : is error term; and i is the employees of monotechnic. In this study, data obtained were analyzed via descriptive, regression diagnostics and inferential

statistical techniques. In specific, the research hypotheses were tested using results obtained from inferential statistics (multiple regression models) and the statistical analysis was carried out with STATA 16.0.

## Results and Discussion

The study administered one hundred and twenty-six (126) copies of questionnaire to both academic and non-academic staffs in College of Education, Warri, Delta State, out of which one hundred and ten (110) were fully retrieved/completed; the results are presented as follows:

**Table 2: Respondents' Demographic Variables**

S/N	Variables	Items	N=110	Percentage
1	Gender	Male	66	60.0%
		Female	44	40.0%
		Total	110	100%
2	Marital Status	Single	23	19.1%
		Married	83	75.5%
		Others	4	5.4%
		Total	110	100%
3	Educational qualification	WASC/SSCE/GCE	19	17.3%
		NCE/OND	24	21.8%
		B.Sc./HND	23	20.9%
		Postgraduate Degrees	44	40.0%
		Total	110	100%
4.	Category	Academic Staff	69	62.7%
		Non-Academic Staff	41	37.3%
		Total	110	100%

Source: Compiled by the Researcher (2025)

Table 2 revealed that 66(60%) and 44(40%) of the respondents were males and females respectively; this indicates that majority of the respondents were males. The marital status revealed that majority of respondents were married representing 83(75.5%), 23(19.1%) were single while the remaining respondents representing 4(5.4%) were either divorced or separated but still living with their spouse.

Furthermore, it was found that 19(17.3%) of the respondents had obtained WASC/SSCE /GCE qualification while 24(21.8%) had obtained NCE/OND. On the other hand, it was found that 23(20.9%) had obtained B.Sc./HND while majority of the respondents representing 44(40%) had obtained postgraduate degrees.

**Table 3: Summary Statistics**

Variables	Mean	Standard Dev.	Min. Value	Max. Value
Employee Commitment	2.8991	0.0439	1	4
Transformational Leadership	2.9302	0.0378	1	4
Autocratic Leadership	2.6700	0.0522	1	4

Source: Compiled by the Researcher (2025)

Table 3 revealed that variables of employee commitment (mean = 2.8991) and styles of organizational leadership – transformational leadership (mean = 2.9302) and autocratic leadership (mean = 2.6700) scored above 2.5 cut-off point of mean;

this indicates among others that respondents perceived and agreed that the style of organizational leadership can influence employee commitment.

**Table 4: Pearson Correlation Matrix**

Variables	Employee Commitment	Transformational Leadership	Autocratic Leadership
Employee Commitment	1.0000		
Transformational Leadership	0.0722	1.0000	
Autocratic Leadership	-0.0817	0.0626	1.0000

Source: Compiled by the Researcher (2025)

Table 4 revealed that coefficients of Pearson were 0.0722 (transformational) and 0.0817 (autocratic);this indicates that while there is positive correlation between transformational leadership

style and employee commitment, a negative relationship was found between autocratic leadership style and employee commitment

**Table 5: Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)**

Variables	VIF	1/VIF
Autocratic Leadership	1.07	0.9345
Transformational Leadership	1.02	0.9803
VIF (Mean)	1.05	

**Source: Compiled by the Researcher (2025)**

Table 5 revealed that VIF (mean) is 1.05, which is less than accepted VIF (mean) of 10; this show an absence of multicollinearity in the multiple regression models of the study.

**Table 6: Multiple Regression Results**

R-Squared	0.880	R-Squared Adj.	0.870	F-Value = 17.22
				Prob. F = 0.000
Transform. Leadership = 9.77		Autocratic Leadership = -6.04		Constant = 14.22
Coefficient = 0.4028		Coefficient = -0.2173		Coefficient 0.6029
Probability = 0.0000		Probability = 0.0000		Probability 0.0000

**Source: Compiled by the Researcher (2025)**

The R-squared is 0.880, indicating that variables of organizational leadership styles (autocratic and transformational) jointly explained 88 percent of the systematic variations in employee commitment; this implies that the empirical model provides a good fit to the data. The regression coefficients were 0.4028 (transformational leadership) and -0.2173 (autocratic leadership); this implies that a unit increase in transformational leadership style would result to 40 percent increase in employee commitment. On the other hand, a unit increase in autocratic leadership style would lead to 22 percent decrease in employee commitment. Furthermore, F-value is 17.22 with probability value of 0.000; this indicates that organizational leadership styles (transformational and autocratic) jointly affect employee commitment in Monotechnic College.

The t-value for transformational leadership style and employee commitment is 9.77 with probability of 0.000 which is less than 0.05 percent significance level; this means that there is significant positive relationship between transformational leadership style and employee commitment. Also, the t-value for autocratic leadership style and employee commitment -6.04 with probability value of 0.000 which is less than 0.05 percent significance level; this implies that there is significant relationship between autocratic leadership style and employee commitment

The results revealed that transformational leadership style contributes significantly positively to increased employee commitment. However, when it comes to autocratic leadership style, it significantly negatively decreases the level of employee commitment. These results support prior studies carried out on leadership styles on the stern positive relationship with employee commitment; these studies include Hilton, Madilo, Awaah and Arkorful (2023); and Khan, Rehmat, Butt, Farooqi and Asim, (2020).

Furthermore, Klein (2023) found similar results by showing that organizational leadership styles and organizational support influence employee behaviours. Our results findings agree with the theoretical explanation of McGregor X that for organizational leaders to be able to influence employee commitment and

satisfaction, they need to use suitable style of leadership in motivating employees to work, thus enhancing employee commitment level; these findings however, have significant implications for organization management.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

The objective of this study was to investigated whether transactional and autocratic leadership styles influence employee commitment in monotechnics in Delta State of Nigeria. Questionnaire was the major data collection instrument which was administered to academic and non-academic staff in College of Education, Warri, Delta State. The study used two (2) leadership styles – transactional and autocratic and data obtained were analyzed via descriptive, regression diagnostics and inferential statistical tools. The study concludes from the multiple regression results that while transformational leadership style significantly positively influence employee commitment, autocratic style of leadership significantly negatively influence commitments of academic and non-academic staffs in monotechnics. On the basis of the findings, the study recommends the following:

- That management of monotechnics should possess transformational leadership style that can encourage academic and non-academic staff in realizing significant outcomes on the job and leader-employee exchange benefits, which would in turn result to increased employee commitment.
- Management of monotechnics should further discourage the use of autocratic leadership style as it would decrease staff self-confidence on the job as well as decreasing efficiency in decision-making.

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