

Enhancing universities students' performance through level advisers' leadership qualities

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Abstract

Purpose – Teachers at all levels of the education system are expected to model leadership qualities to students. Leadership qualities of level advisers (LAs) are regarded as charismatic, pragmatic, ideological and innovative (CPII) in this study. This study compared the leadership qualities of LAs in universities in Nigeria as perceived by students. The purpose of this paper is to compare the leadership qualities of LAs in universities in Nigeria as perceived by students.

Design/methodology/approach – A survey-comparative design of a quantitative research approach was used. Two universities were purposively selected and the convenience sampling method was applied to select 207 participants.

Findings – Findings revealed that LAs of the private university exhibit a slightly higher level of leadership qualities than those from the public university based on the students' assessment ($t(207) = 2.19$ and $\rho = 0.029 < 0.05$).

Research limitations/implications – The study concluded that universities should organise regular workshops for LAs on innovative leadership to stimulate 21st-century learners to achieve their educational objectives.

Practical implications – It is therefore recommended that universities should organise a regular workshop for LAs on an innovative leadership model that promotes 21st century students to achieve their educational objectives.

Originality/value – In practice, the study of this kind is timely, given that academic advisers or advisers are very influential on student achievement and success. Thus, the outcome will educate the academic advisers on the leadership qualities that will enhance their role in the 21st century. In addition, it will add to the literature on university LAs' leadership skills in Nigeria and other nations of Africa. Most literature available in the context is mainly from America.

Keywords Level advisers, Leadership qualities, Charismatic, Pragmatic, Ideological, Innovative, Students

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

In all educational institution settings, some individuals assume leadership as in other formal organisations. In Nigeria, these individuals vary from the heads of the institution, unit heads, unions, student union leaders, class captains and level advisers (LAs). The LA's role involves coordinating, directing, monitoring, guiding and influencing the behaviour of students towards the attainment of educational goals. The academic advising (AA) initiative had been conceptualised by many scholars in education and students' academic advisory (McConnell, 2018). The National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) (2020) opined AA is a role played by university representatives called academic advisors. They provide insight or guidance in the form of information, suggestion, counselling, coaching, mentoring or teaching to undergraduate students at university on socio-academic matters. The AA is conceived as a



process in which the advisor (LA) and advisee (student) have a real-time relationship regarding students' concerns (Engelbrecht, 2022). In an ideal situation, the LA in the university system serves as a teacher and model in an interactive relationship to enhance the student's self-awareness and fulfilment.

Researchers observed from personal experience that LAs at private universities have cordial student–teacher relationships when compared with public universities. Leadership is a component in the life transformation process. Leadership in the context of AA, leadership with a transformational approach can induce possible transformation in the students' attitudes and behaviours and build a commitment towards academic success (Kelly, 2017). Nwokolo *et al.* (2010) study showed that AA does not significantly differ between the mean scores of state-owned and federal-owned universities.

Level advising plays a fundamental role in reducing student dropout and promoting success at tertiary institutions across the globe to meet the new realities of students, especially in this century (Sutter and Francis, 2022; Tudor, 2018). The AA, referred to as the level advisor in Nigeria, could be equated with teaching, mentoring, counselling, modelling and coaching (Emekako and van der Westhuizen, 2021). The quality of level advising provided by faculty members to students is a key to the successful attainment of students in higher institutions, regardless of the type of ownership of the institution. Thus, the quality of AA is found to be related to students' academic performance. Of all these studies, none has considered the qualities of LAs from leadership perspectives in Nigerian higher institutions that this study focussed on. The LAs play significant roles in students' academic success in university settings. Beyond being a role model to students, an LA provides leadership roles such as assisting students in course registration, academic support, result collation, counselling and monitoring students' academic progress to enable students to achieve their educational goals.

In most of sub-Saharan Africa, the establishment of private universities is a growing phenomenon (Tamrat, 2017). Scholars such as Tatlah and Iqbal (2012) advanced a model that shows that school types, either public or private, play a significant role in the school head teacher and deputy head teacher's leadership styles. This implies that, head teachers' styles of leadership vary between public and private schools significantly. However, Wote (2014) reported that public and private schools do not significantly differ in their practical leadership styles. These, amongst others, justify the reason for investigating the differences in LAs' leadership qualities between public and private universities.

Female leadership success was found to differ from male leadership success (Siddikov, 2021; Paustian-Underdahl *et al.*, 2014). Female leaders have several qualities that make them successful. For societal transformation to accelerate, female leadership is crucial in the workplace and at home. By integrating work and family, female leaders are more likely to be engaged and promising (Gomathy *et al.*, 2022). Viewing leadership qualities from the perspective of subordinates, Moreno *et al.* (2021) found no perceived difference between men and women when it comes to the qualities of a leader. The question is are gender and school type related to the leadership qualities of LAs? Based on these, the study examined the leadership qualities of LA in Nigerian universities. Gender and leadership require a well-thought-out approach and deliberation because of transformation, globalisation, and socio-personal are realities of the 21st century (Eklund *et al.*, 2017). The findings of the study conducted by Karunarathna and Jayatilake (2016) showed no statistical basis to justify gender differences between male and female administrative staff leadership styles' effectiveness in public universities of Sri Lanka. This is different from the current study that focussed on academic staff who play the role of academic advisers in both public and private universities.

Study objective

The study investigated the differences in leadership qualities of LAs in private and public universities as perceived by students.

Research questions (RQs)

To achieve the stated research objective of the study, the RQs below were formulated:

- RQ1. What is the level of leadership qualities amongst LAs in private and public universities?
- RQ2. What are the leadership qualities amongst LAs in the private and public universities?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were generated to guide the study:

- H1. The level of LAs' leadership qualities does not differ significantly based on university types.
- H2. A significant difference does not exist in the students' perception of their LAs' leadership qualities based on their gender.
- H3. The leadership qualities of male and female LAs are not significantly different as perceived by students.

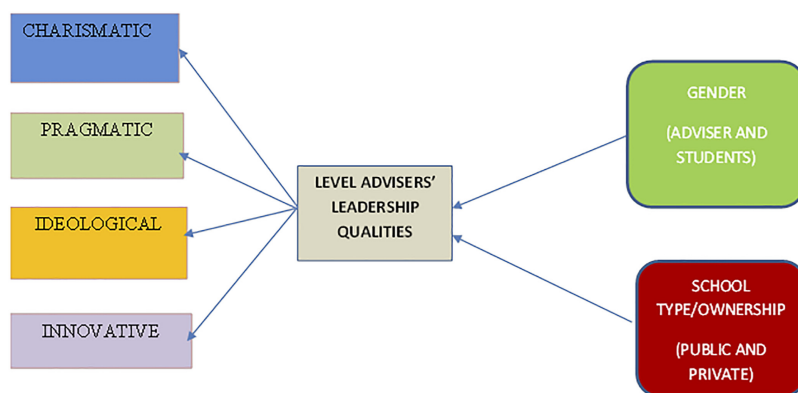
Theoretical framework

The success of educational institutions relies heavily on leadership (Chow *et al.*, 2017). Leadership theories provide insights into leadership concepts (Chow *et al.*, 2017). Academic leadership, transformational leadership, charismatic leadership and strategic leadership are all leadership theories within higher education institutions (Ghasemy and Hussin, 2014). Thus, charismatic leadership model was established to be commonly used in tertiary institutions. There are three distinct leadership styles: charismatic, ideological and pragmatic (CIP) (Griffith *et al.*, 2018). Varieties of circumstances operating at the individual, organisational, group and environmental levels, which are situational, affect each of these types of leaders (Crayne and Medeiros, 2021; Wang *et al.*, 2022). A leader who brings innovation to a situation introduces a novel concept, technique or process. This is a way of addressing current issues and meeting future needs (Nakkubua *et al.*, 2022). Leading with innovation modifies the relationship between leadership and performance (Bourini *et al.*, 2022). Based on these, the study adopted a charismatic, ideological, innovative and pragmatic (CIIP) model to underline the study in order to evaluate leadership qualities of universities LAs possessed as perceived by undergraduate students. Higher education institutions can benefit from adopting an innovative-oriented leadership approach in the 21st century environment. It thus implies that the CIIP model of leadership will be a good approach for leading students in the 21st century. This will allow LAs to bring innovative, ideological, pragmatic and charismatic approaches to the administration of students to attain academic success.

Level advisers' leadership qualities model

LAs' leadership qualities are conceptualised in this study as charismatic, pragmatic, ideological and innovative (CPII), as shown in Figure 1. This study assessed academics LAs' leadership qualities as rated by students to gender (advisers and students) and the school type (public or private).

Leadership qualities are the personal attributes that make up effective leadership. These qualities include values, traits, motives, habits, style, character, behaviours and skills. There are three distinct leadership styles: charismatic, ideological, and pragmatic (CIP) (Griffith *et al.*, 2018). CIIP models are based on the differences between the four types of leaders in terms of how they gather, process and make sense of information (Griffith *et al.*, 2018).



Source(s): Authors' developed

Figure 1. LAs' leadership qualities model

Williams (2015) submitted that educational leaders must be innovative, creative, pragmatic and charismatic. Leaders must be able to produce a variety of approaches to work and passionate towards the achievement of the educational goals for globalisation with comparative advantage. Therefore, it implies that the LA as an educational leader/counsellor requires a CIIP approach in helping students attain educational goals.

Charismatic leaders are possessed with a definite vision of tomorrow (Daş et al., 2022). Meanwhile, leaders with ideological approaches are known in chaotic situations (Tashanov, 2022). On the other hand, pragmatic leaders adopt an approach that focuses on identifying problems and supply appropriate solution to them (Kuan, 2017). The concept of innovation is transformation that brings new dimension to performance (Beyene et al., 2016). Innovative leadership refers to leaders who are able to find creative approaches to implementing solutions to complex problems or opportunities (Nakkubua et al., 2022). Innovation is not necessarily an idea wholly unknown but something with a new dimension that gears to attain a specific goal (Kozioł-Nadolna, 2020). Hence, innovative LAs provide innovative strategies to address issues, foster an inspirational and motivational atmosphere with the students and find creative ways to overcome obstacles.

Methodology

Research design

A quantitative research approach was adopted. A survey design of a comparative approach was used (Glasow, 2005). This was done to establish if the leadership qualities – charismatic, ideological, pragmatic and innovative – of LAs vary based on the school type and gender.

Population, sample size and sampling procedures

There are six universities in the state used for this study. These comprise two public (federal and state) and four privates owned universities. Two universities, one public and one private, were purposively sampled based on the years of their establishment. The public university in the sample was established in the year 1975 as the first university in the area where this study took place. The selected private university was established in the year 2005 as the first private university in the state selected for this study. Aside from their relative years of operation, the two universities were chosen based on the researchers' prior knowledge. The target universe for the study comprised all students of the two selected universities. The population of the participants is 37,543 students. Stratified and convenience sampling

approaches were used with the aid of the Taro Yamane sample size formula $n = \frac{N}{(1+N(e)^2)}$ (Uakarn *et al.*, 2010, 2021, p. 78) to select 410 students across the selected universities. The sample of 220 respondents from the public university and 190 from the private university were selected.

Instrument

A validated questionnaire tagged “Leadership Qualities of Level Advisers Questionnaire” (LQLAQ) was used to elicit information from the participants. A questionnaire is considered valid when experts on the research subject who examine it (Bolarinwa, 2015) confirm its face validity. Senior lecturers carried out the face and content validity of the instrument as experts in educational management, and evaluation and measurement. Their rating in terms of ambiguity, relevancy, readability, structure and clarity of items was done. Cohen’s Kappa index was used to estimate for the expert rating. With the inter-rater between 0.6 and 0.7 upward is acceptable (Siraj *et al.*, 2021) Yusoff (2019). Therefore, the weak items with index less than 0.6 were reworded and restructured. In addition, some of the raters’ comments were taken into consideration during the final revision.

To establish the construct validity, exploratory factor analysis was done with the aid of R software. Parallel analysis suggests that the number of factors is four. The scree plot is displayed below Figure 2:

The instrument’s reliability was determined using Cronbach alpha (0.85 coefficient) and ordinal alpha (0.76 coefficient). The two results were found reliable since alpha values were above 0.7. Therefore, the scale has an excellent internal consistency (DeVellis, 2003; Pallant, 2011; Viladrich *et al.*, 2017). A number of items that could lead to acquiescence, social desire, habituation and confirmation bias were reworded to avoid bias in participant responses. In addition, the instrument was administered by class representatives without the researcher’s involvement. Researchers did not have any influence on respondents’ responses to avoid bias during data collection and analysis. To avoid influencing respondents’ responses, the constructs of the questionnaire items were removed. Respondents and researchers were not personally acquainted.

Data analysis process

Descriptive statistics of mean, standard deviation and rank ordering were used for RQs 1 and 2, while the hypotheses formulated were tested using *t* test. The *t* test was used to test the three hypotheses formulated in order to compare means of LAs’ leadership qualities based on their (students’ gender, LAs’ gender and the school type). One of the assumptions on the underline

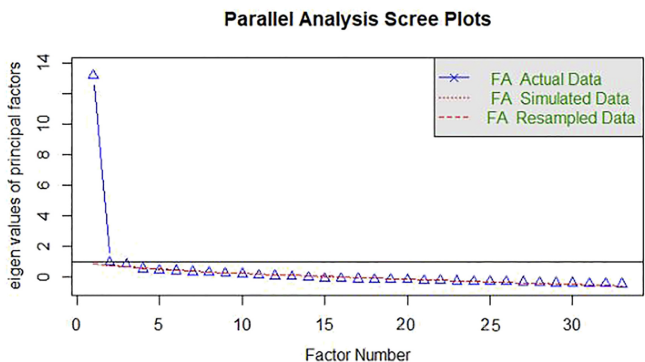


Figure 2.
The scree plot is displayed below

use of the *t* test states that the independent variable must vary at one level while dependent variable must be at the interval levels (Pallant, 2011). After data collection and screening, only 209 copies of the questionnaire were found useful, with a response rate of 50.47%.

Result

Data analysis results were presented as follows:

Based on Table 1, 43.1% of respondents were female and 56.9% were male, with 53.6% enrolled in a public university and 46.4% enrolled in a private university. Over 28.2% of the participants were 200-level undergraduate students, while 23.9% were 100-level students. In terms of the LAs' gender, 73.2% were male and 26.8% were female.

RQ1. What is the level of leadership qualities amongst LAs in private and public universities?

To answer RQ1, data based on sample responses on students' LA's leadership qualities were collated and described as shown in Table 1 using descriptive statistics of the mean rating.

The result in Table 2 indicated that both public and private universities' LAs have a high level of leadership qualities. However, private university's LAs have a slightly higher level of leadership qualities ($\bar{x} = 30.76$) than their counterparts from the public university ($\bar{x} = 28.71$). Hence, this implies that the LAs of private university exhibit better leadership qualities than those from public university based on the students' assessment.

RQ2. What are the leadership qualities amongst LAs in the private and public universities?

RQ 2 was answered using the rank order based on students' responses on their LAs' leadership qualities, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3 helped to consider the constructs used to measure leadership qualities amongst the LAs. These attributes were conceptualised as the CIPI model. Charismatic quality was rated as prominent, followed by pragmatic quality in both universities sampled, with the

Respondents' characteristics	N	%
<i>Students/Respondents</i>		
Male	119	56.9
Female	90	43.1
Total	209	100.0
<i>The school type</i>		
Public	112	53.6
Private	97	46.4
Total	209	100.0
<i>Present academic level</i>		
100 level	50	23.9
200 level	59	28.2
300 level	48	23.0
400 level	38	18.2
500 level	14	6.7
Total	209	100.0
<i>Level advisers' gender</i>		
Male	153	73.2
Female	56	26.8
Total	209	100.0

Table 1.
Respondents'
characteristics

private university taking the lead. The innovative quality of the LAs was rated lowest amongst the leadership qualities in public universities, while the ideological quality of the LAs was rated lowest in the private university.

H0. The level of LAs' leadership qualities does not differ significantly based on university types.

The researchers investigate if there is a significant difference in leadership qualities of LAs based on types of university in the study area. Responses from the students' perception of their LAs' leadership qualities were collated and analysed using a *t* test, as revealed in Table 4.

The mean scores for public and private universities are significantly ($M = 114.83$ and Standard Deviation ($SD = 29.67$); ($M = 123.07$ and $SD = 24.44$); $t(207) = 2.19$ and $\rho = 0.029$). The significance was established as $\rho = 0.029$ that was less than 0.05 level of significance. This means the leadership qualities of LAs in the public university was different from that of

Table 2.
Level of the leadership qualities amongst LAs in selected universities

Leadership qualities	<i>N</i>	Public Mean (\bar{x})	Std. D	<i>N</i>	Private Mean (\bar{x})	Std. D
Charismatic	112	51.31	13.45	97	54.76	12.35
Ideological	112	13.99	3.67	97	13.78	3.85
Pragmatic	112	35.98	10.62	97	39.86	9.81
Innovative	112	13.55	4.38	97	14.65	4.32
<i>Average mean</i>	<i>112</i>	<i>28.71</i>	<i>8.03</i>	<i>97</i>	<i>30.76</i>	<i>7.58</i>

Note(s): Decision Rule: low = 0–13, moderate = 14–27 and high = 28–41

Table 3.
Leadership qualities amongst LAs in the selected universities

Leadership qualities	<i>N</i>	Public			<i>N</i>	Private		
		Mean (\bar{x})	Std. D	Rank		Mean (\bar{x})	Std. D	Rank
Charismatic	112	51.31	13.45	First	97	54.76	12.35	First
Ideological	112	13.99	3.67	Third	97	13.78	3.85	Fourth
Pragmatic	112	35.98	10.62	Second	97	39.86	9.81	Second
Innovative	112	13.55	4.38	Fourth	97	14.65	4.32	Third
<i>Average mean</i>	<i>112</i>	<i>28.71</i>	<i>8.03</i>		<i>97</i>	<i>30.76</i>	<i>7.58</i>	

Table 4.
LAs' leadership qualities based on types of universities

Leadership qualities	The school type	<i>F</i>	Mean	STD	SEM	<i>t</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>p</i>	Decision
	Private	97	54.76	10.71	1.08				
Ideological	Public	112	13.99	3.67	0.34	0.387	208	0.699	Accepted
	Private	97	13.78	4.06	0.41				
Pragmatic	Public	112	35.98	10.62	1.00	2.95	208	0.004	Rejected
	Private	97	39.86	8.36	0.84				
Innovative	Public	112	13.55	4.38	0.41	1.85	208	0.065	Accepted
	Private	97	14.65	4.20	0.42				
<i>Total</i>	<i>Public</i>	<i>112</i>	<i>114.83</i>	<i>29.67</i>	<i>2.80</i>	<i>2.19</i>	<i>208</i>	<i>0.029</i>	<i>Rejected</i>
	<i>Private</i>	<i>97</i>	<i>123.07</i>	<i>24.44</i>	<i>2.48</i>				

Note(s): Significant @ $\rho < 0.05$

the private university. This implies that the LAs of private universities have better leadership qualities than their counterparts from the public university.

Table 4 showed the LAs' charismatic leadership quality is significant difference between the two types of universities $\bar{x} = 3.45$; and $t(208) = 2.06$ and $\rho 0.04 < 0.5$. The significant difference was ascertained as $\rho = 0.04$ that was less than 0.05 threshold. The mean difference of 34.5% occurs between public and private universities, respectively. It shows that the charismatic leadership quality of LAs was better in private universities than that of public university. Meanwhile, a significant difference was not found in the ideological leadership quality of LAs of the public university ($M = 13.99$ and $SD = 3.67$) and the private university ($M = 13.78$ and $SD = 4.06$); $t(208) = 0.387$ and $\rho 0.699 > 0.5$. By implication, the ideological leadership quality of LAs in public universities was not different from the LAs from private universities; thus, LAs of both universities share ideological leadership qualities in the administration of their AA.

Moreover, it was indicated that LAs' pragmatic leadership quality is statistically and significantly different between the two universities $\bar{x} = 3.88$; $t(207) = 2.95$ and $\rho 0.004, < 0.5$. The magnitude of mean difference implies that private university LAs manifest the pragmatic leadership quality more than public university LAs in performing their roles.

In addition, the result showed a statistical variation in the LAs' innovative leadership quality in public and private universities' LAs $\bar{x} = 1.10$; $t(207) = 1.85$ and $\rho 0.065 < 0.5$. The magnitude of the mean difference implies that private university's LAs exhibit greater innovative leadership qualities than their public university counterparts.

H1. Significant difference does not exist between male and female students on their perception of LAs' leadership qualities.

In order to test H1, students' perceptions of LAs leadership qualities were collated and analysed. The data collected were tested to determine if students' perceptions of their LAs' leadership qualities vary between males and females, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5 revealed that significant difference does not exist between the male and female students' perception of LAs leadership qualities; $t(208) = 0.037$ and $\rho 0.970 > 0.5$. Since the calculated significance (0.97) is greater than the critical alpha level of significance (0.05), it was shown that male and female students' perception was not significantly different on LAs leadership qualities. Therefore, it implies that students' gender does not influence their perception of the LAs' leadership qualities.

H2. Male and female LAs' leadership qualities do not make a significant difference as perceived by students.

Table 6 showed that LAs' leadership qualities do not differ statistically based on their gender as perceived by students $t(208) = 1.36$ and $\rho 0.175 > 0.05$ coefficient. Thus, the p value was

Students' gender	<i>N</i>	Mean	SD	SEM	<i>t</i>	Df	<i>p</i>	Decision
Male	153	118.72	27.78	2.54	0.037	207	0.970	Accept
Female	56	118.57	27.55	2.90				

Note(s): Significant @ $\rho > 0.05$

Table 5.
Difference between male and female students' perception of LAs' leadership qualities

LAs' gender	<i>N</i>	Mean	SD	SEM	<i>t</i>	Df	<i>p</i>	Decision
Male	103	120.22	27.39	2.54	1.36	208	0.175	Accept
Female	22	114.37	28.00	2.90				

Note(s): Significant @ $\rho > 0.05$

Table 6.
Difference between male and female LAs' leadership qualities

greater than 0.05 thresholds; the null hypothesis was accepted. It is evident that male and female LAs were not different in their leadership qualities based on the students' perceptions.

Discussions of findings

Table 2 indicated that the level of LAs' leadership qualities was high both in public and private universities selected. LAs in the private university have a slightly higher level of leadership qualities ($\bar{x} = 30.76$) than their counterparts from the public university ($\bar{x} = 28.71$). This means that the LAs of the private university exhibit better leadership qualities than those from the public university based on the students' assessment. Despite the slight difference between the LAs' leadership qualities in the public and private universities, there is room for improvement of LAs in their leadership approach to AA. The difference could be a result of the close relationship between lecturers at private universities with their students. In addition, it is imperative to know that students' enrolment in private universities is smaller compared to the enrolment in public universities. The management styles or structure of private universities is different from those of the public university that may affect the leadership approach of the LAs. In the same vein, private universities are run mainly for profit making. Every staff is a manager and should cultivate good human relations with students (customers) to enhance retention and patronage by the students. The result contradicts Wote (2014), found out that no significant difference in the practical leadership styles based on school type. Regardless of the university type, effective LA leadership quality will enhance students' motivation to learn or help students achieve their educational objectives and promote the university's productivity and development (Kuan, 2017). It thus implies that quality of leadership manifested by the LAs is related to the type of organisation they work with.

The charismatic leadership quality was rated as the most prominent leadership quality possessed by LAs in the sampled universities. Charismatic leaders propose future goals with clear vision and responsibility that will impact on their subordinates' action (Kuan, 2017; Crayne and Medeiros, 2021). This leadership quality attracts students and inspires them to learn. Those LAs that manifest charismatic leadership communicate effectively and are mature in handling students' issues and humble to attach value to each student by listening to students' concerns (Kuan, 2017). Furthermore, these LAs are confident and engage in self-monitoring and self-developing (Kuan, 2017). It, therefore, shows that LA with charismatic quality may likely provide students with assistance that will enable them to achieve their educational goals.

The LAs were pragmatic in their advising role in the universities in the study, with private universities taking the lead. Pragmatic LAs build legitimacy through honest relationships with students and positive people with truthful self-concepts in every situation. Pragmatic leaders are authentic leaders who are genuine, sensitive to others, socialise their ideas with students and truthful in their approaches to matters (Kuan, 2017). Pragmatic leaders are seldom regarded as functional problem solvers who focus on circumstances and people with the goal of providing answers to problems (Wang *et al.*, 2022). It implies that LAs of private universities are authentic, sensitive and focus on students and situations in discharging their AA roles compared to their counterparts at the public university.

Ideological leadership was identified as third and fourth in the leadership qualities of LAs of the sampled universities. The ideological LAs provide ideas in relations to their experience of the past rather than the future in their AA. They are emotionally reminiscent, "tradition-oriented that emphasise a shared collective past and the values and standards necessary for a just society" in their relationship with students (Strange and Mumford, 2002; Koziol-Nadolna, 2020). By implication, an ideal LA will relate their experiences and support to students to solve academic challenges.

LAs in public universities are perceived as having lower innovative leadership quality than their counterparts in private universities. This may be a contributing factor to the underperformance of public universities. An innovative leader is conceived to be the ability of an individual to form a vision, share the vision and transform the vision into reality (Nakkubua *et al.*, 2022). According to Essien *et al.* (2015), to increase graduates' output in the universities, school improvement and educational innovation are imperative service to be provided to students. Thus, LAs as agents of quality education should be innovative in their leadership approach to promote quality graduates.

The hypothesis tested indicated that the leadership qualities of LAs in public universities were different from that of the private university. This degree of difference confirmed the descriptive result in Table 3. The difference could be because of management styles, institutional structure and policy, school enrolment, amongst others. Mehta and Mahajan (2012) submitted that LAs are responsible for leading and providing students with bearing on how to accomplish educational objectives. This finding supports Onongha (2018) who reported that leadership approaches of principals differ based on the school type. Moral integrity as one of the leadership qualities of LA is essential to the quality student administration. By implication, LAs of the private university demonstrate better leadership qualities than their counterparts from the public university.

Meanwhile, male and female students perceived the leadership qualities of their LAs the same way. This implies that gender factors may not count in assessing the leadership quality of LAs. The result supports the report of Paustian-Underdahi *et al.* (2014) that considering all leadership contexts, gender of subordinates does not differ in their perception of leadership effectiveness. In addition, Karunarathna and Jayatilake (2016) found that the gender of administrative staff's leadership styles does not differ in the public university used. Gender of students will not influence their perception of LAs' leadership qualities.

It was also revealed that male and female LAs were not significantly different in their leadership qualities based on the students' perceptions. This contradicts findings by Paustian-Underdahi *et al.* (2014) that females were rated to have significant effective leadership over their male counterparts. In comparison, this study corroborates with Karunarathna and Jayatilake (2016) that managers are not significantly different in their leadership style based on their gender. This means that leadership qualities are not gender oriented in the context of AA performed by LAs in the selected universities as perceived by the students.

Conclusion

In this study, we investigated leadership qualities amongst LAs in private and public universities as perceived by students. Compared to the public university, the private university's LAs demonstrate better leadership qualities based on the students' evaluations. Additionally, students' perceptions showed no difference between male and female LAs in leadership qualities.

Limitations and suggestions for further studies

A quantitative approach and post-positivism paradigm were used in the study. One of the limitations of this study was the inadequate representation of the intended population. Results could have been inaccurate because of the proportion of private and public undergraduates who took the survey. Thus, future research can be conducted using a qualitative approach to have an in-depth understanding of LA's leadership qualities. Also, confirmatory analysis can be conducted to strengthen the constructs of the leadership model used in this study. Most literature available in the context is mainly from America. For further

study, it is suggested that the leadership quality model adopted in this study can be used as correlate to students' academic achievement. Lastly, future research can be done to establish the nexus between the CIIP model leadership qualities and LA's effectiveness with moderating effect of the school type.

Recommendations

Reference to the findings, it is summarised that LAs as leaders and role models are expected to demonstrate some leadership attributes that will enable students to attain their educational goals. These leadership attributes expected of the LAs are tagged as the CIIP model. Regardless of school types, charismatic leadership was used mainly by the LAs of the selected universities, while innovative leadership was placed on the lower ladder of the model. It is therefore recommended that universities should organise a regular workshop for LAs on an innovative leadership model that promote 21st century students to achieve their educational objectives. It is further recommended that LAs as models should be pragmatic leaders in their approach to AA and solving students' academic problems.

Another recommendation is that LAs should conceive their roles as acts of parenting, counselling and modelling that require charismatic and innovative leadership approaches. Furthermore, the LAs are to develop the innovative quality of leadership by creating creative ways of overcoming academic obstacles faced by students and provide innovative strategies to issues.

LA should be encouraged as an agent of educational change in the university system. LAs are to see themselves as leaders and adopt the leadership qualities in this study regardless of their school types to promote students' educational goal achievement. In practice, the study of this kind is timely, given that academic advisers or advisers are very influential on student achievement and success. Thus, the outcome will educate the academic advisers on the leadership qualities (the CIIP model) that will enhance their role in the 21st century. For policy change, the variation in the perceived innovative and pragmatic qualities of the private university LAs over public universities could be driven by the culture, size, ownership, mission statement and operation of the universities. It implies that the private universities' policy is guided by the customer's value approach being profit-making institutions. This requires LAs to be innovative and pragmatic in their dealing with students. The LAs of the public universities could adopt this approach. In addition, it will add to the literature on university level advisers' leadership skills in Nigeria and other nations of Africa.

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