

A Critical Ranking of the Various Leadership Skills use as Motivational Strategies for Construction Managers in Anambra State

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Abstract – Good leadership in construction is a result of the effective use and implementation of important skills such as: Understanding the needs and characteristics of the post, knowing and using the resources of the group effectively, effective communication and planning, and controlling team performance. The study aim to carry out a critical ranking of the various leadership skills use as motivational strategies for Construction Managers in Anambra State. To achieve this, the study examine leadership Skills as Motivational Strategies for Enhancing Construction Managers Performance. The study adopted descriptive survey design by distributing 60 well-structured questionnaires. The 40 retrieved and analyzed responses shows that there are five (5) non-negotiable leadership skills that every construction organisation in Nnewi, Awka, and Onitsha must take into consideration. These five (5) skills are top motivators for improved project delivery and performance in Anambra State. For the organisation to maximize their construction manager productivity, then first of importance is their ability to communicate effectively, plan for the required result, be flexible in operations, be able to take a risk, and while executing any project, focus on the process, not just the goal. The examined leadership skills metrics to be used by construction stakeholders as a motivational tool for construction managers in Anambra State for increased productivity and retention of construction employees.

Keywords – Leadership skills, motivational strategies, Construction Managers, Performance.

I. INTRODUCTION

According to the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, CIMA (2001), they identify leadership skills development is an important managerial quality for any organization's success in the present, the future, and in changing global scenery. Technical or hard skills are often over-emphasized; truly, it is a foundation that will get an average construction manager a job; however, it's his /her leadership skill that will sustain both technical and human management coordination skills. The institute report identifies leadership skills to include direction-oriented skills, drive-to-execute skills, relationship skills, and management systems. For any construction organization to function as intended, implementing via developed leadership skills framework and upgrading existing leadership skills become important to motivating construction managers who will drive workers-based organizational performance or project delivery (CIMA, 2001). This study aims to critically rank the various leadership skills use as motivational strategies for Construction Managers in the study area to improve effective project delivery in Anambra State.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Leadership Skills as Motivational Strategies for Enhancing Construction Managers' Performance

According to Adrian (2004), the reasons for reduced construction productivity are, Clients or the industry focus on short-term results rather than long-term results. This focus on the short term is due to the industry's focus on project profits. Such a focus

may lead to frustration if efforts are not made to improve productivity; it is important to note that productivity improvement is often a long-term result. Secondly, the belief that for a new program or effort to work; “top management or top leadership” have to support the program and drives the program whereas the “Managers”, not “leaders”, frequently are the ones that administer productivity improvement programs but the top leadership must develop important leadership skills like planning, directing, measuring, and monitoring. A construction manager must possess vision, motivation, team building, pride, and trust in administering these productivity programs. Adrain (2004), explains how a construction manager with developed “leadership skills” will have enhanced construction productivity, he identified such skills and requirements like:

1. Idea Driven and are Visionaries
2. Focus on Processes and Planning for the Desired Result
3. Being a Team Builder; Seeking and Obtaining Consensus from Participants
4. Consistent, But Flexible
5. Not Accepting Failure, Not Whiners or Blamers but Problem Solvers and Opportunists.

According to Gharehbaghi and Mcmanus (2003), good leadership in construction is a result of the effective use and implementation of important skills such as: Understanding the needs and characteristics of the post, Knowing and using the resources of the group effectively, effective communication and planning, and controlling team performance. According to Sousa, Maria-José, and Rocha, Álvaro(2019), there are many leadership styles, and skills expected of a construction manager; the study recommended the use of game-based learning (GBL) because of how it boosts learning and knowledge development. They identify that under a collaborative adoption of GBL; primary, and leadership skills like motivation, facilitation, coaching, mindset changing, and communication are easily passed to the construction managers; the study related games situations with organizational life as a form of simulations.

Radhika (2020), identifies common leadership skills such as communication, motivation, creativity, positivity, feedback, delegating, trustworthiness, work ethics, conscientiousness, and dispute settlement. The study by Radhika (2020) further added that developing and implementing effective leadership skills should base on job duties, situations involved, Goals, objectives to be pursued, as well as client demands. Taking such a developmental initiative will be beneficial to internal and external organizational stakeholders.

Every organization must therefore hone the leadership skills of their construction managers so that they can attain personal and corporate success. According to Odusami (2002); Long, Ogunlana, and Lan (2004), the subject of leadership skills in construction/project management is very important considering that the industry’s product is expensive, time-bound technically demanding, and involves managing a large and diverse project team. We expect a construction manager to be kitted to manage any sort of construction project (George and Shamas-ur, 2012). The construction industry’s need for leadership skill development rank high compared to any other field of endeavour considering its place on national socio-economic development, the absence of adequate and relevant project-based leadership skills will ultimately breed poor performance of the construction managers and poor project delivery (Hillebrandt, 2000). Developing an effective construction manager’s leadership skills becomes a primary answer to the problems experienced within the industry. According to Bryman (2004), modern leadership skills developments have gathered recent interest, therefore, requiring greater interest in diverse methodological approaches and optimistic development for (a)Improved measurement and analytical methods, (b) Greater use of meta-analyses in systematic reviews, (c) An increased interest in new leadership topics such as transformational leadership and charismatic leadership, (d) Better cross-cultural studies; and greater diversity research on the leadership and organizational contexts. Critical leadership skills development requirements should include; excellent communication skills, the ability to encourage others, feedback receipt mechanisms, delegating responsibilities, personal development, and training, reward packages, and being able to brief/inform. We must equip a successful construction manager to achieve the assigned projects in terms of cost, time, quality, safe environment, good health, and scope.

According to Cadwell (2004), team performance is a measure of a construction manager’s leadership development and work performance to hinge on team performance. The study highlights that applying the right leadership, and motivational strategy on construction managers is a bait to improve industrial performance; the research was able to differentiate between construction managers, and leaders in terms of the skills they possess; the study sees management skills as the basis to developing leadership

skills, the major differences outlines between management, and leadership was: leaders innovate; managers administer ;leaders seek challenges; managers seek to maintain the status quo. Leaders think long term; managers think short-to mid-term, leaders motivate, and inspire; managers control, leaders worry about doing the right things; managers worry about doing things right and leaders have a wide circle of influence; managers` have limited influence.

According to Kumar (2009), successful construction or construction managers are effective and have strong management, and leadership skills, the study differentiated between what strong management is as opposed to having effective leadership skills. The study identifies basic competencies in leadership skills development as a tool that help construction managers manage their team, deliver the project successfully and become effective leader. The study asserts that while management skills can be acquired through experience and practice; leadership skills is often developed, and learned. Based on this study developing leadership skills as a tool for motivating construction managers becomes possible through job learning, and development. The study identified the need to practice what's learned which includes:

1. **Listening, and Influencing Skills:** Active listening by a construction manager will help understand the subordinate, and be considerate to learn the operative perspective, collaborate, and make mutually beneficial decisions
2. **Negotiation Skills, and Communicating Skills** are needed to make the management team or operative's members with opposite or shared interests work effectively because of an open, and honest communication platform.
3. **Motivating, and Inspiring Teams** deal with communicating developed vision consistently through enthusiastic vision sharing, and making management team members know how contributing to organization goals will breed self-satisfaction.
4. **Team Building Skills** are the skills that enable construction managers to help their team individually, and on a group level, to achieve personal, and corporate goals.

Kumar, (2009), recognizes the need to achieve the industry's strategic goals through effective leadership skills development which is often lacking in project management skills. The study added that using appropriate leadership skills at the right moment is a measure of when a construction manager has developed effective leadership skills. Every team according to Patrick (2002), faces what is tagged dysfunctions which are drawn in the dysfunctions model of the team. This when developed in construction manager's traits makes for a team that will deteriorate, and its opposite offers a cohesive, and performing team.

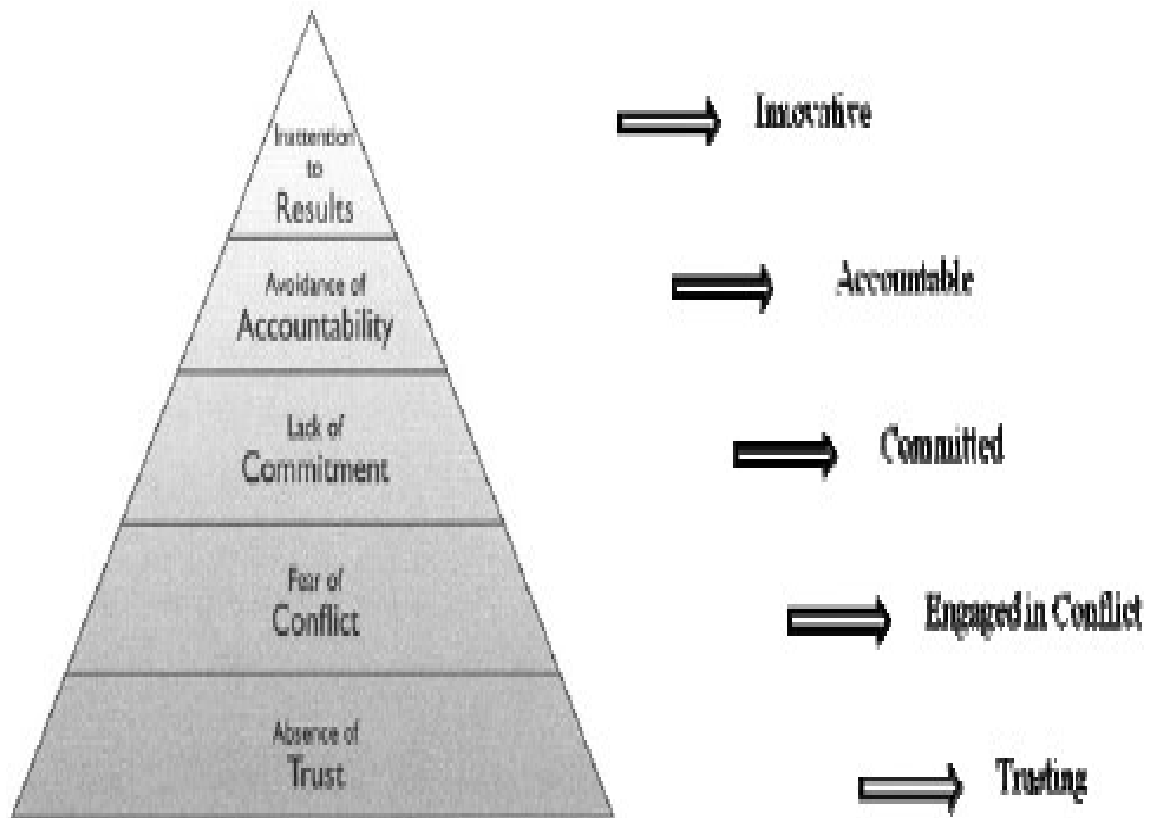


Figure 2.1: The five dysfunctions of a team, and the positive approach

Source: Kumar (2009) citing Patrick (2002)

The study from figure 1 above described the various items in the dysfunctions' triangle as follows:

1. **Absence of trust.** Lack of trust among stakeholders and the construction team often create a lack of honesty or genuine openness with one another on mistakes or weaknesses. Everyone seems to cover up without the willingness to be vulnerable.
2. **Fear of Conflict.** Consequent to the above is fear of conflict, as the team members can't engage in unfiltered, passionate, and constructive conversations or idea sharing.
3. **Lack of Commitment.** Fear of conflict breeds lack of commitment to team decisions.
4. **Avoidance of Accountability.** With a lack of commitment and buy-in on team decisions, team members develop an avoidance of accountability, the fourth dysfunction.
5. **Inattention to results.** Where there is no accountability, the construction industry will not be able to thrive: as there is little attention to results or placing individual objectives above the industry project team objectives.

Koorosh, and Kerry (2003) identified the need not just to develop leadership skills but also to enhance effective leadership styles in construction managers; ten of such were identified while 6 leadership styles were recognized in a model developed by Koorosh and Kerry(2003, there was found to be a direct relationship between project resources and project team success or failure as regards to leadership style. Figure 2.4 highlights the relationships between project resources, project team, type, process, objectives, goals, hierarchy, structure, and project limitations.

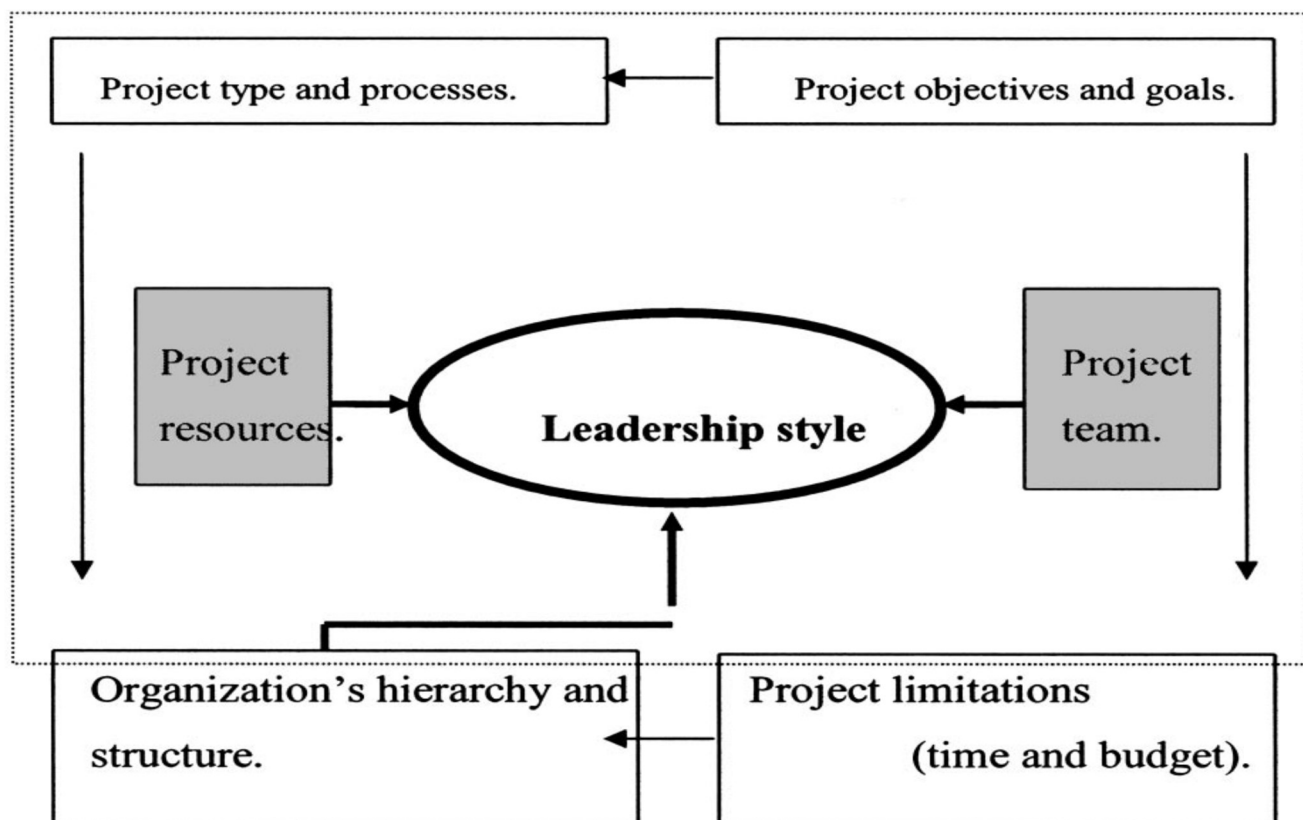


Figure 2.2 Leadership Style Influences.

Source: Koorosh and Kerry (2003)

Every Construction Manager that will tagg effective and highly motivated must have the leadership skills or abilities to successfully accomplish the industry growth and organizational success, an organization with well-developed leadership skills will be able to select, and develop his/her team as well as help them grow toward common objectives, developing construction management team involves teaching, counselling and getting the members involved in the planning stage. A strong, and well-motivated management team will get the organizations' goal achieved. Construction managers as leaders must energize his people in-order to create, and find new opportunities daily, he or she must totally be able to understand organizational environment, and monitor work structure, and progress. His/her knowledge, and skills must enable him to comprehend the project at hand and maximize the team by applying the appropriate leadership style in achieving overall vision. Different leader has a style with he/she feels comfortable with just as different people require different styles of leadership.

This style of leadership is often required for different situations, and different people. A fully developed construction manager must be able to switch to different style of leadership for effective project delivery. Choosing the right leadership style depends on many factors that include organizational structure, project type, objectives, and goals, time availability, team, and individual knowledge, and skill, and motivation level of the team. Highlighted in the Table 2.1 is a comparison of various leadership style and skills.

Table 2.2 A Comparison of various Leadership Style, and Skills

Leadership Skills	Leadership Style
1) Understanding the needs, and characteristics of the post: A successful construction manager as leader must be aware of certain needs, and characteristics of the project.	Laissez style. He/she gives little or no direction to group/individuals, opinion is offered only when requested, and an individual does not seem to be in charge.
2) Knowing, and using the Resources of the group effectively: A successful construction manager as leader must not allow the resources to be wasted. This requires good resource planning procedures such as resource levelling techniques.	Autocratic style. He/she tells others what to do, limits discussion on ideas, and new ways of doing things, and the group does not experience feeling of teamwork.
3) Effective Communication: A successful construction manager as leader must use effective communication skills to provide, and receive data, and information, making sure that all members are totally understood.	Democratic style/team builder style. Uses work group for both motivation, and discipline. He/she stresses openness, and consensus, tries to achieve balance between group choices ,and organizational goals; shares responsibility with the group but makes sure the organization's expectations are achieved; believes that the team is powerful; involves group members in planning ,and carrying out activities; ,and asks before telling ,and promotes the sense of teamwork.
4) Effective Planning: Planning is a vital part of actions of the successful construction manager as leader in the organization. Considerations during the planning phase include considering the task, and objectives, and considering the resources/equipment, knowledge, skills, and attitudes.	Coach style. Maintains personal relationships with each staff member. He/she tries to build trust, sets mutual goals with each staff member, encourages but also expresses disappointment when a person fails to meet goals, and attempts to help individuals achieve satisfaction from work.
5) Controlling Team Performance: A successful construction manager as leader must influence the performance of his/her team, and individual members through his/her actions.	Expert Style. Operates from personal experience; has skills needed to perform work. He/she feels there is no substitute for preparation, and practice, is able to demonstrate how to perform a task, tends to give directions based on what he/she says, and acts directly to get results under pressure.

6) Evaluating. The construction manager as a leader can use evaluating to improve teams, and the organization's performance.

Official Style. Relies on rules, and directives, preferably in writing. He/she tends to be fair, and impartial when functioning well, uses an impersonal style, and knows the right way to get things done.

7) Setting the Example: This is the most effective way to demonstrate the correct approach towards achieving goals.

8) Sharing Leadership: A successful construction manager as leader must share his/her vision with the members of the team, and organization, and consider their ideas.

9) Counselling: A successful construction manager as leader must be able to counsel effectively to help individuals solve problems, to encourage or reassure, and to help an individual reach his/her potential. Counselling is sometimes required when there is a need for change.

10) Effective Teaching. Effective teaching focuses on learning to increase the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of the team, and its members by using such steps as evaluating the process, choosing the learning objectives, and demonstrating or explaining the skill.

Source: West, and Jackson (2002)

Hassan, and Abdussalam (2016), in a study on Dubai construction industry were able to identify 20 core leadership skills that will lead to construction managers performance, and that these set of skills are foundationally based on the quality of treatment team receive from their leaders. These skills include:

1. Communication Skills
2. Interpersonal Skills
3. Managing Conflict
4. Mentoring Skills
5. Controlling group performance
6. Building effective relationships
7. Decision-making
8. Planning skills
9. Sharing leadership

10. Motivational skills
11. Knowledge
12. Problem-solving
13. Negotiation
14. Confidence
15. Setting objectives
16. Prioritization
17. Strategic planning
18. Networking skills
19. Team work
20. Building bonds.

According to Felix (2018), for an effective construction project management than the individuals responsible for its management or coordination must have great leadership ability. A construction project has a very high chance of not being completed successfully. To Kumar (2009), a successful construction or project managers is one who is able to utilize both strong management skills and also expend an effective leadership skill. The report was able to distinguish a clear difference between construction managers developed leadership skills and existing management skills.

According to Kumar (2009), management skills are often gleaned from continuous practice and accumulated experiences while for a construction manager to become an effective leader, then such skills must be developed through intentional leadership skills development. The study tagged leadership skills as competencies for effective team management and successful project delivery skills. The study further distinguishes between project management and leadership, how to utilize leadership skills in construction management. The study identifies certain competencies such as: influencing skills, negotiation skills, interpersonal communication skills and team building. The benefit identified is that such skill will enable construction managers to motivate and inspire their project or organizational teams. The study focused on building leadership competencies or skills in order to develop successful project managers into effective leaders. The present study however doesn't generalize the concept project management but construction management as a sub-sector but the result can be applied to general management. Alexandra (2021), identified that there are several leadership skills or traits that can help a construction manager to become a more effective leader. They range from being able to take initiative, developing critical thinking skills, or learning how to motivate and empower those around him. PMPodcast (2021), identifies five(5) leadership skills ranging from communication, team leadership, conflict resolution, motivation to crafting solutions.

1. **Taking Initiative and Constant Learning:** Top managers must learn to assign tasks that are above or beyond their current position. Be willing to step out of comfort zone and challenge is to want to improve oneself by learning at the workplace. Construction managers will gladly follow a leader who has track record of encouraging initiative as well as wanting to learn and gain knowledge without ego.
2. **Critical Thinking:** An effective construction manager must be able to foresee potential problem before they happen and develop corrective measures
3. **Effective Listening and Communication Skills:** Communication skills are critical to being an effective construction manager within a team. This will help to get feedback from others, hire specialist as well identify good body language measurement for productivity.
4. **Motivation and Discipline:** To execute a goal creative a positive work place environment and be discipline enough to execute vision, good idea and goals.
5. **Constant Learning:** Leadership and learning are indispensable as it helps to study others and communicate well

6. **Delegation and Handling Conflict:** A good construction leader with well-developed leadership skill must be able to handle conflict as well as delegate responsibilities
7. **Be a Follower:** A good leader should be able to recognize value of team members, learn from them and encourage team members to learn.

2.2 Identification of Literature Gap

Despite the identified studies as reviewed, there is still a gap on sufficient detailed examination of the core leadership skills, merits of using them and their prospects.

III. METHODOLOGY

Considering the research questionnaires of this study, qualitative data will be required through adopting a descriptive survey design approach. This approach will help in gathering critical data that affords an opportunity to create essential models based on empirical research and to differentiate theory, assumptions, and facts from information gathered from the professionals. The technicalities of this thesis adopted a deductive approach by looking at theory, produces hypothesis from that theory, relates to the focus of the research, and tests that theory. This research is a logic positivist focus is to promote the idea of the experimentation strategy, testing theory to increase the predictability and outcomes. The population of this study was 60 construction operatives, project/human resource managers/coordinators/ engineers, and top managers/company owners from registered Construction Companies in Nnewi, Awka, and Onitsha town, Anambra state. Since the population for this study is not that large, effort was made to administer the question to the 60 members on the sampling frame. The data set needed was quantitative data obtained through well-structured questionnaires. The sampling frame adopted for distributing the questionnaires are:

Work Sections	Target Population
Site – Operations or Construction Project Manager	21
Human Resource Management	12
Payroll Department	3
Head Office Department	2
Training/Development	2
Total	40

Source: Business Place Records on CAC (2021)

3.1 Ranking in order of principal importance the various identified Leadership Skills use as Motivational Strategies for Construction Managers

Section 4.1.3 uses principal component analysis to identify principal leadership skills among the identified leadership skills used as motivational strategies for construction managers on construction sites in Anambra State, Nigeria. The question forms the basis for developing a leadership skill framework later.

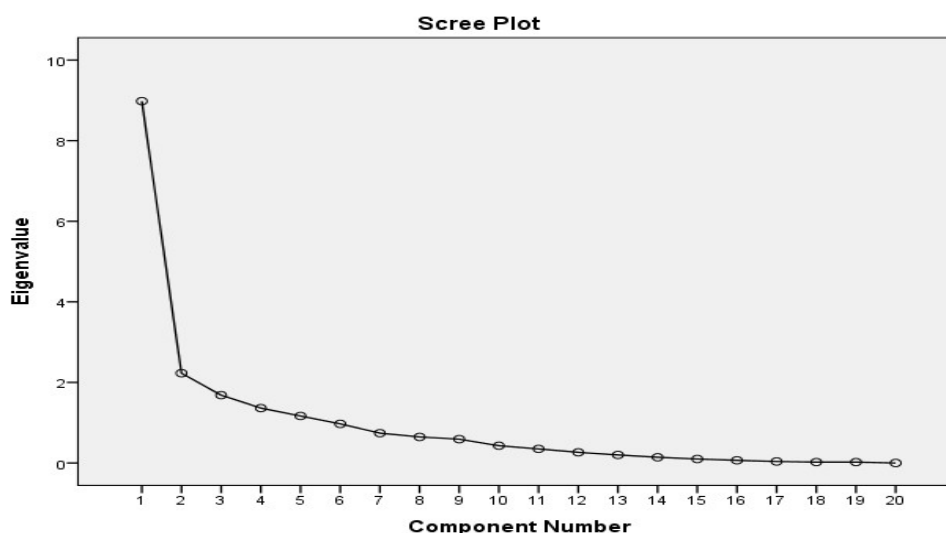


Figure 3.1 Scree Plot of leadership skills identified to enhance construction managers development.

Source: IBM SPSS Statistics 23

The scree plot in Figure 4.1 shows the graphical relationship between the Eigenvalues and the component numbers, meaning there is a level-off after the extraction of five component leadership skills from the series. This indicates five leadership skills or components to develop a leadership skill framework for increasing the construction manager's motivation and productivity in the study area. The result in Table 4.1.3 shows that extracted component values have Eigen values of 8.981, 2.228, 1.683, 1.362, and 1.167 with associated percentage variances of about 44.90%, 11.142%, 8.415%, 6.809%, and 5.833%, respectively, which summed up to 77.1%, indicating that the extracted leadership skills can explain more than 77.1% of the total variance in the series. The 6th to 2nd leadership skills have Eigenvalues below 1.000 and jointly explain only about 22.9% of the total variations, which confirms that they are not necessary for consideration.

Table 3.1 Percentage of Total Variance Explained

Total Variance Explained							
Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings ^a
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total
Big Thinking, Being Plan Driven and Visionaries	8.981	44.903	44.903	8.981	44.903	44.903	5.838
Focusing on Processes	2.228	11.142	56.045	2.228	11.142	56.045	3.132
Risk-Taking	1.683	8.415	64.460	1.683	8.415	64.460	3.488

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Planning for the required Result,	1.362	6.809	71.269	1.362	6.809	71.269	6.240
Team Building skills i.e. Motivational, inspiring Teams Skills	1.167	5.833	77.103	1.167	5.833	77.103	3.651
Seeking and obtaining accord from Participants	.971	4.854	81.956				
Consistency in Confidence	.740	3.702	85.658				
Flexibility	.646	3.232	88.890				
Not Accepting Failure	.591	2.957	91.847				
Not whining or Blaming but Problem Solving and Opportunists	.429	2.143	93.990				
Communicating Skills, Listening, and influencing Skills	.349	1.746	95.736				
Negotiation Skills and Managing Conflict,	.264	1.321	97.057				
Interpersonal Skills, Problem Solving and Networking Skills	.200	.999	98.056				
Mentoring Skills and Building	.142	.711	98.767				

Bonds			
Controlling Group Performance and Planning Skills.	.099	.493	99.260
Decision Making	.066	.328	99.588
Building Effective Relationships	.037	.186	99.774
Gaining information and Sharing knowledge	.023	.114	99.887
Setting Objectives	.022	.112	99.999
Prioritization and Strategic Planning	.000	.001	100.000

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Source: IBM SPSS Statistics 23

The deduction from figure 4.1 and table 4.1.3 is that there are five (5) non-negotiable leadership skills that every construction organisation in Nnewi, Awka, and Onitsha must take into consideration. These five (5) skills are top motivators for improved project delivery and performance in Anambra State. For the organisation to maximize their construction manager productivity, then first of importance is their ability to communicate effectively, plan for the required result, be flexible in operations, be able to take a risk, and while executing any project, focus on the process, not just the goal.

IV. FINDINGS

From the result in Table 3.1, the critical leadership skills that strongly serve as a motivational strategy for construction managers to increase productivity are: planning for required results; big thinking; being plan-driven or visionaries; focusing on process; team-building skills, i.e., motivational; communicating and inspiring team skills; listening and influencing skills; not whining or blaming but problem-solving and opportunism; consistency in confidence; flexibility; not accepting failure; and setting objectives. These leadership skills are productivity boosters, as rightly supported by the work of Hassan and Abdulsalam (2016) and Adrain (2004). John (1997). If construction managers are to be motivated to effect the desired change, appropriate intangible social incentives must be provided. This is what this table highlights.

V. SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

The various leadership skills that can be used to motivate construction managers in the study area include communication, planning for the required result, flexibility, risk-taking, and focusing on the process. (See Table 3.1.)

VI. CONCLUSION

Since leadership is the key to achieving work results, effective project delivery, and achieving an end goal, this study concludes that developing critical leadership skills such as communication, planning for the required result, flexibility, risk-taking, and

focusing on the process in construction managers in Awka, Nnewi, and Onitsha will significantly and strategically impact their performance.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

The examined leadership skills metrics to be used by construction stakeholders as a motivational tool for construction managers in Anambra State for increased productivity and retention of construction employees.

VIII. CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

The study has opened new literature dimensions in the studies of construction managers' leadership skills development by examining the critical leadership skills metrics to be used by construction stakeholders as a motivational tool for construction managers in Anambra State to increase productivity and retention of construction employees.

IX. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this manuscript.

X. ETHICAL APPROVAL

Ethical approval is not required.

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