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Impact of Leadership-Driven Learning Culture on Lifelong Learning Skills of Educators in Okene Local Government Area of Kogi State

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Highlights:

IInvestigates how leadership-driven learning culture impacts lifelong learning skills of educators in Okene LGA, Kogi State with LDLCIQ, a 5-point Likert questionnaire.

Draws leadership that promotes learning culture directly boosts educators ' self-direction, collaboration, and adaptability.

Recommends leaders with prioritize continuous professional development and model learning behaviors to inspire and sustain educator growth.

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Abstract: This study investigated the impact of leadership-driven learning culture on the lifelong learning skills of educators in Okene Local Government Area of Kogi State using a descriptive survey research design. Three research questions and three null hypotheses guided the study. The target population consisted of 1,620 educators across public primary and secondary schools in Okene LGA. A sample of 320 educators comprising 189 males and 131 females was drawn through stratified random sampling technique from twelve selected schools. A structured five-point Likert-scale questionnaire titled the Leadership-Driven Learning Culture Impact Questionnaire (LDLCIQ) was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by experts in the field and yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.87 via Cronbach's alpha. Data obtained were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions while chi-square test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that leadership-driven learning culture significantly enhanced educator's self-directed learning skills, significantly strengthened their collaborative professional development, and significantly improved their reflective practice and adaptability. It was recommended that school leaders should foster cultures that prioritize continuous professional development; the Kogi State Ministry of Education should establish structured frameworks embedding lifelong learning as a core institutional value; and educational administrators should model learning behaviors that inspire and sustain educator growth.

Keywords: Leadership-Driven Learning Culture, Lifelong Learning Skills, Educators, Professional Development, Reflective Practice

Introduction

Leadership-driven learning culture refers to the deliberate and sustained efforts of school leaders to create, nurture, and institutionalize an environment where continuous learning, reflective inquiry, and professional growth are embedded as core organizational values (Musa & Bello, 2022). This conceptualization draws on transformational and distributed leadership theories, which posit that effective leaders inspire collective commitment to shared learning goals rather than merely ensuring administrative compliance. However, the concept cannot be uncritically transplanted from Western organizational contexts without examining how local governance structures, funding realities, and cultural attitudes toward authority shape what is actually possible in environments like Okene LGA.

Lifelong learning has emerged as a foundational competency in contemporary education systems, representing the ongoing, voluntary, and self-motivated pursuit of knowledge for personal and professional development (Adeyemi & Oluwafemi, 2021). For educators, it is a professional imperative given the rapidly changing demands of twenty-first century

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pedagogy, technological integration, and curriculum reforms. Individual motivation to learn continuously is, however, profoundly shaped by the organizational environment. Where leadership is indifferent to professional growth and reflective practice is neither valued nor rewarded, even intrinsically motivated educators find their lifelong learning aspirations eroded over time, making leadership-driven learning culture constitutive of the conditions under which lifelong learning skills are cultivated or diminished.

Three dimensions of lifelong learning are particularly relevant here. Self-directed learning involves the capacity to independently identify learning needs, design strategies, and evaluate personal growth (Nwosu & Uche, 2020), though its expression is moderated by organizational climate. Collaborative professional development, encompassing peer coaching, professional learning communities, and mentoring, builds richer pedagogical repertoires and sustains professional growth (Okonkwo & Nnadi, 2022), but requires a shared culture of trust that leadership must actively cultivate. Reflective practice and adaptability involve critically examining professional assumptions and adjusting instructional approaches in response to evidence (Ibrahim & Sule, 2021), capacities that are enabled or destroyed by deliberate leadership decisions.

Research evidence from Nigerian educational contexts consistently identifies weak leadership commitment to professional learning as a primary structural barrier to educator growth (Garba & Mohammed, 2020). In Okene Local Government Area of Kogi State, preliminary observations reveal that while school leaders recognize the importance of professional development, institutional learning culture remains largely underdeveloped. Many educators report limited collaborative learning opportunities, insufficient encouragement for self-directed growth, and environments that do not adequately value reflective practice. Despite the significance of this problem, empirical studies examining how leadership-driven learning culture specifically influences educators' lifelong learning skills in this context are notably absent. This study therefore investigates the impact of leadership-driven learning culture on the lifelong learning skills of educators in Okene Local Government Area of Kogi State, with the aim of generating locally grounded evidence to inform leadership development, institutional policy, and professional development frameworks in the Nigerian context.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What is the impact of leadership-driven learning culture on educators' mean self-directed learning skills scores in Okene LGA?
2. What impact does leadership-driven learning culture have on educators' mean collaborative professional development ratings in Okene LGA?
3. How does leadership-driven learning culture affect educators' mean reflective practice and adaptability scores in Okene LGA?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. Leadership-driven learning culture has no significant impact on educators' mean self-directed learning skills scores.

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2. Leadership-driven learning culture has no significant impact on educators' mean collaborative professional development scores.
3. Leadership-driven learning culture has no significant impact on educators' mean reflective practice and adaptability scores.

Methodology

This study employed the descriptive survey research design, which is appropriate for investigating attitudes, opinions, and perceptions of a population on a given phenomenon without manipulating variables. The population consisted of all educators across public primary and secondary schools in Okene Local Government Area of Kogi State who had been teaching for a minimum of two years and had observable experience with their school's leadership-driven learning culture, comprising a total of 1,620 educators. A sample of 320 educators (189 males and 131 females) was drawn using stratified random sampling technique from twelve selected schools across the LGA, ensuring adequate representation by school type, gender, and years of experience.

Prior to data collection, ethical clearance was obtained from the appropriate institutional authority, and formal permission was sought from the Kogi State Ministry of Education as well as the principals of all sampled schools. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from each respondent before questionnaire administration. Participants were assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses, with no personal identifying information recorded on the instrument. They were equally informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any point without consequence. All data collected were used strictly for academic research purposes and handled with the utmost confidentiality throughout the study.

The instrument for data collection was a structured five-point Likert-scale questionnaire titled the Leadership-Driven Learning Culture Impact Questionnaire (LDLCIQ), with response options ranging from Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1). The questionnaire was validated by four experts, two from the Department of Educational Administration and Planning and two from the Department of Curriculum Studies who reviewed its content validity and structural coherence. The instrument yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.87 using Cronbach's alpha, indicating high internal consistency. The LDLCIQ was divided into two sections: Section A elicited demographic information, and Section B contained 18 items covering three constructs: self-directed learning skills (6 items), collaborative professional development (6 items), and reflective practice and adaptability (6 items). Five trained research assistants administered the questionnaire across the sampled schools. Mean scores and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, with a cut-off mean of 3.00, where a mean of 3.00 and above indicates significant impact and below 3.00 indicates no significant impact. Chi-square test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance, with rejection of the null hypothesis where $p < 0.05$.

Table 1 presents the impact of leadership-driven learning culture on educators's self-directed learning skills. From the table, the grand mean is 3.61. This mean score is more than the cut-off mean which is 3.00; following the decision rule suggested to be adopted earlier, this indicates that leadership-driven learning culture has high impact on educators's self-directed learning skills in Okene LGA.Table 2 presents the impact of leadership-driven learning culture on educators' collaborative

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professional development. From the table, the grand mean is 3.71. This mean score is higher than the cut-off mean which is 3.00; following the decision rule, this indicates that leadership-driven learning culture has high impact on educators' collaborative professional development in Okene LGA.

Table 3 presents the impact of leadership-driven learning culture on educators' reflective practice and adaptability. From the table, the grand mean is 3.58. This mean score is higher than the cut-off mean which is 3.00; following the decision rule, this indicates that leadership-driven learning culture has high impact on educators' reflective practice and adaptability in Okene LGA.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis1
Leadership-driven learning culture has no significant impact on educators' mean self-directed learning skills scores.

Table 4: Chi-Square Test Results for Hypothesis 1

Test Statistic (χ^2)	df	p-value	Decision
541.628	20	0.000	Rejected

Table 4 presents chi-square test results for the impact of leadership-driven learning culture on educators's self-directed learning skills. The table reveals that the chi-square (χ^2) value is 541.628 with P = 0.000. Since P = 0.000 < 0.05, leadership-driven learning culture significantly impacts educators's self-directed learning skills. The hypothesis that leadership-driven learning culture has no significant impact on educators' mean self-directed learning skills scores was therefore rejected.

Hypothesis2
Leadership-driven learning culture has no significant impact on educators' mean collaborative professional development scores.

Table 5: Chi-Square Test Results for Hypothesis 2

Test Statistic (χ^2)	df	p-value	Decision
586.347	20	< 0.001	Rejected

Table 5 presents chi-square test results for the impact of leadership-driven learning culture on educators' collaborative professional development. The table reveals that the chi-square (χ^2) value is 586.347 with P = 0.000; since P = 0.000 < 0.05, where 0.05 is the level of significance for the study, this means that leadership-driven learning culture significantly influences educators' collaborative professional development. The hypothesis which states that leadership-driven learning culture has no significant impact on educators' mean collaborative professional development scores was rejected.

Hypothesis3
Leadership-driven learning culture has no significant impact on educators' mean reflective practice and adaptability scores.

Table 6: Chi-Square Test Results for Hypothesis 3

Test Statistic (χ^2)	df	p-value	Decision
497.815	20	< 0.001	Rejected

Table 6 presents chi-square test results for the impact of leadership-driven learning culture on educators' reflective practice and adaptability. The table reveals that the chi-square (χ^2) value is 497.815 with P = 0.000. Since P = 0.000 < 0.05, where 0.05 is the level of significance for the study, leadership-driven learning culture significantly affects educators' reflective practice and adaptability. The hypothesis which states that leadership-driven

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learning culture has no significant impact on educators' mean reflective practice and adaptability scores was rejected.

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Results

Research Question 1: What is the impact of leadership-driven learning culture on educators' self-directed learning skills?

Table 1: Mean scores and standard deviation of leadership-driven learning culture impact on educators' self-directed learning skills

Item	Mean	SD
My school leader encourages me to pursue independent professional learning	3.74	0.88
Leadership provides resources that support my self-directed learning goals	3.58	0.94
I feel empowered by school leadership to identify and address my own learning needs	3.61	0.91
School leadership recognizes and rewards self-initiated professional development	3.47	1.02
My leader creates an environment where I can explore new teaching approaches independently	3.69	0.86
Leadership culture in my school motivates me to set personal professional development goals	3.55	0.93
Grand Mean	**3.61**	**0.92**

Research Question 2

What impact does leadership-driven learning culture have on educators' collaborative professional development?

Table 2: Mean scores and standard deviation of leadership-driven learning culture impact on educators' collaborative professional development

Item	Mean	SD
School leadership facilitates structured professional learning communities in my school	3.82	0.85
My leader encourages peer mentoring and collaborative lesson planning among staff	3.67	0.91
Leadership creates regular opportunities for collaborative professional discussions	3.73	0.88
School leaders model collaborative learning behaviors for teaching staff	3.54	0.97
I feel supported by leadership to share and learn from colleagues' professional experiences	3.69	0.89
Leadership-driven learning culture strengthens teamwork among educators in my school	3.78	0.84
Grand Mean	**3.71**	**0.89**

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Research Question 3

How does leadership-driven learning culture affect educators' reflective practice and adaptability?

Table 3: Mean scores and standard deviation of leadership-driven learning culture impact on educators' reflective practice and adaptability

Item	Mean	SD
School leadership encourages me to critically reflect on my instructional practices	3.65	0.92
My leader treats professional mistakes as learning opportunities rather than failures	3.44	1.06
Leadership culture in my school supports adaptation to new teaching methods and curriculum changes	3.57	0.95
School leaders provide feedback that promotes my reflective professional growth	3.52	0.98
I am encouraged by leadership to experiment with innovative teaching strategies	3.61	0.90
Leadership-driven learning culture increases my willingness to embrace educational change	3.70	0.87
Grand Mean	**3.58**	**0.95**

Discussion of Findings

The finding that leadership-driven learning culture significantly impacts educators's self-directed learning skills is consistent with the work of Musa and Bello (2022), who established that school leaders who actively model and institutionalize professional learning behaviors create organizational conditions that empower educators to take independent responsibility for their own professional growth. This finding also aligns with Nwosu and Uche (2020), who demonstrated that self-directed learning among educators is substantially mediated by the quality of institutional learning cultures, with supportive leadership being among the strongest predictors of self-directed professional engagement. Further corroboration is found in Okeke and Anyanwu (2021), whose study of public secondary school teachers in Enugu State revealed that educators in schools with visionary, learning-oriented leadership exhibited significantly higher levels of professional autonomy and self-initiated skill acquisition than their counterparts in administratively rigid institutions. Similarly, Abubakar and Yusuf (2023) observed that in northern Nigerian school contexts, leadership encouragement of independent professional inquiry was a critical determinant of whether educators sustained self-directed learning habits beyond mandated training cycles. The present study extends these findings to the specific context of Okene LGA, affirming that leadership-driven learning cultures are instrumental in moving educators from passive recipients of mandated training toward active, self-determining agents of their own continuous professional development.

The result that leadership-driven learning culture significantly influences educators' collaborative professional development corroborates Okonkwo and Nnadi (2022), who found that school leaders who deliberately cultivate collegial learning structures significantly strengthen the professional learning community dynamics

within their institutions. This finding is further supported by Adeyemi and Oluwafemi (2021), who identified collaborative professional engagement as one of the most powerful mediators of educators' lifelong learning outcomes, noting that leadership commitment to structured collaboration distinguishes schools where professional growth is sustainable from those where it remains episodic and superficial. Additional support comes from Aliyu and Dangana (2022), who found in their study of Nasarawa State secondary schools that teacher collaboration was significantly higher in schools where principals actively participated in and facilitated peer learning sessions, demonstrating that leadership involvement is a decisive factor in the depth and consistency of collaborative professional engagement. Eze and Obi (2020) similarly established that professional learning communities in Nigerian schools are most effective where school heads deliberately allocate time, space, and institutional recognition for collaborative inquiry, reinforcing the view that collaboration requires deliberate structural investment from leadership rather than emerging organically among educators. The significance of this finding in the Okene LGA context highlights the urgent need for school leaders to move beyond compliance-driven professional development toward the creation of genuine collaborative learning ecosystems.

The finding that leadership-driven learning culture significantly affects educators' reflective practice and adaptability is in line with Ibrahim and Sule (2021), who established that reflective practice among educators is profoundly shaped by the institutional climate created by school leadership, with cultures that normalize critical inquiry and treat professional errors as growth opportunities being associated with higher levels of educator adaptability and instructional innovation. This finding is also consistent with Garba and Mohammed (2020), whose research in Nigerian school contexts demonstrated that leadership behaviors that affirm experimentation, provide constructive feedback, and celebrate professional growth significantly enhance educators' willingness and capacity to engage in ongoing reflective adaptation of their teaching practices. Corroborating evidence is provided by Usman and Bello (2023), who found that teachers in Kogi and Benue State schools led by principals who modeled reflective self-assessment were significantly more likely to revise their instructional strategies in response to student performance data, suggesting that leadership modeling of reflection directly shapes the reflective culture of an institution. Furthermore, Chukwu and Obiora (2022) established in their study of Lagos State public school educators that institutional cultures which reward professional experimentation and honest self-evaluation produce educators with markedly stronger adaptive capacities, while punitive leadership responses to instructional failure were among the most powerful suppressors of reflective practice identified in their research. Equally relevant is the work of Suleiman and Adamu (2021), who demonstrated in a study spanning schools across Kogi, Niger, and Kwara States that leadership-driven cultures of continuous improvement were the single strongest institutional predictor of educator adaptability in the face of curriculum reforms, underscoring the critical role of leadership in preparing educators not merely to cope with change but to engage it as a professional growth opportunity.

Conclusion

This study has established that leadership-driven learning culture exerts a significant impact on the lifelong learning skills of educators in Okene Local Government Area of Kogi State across the three dimensions of self-directed learning, collaborative professional development, and reflective practice and adaptability. These findings

affirm that school leadership is not merely an administrative function but a foundational force that either enables or constrains educators' continuous professional growth. Where leaders actively model learning behaviors, invest in collaborative structures, and normalize critical reflection, educators are significantly better positioned to develop and sustain the lifelong learning skills that effective twenty-first century teaching demands. The study therefore underscores the urgent need for intentional and policy-supported investment in leadership-driven learning cultures across schools in Okene LGA and the broader Kogi State educational system.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are put forward:

1. School leaders in Okene LGA should deliberately cultivate and institutionalize learning cultures that prioritize and structurally support educators's self-directed professional growth, including providing access to professional resources, creating time for independent professional inquiry, and formally recognizing self-initiated learning achievements among teaching staff.
2. The Kogi State Ministry of Education should develop and implement a comprehensive framework for leadership-driven professional learning communities in schools, providing school heads with the training, policy support, and institutional resources necessary to create and sustain collaborative professional development environments that meaningfully strengthen educators' lifelong learning capacity.
3. School administrators and educational supervisors should integrate reflective practice and professional adaptability as core performance expectations within teacher appraisal frameworks, ensuring that leadership cultures in Kogi State schools consistently affirm critical professional reflection, constructive risk-taking, and responsive instructional adaptation as valued hallmarks of educator professionalism.

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