AN ASSESSMENT OF LEADERSHIP TRAITS ON SUCCESSFUL PUBLIC GOVERNANCE IN NORTH CENTRAL NIGERIA

BOLUROMI, Samuel Sunday[1], OLORUNNIPA, Samuel Atteh[2], SALIU, Adekunle Ekundayo[3]

[1]*Department of Arts and Social Sciences, Kogi State Polytechnic, Lokoja, Nigeria.*
[2]*Department of Sciences, Kogi State Polytechnic, Lokoja, Nigeria*
[3]*Department of Arts and Social Sciences, Kogi State Polytechnic, Lokoja, Nigeria*

ABSTRACT
The study looked at how leadership traits affect successful public governance in North Central Nigeria. Leadership-key traits such as mental toughness, communication skills, and honesty were examined. The objective was to ascertain whether each of these traits has any influence on successful public governance. A primary source of data was employed for this study, and the convenience sampling method was used. The data was collected with the aid of a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was prepared with Google Form and posted to the WhatsApp pages of the citizens of the selected states, and 699 filled-out questionnaires were collected. The data was analysed using the Chi-Square. Findings revealed that mental toughness, communication skills, and honesty have a substantial impact on successful public governance. On the basis of these discoveries, the study recommends that public sector leadership should be trained and retrained in order to acquire the necessary skills. There should be a debate where the electorate can scrutinise the leaders to determine whether they are fit or not before voting. Their manifestos should be thoroughly deliberated to determine whether they have the prerequisites to execute them.
KEY WORDS: *Leadership, Traits, Public Governance, Nigeria*

1.1 INTRODUCTION
It is probably almost difficult for governments to accomplish and sustain effective administration, goals, quality, and the provision of first-rate services without strong leadership and good governance at all levels. Effective and moral leadership is necessary because of the expanding demands and complexity brought on by society's constant transformation as well as the on-going drive for higher levels of productivity. For a government to be regarded as successful in the eyes of its citizens in the twenty-first century, good governance and effective ethical leadership are fundamental criteria.

A leader's personality traits are his distinct behavioural, temperamental, and mental characteristics - his general disposition and the way he thinks, acts, and feels. Like if he is a pessimist, optimist, idealist or realist, whether he is short-tempered or patient, whether impulsive or thoughtful, whether he takes decisions fast or dawdles, whether he is open to new ideas and people or psychologically closed, etc., all the little things that make up a person. Strategy refers to the plan of action of a leader - the road map that he takes to get where he wants to go. While personality traits and strategy are important elements that make or mar a leader, it is the character traits of the leader that determine how influential a leader is or can become. If a set of traits could be identified, people could be trained to develop these traits. The current perspective is that some personality characteristics - many

of which a person need not be born with but can strive to acquire - do distinguish effective leaders from other people. (Khan, 2010; Mankhedkar, 2011; Onichakwe, 2018; Onolememen, 2015).

1.2 StatemenT of the Problem

Nigeria gained her independence from Britain in 1960 (about sixty-two years ago). There were various leaders that led the country with an abundance of human and material resources, which ordinarily would have propelled prosperity to the citizens, but high rate of unemployment (Asaju, Arome, & Anyio, 2014; National Bureau of Statistics [NBS, 2022],), poverty (Anyadike, & Emeh, 2014; Halilu, Lawal, & Nafiu, 2016; Nicholas-Omoregbe et al., 2016), infrastructure decay (Ojo & Ojo, 2012; Onolememen, 2015), insecurity (Ikezue, & Ezeah, 2016; Ogoma, 2014), just to mention a few, have been the case. The leaders have occupied different positions before their ascension into leading the country, thereby gathering experiences and having travelled widely and could not be seen as unexposed. Since the numerous problems have been attributed to bad governance and bad leadership (Anyadike, & Emeh, 2014), could it be said that their experiences are limited to the positions they occupied? In addition, could it be that Nigerian leaders are not well trained to lead or born with leadership traits, thereby being overwhelmed with the challenges of leadership? Cuylenburg (2021) posits that a leader's or government's success or failure is measured by the level of security, poverty reduction, and nature of infrastructure development undertaken by the leader or government, as well as how well it meets the needs of the people. It is against this backdrop that this study sets to examine leadership traits in public governance in North Central Nigeria.

1.3 Research Questions

    i.   What is the effect of mental toughness on successful public governance?
    ii.   How has superior communication skills affected successful public governance?
    iii.   To what extent has honesty influence successful public governance?

1.4 Aims: General and Specific Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is an assessment of leadership traits for successful public governance in North Central Nigeria. The specific objectives are:

1. To find out the effects of mental toughness on successful public governance,
2. To identify the influence of superior communication skills on successful public governance.
3. To determine whether honesty has a significant effect or not on good public governance.

1.5 Research Hypotheses

    i. H_0 Mental toughness has no significant effect on successful public governance.
    ii. H_0 Superior communication skill does not considerably contribute to successful public governance.
    iii. H_0 Honesty has no substantial influence on successful public governance.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The significance of leadership on successful public governance cannot be overemphasized. Previous studies carried out include the following. Cuylenburg (2021) examined the importance of leadership in good governance and development. The author is of the view that some leadership skills like patience, education, empathy, team-building, integrity and decisiveness are important to good governance. The conclusion was that governance is a responsibility where these leadership qualities are vital to maintaining that well-oiled machinery, with every part is in proper coordination, without these, any country is most certainly doomed to fail. Onichakwe (2018) investigated effective leadership and good governance as tools for national development- a critical discussion. The paper explained that effective leadership and good governance remain the only known panacea for national development. It was recommended that anti-corruption campaign should be intensified alongside accountability and that leadership position in our national life should be based on merit. Ojewunmi (2020) studied good leadership and sustainable governance: a critical assessment of government in Nigeria. The paper is of the view that for governance of any given state to be sustainable, it must be governance that is led and managed by good leadership and it should conform to the expected constitutional standard, that is legally constituted and that is being operated according to the rules and regulations of the country. It must be accountable to the people with the structure that allows a smooth handover process. From the foregoing, it can be observed that there is no sufficient study on an assessment of leadership traits on successful public governance in North Central Nigeria.

This study is significant for the fact that it has contributed to knowledge in the area of providing good leadership which will in turn reduce insecurity and poverty, and improve infrastructural facilities. This will improve the social and economic well-being of the citizens. Governments, leaders, and citizens will also be better guided in making policy decisions regarding the requirements for good governance. Findings from this study can help stimulate a government blueprint for good public governance. Future researchers in similar or related fields would find the material of invaluable use. The study becomes necessary as it will provide both short and long-term solutions to bad public governance always experienced by citizens.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

This section considered the concept of governance, good leadership in governance, and leadership traits for good governance.

2.1 The Concept of Governance

The concept of governance means different things to different people, although, the actual meaning depends on the level of governance being talked about, the goals to be achieved and the approach being followed (Adepoju, 2010; Akinola, Adebisi, & Oyewo, 2015; Ojewunmi, 2020). The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific ([UNESCAP], 2011) notes that governance means the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented. The concept can be used in several contexts, such as corporate governance, international governance, national governance, and local governance. Governance is sustaining coordination and coherence among a wide variety of actors with different purposes and objectives. Such actors may include political actors and institutions, interest groups, civil society, non-governmental and transnational organizations. According to UNESCAP (2011), the government is one of the actors in governance. Other actors involved in governance vary depending on the level of government that is under discussion and may include influential landlords, associations of peasant farmers, cooperatives, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), research institutes, religious leaders, financial institutions, political parties, the media, lobbyists, international donors, multi-national corporations, etc. who may play a role in decision-making or in influencing the decision-making.

Good governance refers to the delivery of minimum public services, including infrastructure for basic education and health, roads and other means of transport and communication, the rule of law and accountability. Good governance is not only the absence of corruption but also the establishment of institutional arrangements which help create an environment for sustainable economic development and the removal of abject poverty. Thus, good governance also includes an appropriate and effective legal framework for commerce, financial institutions, taxation, government expenditure, the environment, business competition, and the labour market (Adisu, 2015; Nicholas-Omoregbe et al., 2016; Ojewunmi, 2020; Saiful, 2010). The World Bank (1993) notes that good governance entails sound public sector management (efficiency, effectiveness, and economy), accountability, exchange, and free flow of information (transparency), and a legal framework for development (justice, respect for human rights, and liberties). UNESCAP (2011) further elaborated that good governance has eight (8) major characteristics. It is participatory, consensus-oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive, and follows the rule of law. It ensures that corruption is minimized, the views of minorities are taken into account, and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision-making. It is also responsive to the present and future needs of society.

Adepoju (2010) notes that lack of transparency and effective institutional controls are the main factors leading to poor governance. It is important to note, however, that bad leadership is responsible for poor governance. Hence, Yadav (2005) concludes that both corruption and bad governance can be contained if the formulation and implementation of projects and policies are transparent and involve the community. Pillay (2004) argues that the rules and practises of governance shape the foundation of sustainable development and that if these rules and practises are not effectively monitored and applied, the very basis of development is compromised. Development is closely associated with democracy and state building. Democratization makes the state more transparent and more responsive to social needs. This, in turn, strengthens the state by enhancing its legitimacy and by integrating different entities (Adepoju, 2010; Adeosun, 2012; Anyadike, & Emeh, 2014).With a view to assuring the realisation of objectives, major donors and international financial institutions are increasingly basing their aid and loans on the condition that reforms or good governance are undertaken by beneficiary states. For a better and clearer grasp of the subject matter that constitutes the thrust of this study, it is necessary to attempt an answer to the question, "What is good leadership in governance?"

2.2 Good Leadership in Governance

Every group of people that performs near its total capacity has some person as its head who is skilled in the art of leadership. Weihrich, Cannice, and Kootz (2008) say this skill seems to be a compound of at least four major ingredients:

1. The ability to comprehend that human beings have a responsible manner
2. The ability to comprehend that human beings have different motivating forces at different times and in different situations,
3. The ability to inspire and
4. The ability to act in a manner that will develop a climate conducive to responding to and arousing motivations.

Good leaders act to help a group attain objectives through the maximum application of their capabilities. They do not stand behind a group to push and prod; they place themselves before the group as they inspire members and chart the course of their subject (Weihrich et al., 2008). Lord Montgomery, in his book Path to Leadership in Appleby (1994), describes a good leader as... one who can be looked up to, whose personal judgement is trusted, who can inspire and warm the hearts of those he leads, gaining their trust and confidence and explaining what is needed in language which can be understood. In Nigeria's current democratic setting, when leaders are elected, everyone wants them to live up to their expectations. Many people are counting on them to bring about change and reform for the benefit of the masses. The performance of this expectation is good governance (Ogoma, 2014) which to a large extent depends on the type of leaders that have just been described.

2.3 Leadership Traits for Successful Governance

It is a widely accepted fact that every person cannot be a leader. This directly implies that leaders have some qualities which are not present in other people (Charlie, 2011; Oak, 2011). However, Pillai (2011) states that good leaders are required in all fields because they lead, motivate, and inspire others. He argued that superior leadership is essential in today's high-pressure, competitive world. Rampur (2010) posits that a team is recognised by the leadership qualities and skills that are associated with the leader. So it can be considered that if a leader is not performing up to the mark, the team will obviously not give their best as well. Hence, Mankhedkar (2011); Pandey (2010) say there are some distinctive qualities of a good or great leader. Some are related to personality traits, some to character traits, and some to the strategies employed by a leader.

Possessing leadership traits is itself a quality that is seldom bestowed on an individual. However, leadership qualities can be acquired by experience and by following the path tread by great leaders in history. A leader has certain abilities and attributes that distinguish him from the masses. A person who listens to the grievances of the citizens with patience and acts rightfully is capable of becoming a leader. One who is confident enough to put forth his views and can convince people to follow him willingly is a leader. A good leader is stubborn and magnanimous at the same time (Kulkarni, 2011; Nicholas-Omoregbe et al., 2016; Sengupta, 2011). Men make history and not the other way round. In a period where there is no leadership, society stands still. Progress occurs when courageous, skilful leaders seize the opportunity to change things for the better (Naik, 2011; Shukla, 2011). Scholars have identified effective leadership qualities (traits, skills, characteristics, strengths, attributes-as it is variably called) which can make a leader successful. Few of these attributes are discussed below.

Mental Toughness: Alphonse (2010); Charlie (2011); Nakate (2010); Thadani (2010) state that a leader needs to be mentally tough. No one can lead without facing tough situations. A rough-minded leader sees things as they are and will pay the price for it. Leadership creates a certain separation from one's peers, which comes from carrying responsibility that only the leader is able to carry. The leader must be able to keep his or her own counsel until the proper time. A leader possesses the ability to live with criticism and not be affected by it. It is not possible for a leader to please everyone. Leaders are able to limit the impact of stress on their lives. A good leader thrives on the energy of a stressful situation, not the negativity. Ojewunmi (2020) is of the view that good leaders assume control even when they do not have it, thus eliminating the stress of not having control. Good leaders have the self-esteem and self-confidence to ride out of any tough situation.

Superior Communication Skills: Effective leadership necessitates good listening skills (Onichakwe, 2018). A leader needs to create a system of communication for the organization. Interaction should take into account the cultural differences too. He possesses the ability to ask the right questions. A good leader possesses superior interviewing skills in order to choose the right candidate. He is able to communicate clearly the objectives and

procedures required for a task. He needs to be excellent at public speaking and reading body language. A leader has to be open to constructive feedback. They have the ability to convince others and also communicate their vision to their team. They are endowed with the ability to inspire others to work more productively through their speech or words (Ambekar, 2011; Dhavale, 2010; Godbole, 2011; Naik, 2010).

Honesty: A valuable asset of a leader is honesty. He must be honest with the masses. Another part of his features is integrity (Anyadike, & Emeh, 2014). Once a leader compromises his or her integrity, it is lost. Integrity is considered admirable (Debopriya, 2010; Dhanya, 2011; Dogra, 2011; Irani, 2011). Ojewunmi (2020); Ojo, and Ojo (2012) opine that integrity is fidelity, strength of character, and credibility are their hallmarks. Good leaders set high ethical and moral standards for themselves, and live up to them conspicuously. Their words, supported by their actions, send clear messages to others about the type of behaviour they expect.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
Primary source of data was employed for this study. The research design considered appropriate for this study was survey research. Survey research was used because of its cost effectiveness, extensiveness, flexibility, and dependability of respondent answers (Dillman, 1991; Fincham, & Draugalis, 2013). Convenience sampling method was used for this study. A convenience sampling method was adopted because it provides a wealth of qualitative information; data can be easily collected; and when the list of the target population is inaccessible, the method proves to be useful (Dudovskiy, 2022; Gaille, 2020; Saeed, 2020; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012). The study population included all citizens of North Central Nigeria. Both descriptive and inferential statistics was used for data analysis. Chi-Square was used to determine the effects of the independent variables on the dependent variable.

3.1 The Study Location
The study location was the North Central Nigeria. It comprises the following states: Abuja (Federal Capital Territory), Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, and Plateau.

4.0.DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS OF A LEADERSHIP TRAITS ASSESSMENT FOR SUCCESSFUL PUBLIC GOVERNANCE IN NORTH CENTRAL NIGERIA
The online Google Form questionnaire completed by the six states and Abuja totalled 699 responses, with an average of 100 responses per state.

4.1.Mental Toughness as a Trait for Successful Public Governance
Hypothesis 1 states that mental toughness has no significant effect on successful public governance. A summary of the responses of citizens' levels of satisfaction with each of the statements describing mental toughness as a trait for successful public governance is provided below.

4.1.1.The Leadership's Intelligence in Public Governance
The summary of responses obtained in terms of the level of intelligence of the public governance leadership is in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Summary of Response on the Level of Intelligence of the Public Governance Leadership

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Very Unsatisfactory	106	139.8	-33.8
Unsatisfactory	293	139.8	153.2
Neutral	177	139.8	37.2
Satisfactory	112	139.8	-27.8
Very Satisfactory	11	139.8	-128.8
Total	699		

Source: Survey Data, 2022

In order to get a valid result, Chi-Square was used to test the response of the respondents in Table 4.1. The result obtained is in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Result of the Chi-Square Test on the Level of Intelligence of the Public Governance Leadership

Chi-Square	310.149[a]
Degree of Freedom (DF)	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000

Source: Survey Data, 2022

Decision Rule: The Chi-Square result on the question of the level of intelligence of public governance leadership in North Central Nigeria was statistically confirmed to be unsatisfactory. (d. f. = 4, p-value = 0.00, a= 0.05, x^2 = 310.149[a]) is the test statistic. We reject H_0 and conclude that the level of intelligence has a significant effect on successful public governance. This result supports the works of Charlie (2011); Ojewunmi (2020).

4.1.2.The Security Decisions of the Public Governance Leadership
The summary of responses obtained in terms of the security decisions of the public governance leadership is in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Summary of Response to Security Decisions by the Public Governance Leadership

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Very Unsatisfactory	110	139.8	-29.8
Unsatisfactory	366	139.8	226.2
Neutral	101	139.8	-38.8
Satisfactory	121	139.8	-18.8
Very Satisfactory	1	139.8	-138.8
Total	699		

Source: Survey Data, 2022

In order to get a binding result, Chi-Square was used to test the response of the respondents in Table 4.3. The Result obtained is in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Result of the Chi-Square Test on the Decisions that Concern Security by the Public Governance Leadership

Chi-Square	523.454[a]
Degree of Freedom (DF)	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000

Source: Survey Data, 2022

Decision Rule: The Chi-Square result on the question of security decisions made by leadership in public governance was statistically confirmed to be unsatisfactory in North Central Nigeria. (d. f. = 4, p-value = 0.00, a= 0.05, x^2 = 523.454[a]) is the test statistic. We reject H_0 and conclude that the decision that concerns security has a significant effect on successful public governance. This result supports the works of Cuylenburg (2021); Ikezue, and Ezeah (2016); Nicholas-Omoregbe et al. (2016).

4.1.3. The Citizens' Welfare Decisions by the Public Governance Leadership
The summary of responses obtained in terms of the citizens' welfare decisions of the public governance leadership is in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Summary of Response to Citizens Welfare Decisions by the Public Governance Leadership's

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Very Unsatisfactory	200	174.8	25.3
Unsatisfactory	378	174.8	203.3
Neutral	30	174.8	-144.8
Satisfactory	91	174.8	-83.8
Very Satisfactory	-	-	-
Total	699		

Source: Survey Data, 2022

In order to get a valid result, Chi-Square was used to test the response of the respondents in Table 4.5. The Result obtained is in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Chi-Square Test Results on Public Governance Leadership Decisions on Citizen Welfare

Chi-Square	400.084[a]
Degree of Freedom (DF)	3
Asymp. Sig.	.000

Source: Survey Data, 2022

Decision Rule: The Chi-Square result on the question of public governance leadership decisions on citizen welfare was statistically confirmed to be unsatisfactory in North Central Nigeria. (d. f. = 3, p-value = 0.00, a= 0.05, x^2= 400.084[a]) is the test statistic. We reject H_0 and conclude that the decision that concerns welfare has a significant effect on successful public governance. This supports the works of Onichakwe (2018); UNESCAP (2011).

4.2. Superior Communication Skills as a Trait for Successful Public Governance

Hypothesis 2 states that superior communication skills do not significantly contribute to successful public governance. A summary of the responses of citizens' levels of satisfaction with each of the statements describing superior communication skills as a trait for successful public governance is provided below.

4.2.1. The Ability of Public Governance Leaders to Listen to the Problems that Citizens Face.

The summary of responses obtained in terms of the ability to listen to the problems confronting the citizens by the public governance leadership is in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7 Summary of Response on the Ability to Listen to the Problems Confronting the Citizens by the Public Governance Leadership

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Very Unsatisfactory	165	174.8	-9.8
Unsatisfactory	319	174.8	144.3
Neutral	117	174.8	-57.8
Satisfactory	98	174.8	-76.8
Very Satisfactory	-	-	-
Total	699		

Source: Survey Data, 2022

In order to get a valid result, Chi-Square was used to test the response of the respondents in Table 4.7. The result obtained is in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Result of Chi-Square Test on the Ability to Listen to the Problems Confronting the Citizens by the Public Governance Leadership

Chi-Square	172.411[a]
Degree of Freedom (DF)	3
Asymp. Sig.	.000

Source: Survey Data, 2022

Decision Rule: The Chi-Square result on the question of public governance leadership's ability to listen to citizens' problems was statistically confirmed to be unsatisfactory in North Central Nigeria. (d. f. = 3, p-value = 0.00, a= 0.05, x^2= 172.411[a]) is the test statistic. We reject H_0 and conclude that the ability to listen to the problems confronting citizens has a significant effect on successful public governance. This result supports the works of Godbole (2011); Onichakwe (2018).'

4.2.2. The Level of Consistent Interaction of Public Governance Leadership with the Citizens

The summary of responses obtained in terms of the consistent interaction by the public governance leadership with the citizens in solving the problems of poverty, infrastructure decay, and insecurity is shown in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9 Summary of Respondents Response on the Consistent Interaction of Public Governance Leadership with the Citizens

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Very Unsatisfactory	198	174.8	23.3
Unsatisfactory	373	174.8	198.3
Neutral	67	174.8	-107.8
Satisfactory	61	174.8	-113.8
Very Satisfactory	-	-	-
Total	699		

Source: Survey Data, 2022

In order to get a binding result, Chi-Square was used to test the response of the respondents in Table 4.9. The result obtained is in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Result of Chi-Square Test on the Consistent Interaction of Public Governance Leadership with the Citizens

Chi-Square	368.485^{a}
Degree of Freedom (DF)	3
Asymp. Sig.	.000

Source: Survey Data, 2022

Decision Rule: The Chi-Square result on the question of public governance leadership's ability to listen to citizens' problems was statistically confirmed to be unsatisfactory in North Central Nigeria. (d. f. = 3, p-value = 0.00, a= 0.05, x^2= 368.485^{a}) is the test statistic. We reject H_0 and conclude that the ability to listen to the problems confronting the citizens in terms of poverty, infrastructure decay, and insecurity has a significant effect on successful public governance. This contributes to the work of Cuylenburg (2020); Onichakwe (2018).

4.2.3: Effective Information Dissemination to the Citizens by the Public Governance Leadership
The summary of responses obtained in terms of the effective dissemination of information to the citizens by the public governance leadership is in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11 Summary of Respondents Response on the Effective Dissemination of Information to the Citizens by the Public Governance Leadership

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Very Unsatisfactory	125	174.8	-49.8
Unsatisfactory	269	174.8	94.3
Neutral	169	174.8	-5.8
Satisfactory	136	174.8	-38.8
Very Satisfactory	-	-	-
Total	699		

Source: Survey Data, 2022

In order to get a valid result, Chi-Square was used to test the response of the respondents in Table 4.11. The result obtained is in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12: Result of Chi-Square Test on the Effective Information Dissemination to the Citizens by the Public Governance Leadership

Chi-Square	73.778^{a}
Degree of Freedom (DF)	3
Asymp. Sig.	.000

Source: Survey Data, 2022

Decision Rule: The Chi-Square result on the question of public governance leadership's dissemination of information to citizens was statistically confirmed to be unsatisfactory in North Central Nigeria. (d. f. = 3, p-value = 0.00, a= 0.05, x^2= 73.778^{a}) is the test statistic. We reject H_0 and conclude that effective dissemination of information to citizens has a significant effect on successful public governance. This result supports the works of Ambekar (2011); Onichakwe (2018).

4.3.Honesty skills as a Trait for Successful Public Governance

Hypothesis 3 states that honesty has no significant influence on successful public governance. A summary of the responses of citizens' levels of satisfaction with each of the statements describing honesty skills as a trait for successful public governance is provided below.

4.3.1.The Ability to Handle Public Funds in a Corrupt-Free Manner by the Public Governance Leadership

The summary of responses obtained in terms of ability to handle public funds in a corrupt-free manner by the public governance leadership is shown in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13 Summary of Respondents Response on the Ability to Handle Public Funds in a Corrupt- Free Manner by the Public Governance Leadership

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Very Unsatisfactory	248	174.8	73.3
Unsatisfactory	307	174.8	132.3
Neutral	107	174.8	-67.8
Satisfactory	37	174.8	-137.8
Very Satisfactory	-	-	-
Total	699		

Source: Survey Data, 2022

In order to get a valid result, Chi-Square was used to test the response of the respondents in Table 4.13. The result obtained is in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14: Result of Chi-Square Test on the Ability to Handle Public Funds in a Corrupt Free Manner by the Public Governance Leadership

Chi-Square	265.641[a]
Degree of Freedom (DF)	3
Asymp. Sig.	.000

Source: Survey Data, 2022

Decision Rule: In North Central Nigeria, the Chi-Square result on the question of public governance leadership's ability to handle public funds in a corrupt-free manner was statistically confirmed to be very unsatisfactory. (d. f. = 3, p-value = 0.00, a= 0.05, x^2= 265.641[a]) is the test statistic. We reject H_0 and conclude that the ability to handle public funds in a corrupt-free manner has a significant effect on successful public governance. This result supports the works of Adisu (2015); Dhanya (2011); Ojo, and Ojo (2012).

4.3.2.The Integrity Level of the Public Governance Leadership

The summary of responses obtained in terms of the integrity level of the public governance leadership is shown in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15: Summary of Respondents Response on the Integrity Level of the Public Governance Leadership

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Very Unsatisfactory	193	174.8	18.3
Unsatisfactory	304	174.8	129.3
Neutral	159	174.8	-15.8
Satisfactory	43	174.8	-131.8
Very Satisfactory	-	-	-
Total	699		

Source: Survey Data, 2022

In order to get a valid result, Chi-Square was used to test the response of the respondents in Table 4.15. The result obtained is in Table 4.16.

Table 4.16: Result of the Chi-Square Test on the Integrity Level of the Public Governance Leadership

Chi-Square	198.253[a]
Degree of Freedom (DF)	3
Asymp. Sig.	.000

Source: Survey Data, 2022

Decision Rule: The Chi-Square result on the question of the integrity level of public governance leadership in North Central Nigeria was statistically confirmed to be unsatisfactory. (d. f. = 3, p-value = 0.00, a= 0.05, x^2= 198.253[a]) is the test statistic. We reject H_0 and conclude that the integrity of the public governance leadership has a significant effect on successful public governance. This result supports the works of Anyadike, and Emeh (2014); Ojewunmi (2020); Ojo, and Ojo (2012).

4.4. Research Findings

Running a Chi-Square on three leadership traits (mental toughness, superior communication skill, and honesty), the following results were obtained:

There was a significant relationship between successful public governance and mental toughness. The level of a leader's intelligence has a significant effect on public governance. There was a significant relationship between decisions that affected security of lives and properties and successful public governance. Decisions on a citizen's welfare significantly affect successful public governance.

Citizens in North Central Nigeria were generally dissatisfied with the poor communication skills of the public leadership. It was revealed that citizens detested the inability of public leadership to listen to them when confronted with problems. There is a significant relationship between consistent interactions of citizens and leadership in public governance. However, study findings revealed that this was absent. The study unravelled the significant relationship between effective information dissemination and successful public governance. Nonetheless, residents of North Central Nigeria were disappointed by its absence.

Citizens were dissatisfied on the honesty of public leadership. The public leadership's ability to manage public funds in a corrupt-free manner was called into question. The integrity of public leadership significantly affects successful public governance. The study revealed that the North Central Nigerian public leadership lacked integrity.

4.5. Discussion of Findings

This study's main goal was to determine leadership traits on successful public governance in North Central Nigeria. Running a Chi-Square on mental toughness, the responses of the respondents to the questions raised confirmed statistically that public governance leadership actions are unsatisfactory in terms of intelligence, decisions that concern security, and adequate decisions on citizen's welfare. Mental toughness significantly affects successful public governance (see tables 4.2, 4.4, and 4.6). Charlie (2011); Ojewunmi (2020) state that for successful governance, a leader needs to be mentally tough. No one can lead without facing tough situations. A rough-minded leader sees things as they are and will pay the price for it. Leaders are able to limit the impact of stress on their lives. Good leaders have the self-esteem and confidence to ride out any tough situation.

Superior communication skills were tested on the Chi-Square. The study result revealed that respondents were dissatisfied with the public governance leadership's actions in terms of its ability to listen to the problems confronting the citizens, consistent interaction between the public governance leadership and the citizens, and effective information dissemination. It is therefore concluded that superior communication skills significantly contribute to successful public governance (see tables 4.8, 4.10, and 4.12). Onichakwe (2018) is of the view that effective leadership necessitates good listening skills, which contribute to good governance. Dhavale (2010); Naik (2010) state that for the achievement of successful public governance, a leader needs to create a system of communication, possess the ability to convince others, and also communicate his vision to his team. He is endowed with the ability to inspire others to work more productively through his speech or words.

In testing for honesty, respondents' responses on the ability of public governance leadership to handle public funds in a corrupt-free manner and their level of integrity were unsatisfactory. Respondents expressed dissatisfaction with how public governance leadership managed public funds (see table 4.13). Their integrity

could not be trusted as well (see table 4.15). Findings of study revealed that honesty has great influence on successful public governance (see tables 4.14 and 4.16). This supports the work of Anyadike, and Emeh (2014), who argue that honesty is a valuable asset of a leader for successful public governance. He must be honest with the masses. Another part of his character is integrity. Dogra (2011); Irani (2011) submit that once a leader compromises his or her integrity, it is lost. Integrity is considered admirable for successful public governance. Ojewunmi (2020); Ojo, and Ojo (2012) opine that integrity is fidelity; strength of character; and credibility are their hallmarks. Good leaders set high ethical and moral standards for themselves and live up to them conspicuously. Their words, supported by their actions, send clear messages to others about the type of behaviour they expect.

5.0. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
5.1.Summary
The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of leadership traits on successful public governance in North Central Nigeria. The study used a structured questionnaire as the instrument for data collection and a Chi-Square as the tool for data analysis. The key findings of the study are summarised below.

Evidence of study findings revealed that mental toughness significantly influences successful public governance. Respondents were dissatisfied when intelligence, security decisions, and citizen welfare were lacking in public governance leadership. Results showed that superior communication skills greatly contribute to successful public governance. Respondents clearly indicated their high level of dissatisfaction when public governance leadership lacks the ability to listen to the problems confronting the citizens, maintain consistent interaction with the citizens, and effectively disseminate information. According to the study findings of data analysis, honesty has a significant impact on successful public governance. There was a high level of dissatisfaction with the way public governance leadership handled public funds and their lack of integrity.

5.2. Conclusions
In line with the findings summarised above, conclusions can be drawn as follows:
Mental toughness greatly affects successful public governance. Respondents were dissatisfied when intelligence, timely decisions on security, and citizen welfare were lacking. Superior communication skills have a serious influence on successful public governance. There was dissatisfaction when public governance leadership failed to listen to the citizens when confronted with problems, a lack of consistent interactions, and effective information dissemination. Evidence revealed in the study findings indicates that honesty considerably supports successful public governance. Respondents were not satisfied with the way public governance leadership managed public funds and their lack of integrity.

5.3. Recommendations
Based on the above summary and the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are hereby made:
1. Public governance leadership should be trained and retrained in order to deliver on the mandate they were voted for. This is because there is a school of thought that holds that leaders are not only born but can be made or trained. During the training, the required traits or skills can be inculcated. Leadership requires educational nourishment for them to function well and deliver their mandate.
2. There should be a debate where electorates can scrutinise the leaders to determine whether they are fit or not before voting. Their manifestos should be thoroughly debated to determine whether they have the prerequisites to execute them. There are situations where manifestos are well written, but the leaders do not have the knowledge or will to execute them. A leader who avoids debate or conferences where his idea or input is required prior to voting should not be taken seriously or voted.
3. A leader who has not occupied a lower position should not be voted to occupy a higher one where enormous power and authority are vested. This is to prevent a situation where the destinies of the citizens are handed over to inexperienced leaders who take critical decisions without due consideration. Similarly, in such critical decisions, there should be checks and balances and independent bodies to ensure that costly mistakes are not made.
4. There should be a clear vision. Vision is what drives leadership. If it were not for vision, revered leaders would never have made their mark on history. A leader must consider both the current state of governance and the potential for future growth. He has to be able to look beyond where the country is today, know where it is going, and use that vision to move the country forward.

5. Any leader who will be successful must be able to select a good team. Though he may possess sound technical skills, he must also ensure that the team he selects is efficient enough to back up any skills he lacks. A leader is a human being and does not have an answer for everything. But by working together, he creates an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect; the team then always finds the best solution.

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