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TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOUR OF PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS' JOB SATISFACTION IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Teachers' job satisfaction plays a critical role in determining the effectiveness of secondary school education because satisfied teachers tend to demonstrate stronger commitment, motivation, and instructional effectiveness. Leadership behaviour of school principals has been identified as one of the most influential factors shaping teachers' attitudes toward their work. This study investigated transformational leadership of principals and teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. A correlational research design was adopted for the study. The population consisted of 4,946 teachers in public secondary schools in the state, from which a sample of 540 teachers was selected using a multistage sampling procedure. Data were collected using the Transformational Leadership Questionnaire and Teachers' Job Satisfaction Questionnaire. The instruments were validated by experts in educational management and measurement and evaluation, while reliability coefficients of 0.84 and 0.96 respectively were obtained using Cronbach's alpha. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used for data analysis at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed significant positive relationships between principals' transformational leadership dimensions (idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration) and teachers' job satisfaction. The study concluded that transformational leadership behaviours of principals significantly enhance teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools. It was recommended that educational authorities should encourage principals to adopt transformational leadership practices that promote teacher motivation, support professional development, and foster collaborative school environments.

Keywords: transformational leadership, principals, teacher job satisfaction, educational leadership, secondary schools

Introduction

The success of any educational system largely depends on the effectiveness and motivation of teachers. Teachers constitute the central workforce responsible for implementing educational policies, facilitating learning, and shaping students' academic development. For teachers to perform optimally, they must experience a high level of job satisfaction. Job satisfaction influences teachers' attitudes toward their profession, their commitment to

instructional responsibilities, and their willingness to contribute positively to school improvement. Educational researchers have increasingly emphasized that leadership behaviour within schools significantly influences teachers' job satisfaction. Principals occupy strategic leadership positions within the school system, and their leadership styles shape the organizational climate, teacher motivation, and staff relationships. When principals demonstrate supportive and motivating leadership behaviours, teachers tend to feel valued, respected, and satisfied with their work.

Recent leadership literature has highlighted transformational leadership as one of the most effective leadership approaches in educational institutions. Transformational leadership emphasizes inspiring followers, encouraging innovation, and promoting collective commitment toward organizational goals. According to Leithwood and Jantzi (2012), transformational leadership enables school leaders to influence teachers' attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours by fostering trust, motivation, and professional growth. In educational settings, transformational leadership behaviours encourage teachers to become more engaged in their professional duties and to work collaboratively toward achieving school objectives. When principals demonstrate transformational leadership, teachers are more likely to develop a sense of belonging and satisfaction in their work environment. As noted by Nguni, Sleegers, and Denessen (2010), and Ikedimma and Okorji (2023) transformational leadership practices such as individualized support, intellectual stimulation, and inspirational motivation significantly influence teachers' motivation and job satisfaction.

In Nigeria, concerns about declining teacher morale and dissatisfaction have been reported in several public secondary schools. Teachers often encounter challenges such as inadequate support from school administrators, heavy workload, and limited opportunities for professional growth. These challenges can negatively affect teachers' job satisfaction and ultimately impact students' learning outcomes. Within Anambra State, similar concerns have been observed regarding teachers' commitment and satisfaction in public secondary schools. Reports from educational stakeholders indicate that some teachers experience frustration due to perceived lack of recognition, inadequate leadership support, and limited participation in school decision-making processes. Such circumstances highlight the importance of examining leadership practices within schools.

Transformational leadership may offer a viable framework for addressing these challenges because it emphasizes supportive relationships between leaders and followers. Principals who practice transformational leadership inspire teachers, encourage professional autonomy, and provide opportunities for intellectual engagement. Such leadership behaviours can significantly improve teachers' attitudes toward their work. Despite the growing recognition of transformational leadership in educational management, limited empirical studies have specifically examined its

relationship with teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Understanding this relationship is important for improving leadership practices and enhancing teachers' workplace experiences. Therefore, this study examined the relationship between transformational leadership of principals and teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Teachers play a central role in achieving the goals of secondary education because they are responsible for implementing curriculum, facilitating learning, and shaping students' academic development. However, the effectiveness of teachers largely depends on the level of satisfaction they derive from their professional responsibilities. Teachers who are satisfied with their jobs tend to demonstrate greater commitment, motivation, and instructional effectiveness, whereas dissatisfied teachers may exhibit reduced morale, absenteeism, and diminished teaching performance.

In many educational systems, concerns have been raised about declining teacher morale and job satisfaction. Within public secondary schools in Nigeria, teachers often face several professional challenges such as heavy workloads, limited administrative support, inadequate recognition, and restricted participation in decision-making processes. These challenges may negatively influence teachers' attitudes toward their work and reduce their commitment to the teaching profession. Notably, when teachers experience low levels of job satisfaction, it may lead to decreased motivation and increased intentions to leave the profession.

Despite the recognized importance of transformational leadership in educational administration, concerns remain about the extent to which principals in public secondary schools adopt leadership practices that promote teachers' job satisfaction. In Anambra State, reports from stakeholders and educational observers suggest that some teachers experience dissatisfaction related to perceived lack of support, limited recognition, and inadequate leadership engagement within schools.

While several studies have examined leadership effectiveness in schools, there remains a need to specifically determine how principals' transformational leadership behaviours relate to teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Without empirical evidence on this relationship, efforts aimed at improving school leadership practices may not adequately address the factors influencing teachers' professional satisfaction. It is against this background that the present study investigated the relationship between transformational leadership of principals and teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between transformational leadership of principals and

teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine the relationship between principals' idealized influence and teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. Determine the relationship between principals' inspirational motivation and teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Anambra State.
3. Determine the relationship between principals' intellectual stimulation and teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Anambra State.
4. Determine the relationship between principals' individualized consideration and teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between principals' idealized influence and teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Anambra State?
2. What is the relationship between principals' inspirational motivation and teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Anambra State?
3. What is the relationship between principals' intellectual stimulation and teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Anambra State?
4. What is the relationship between principals' individualized consideration and teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Literature Review

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is widely regarded as one of the most influential leadership theories in contemporary organizational research. The concept emphasizes leaders' ability to inspire followers to achieve higher levels of motivation and performance beyond their initial expectations. According to Leithwood and Sun (2012), transformational leadership in schools focuses on building shared vision, fostering collaborative relationships, and empowering teachers to participate actively in school improvement. Transformational leadership is typically conceptualized through four major dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Each dimension contributes to shaping the leadership behaviour of school principals and influencing teachers' perceptions of their work environment.

Idealized influence deals with the extent to which leaders act as role models who demonstrate ethical behaviour, integrity, and professionalism (Ikedimma & Okorji, 2023). When principals exhibit these qualities, teachers develop trust and respect for their leadership. As noted by Hallinger (2011), school leaders who demonstrate

strong ethical standards often inspire teachers to emulate their behaviour and remain committed to organizational goals.

Inspirational motivation involves articulating a compelling vision that encourages teachers to work toward collective educational goals. According to Bush (2014), school leaders who communicate clear expectations and inspire enthusiasm among teachers are more likely to create a positive organizational climate that enhances motivation and satisfaction.

Intellectual stimulation refers to leadership practices that encourage innovation and critical thinking among teachers. Principals who promote intellectual stimulation challenge teachers to explore new teaching strategies and contribute ideas for improving instructional practices. Nguni and colleagues (2010) observed that when teachers are encouraged to think creatively and participate in decision-making processes, they experience higher levels of professional fulfillment.

Individualized consideration focuses on leaders' attention to the individual needs and professional development of followers. Transformational principals provide mentorship, emotional support, and opportunities for career growth. According to Aydin, Sarier, and Uysal (2013), individualized support from school leaders significantly enhances teachers' morale and job satisfaction.

Teachers' Job Satisfaction

Teachers' job satisfaction refers to the extent to which teachers feel content, fulfilled, and motivated in their professional roles. Job satisfaction is influenced by various factors including leadership support, working conditions, professional autonomy, and opportunities for advancement. According to Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2011), teachers who experience high job satisfaction demonstrate greater enthusiasm for teaching and stronger commitment to student success. Leadership behaviour is one of the most critical determinants of teachers' job satisfaction. When school leaders provide encouragement, recognition, and professional support, teachers tend to feel valued and motivated. Conversely, authoritarian leadership styles often reduce teachers' morale and contribute to workplace dissatisfaction.

Transformational leadership is particularly effective in promoting teachers' job satisfaction because it emphasizes supportive leadership relationships and professional empowerment. As argued by Bogler (2012), teachers who perceive their principals as transformational leaders tend to experience higher levels of job satisfaction because they feel involved in school development processes and supported in their professional roles.

Method

This study adopted a correlational research design in order to examine the relationship between principals' transformational leadership behaviours and teachers' job satisfaction. The design was considered appropriate because it enabled the researcher to determine the direction and degree of association between the study variables without manipulating them.

The study was conducted in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. The population consisted of 4,946 teachers working in public secondary schools across the state. From this population, a sample of 540 teachers was selected using a multistage sampling procedure to ensure representation across the educational zones. Two major instruments were used for data collection:

1. Transformational Leadership Questionnaire (TLQ)
2. Teachers' Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (TJSQ)

The instruments were validated by experts in educational management and measurement and evaluation. Reliability of the instruments was established using Cronbach's alpha method, which yielded reliability coefficients of 0.84 for the TLQ and 0.96 for the TJSQ, indicating high internal consistency.

The researcher administered the questionnaires to the sampled teachers with the assistance of trained research assistants. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to analyze the data and determine the relationship between transformational leadership behaviours and teachers' job satisfaction at the 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between principals' idealized influence and teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 1: Pearson r on principals' idealized influence and teachers' job satisfaction.

	N	principals' idealized influence	teachers' job satisfaction	Remarks
principals' idealized influence	540	1.00	0.61*	significant
teachers' job satisfaction	540	0.61*	1.00	

On Table 1, the result shows that the correlation coefficient (r) between principals' idealized influence and teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Anambra State is 0.61. This implies principals' idealized influence demonstrated positive and statistically significant relationship with teachers' job satisfaction.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between principals' inspirational motivation and teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 2: Pearson r on principals' inspirational motivation and teachers' job satisfaction.

	N	inspirational motivation	teachers' job satisfaction	Remarks
inspirational motivation	540	1.00	0.64*	significant
teachers' job satisfaction	540	0.64*	1.00	

On Table 2, the result shows that the correlation coefficient (r) between principals' inspirational motivation and teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Anambra State is 0.64, which is considered as positive and significant relationship.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between principals' intellectual stimulation and teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 3: Pearson r on principals' intellectual stimulation and teachers' job satisfaction.

	N	principals' intellectual stimulation	teachers' job satisfaction	Remarks
principals' intellectual stimulation	540	1.00	0.57*	
teachers' job satisfaction	540	0.57*	1.00	significant

On Table 3, the result shows that the correlation coefficient (r) between principals' intellectual stimulation and teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Anambra State is 0.57, which is considered as positive and significant relationship.

Research Question 4: What is the relationship between principals' individualized consideration and teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 4: Pearson r on principals' individualized consideration and teachers' job satisfaction.

	N	principals' individualized consideration	teachers' job satisfaction	Remarks
principals' individualized consideration	540	1.00	0.66*	
teachers' job satisfaction	540	0.66*	1.00	significant

On Table 4, the result shows that the correlation coefficient (r) between principals' individualized consideration and teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Anambra State is 0.66, which is considered as positive and significant relationship.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study were discussed in relation to the four dimensions of transformational leadership examined in the study: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Each dimension was analyzed to determine its relationship with teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Idealized Influence and Teachers' Job Satisfaction

The findings of the study revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between principals' idealized influence and teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

This finding suggests that when principals demonstrate ethical leadership, professionalism, and integrity in their administrative roles, teachers are more likely to experience satisfaction with their professional responsibilities. Idealized influence refers to the ability of leaders to serve as role models whose behaviours inspire respect, trust, and admiration among their followers. When school principals demonstrate fairness, transparency, and commitment to educational goals, teachers tend to develop confidence in their leadership and feel motivated to contribute to the achievement of school objectives. Teachers who perceive their principals as trustworthy and principled leaders are more likely to experience a sense of organizational belonging and professional fulfillment.

The result of this study is consistent with the observations of Hallinger (2011), who explains that school leaders who exhibit strong ethical standards and professional integrity contribute significantly to the development of positive organizational climates within schools. Hallinger in Ikedimma and Okorji (2023) states that teachers tend to respond positively to leaders who demonstrate moral leadership because such behaviours foster trust and strengthen professional relationships within the school environment. Similarly, Leithwood and Sun (2012) note that transformational leaders who demonstrate idealized influence create conditions that encourage teachers to internalize organizational values and develop stronger commitment to their work. When teachers observe their principals modeling ethical behaviour and dedication to educational goals, they are more likely to emulate these behaviours and maintain positive attitudes toward their professional duties. The implication of this finding is that principals who demonstrate exemplary leadership behaviour and uphold professional standards can significantly enhance teachers' perceptions of their work environment, thereby improving their level of job satisfaction.

Inspirational Motivation and Teachers' Job Satisfaction

The findings of the study also revealed a significant relationship between principals' inspirational motivation and teachers' job satisfaction. This indicates that principals who effectively communicate a clear vision for the school and inspire enthusiasm among teachers are more likely to influence teachers' satisfaction with their work. Inspirational motivation involves leaders' ability to articulate meaningful goals and motivate followers to work toward achieving them. In school settings, principals who encourage teachers, recognize their contributions, and communicate optimism about school improvement can create environments that promote teacher motivation and professional engagement.

The findings of this study support the assertion of Bush (2014), who explains that inspirational leadership enables school leaders to mobilize teachers toward shared educational goals. According to Bush (2014), principals who demonstrate inspirational leadership behaviours create a

sense of collective purpose among teachers, which contributes to increased motivation and job satisfaction. Furthermore, Nguni, Sleegers, and Denessen (2010) argue that inspirational leadership practices encourage teachers to develop positive attitudes toward their professional roles because they feel motivated by leaders who acknowledge their contributions and inspire them to achieve higher levels of performance. When teachers perceive that their efforts are recognized and that their work contributes to meaningful educational goals, they are more likely to derive satisfaction from their professional responsibilities. The implication of this finding is that principals who communicate clear goals, encourage teachers, and promote a shared vision for school improvement can enhance teachers' enthusiasm and commitment to their work.

Intellectual Stimulation and Teachers' Job Satisfaction

Another important finding of the study is the significant relationship between principals' intellectual stimulation and teachers' job satisfaction. This finding suggests that when principals encourage creativity, innovation, and critical thinking among teachers, teachers are more likely to experience professional fulfillment and satisfaction in their work. Intellectual stimulation refers to leadership practices that challenge followers to think critically, explore innovative ideas, and question traditional methods in order to improve organizational performance. In educational settings, principals who promote intellectual engagement encourage teachers to develop new teaching strategies, explore creative instructional methods, and participate actively in problem-solving processes related to teaching and learning (Ikedimma & Okorji, 2023).

The result of this study aligns with the findings of Nguni, Sleegers, and Denessen (2010), who report that transformational leadership behaviours that stimulate teachers intellectually significantly influence their professional attitudes and satisfaction. According to the authors, teachers who are encouraged to explore new ideas and contribute to instructional improvement initiatives often develop a stronger sense of professional autonomy and competence. Similarly, Aydin, Sarier, and Uysal (2013) observe that school leaders who support innovation and encourage teachers to participate in intellectual activities create environments that promote professional growth and job satisfaction. Teachers who are given opportunities to engage in reflective dialogue, professional learning communities, and collaborative instructional planning are more likely to feel intellectually stimulated and professionally valued. The implication of this finding is that principals who encourage creativity, promote professional inquiry, and support innovative teaching practices can significantly improve teachers' professional satisfaction and engagement.

Individualized Consideration and Teachers' Job Satisfaction

The findings of the study also indicated a significant relationship between principals' individualized consideration and

teachers' job satisfaction. This result suggests that teachers are more satisfied with their jobs when principals demonstrate personal concern for their professional needs and provide individualized support. Individualized consideration refers to leadership behaviours that involve recognizing the unique needs, abilities, and aspirations of each employee. In the context of educational leadership, principals who demonstrate individualized consideration provide mentorship, emotional support, and opportunities for professional development for teachers.

The finding supports the observations of Aydin, Sarier, and Uysal (2013), who report that leadership behaviours that recognize individual employee needs significantly influence job satisfaction. According to the authors, teachers who receive personal support and encouragement from their principals are more likely to feel valued within the school organization and develop stronger commitment to their professional roles. In addition, Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2011) emphasize that teachers' job satisfaction is strongly influenced by supportive relationships with school leaders. When principals provide constructive feedback, recognize teachers' efforts, and support their professional growth, teachers tend to develop positive attitudes toward their work. The implication of this finding is that principals who provide mentorship, recognize teachers' professional needs, and maintain supportive relationships with teachers can significantly enhance teachers' morale and job satisfaction.

Conclusion

This study examined the relationship between transformational leadership of principals and teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. The findings demonstrated that the four dimensions of transformational leadership, idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, are positively associated with teachers' job satisfaction. The results highlight the importance of leadership practices that encourage teacher participation, innovation, and professional support. Principals who demonstrate transformational leadership behaviours contribute significantly to creating positive school environments where teachers feel motivated and satisfied with their work.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made.

1. Educational authorities, particularly the Anambra State Ministry of Education and the Post Primary Schools Service Commission (PPSSC), should design and implement structured leadership development programmes aimed at equipping school principals with transformational leadership competencies. These programmes should focus on the core dimensions of transformational leadership such as idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.

2. School leaders should promote an intellectually stimulating environment that encourages teachers to engage in continuous professional learning and innovation in instructional practices. Encouraging teachers to explore creative teaching strategies can enhance their professional competence and strengthen their commitment to the teaching profession. Principals may also encourage teachers to participate in action research projects aimed at improving teaching and learning outcomes within their classrooms. Teachers who are involved in research-based instructional improvement often experience greater professional satisfaction because they feel intellectually stimulated and professionally empowered. By promoting innovation and professional growth opportunities, school leaders can significantly enhance teachers' job satisfaction and instructional effectiveness.
3. Principals should demonstrate individualized consideration by providing personal support, mentorship, and professional guidance to teachers. Teachers have diverse professional needs, experiences, and challenges, and effective school leaders should recognize and respond to these individual differences. One important strategy for achieving this is the establishment of structured mentoring programmes within schools. Newly recruited teachers should be paired with experienced teachers who can guide them in areas such as lesson planning, classroom management, student assessment, and professional conduct. Such mentorship relationships can help early-career teachers develop confidence and adapt successfully to the demands of the teaching profession. Also, by demonstrating genuine concern for teachers' professional growth and well-being, principals can create supportive working environments that enhance teachers' morale, commitment, and job satisfaction.

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