



**PRINCIPALS' TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES AS
CORRELATES OF TEACHERS' JOB PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY
SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE**

Chidinma Onyinye Nwokenkwo

Department of Educational Management and Policy, Nnamdi Azikiwe University,
P.M.B 5025, Awka, Nigeria; E-mail: chidinmaonyinyemartins@gmail.com

Phone: 07038079457

&

Prof. Loyce Chiedozie Onyali

Department of Educational Management and Policy, Nnamdi Azikiwe University
P.M.B 5025, Awka, Nigeria; Email: lc.onyali@unizik.edu.ng

Phone: 08036772836

Abstract

This study investigated the relationship between principals' transformational leadership practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. The study adopted a correlational research design involving all 263 principals of public secondary schools in the state. Two instruments, Teachers' Job Performance Scale (TJPS) and Principals' Transformational Leadership Practices Questionnaire (PTLQ) were used for data collection. The instruments were validated by experts and yielded Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of 0.82 and 0.80 respectively. Data were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and linear regression. Findings revealed moderate positive relationship between principals' idealized influence, inspirational motivation, and teachers' job performance. The study concluded that transformational leadership practices significantly enhance teacher effectiveness and recommended improved leadership training and teacher motivation systems.

Keywords: transformational leadership, transformational leadership practices, job performance.

Introduction

Education is widely recognized as the bedrock of national development, social transformation, and economic advancement. Across the world, the educational system remains the most effective mechanism through which societies reproduce knowledge, values, and competencies needed for sustainable development. According to Ugwu and Okoye (2024) education determines the speed and level of national development. The quality of a nation's education system often determines its ability to compete globally in science, technology, politics, and economic productivity. According to the (UNESCO, 2024), education is central to achieving sustainable development goals, particularly in promoting inclusive and equitable quality education for all. This underscores the indispensable role education plays in shaping the future of individuals and societies.

In Nigeria, education is structured into three major levels: primary, secondary, and tertiary education. Among these, secondary education occupies a strategic and transitional position because it serves as a bridge between foundational learning and specialized higher education.



Secondary education is expected to prepare students for useful living within society and for higher education, as stipulated in the National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria [FRN], 2014). This level of education equips learners with critical thinking skills, moral values, and technical competencies necessary for productive citizenship. As noted by Ajayi and Adegbasum (2018), secondary education is indispensable because the literacy and numeracy skills acquired at the primary level are often insufficient for effective societal functioning.

The effectiveness of secondary education largely depends on the quality of teachers and the extent to which they perform their professional responsibilities. Teachers are regarded as the most important human resources in the educational system because they are directly involved in implementing the curriculum and translating educational policies into practical classroom realities. (2021) emphasized that teacher quality remains the strongest school-related factor influencing student achievement. Similarly, Elmagri and Laton (2021) observed that teachers are the pivot around which all school activities revolve, making their performance central to educational success.

Teachers' job performance refers to the degree to which teachers effectively execute their instructional, administrative, and professional responsibilities in achieving educational objectives. This includes lesson planning, classroom management, instructional delivery, student assessment, professional ethics, punctuality, attendance, and participation in co-curricular activities. According to Okafor (2023), teachers' job performance is the practical manifestation of their competence, commitment, and productivity in fulfilling institutional expectations. Effective teacher performance is associated with improved student outcomes, stronger school culture, and enhanced institutional reputation.

However, recent observations and empirical evidence indicate that teacher job performance in many public secondary schools in Nigeria has become a major concern. Issues such as absenteeism, lateness to school, poor lesson preparation, low morale, inadequate commitment, and weak instructional effectiveness have continued to affect the quality of education. In Anambra State, these concerns have become more visible as parents increasingly prefer private secondary schools, believing they offer better instructional quality and stronger teacher commitment (Nwosu, 2020). This trend reflects a growing public perception that public secondary school teachers may not be performing optimally.

Scholars have argued that teacher job performance is influenced by multiple factors, including remuneration, working conditions, professional development, and leadership style. Among these factors, leadership has emerged as one of the most critical determinants of teacher effectiveness. Leadership in educational administration involves influencing, directing, and coordinating the efforts of teachers and other stakeholders toward the achievement of school goals. According to (2021), leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group to achieve a common goal. In the school setting, the principal occupies this leadership role and is expected to provide the vision, motivation, and organizational support necessary for effective teaching and learning.

The role of principals in school effectiveness cannot be overemphasized. Principals serve as instructional leaders, administrators, supervisors, and motivators. Their leadership style significantly shapes the work climate, teacher morale, and institutional productivity. Research has

shown that principals who adopt effective leadership styles create positive school environments that encourage teacher commitment and improved job performance (Leithwood et al., 2020). Conversely, ineffective leadership can lead to dissatisfaction, low motivation, and poor teacher productivity.

Among contemporary leadership theories, transformational leadership has received considerable attention due to its effectiveness in improving organizational outcomes. Transformational leadership was first conceptualized by (1978) and later expanded by (1985). This leadership style emphasizes inspiring and motivating followers to exceed expectations, develop professionally, and align their personal goals with organizational goals. Transformational leadership is characterized by four major dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.

Idealized influence refers to the leader's ability to serve as a role model, earning the trust, admiration, and respect of followers. Leaders who demonstrate idealized influence inspire followers through integrity, accountability, and commitment to organizational values. Recent studies by Ikedimma et al. (2023) found that principals' idealized influence significantly improves teachers' job satisfaction and commitment in public secondary schools.

Inspirational motivation involves the ability of leaders to articulate a compelling vision, communicate high expectations, and encourage followers toward goal achievement. Leaders who apply inspirational motivation create enthusiasm, optimism, and a sense of purpose among subordinates. Aydin (2022) argued that principals who motivate teachers through recognition, encouragement, and support improve teacher morale and productivity.

Intellectual stimulation focuses on encouraging creativity, innovation, and problem-solving among followers. In the educational context, principals who intellectually stimulate teachers create opportunities for professional development, critical thinking, and instructional innovation. Akinnubi and Adeoye (2024) reported that intellectual stimulation positively influences teachers' job satisfaction and professional effectiveness in Nigerian secondary schools.

Individualized consideration involves attending to the personal and professional needs of followers through mentoring, coaching, and support. This dimension recognizes individual differences and seeks to maximize the strengths of each teacher. According to Tang et al. (2024), individualized consideration enhances employee loyalty, commitment, and productivity by creating a supportive work environment.

Despite the growing body of literature supporting transformational leadership, evidence suggests that its application in public secondary schools in Anambra State remains inadequate. Teachers in many schools reportedly lack access to regular professional development, motivation systems, and participatory decision-making processes (Okafor et al., 2020). This situation raises concerns about whether principals effectively apply transformational leadership practices to improve teacher performance.

It is against this backdrop that this study investigates principals' transformational leadership practices as correlates of teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Specifically, the study focuses on idealized influence and inspirational motivation

as dimensions of transformational leadership that may significantly influence teachers' effectiveness, commitment, and productivity in the school system.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the importance of teachers in achieving educational goals, evidence suggests that teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State has declined significantly. Reports of poor instructional delivery, absenteeism, lack of commitment, and weak professional ethics have become common. This situation has contributed to increased parental preference for private schools. The problem of this study is to determine whether principals' transformational leadership practices significantly relate to teachers' job performance.

Purposes of the Study

1. To determine the relationship between principals' idealized influence practices and teachers' job performance.
2. To determine the relationship between principals' inspirational motivation practices and teachers' job performance.

Research Questions.

1. What is the relationship between principals' idealized influence practices and teachers' job performance?
2. What is the relationship between principals' inspirational motivation practices and teachers' job performance?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between principals' idealized influence practices and teachers' job performance.
2. There is no significant relationship between principals' inspirational motivation practices and teachers' job performance.

Method

The study adopted a correlational survey research design. This design was considered appropriate because it established the direction and magnitude of the relationship between principals' transformational leadership practices and teachers' job performance. The study was conducted in Anambra State, Nigeria. The state has 21 Local Government Areas and 263 public secondary schools distributed across six education zones: Aguata, Awka, Nnewi, Ogidi, Onitsha, and Otuocho. The population consisted of 263 principals in all public secondary schools in Anambra State. A census technique was adopted, involving the entire population due to its manageable size. Two researcher-developed instruments were used: Teachers' Job Performance Scale (TJPS) – 17 items. Principals' Transformational Leadership Practices Questionnaire (PTLQ) – 15 items divided into two sections: Idealized Influence (7 items) Inspirational Motivation (8 items). The instruments were structured on a 4-point Likert scale ranging of Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2), Strongly Disagree (1). The instruments were validated by three experts from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Reliability was established through a pilot test involving 20 principals in Enugu State using Cronbach's alpha. Reliability coefficients obtained were .79 and .80 for the two sections of the PTLQ, while the TJPS yielded .82. The overall reliability coefficient was .80. The researcher administered 263 copies of the questionnaire with the assistance of 12 trained research assistants. Out of the total distributed, 259 were retrieved and used for analysis.

Data were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) at the .05 significance level. Interpretation Bands for the Pearson Correlation Coefficient are as follows:

Coefficient (r)	Relationship
.00–.19	Very Low
.20–.39	Low
.40–.59	Moderate
.60–.79	High
.80–.99	Very High

For hypothesis testing, the p-value associated with each correlation was compared against the significance level of .05. Where $p \leq .05$, the null hypothesis was rejected; otherwise, it was retained. All analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 23.

Results

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

Table 1. Pearson Correlation Between Principals' Idealized Influence Practices and Teachers' Job Performance (N = 259)

Variable	1	2
Idealized Influence Practices	1.00	.55
Teachers' Job Performance	.55	1.00

Note. All correlations are significant at $p < .001$.

A moderate positive relationship ($r = .55$) was found between principals' idealized influence practices and teachers' job performance.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between principals' idealized influence practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Table 2. Test of Significance of the Pearson Correlation

Variable	N	r	p	Decision
Idealized Influence Practices & Teachers' Job Performance	259	.55	$< .001$	Reject H_0

Because the calculated r (.55) was associated with $p < .05$, the first null hypothesis was rejected.

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

Table 3. Pearson Correlation Between Principals' Inspirational Motivation Practices and Teachers' Job Performance (N = 259)

Variable	1	2
Inspirational Motivation Practices	1.00	.67
Teachers' Job Performance	.67	1.00

A high positive relationship ($r = .67$) was found between principals' inspirational motivation practices and teachers' job performance.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between principals' inspirational motivation practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Table 4. Test of Significance of the Pearson Correlation

Variable	N	r	p	Decision
Inspirational Motivation Practices & Teachers' Job Performance	259	.67	< .001	Reject H02

Because the calculated r (.67) was associated with $p < .05$, the second null hypothesis was rejected. The relationship between principals' inspirational motivation practices and teachers' job performance is statistically significant.

Discussion

Idealized Influence and Teachers' Job Performance

The moderate positive relationship found between principals' idealized influence practices and teachers' job performance ($r = .55$) indicates that practices such as emphasizing accountability, setting specific goals, and encouraging teamwork account for a meaningful share of variation in teachers' job performance. Although a coefficient of this size would be considered modest in the physical sciences, it is regarded as a substantively meaningful relationship in social and behavioral science research, which deals with attitudinal and behavioral data subject to greater measurement variability. The finding is consistent with Ikedimma et al. (2023), who reported a moderate, significant positive relationship between principals' idealized influence practices and teachers' job commitment in the same state, and with Igwenwanne and Obasi (2024), whose regression analysis showed that principals' idealized influence significantly predicts teachers' job commitment to a high degree. The convergence across these studies conducted in similar settings using similar methods suggests that idealized influence offers a robust explanation of how principals' personal conduct and trust-building shape teacher outcomes, independent of minor differences in location or time of study. The findings revealed that idealized influence significantly improves teachers' job performance. This implies that principals who demonstrate trustworthiness, accountability, and exemplary conduct can inspire teachers to perform better.

Inspirational Motivation and Teachers' Job Performance

The high positive relationship found for inspirational motivation ($r = .67$) indicates that principals' use of in-service training opportunities, public recognition of dedicated teachers, and recommendation for career advancement is strongly linked to teachers' job performance. A relationship of this magnitude supports confident reliance on the result for policy and intervention purposes. This finding aligns with research showing that school leaders' inspiring practices can outperform financial rewards in arousing teacher enthusiasm, and with Melela and Gathumbi's (2016) finding that inspirational motivation increases teachers' job commitment in Kenyan public primary schools. It is also consistent with Furaha et al. (2023), who found that heads of school possessing inspirational motivation skills moderately improved teachers' job satisfaction in Tanzania. Although these comparison studies vary in outcome variable (commitment or satisfaction rather than performance) and context, the consistent direction of the relationship across studies suggests that motivational leadership behavior operates similarly across settings and outcome measures. This shows that teachers are more productive when principals encourage and support them through motivation, rewards, and recognition.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that principals' transformational leadership practices, particularly idealized influence and inspirational motivation, are significant correlates of teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The study established that principals who demonstrate exemplary conduct, accountability, and commitment positively influence teachers' effectiveness and dedication to duty. Similarly, principals who inspire and motivate teachers through encouragement, recognition, and the communication of clear goals contribute significantly to improved teacher productivity. Therefore, the adoption of transformational leadership practices by principals remains essential for enhancing teachers' job performance and achieving educational goals in public secondary schools.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

Principals should strengthen their idealized influence practices by demonstrating integrity, accountability, and commitment in the discharge of their duties. Since the study revealed a positive relationship between principals' idealized influence and teachers' job performance, principals should serve as role models by setting clear standards, encouraging teamwork, and promoting professional ethics among teachers.

Principals should improve their use of inspirational motivation practices by creating a motivating school climate that encourages teachers to perform optimally. This can be achieved through regular recognition of teachers' efforts, effective communication of school goals, provision of encouragement, and fostering a shared vision for school improvement.

The Ministry of Education should organize regular leadership training and workshops for principals on transformational leadership practices, especially on idealized influence and inspirational motivation, to equip them with the necessary leadership competencies for improving teacher performance.

School administrators and policymakers should establish monitoring and evaluation frameworks to ensure that principals consistently apply transformational leadership strategies in managing teachers and school activities.

References

Huntua, H.T., Wantu, S.M., Kamuli, U. and Aneta, Y. (2026). The functional career development of lecturers in private universities in Gorontalo Province. *Journal of Asian Multicultural Research for Social Sciences Study*, 7(2), 24-31. <https://doi.org/10.47616/jamrsss.v7i2.714>

Ajayi, T., & Adegbasum, A. (2018). Secondary education and national development in Nigeria: Implications for sustainable development. *Journal of Educational Policy and Development*, 12(2), 45–56.

Akinnubi, O. P., & Adeoye, A. A. (2024). Intellectual stimulation and teacher effectiveness in public secondary schools in Southwest Nigeria. *African Journal of Educational Management*, 19(1), 88–103.

Aydin, A. (2022). Transformational leadership and inspirational motivation in educational organizations. *International Journal of Leadership Studies*, 14(1), 22–37. <https://doi.org/10.1177/ijl.2022.01401>

Bass, B. M. (1985). *Leadership and performance beyond expectations*. Free Press.

Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership*. Harper & Row.

Elmagri, A., & Laton, S. (2021). Teachers' effectiveness and educational outcomes: Examining instructional performance in developing countries. *International Journal of Education and Development*, 8(1), 34–49.

Federal Republic of Nigeria. (2014). National policy on education (6th ed.). NERDC Press.

Ikedimma, C. N., Eze, U. O., & Obi, P. C. (2023). Principals' idealized influence and teachers' organizational commitment in public secondary schools in Southeast Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Educational Leadership*, 17(3), 65–81.

Leithwood, K., Harris, A., & Hopkins, D. (2020). Seven strong claims about successful school leadership revisited. *School Leadership & Management*, 40(1), 5–22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2019.1596077>

Nwosu, B. O. (2020). Public perception of teacher performance and parental preference for private secondary schools in Anambra State. *Journal of Contemporary Education Research*, 6(2), 102–118.

Okafor, C. C. (2023). Teacher job performance and educational productivity in Nigerian public schools. *International Journal of Educational Research and Innovation*, 11(4), 55–70.

Okafor, E. N., Nwankwo, J. I., & Ezeani, P. C. (2020). Participatory leadership practices and teacher motivation in public secondary schools. *Journal of Educational Administration in Africa*, 15(2), 40–57.

Okonkwo, P. G. (2021). *Leadership: Theory and practice* (9th ed.). Sage Publications.

Tang, Y., Zhang, H., & Liu, F. (2024). Individualized consideration and employee productivity in organizational leadership: A meta-analytic review. *Journal of Organizational Behavior Studies*, 29(2), 144–167.

Ugwu, I., Okoye, P. (2024). Education as a tool for national transformation. *Nigerian Journal of Education*, 20(1), 15 – 29.

