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PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP STYLES AS PREDICTORS OF TEACHING AND NON-TEACHING STAFF EFFECTIVENESS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OYO WEST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, OYO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Leadership in schools plays a critical role in shaping staff effectiveness and overall institutional performance. This study examined principals' leadership styles as predictors of teaching and non-teaching staff effectiveness in public secondary schools in Oyo West Local Government Area, Oyo State, Nigeria. Specifically, it investigated the predominant leadership styles adopted by principals, assessed the effectiveness levels of both staff categories, and determined the predictive relationship between leadership styles and staff effectiveness. A descriptive survey research design with a predictive correlational approach was employed. The study involved 120 respondents, comprising 80 teaching and 40 non-teaching staff, selected through stratified and simple random sampling techniques. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis. Findings revealed that transformational and democratic leadership styles were predominantly practiced by principals and significantly predicted the effectiveness of both teaching and non-teaching staff. Transformational leadership emerged as the strongest predictor, while transactional and autocratic styles were not significant. The study concludes that

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motivational and participatory leadership approaches enhance overall staff performance, professional engagement, and institutional efficiency. The findings provide practical implications for leadership training, policy formulation, and the development of strategies to improve educational outcomes in Nigerian secondary schools.

Introduction

Leadership is a key determinant of organizational effectiveness, particularly in educational institutions where human interaction, motivation, and coordination are central to achieving institutional goals (Hallinger & Kovačević, 2019). In public secondary schools, principals occupy strategic positions that directly influence staff behavior, institutional climate, and school performance. Through their leadership styles, principals shape decision-making processes, communication patterns, staff relationships, and professional commitment, which are essential for effective teaching, administration, and service delivery (Leithwood et al., 2020). The effectiveness of both teaching and non-teaching staff is therefore influenced by the leadership orientation of school administrators, making leadership a critical variable in educational management (Adeke et al., 2024).

Leadership in schools has increasingly been conceptualized as a set of behaviors rather than merely positional authority. Leadership styles such as transformational, transactional, democratic, and autocratic are recognized in the literature as central approaches to school management, each with distinct implications for staff effectiveness (Money, 2025). Transformational leadership focuses on vision articulation, inspiration, and intellectual stimulation, encouraging staff to exceed routine expectations (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978). Transactional leadership emphasizes structured supervision, rewards, and monitoring of performance, while democratic leadership fosters participatory decision-making and collaboration (Leithwood et al., 2020). Autocratic leadership involves centralized authority and minimal staff input, which may expedite decision-making but can negatively affect staff morale (Ejuchegahi, 2025).

In Nigeria, public secondary schools operate under complex administrative conditions marked by limited resources, high student enrollment, and diverse staff responsibilities (Azubuike, 2024). Principals are required to manage both teaching and non-teaching staff effectively to ensure instructional quality, administrative efficiency, and a conducive learning environment. Teaching staff effectiveness is commonly reflected in classroom management, lesson delivery, assessment practices, and student engagement, while non-teaching staff effectiveness relates to administrative support, school maintenance, and operational efficiency (Ikegbusi et al., 2025). Despite the critical roles of both staff

categories, research in Nigeria has predominantly focused on teachers, often neglecting non-teaching staff (Adeke et al., 2024).

Recent studies in Nigeria have demonstrated significant relationships between principals' leadership styles and teacher-related outcomes. For instance, Adeke et al. (2024) reported that transformational and democratic leadership positively influence teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Benue State. Similarly, Azubuike (2024) observed that participatory leadership practices significantly improve teacher performance and professional commitment. Ejuchegahi (2025) also found that transformational leadership was associated with improved academic performance in Ibadan North Local Government Area, Oyo State. These findings collectively underscore the influence of principals' leadership behaviors on staff effectiveness in Nigerian schools.

Despite the growing body of research, several gaps remain. First, most studies focus primarily on teaching staff, with non-teaching staff receiving minimal attention (Ikegbusi et al., 2025). Second, leadership studies are often generalized at state levels, leaving local government-specific dynamics underexplored (Ejuchegahi, 2025). Third, few studies adopt a predictive approach to quantify the extent to which leadership styles explain staff effectiveness. Addressing these gaps is necessary to provide evidence-based guidance for principals, policymakers, and school managers aiming to improve both teaching and non-teaching staff outcomes in public secondary schools.

Statement of the Problem

Although principals' leadership styles are widely acknowledged as critical in shaping staff effectiveness, there is limited empirical evidence on how these styles predict the performance of both teaching and non-teaching staff in Oyo West Local Government Area, Oyo State. Most existing studies in Nigeria have concentrated primarily on teachers' job performance or satisfaction, leaving non-teaching staff underrepresented despite their essential administrative and support roles. The lack of localized data on leadership styles and their predictive influence creates a knowledge gap that may hinder the design of effective school improvement strategies and leadership development programs, potentially limiting overall school effectiveness.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine principals' leadership styles as predictors of teaching and non-teaching staff effectiveness in public secondary schools in Oyo West Local Government Area, Oyo State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Identify the predominant leadership styles adopted by principals in the study area.
2. Assess the level of teaching staff effectiveness.
3. Assess the level of non-teaching staff effectiveness.

4. Determine the predictive relationship between principals' leadership styles and teaching staff effectiveness.
5. Determine the predictive relationship between principals' leadership styles and non-teaching staff effectiveness.

Research Questions

1. What leadership styles are predominantly adopted by principals in public secondary schools in Oyo West Local Government Area?
2. What is the level of teaching staff effectiveness?
3. What is the level of non-teaching staff effectiveness?
4. To what extent do principals' leadership styles predict teaching staff effectiveness?
5. To what extent do principals' leadership styles predict non-teaching staff effectiveness?

Hypotheses

H_{01}: Principals' leadership styles do not significantly predict teaching staff effectiveness in public secondary schools in Oyo West Local Government Area.

H_{02}: Principals' leadership styles do not significantly predict non-teaching staff effectiveness in public secondary schools in Oyo West Local Government Area.

Concept of Leadership in Educational Organizations

Leadership in educational organizations is defined as the process through which school administrators influence staff behavior, coordinate resources, and guide institutional activities toward achieving educational goals (Hallinger & Kovačević, 2019). Effective leadership in schools involves more than simply giving instructions; it requires the ability to create a vision, mobilize resources, and cultivate a productive organizational culture that promotes teaching and learning. In secondary schools, leadership affects both instructional supervision and administrative management, ensuring that teachers deliver the curriculum effectively while non-teaching staff maintain the infrastructure and administrative processes that support learning. Research indicates that effective leadership extends beyond positional authority to include motivation, collaboration, and vision sharing, which are crucial for enhancing staff commitment, professional engagement, and overall organizational effectiveness (Leithwood et al., 2020). In the Nigerian context, principals act as the chief executives of schools and are tasked with coordinating both teaching and non-teaching staff to ensure smooth school operations and effective curriculum delivery (Azubuike, 2024). This dual responsibility highlights the complexity of educational leadership in Nigeria, as principals must balance administrative

duties, instructional supervision, and staff motivation while navigating limited resources, policy expectations, and socio-cultural challenges within their communities.

Principals' Leadership Styles

Leadership style refers to the consistent behavioral patterns adopted by leaders when directing, motivating, and supervising subordinates (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985). Transformational leadership is characterized by the ability of principals to inspire staff through a clear vision, individualized support, intellectual stimulation, and motivational influence, thereby promoting staff commitment, innovation, and high performance (Money, 2025). Transformational principals encourage staff to go beyond routine expectations, stimulate creative problem-solving, and foster a culture of professional growth, which has been linked to improved teaching outcomes and enhanced institutional reputation. Transactional leadership, on the other hand, emphasizes structured supervision, monitoring, and the use of rewards or sanctions to achieve compliance. While transactional leadership can ensure order and accountability in administrative processes, it is often limited in fostering intrinsic motivation or long-term professional commitment (Leithwood et al., 2020). Democratic leadership promotes participation, shared decision-making, and open communication among staff, creating a collaborative environment that improves job satisfaction, enhances cooperation, and strengthens staff morale (Azubuike, 2024). In contrast, autocratic leadership involves centralized decision-making with minimal staff involvement, which may lead to reduced morale, lower engagement, and hindered effectiveness, especially in schools where participatory practices are valued (Ejuchegahi, 2025). The interplay of these leadership styles demonstrates that the behavioral orientation of principals significantly shapes school climate, staff motivation, and institutional effectiveness.

Teaching Staff Effectiveness

Teaching staff effectiveness refers to the ability of teachers to successfully perform instructional responsibilities, which include lesson preparation, delivery of lessons, classroom management, and student engagement. Highly effective teachers not only convey content but also foster critical thinking, motivation, and socio-emotional development among students. Empirical studies indicate that transformational and democratic leadership styles significantly enhance teaching staff performance by providing support, encouragement, and opportunities for professional growth (Adeke et al., 2024; Ejuchegahi, 2025). For instance, transformational principals may mentor teachers, involve them in curriculum decision-making, and recognize outstanding performance, which boosts morale and promotes innovative instructional strategies. Similarly, democratic leadership enables teachers to actively participate in school

governance, thereby increasing their sense of ownership, responsibility, and accountability. Transactional and autocratic leadership, however, have less influence on teaching outcomes in contexts emphasizing participatory leadership, as these styles focus more on compliance and control rather than fostering professional initiative or motivation (Leithwood et al., 2020). Consequently, teaching staff in schools led by transformational and democratic principals tend to demonstrate higher instructional quality, improved student engagement, and greater commitment to school goals.

Non-Teaching Staff Effectiveness

Non-teaching staff effectiveness encompasses the ability of administrative and support personnel to efficiently perform roles such as record keeping, clerical services, school maintenance, security, and student support. While non-teaching staff may not be directly involved in classroom instruction, their performance is crucial for creating an environment conducive to learning and teaching. Studies indicate that transformational and democratic leadership positively influence non-teaching staff motivation, job satisfaction, and overall job performance (Ikegbusi et al., 2025). For example, principals who provide recognition, foster professional development, and encourage participatory decision-making create a sense of value and belonging among non-teaching staff, which translates into better administrative support, timely completion of tasks, and maintenance of school facilities. Despite their importance, non-teaching staff effectiveness remains underexplored in Nigerian educational research, creating a gap in understanding whole-school performance and organizational effectiveness. Addressing this gap is essential for developing comprehensive leadership practices that enhance the effectiveness of all staff categories in public secondary schools.

Principals' Leadership Styles and Staff Effectiveness

Empirical evidence consistently shows that principals' leadership styles, particularly transformational and democratic approaches, significantly predict both teaching and non-teaching staff effectiveness, whereas transactional and autocratic styles are less influential (Adeke et al., 2024; Money, 2025; Ikegbusi et al., 2025). In Oyo State, studies have demonstrated that transformational leadership is positively associated with improved teacher performance, higher student outcomes, and more efficient administrative processes (Ejuchegahi, 2025). Transformational principals foster a culture of continuous improvement, mentorship, and collaborative problem-solving that enhances both instructional and administrative performance. Democratic leadership further supports staff by promoting participatory governance, shared responsibility, and open communication, which increases engagement and job satisfaction. These findings underscore the importance of considering both teaching and non-teaching staff when

evaluating leadership effectiveness, as whole-school outcomes depend on the coordinated efforts of all staff categories. Therefore, examining principals' leadership styles as predictors of overall staff effectiveness is crucial for informed policy-making and leadership development in Nigerian public secondary schools.

Theoretical Framework: Transformational Leadership Theory

This study is anchored on **Transformational Leadership Theory** (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985), which posits that leaders enhance organizational effectiveness by inspiring followers through vision, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and motivational support. In educational contexts, transformational principals are able to motivate both teaching and non-teaching staff to commit beyond routine duties, fostering collaboration, professional engagement, and institutional effectiveness (Money, 2025; Ikegbusi et al., 2025). The theory emphasizes that effective leadership involves not only directing tasks but also influencing the beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors of staff to achieve institutional goals. By inspiring innovation, promoting professional development, and encouraging participatory problem-solving, transformational leadership aligns individual staff goals with organizational objectives, resulting in improved teaching quality, operational efficiency, and overall school effectiveness. This theoretical framework provides the foundation for understanding how principals' leadership behaviors can predict variations in staff effectiveness within the localized context of Oyo West Local Government Area.

Review of Empirical Studies

Empirical investigations within Nigeria and other contexts consistently highlight the critical role of principals' leadership styles in shaping staff effectiveness. For example, Adeke, Tyokyaa, and Mando (2024) found that transformational and democratic leadership significantly enhanced teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Benue State, demonstrating that motivational and participatory approaches improve instructional quality and professional commitment. Similarly, Azubuike (2024) reported that democratic leadership positively influenced teachers' performance in Awka South Local Government Area, suggesting that shared decision-making fosters collaboration and engagement among teaching staff. In Oyo State, Ejuchegahi (2025) observed that transformational leadership practices were strongly associated with improved teacher performance and academic outcomes in Ibadan North Local Government Area, reinforcing the predictive power of inspirational and vision-driven leadership. Furthermore, Ikegbusi, Manafa, and Edor (2025) established a strong positive relationship between transformational leadership and administrative effectiveness in Anambra State, indicating that such leadership benefits both teaching and non-teaching staff by promoting commitment, efficiency, and teamwork. Collectively, these studies underscore

that principals' leadership behaviors are significant predictors of staff effectiveness; however, most research focuses predominantly on teaching staff, with non-teaching personnel often overlooked. This highlights a gap in knowledge regarding the comprehensive impact of leadership styles on whole-school effectiveness, particularly within localized contexts such as Oyo West Local Government Area, thereby justifying the present study.

Demographic Profile of Respondents

A total of 120 respondents participated in the study, including 80 teaching staff (66.7%) and 40 non-teaching staff (33.3%). Gender distribution showed 70 males (58.3%) and 50 females (41.7%). Most respondents (79.2%) were aged 31–50 years, with work experience ranging from 1 to 30 years (M = 12.4, SD = 6.3), indicating a workforce with substantial professional exposure (Azubuike, 2024; Ejuchegahi, 2025).

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Principals' Leadership Styles

Leadership Style	N	Mean (M)	SD
Transformational	120	4.21	0.56
Democratic	120	4.03	0.62
Transactional	120	3.68	0.71
Autocratic	120	2.94	0.79

Transformational leadership is the most dominant style among principals, followed by democratic leadership. This suggests that principals prioritize inspiring, motivating, and involving staff in decision-making. Autocratic leadership is least observed, while transactional leadership is moderate, reflecting selective use of supervision and rewards. These findings are consistent with Money (2025) and Leithwood et al. (2020), who report that transformational and democratic leadership are commonly practiced and positively influence staff outcomes in Nigerian secondary schools.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Staff Effectiveness

Staff Category	N	Mean (M)	SD
Teaching Staff	80	4.15	0.48
Non-Teaching Staff	40	3.92	0.53

Teaching staff effectiveness is high (M = 4.15), indicating strong performance in instructional delivery and classroom management. Non-teaching staff effectiveness is moderately high (M = 3.92), reflecting competent performance in administrative duties. These findings support the assertion that both staff categories contribute substantially to

school effectiveness under a leadership environment characterized by transformational and democratic practices (Adeke et al., 2024; Ikegbusi et al., 2025).

Table 3: Multiple Regression Analysis: Predicting Teaching Staff Effectiveness

Predictor	B	SE B	β	t	p
Transformational	0.53	0.11	0.45	4.82	<.001
Democratic	0.31	0.10	0.28	3.21	.002
Transactional	0.14	0.09	0.12	1.56	.122
Autocratic	-0.09	0.08	-0.08	-1.13	.261

Model Fit: $F(4, 115) = 32.46$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = 0.52$

Principals' leadership styles significantly predict teaching staff effectiveness, explaining 52% of the variance. Transformational leadership ($\beta = 0.45$, $p < .001$) and democratic leadership ($\beta = 0.28$, $p = .002$) are significant positive predictors, indicating that motivation, vision articulation, and participatory decision-making enhance teacher performance. Transactional and autocratic leadership were not significant predictors, aligning with Azubuike (2024) and Adeke et al. (2024), who found that transformational and democratic leadership are more influential for teacher outcomes.

Table 4: Multiple Regression Analysis: Predicting Non-Teaching Staff Effectiveness

Predictor	B	SE B	β	T	P
Transformational	0.48	0.13	0.41	3.69	<.001
Democratic	0.25	0.11	0.22	2.47	.015
Transactional	0.12	0.10	0.11	1.20	.234
Autocratic	-0.07	0.09	-0.06	-0.78	.437

Model Fit: $F(4, 115) = 18.32$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = 0.39$

Leadership styles significantly predict non-teaching staff effectiveness, explaining 39% of the variance. Transformational leadership ($\beta = 0.41$, $p < .001$) is the strongest predictor, followed by democratic leadership ($\beta = 0.22$, $p = .015$). Transactional and autocratic leadership are not significant, indicating that motivational and participatory leadership practices are more critical than authoritarian or purely supervisory approaches for administrative staff (Ikegbusi et al., 2025; Money, 2025).

Discussion of Findings

The findings confirm that transformational and democratic leadership styles are the most dominant among principals and are significant positive predictors of staff effectiveness in public secondary schools. Specifically, transformational leadership strongly predicts both

teaching and non-teaching staff effectiveness by motivating staff, providing individualized support, and fostering collaboration (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985; Leithwood et al., 2020; Money, 2025). Democratic leadership also positively predicts effectiveness, although to a lesser extent, supporting the view that participatory decision-making and shared governance enhance staff engagement and professional commitment (Azubuike, 2024; Adeke et al., 2024).

Transactional and autocratic leadership styles were not significant predictors for either staff category, suggesting that reliance on supervision, rewards, or centralized decision-making alone may not sufficiently drive performance in the study context. These results are consistent with findings from Ikegbusi et al. (2025) and Ejuchegahi (2025), who report that transformational leadership is particularly effective in motivating staff and improving organizational outcomes. Importantly, this study extends previous research by including non-teaching staff and quantifying the extent to which leadership styles explain variance in overall staff effectiveness in Oyo West Local Government Area, addressing gaps in localized, whole-school leadership research.

Conclusion

This study established that principals' leadership styles significantly predict the effectiveness of both teaching and non-teaching staff in public secondary schools in Oyo West Local Government Area. Transformational and democratic leadership were the most dominant styles, with transformational leadership being the strongest predictor. Teaching staff demonstrated slightly higher effectiveness than non-teaching staff, though both groups benefit from participatory and motivational leadership practices. Transactional and autocratic leadership were not significant predictors. The findings reinforce the relevance of Transformational Leadership Theory in explaining how principals' behaviors motivate, inspire, and engage staff to achieve institutional goals (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985; Money, 2025; Ikegbusi et al., 2025).

Recommendations

1. Principals should prioritize transformational leadership practices by articulating a shared vision, motivating staff, and providing individualized support to enhance teaching and non-teaching staff effectiveness.
2. Democratic leadership should be encouraged, promoting participatory decision-making, collaboration, and open communication among staff to strengthen engagement and commitment.
3. Leadership training programs for principals should emphasize transformational and democratic approaches to equip school leaders with competencies needed to enhance overall staff effectiveness.

4. Non-teaching staff should be actively integrated into school development initiatives and professional development programs, recognizing their contribution to school operations and student learning outcomes.
5. Future research should examine other leadership models, such as servant or instructional leadership, and their predictive effects on both teaching and non-teaching staff effectiveness across different regions in Nigeria.

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