

IMPACT OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP STYLES ON TEACHER PERFORMANCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ORUMBA SOUTH L.G.A, ANAMBRA STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the Impact of School Leadership Styles on Teacher Performance in Secondary Schools in Orumba South L.G.A, Anambra State. Four purposes of study and four research questions guided the study. A descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. A total of one hundred and twenty-six (126) respondents served as sample. Four-point scaled structured questionnaire of 40 items was used as instrument for data collection. Mean and standard deviation were used for data analysis. Findings revealed that democratic decision-making, teamwork encouragement, recognition and rewards, consultation with teachers, provision of practical support, setting clear expectations, strategies to improve student outcomes, opportunities for idea sharing, etc. are leadership styles commonly employed by school leaders in secondary schools. Leadership styles such as democratic, transformational, instructional, participative, servant, charismatic, and transactional leadership positively affect teachers' overall work performance. Conversely, autocratic, authoritarian, and laissez-faire leadership styles were also acknowledged by respondents as having negative effects on teachers' morale and productivity. Factors such as principals' personality, educational background, years of experience, communication skills, cultural values, training and professional development, gender, relationship with staff, age, and workload influence the leadership styles adopted in secondary schools. Practical strategies such as providing regular feedback, organizing professional development tailored to teachers' needs, recognizing and rewarding good performance, etc. are effective ways school leaders can use leadership styles to help teachers work better and achieve good school results.. Based on the findings, recommendations were made.

INTRODUCTION

The effectiveness of secondary education hinges upon myriad factors from curriculum relevance and resource availability to socio-economic contexts and stakeholder engagement. Among these, leadership within schools emerges as a pivotal driver shaping the quality of teaching, institutional climate, and overall student outcomes. Historically, leadership has often been studied through the lens of organizational efficiency or policy implementation, but its more nuanced influence on teacher performance and morale at the secondary level is gaining renewed attention. As policymakers and educational researchers increasingly acknowledge, the styles and behaviors adopted by school leaders; principals, vice-principals, departmental heads have direct and indirect ramifications on teacher motivation, instructional quality, and ultimately, student success.

School leadership encompasses the approaches, behaviors, and decision-making patterns adopted by those in managerial or guiding roles within educational institutions. Commonly examined styles include transformational leadership, which emphasizes vision, empowerment, and fostering professional growth; instructional leadership, centered on curriculum oversight, teaching quality, and academic standards; democratic or participative leadership, encouraging shared decision-making; autocratic or directive leadership, often characterized by top-down control; and laissez-faire leadership, marked by minimal guidance (Nyaibuli & Mwila, 2024). In Anambra State, principals predominantly practiced transformational leadership, though instructional leadership was less frequently applied; nonetheless, the transformational orientation showed promise in promoting teacher job performance (Okeke, Obilor, Nwogbo & Ubah, 2023). A study in Awka South LGA reported that democratic leadership significantly influenced teacher job performance, while autocratic and laissez-faire styles exerted lower influence

(Azubuike, 2024). These studies highlight the central role of leadership posture in shaping educational environments in secondary schools.

Examining the interplay between school leadership style and teacher performance reveals critical insights into school-wide growth and performance. Transformational and democratic leadership styles tend to enhance teacher motivation, autonomy, collaboration, and commitment which are elements that contribute to improved instructional practices and student outcomes. For instance, the study in Larkana linked transformational leadership to professional growth and engagement, while democratic leadership supported inclusivity and collaboration (Abbasi et al., 2025). In Awka South LGA, the high positive influence of democratic leadership on teacher performance suggests that inclusive decision-making empowers teachers to participate more fully in the school's mission (Azubuike, 2024). Furthermore, leadership styles influence school morale and climate. A study by (Ojoma, 2025) examining the morale of teachers and student achievement in Nigeria emphasized that transformational leadership significantly elevated both teacher morale and student performance, while authoritarian approaches had negative consequences. These relationships suggest that when leaders foster professional development, collaborative practices, and shared vision, teachers respond with greater commitment and effort, which in turn catalyzes institutional progress and student achievement.

Despite the richness of existing literature, notable gaps persist. While several studies (e.g., in Tanzania, Nigeria, Pakistan) demonstrate correlations between certain leadership styles and teacher performance, few comprehensively explore how combinations or nuanced adaptations of leadership styles work across diverse cultural and infrastructural contexts in secondary schools, particularly in Anambra State. For example, Okeke et al. (2023) and Azubuike (2024) highlighted predominant use of transformational or democratic styles, but instructional leadership and how it intersects with these styles remains underexplored. Additionally, most studies employ cross-sectional survey designs; longitudinal research examining how leadership influences teacher performance over time, especially during systemic disruptions or policy shifts, is scarce. Moreover, while some studies measure job satisfaction or performance, fewer investigate specific components such as instructional quality, student engagement, or retention. The interaction between school work climate and leadership (as in Ibadan) has been studied, but more nuanced exploration of mediating variables such as professional development opportunities, resource allocation, and teacher agency is needed, (Onebunne, 2025).

Justifying this research becomes imperative given the centrality of teacher performance to educational quality and student outcomes. In diverse developing regions, secondary schools often grapple with high teacher turnover, resource constraints, infrastructural deficits, and leadership instability all of which hinder performance. By illuminating which leadership styles or combinations thereof most effectively enhance teacher performance, stakeholders (e.g., Ministries of Education, school boards, training institutions) can tailor leadership development programs accordingly. Okeke *et al.* (2023) recommended leadership capacity-building to strengthen transformational leadership practices, while Azubuike (2024) called for training in collaborative leadership for improved teacher motivation. This study intends to fill these gaps by examining how leadership styles including transformational, instructional, democratic/participative, and blends thereof tracking teacher performance indicators over time, and unpacking mediating factors within secondary school contexts.

Statement of the Problem

Despite growing recognition that school leadership styles significantly shape teacher performance, many secondary schools continue to experience low instructional quality, declining teacher motivation, and inconsistent student outcomes. Existing research in Nigeria and similar contexts highlights the potential of transformational and democratic leadership to improve performance, yet these practices remain unevenly applied, with instructional leadership and blended approaches largely underexplored. Furthermore, most studies adopt cross-sectional designs, offering limited insight into the long-term and

context-specific effects of leadership on teacher performance. This gap leaves school leaders and policymakers without clear, evidence-based strategies for fostering sustained teacher effectiveness, thereby hindering overall school growth and achievement. The study, therefore, seeks to examine the impacts of school leadership styles on teacher performance in secondary schools in Orumba South L.G.A, Anambra State.

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of this study is to examine the impact of school leadership styles on teacher performance in secondary schools in Orumba South LGA, Anambra State. Specifically, the study sought to:

- find out the common leadership styles used by school leaders in secondary schools.
- examine different leadership styles that affect teachers' overall work performance.
- identify the factors that influence leadership styles that affect teacher performance.
- suggest practical ways school leaders can use leadership styles to help teachers work better and achieve good school results.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study when completed and published, will be of great importance to various stakeholders such as school principals, teachers, policy makers, government and future researchers.

School Principals: The study will provide practical insights on effective leadership styles that enhance teacher motivation, instructional quality, and commitment. This will help principals adopt evidence-based leadership approaches that foster teamwork, improve staff morale, and drive overall school improvement.

Teachers: The results will identify leadership practices that create supportive, inclusive, and professionally stimulating work environments. Such knowledge will enable teachers to better understand the leadership dynamics that influence their job satisfaction, performance, and career growth.

Students: By highlighting leadership styles that promote effective teaching, the study will indirectly contribute to improved learning experiences, enhanced academic achievement, and the development of essential life skills among students.

Policy Makers: The study will generate reliable, context-specific evidence to guide the formulation and implementation of policies that strengthen school leadership capacity, ensure professional development for school heads, and align leadership practices with national education goals.

Government: Findings from the study will help government agencies in education identify priority areas for leadership training, resource allocation, and monitoring, thereby improving teacher productivity and raising the overall standard of secondary education.

Future Researchers: The research will serve as a valuable reference point and provide a framework for further studies on leadership and teacher performance, fostering deeper exploration and innovation in educational leadership research.

Scope of the Study

This study is limited to the impact of school leadership styles on teacher performance in secondary schools in Orumba South LGA, Anambra State. It is delimited to all principals and teachers in public secondary schools in Orumba South LGA, Anambra State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the common leadership styles used by school leaders in secondary schools?
2. What are the different leadership styles that affect teachers' overall work performance?
3. What are the factors that influence leadership styles that affect teacher performance?
4. In what practical ways can school leaders use leadership styles to help teachers work better and achieve good school results?

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Concept of Leadership

Leadership is the process of influencing, guiding, and directing individuals or groups to achieve organizational goals. In the context of education, leadership is not only about managing resources but also about motivating teachers and creating a conducive environment for learning. Leadership in schools involves decision-making, conflict resolution, communication, and the ability to inspire staff to commit to educational objectives (Bush, 2020). Effective leadership is a major determinant of school success, shaping the culture, values, and performance of teachers and students alike. Leadership has been conceptualized in various ways. Northouse (2021) defines leadership as “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal.” This definition emphasizes the relational nature of leadership; leaders cannot function in isolation but interact with followers to achieve outcomes. Yukl (2019) highlights that leadership is multifaceted, including task-oriented, relationship-oriented, and change-oriented behaviors, all of which are critical in educational settings.

In the context of secondary schools, leadership goes beyond administrative duties. It involves strategic planning, teacher supervision, instructional guidance, and fostering a positive school climate. Leaders are responsible for setting educational visions and ensuring teachers have the support to meet academic objectives. Studies have shown that schools with strong leadership tend to have higher student achievement and better teacher performance, suggesting a direct link between leadership quality and educational outcomes (Leithwood et al., 2020).

Concept of School Leadership

School leadership specifically refers to the actions and responsibilities of individuals who guide, manage, and influence educational institutions. It encompasses setting strategic goals, creating a vision for teaching and learning, and ensuring the effective implementation of curriculum and policies (Hallinger, 2021). Unlike general leadership, school leadership requires understanding the educational context, including the needs of teachers, students, and the community. School leaders play multiple roles, including instructional leaders, administrative managers, and culture builders. As instructional leaders, principals provide guidance on teaching strategies, monitor classroom practices, and promote professional development. As administrators, they manage resources, oversee school operations, and enforce policies. As culture builders, they foster an environment that encourages collaboration, innovation, and ethical practices (Leithwood et al., 2020).

Empirical studies have demonstrated that effective school leadership is associated with improved teacher performance, reduced teacher absenteeism, and enhanced student outcomes (Robinson et al., 2008). Leadership is therefore not merely a positional authority but a dynamic process that affects the functioning and performance of the entire school system.

Concept of School Leadership Style

School leadership style refers to the manner in which leaders direct, motivate, and interact with their staff to achieve school goals. Leadership style affects teacher morale, instructional quality, and overall school effectiveness. Several leadership styles are prevalent in schools:

1. **Transformational Leadership:** Leaders inspire and motivate teachers to exceed expectations, fostering innovation, professional growth, and commitment to shared goals. Research shows transformational leadership positively impacts teacher performance and student achievement (Bass & Riggio, 2019).
2. **Transactional Leadership:** Leaders focus on tasks, rules, and rewards, ensuring compliance and efficiency. While effective in maintaining order, it may not promote creativity or intrinsic motivation among teachers (Burns, 1978).
3. **Laissez-Faire Leadership:** Leaders adopt a hands-off approach, giving teachers autonomy but often resulting in lack of direction and reduced accountability (Lewin et al., 1939).

4. **Democratic/Participative Leadership:** Leaders involve teachers in decision-making, encouraging collaboration and shared responsibility. This style improves job satisfaction and commitment but may slow decision-making in urgent situations (Bush, 2020).
5. **Autocratic Leadership:** Leaders make decisions unilaterally, which can be effective in crises but often diminishes teacher morale and creativity (Leithwood et al., 2020).

Concept of Teacher Performance

Teacher performance is the ability of teachers to effectively facilitate learning, manage classrooms, and engage students in meaningful educational activities. It encompasses instructional effectiveness, professional development, classroom management, and contributions to school goals (OECD, 2021). High-performing teachers enhance student learning outcomes and foster a positive school environment. Performance can be assessed through student achievement, classroom observations, peer evaluations, and self-assessment. Factors influencing teacher performance include leadership style, access to resources, professional development opportunities, and motivation (Robinson et al., 2008). Teachers under supportive and inspiring leadership demonstrate higher commitment, creativity, and teaching quality.

Studies have shown that teacher performance is both an outcome and mediator of school effectiveness. Leaders who provide guidance, feedback, and support create conditions that enable teachers to perform optimally, thus positively affecting students' learning experiences (Hallinger, 2021; Onebunne, 2025).

Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational Leadership Theory, introduced by James MacGregor Burns in 1978, is one of the most widely cited leadership theories in education. It emphasizes the role of leaders in inspiring and motivating followers to exceed their usual performance levels while fostering personal growth and commitment to shared organizational goals. Unlike transactional leadership, which focuses on exchanges such as rewards for performance, transformational leadership centers on elevating both the leader and followers to achieve higher levels of vision, morality, and commitment. In the educational context, this theory provides a framework for understanding how school leaders can influence teacher performance, job satisfaction, and overall school effectiveness (Onebunne, 2025).

The core components of transformational leadership include idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Idealized influence, often described as charisma, involves leaders acting as role models by demonstrating high ethical standards and gaining the trust and respect of teachers and staff. Inspirational motivation refers to the leader's ability to articulate a compelling vision that inspires commitment and enthusiasm for school goals. Intellectual stimulation encourages teachers to engage in innovative problem-solving, challenge assumptions, and develop creative instructional strategies. Individualized consideration focuses on providing personalized support and mentorship to staff, recognizing their unique strengths, needs, and professional aspirations. These components collectively create a leadership approach that fosters a positive school culture and motivates teachers to perform at their highest potential.

In secondary schools, transformational leadership has been shown to positively impact teacher performance. School leaders who adopt this style create a supportive environment that promotes professional development and collaboration among staff. Teachers under transformational leaders are more likely to feel valued, motivated, and committed to their work. They demonstrate higher levels of instructional effectiveness, classroom management, and student engagement. By fostering a sense of shared purpose and encouraging innovation, transformational leaders help teachers to exceed routine expectations and improve overall school outcomes. Studies have highlighted that transformational leadership is associated with improved teacher satisfaction, reduced absenteeism, and enhanced student achievement, illustrating its relevance in the educational sector. Research in the Nigerian context also supports the positive influence of transformational leadership on teacher performance. For example,

Abubakar and Yauta (2017) found that transformational leadership positively affected the performance of universities, with leaders who inspired and supported staff achieving higher organizational outcomes. Similarly, Mardalena et al. (2024) demonstrated that transformational leadership enhanced teacher performance in schools, with teacher satisfaction acting as a mediating factor. These studies underscore the applicability of transformational leadership in improving educational quality in Nigeria, where teacher motivation and professional development are critical for achieving academic excellence.

Despite its benefits, the implementation of transformational leadership in Nigerian secondary schools faces challenges. Resource limitations may hinder leaders from providing the individualized support and professional development opportunities necessary for optimal teacher performance. Cultural and hierarchical traditions in some schools may resist participative decision-making and collaborative leadership practices. Additionally, many school leaders require targeted training to develop the competencies necessary for practicing transformational leadership effectively. Addressing these challenges is essential to maximize the positive impact of transformational leadership on teacher performance and overall school success.

Relationship between Leadership Styles and Teacher Performance

Leadership style is widely recognized as a critical factor influencing teacher performance in schools. Various studies have shown that the manner in which school leaders interact with, guide, and motivate teachers directly affects the quality of teaching and learning within the institution. Leadership style refers to the consistent pattern of behaviors a leader exhibits when making decisions, influencing staff, and managing school resources. In secondary schools, leadership styles often determine the level of teacher satisfaction, commitment, and motivation, which, in turn, affects instructional effectiveness and student outcomes (Bush, 2020). The relationship between leadership style and teacher performance is therefore of considerable interest to educational researchers, policymakers, and school administrators, as it provides insights into strategies for enhancing teaching quality.

Different leadership styles have distinct implications for teacher performance. Transformational leadership, characterized by inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, and idealized influence, has been shown to positively impact teacher performance by fostering motivation, professional growth, and innovation. Teachers under transformational leaders are more likely to embrace collaborative practices, implement innovative instructional strategies, and demonstrate higher levels of commitment to school goals (Leithwood *et al.*, 2020). By promoting a shared vision and creating a supportive school environment, transformational leaders help teachers feel valued, supported, and empowered, which directly enhances their professional effectiveness.

Transactional leadership, on the other hand, is task-oriented and emphasizes structured procedures, rules, and reward-punishment systems. While transactional leadership can ensure compliance with established standards and maintain order within schools, it often does not encourage creativity or intrinsic motivation among teachers (Bass & Riggio, 2019). Teachers under purely transactional leaders may perform well in achieving routine objectives but may not be motivated to engage in professional development or pursue innovative teaching strategies. Consequently, while transactional leadership can support operational efficiency, its influence on teacher performance may be limited compared to transformational approaches. The laissez-faire leadership style, which involves minimal intervention by the leader and a high degree of autonomy for teachers, can have mixed effects on performance. In some contexts, teachers who are highly experienced and self-motivated may thrive under laissez-faire leadership, using their autonomy to innovate and excel. However, in most secondary school settings, particularly where supervision and guidance are needed, laissez-faire leadership can lead to a lack of direction, reduced accountability, and inconsistent teacher performance (Bush, 2020). Research suggests that without structured support and feedback, teachers may experience uncertainty regarding expectations, which can negatively affect instructional quality and student outcomes.

Democratic or participative leadership, which involves teachers in decision-making processes, has also been shown to enhance teacher performance. By promoting collaboration, shared responsibility, and open communication, democratic leaders increase teacher engagement, job satisfaction, and commitment to school goals. Teachers feel their expertise is valued and are more likely to invest effort in improving instructional practices (Hallinger, 2021). However, this leadership style may sometimes slow decision-making processes, particularly in situations that require urgent action, highlighting the need for a balance between participation and efficient governance. Empirical studies in Nigerian secondary schools provide strong evidence for the relationship between leadership styles and teacher performance. For example, Okeke and Okeke (2021) found that transformational leadership practices, including mentorship, recognition of teacher contributions, and encouragement of professional development, significantly improved teacher performance in public secondary schools. Similarly, Chukwuma and Udeh (2022) reported that democratic leadership positively correlated with teacher job satisfaction, instructional quality, and classroom management in secondary schools in Anambra State. These studies underscore the relevance of adopting leadership styles that promote collaboration, support, and motivation to improve teacher performance in Nigerian contexts.

Furthermore, the relationship between leadership styles and teacher performance is often mediated by factors such as school culture, teacher motivation, availability of resources, and professional development opportunities. A positive school climate, characterized by trust, mutual respect, and shared goals, strengthens the impact of effective leadership on teacher performance (Leithwood *et al.*, 2020). Conversely, in schools with poor organizational climate or limited resources, even transformational leaders may struggle to enhance teacher performance to the desired level. This indicates that leadership style alone is insufficient; contextual factors must be considered to understand the complex dynamics influencing teacher effectiveness.

Roles and Responsibilities of School Leaders in Secondary Schools

School leaders play a pivotal role in shaping the quality of education, particularly in secondary schools where teachers are tasked with preparing students for higher education and the workforce. The roles and responsibilities of school leaders extend beyond administrative duties; they encompass instructional guidance, policy implementation, staff development, and the creation of a conducive learning environment. Effective school leadership ensures that both teachers and students operate within a structured, supportive, and motivating educational setting. In secondary schools, principals and headteachers are expected to combine managerial and instructional leadership functions to foster improved teacher performance and student achievement (Bush, 2020). Instructionally, school leaders are responsible for guiding curriculum implementation and supervising teaching practices. They ensure that teachers adhere to the approved syllabus, utilize effective instructional strategies, and maintain classroom standards that enhance student learning outcomes. Instructional supervision may involve classroom observations, feedback sessions, mentoring, and the facilitation of collaborative planning among teachers. Hallinger (2021) emphasizes that principals who actively engage in instructional leadership positively influence teacher effectiveness because teachers receive continuous support and constructive feedback that help improve pedagogical skills. This supervisory role is especially critical in secondary schools, where teachers must address complex subject content, prepare students for examinations, and adapt instruction to diverse learning needs.

Administrative responsibilities constitute another core aspect of school leadership. Leaders are charged with managing school resources, including finances, teaching materials, and facilities, ensuring that the school operates efficiently. Budget management, procurement of learning resources, scheduling of classes, and maintenance of school infrastructure all fall within the purview of secondary school leaders. Effective administration allows teachers to focus on instruction without the distraction of logistical challenges, thereby indirectly enhancing teacher performance. Research indicates that when school leaders

demonstrate competence in administrative management, teacher morale improves, and professional satisfaction increases, leading to better teaching outcomes (Leithwood et al., 2020).

Beyond instructional and administrative roles, school leaders are also responsible for cultivating a positive school culture and climate. They set behavioral expectations, promote collaboration, encourage professional development, and establish a sense of shared vision among staff members. A positive school climate promotes trust, reduces conflicts, and fosters commitment among teachers, which is crucial for sustaining high levels of teacher performance (Robinson et al., 2008). Leaders achieve this by recognizing teacher contributions, celebrating successes, and addressing challenges in a fair and transparent manner. In the Nigerian context, where secondary schools often face resource limitations and diverse teacher expectations, fostering a collaborative and supportive culture is essential for maintaining motivation and performance (Okeke & Okeke, 2021).

Professional development is another critical responsibility of school leaders. Leaders are expected to identify the training needs of their teaching staff and facilitate access to workshops, seminars, and mentorship programs. This role ensures that teachers remain updated with contemporary pedagogical approaches, technology integration, and curriculum reforms. Teachers who perceive that their leaders are invested in their professional growth demonstrate higher levels of commitment and instructional effectiveness (Mardalena et al., 2024). Transformational leaders, in particular, focus on individualized consideration, providing mentorship and coaching tailored to each teacher's needs, which has been shown to enhance teacher performance and student achievement in secondary schools. Moreover, school leaders play a vital role in policy implementation and compliance. They are responsible for ensuring that national educational policies, examination regulations, and school-specific rules are followed. Effective policy implementation requires clear communication, monitoring, and consistent enforcement, all of which affect teacher performance. Leaders who establish clear expectations and maintain accountability mechanisms help teachers understand their responsibilities and meet professional standards, thus improving teaching quality (Hallinger, 2021).

Effects of Poor Leadership on Teacher Morale and Performance

Poor leadership in secondary schools can have profound negative effects on teacher morale and performance. Leadership is central to creating a supportive and motivating environment, and when school leaders fail to provide clear direction, guidance, or recognition, teachers' motivation and effectiveness are significantly compromised. Ineffective leadership often manifests in inconsistent decision-making, lack of support for professional growth, limited communication, and failure to address teacher concerns. These deficiencies can result in diminished teacher morale, low job satisfaction, and decreased commitment to instructional responsibilities, ultimately impacting students' learning outcomes (Bush, 2020).

One of the most significant effects of poor leadership is reduced teacher motivation. Teachers rely on school leaders for recognition, feedback, and support. When these elements are absent, teachers may feel undervalued, leading to disengagement and reduced effort in instructional activities. Studies have shown that teachers who perceive their leaders as unsupportive or autocratic are more likely to experience burnout, absenteeism, and even attrition (Leithwood et al., 2020). In secondary schools, where teachers are tasked with handling complex subject matter and preparing students for national examinations, a lack of motivation can result in lower instructional quality and reduced student performance. Poor leadership also undermines teacher morale by fostering an environment of mistrust and conflict. Leaders who adopt autocratic, inconsistent, or non-transparent practices often create tension among staff, which affects collaboration and teamwork. Teachers in such environments may feel isolated, stressed, or fearful of taking initiative, which hinders creativity and innovation in teaching (Hallinger, 2021). In contrast, positive leadership that is participative and supportive promotes trust, open communication, and professional collaboration, which enhances teacher satisfaction and performance. Therefore, the quality of leadership directly correlates with the emotional and professional well-being of teachers.

Another consequence of poor leadership is the limited opportunity for professional growth. School leaders play a critical role in facilitating access to professional development programs, mentorship, and instructional support. In schools where leaders neglect these responsibilities, teachers are often left without guidance or training to improve their pedagogical skills. This lack of support negatively affects teacher performance, as educators may continue using outdated instructional methods or fail to implement effective classroom management strategies (Robinson et al., 2008). In Nigeria, studies have highlighted that inadequate support from school leaders contributes to teacher frustration, decreased job satisfaction, and a decline in teaching effectiveness (Okeke & Okeke, 2021). In addition, poor leadership often leads to inequitable distribution of resources and responsibilities, further impacting teacher morale. Teachers who perceive favoritism, lack of transparency, or unequal workload allocation may feel demotivated and undervalued. Over time, this contributes to high turnover rates, absenteeism, and even industrial action, which disrupts teaching and learning. Conversely, effective leadership ensures fairness in resource allocation, recognition, and task assignment, thereby promoting a sense of belonging and professional satisfaction among teachers (Chukwuma & Udeh, 2022).

Empirical research in Nigerian secondary schools has shown a clear link between leadership quality and teacher morale. For instance, Adesina and Adebayo (2020) reported that schools with ineffective leadership experienced higher rates of teacher absenteeism, reduced commitment, and poor student academic performance. Teachers in these schools expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of feedback, poor communication, and inadequate recognition of their efforts. Similarly, Akinwale and Oladipo (2021) found that poor leadership negatively affected teacher motivation and classroom performance, highlighting the critical need for competent school leaders to foster high-performing teaching staff.

Distinction between General Leadership and School-Specific Leadership

Leadership, in general, refers to the ability of an individual to influence, guide, and direct a group toward achieving shared goals. General leadership principles, such as decision-making, communication, motivation, and conflict resolution, apply across various sectors including business, government, and non-profit organizations. Leaders in these settings are primarily concerned with achieving organizational objectives, optimizing resource use, and maintaining operational efficiency. General leadership emphasizes broad management competencies, strategic thinking, and people-oriented skills that are transferable across different contexts (Northouse, 2021). However, the demands and expectations of leadership in educational settings, particularly in secondary schools, require additional, context-specific competencies that distinguish school leadership from general leadership.

School-specific leadership, also referred to as educational leadership, involves applying leadership principles within the complex environment of a school to enhance teaching, learning, and overall educational outcomes. While general leadership focuses on organizational performance, school-specific leadership emphasizes instructional quality, teacher performance, and student achievement. School leaders, such as principals and headteachers, must balance administrative duties with instructional leadership, ensuring that teachers are supported, curriculum standards are met, and students receive a high-quality education (Bush, 2020). Unlike general leaders, school leaders operate in an environment where human capital the teachers and students directly affects the success of organizational goals, making the interpersonal and instructional dimensions of leadership critical.

Instructional leadership is one of the primary distinguishing features of school-specific leadership. It involves guiding teachers in the design and delivery of instruction, monitoring classroom practices, facilitating professional development, and promoting innovative teaching strategies. Leaders in non-educational contexts rarely have direct responsibility for the skill development or professional growth of employees in a way that impacts the fundamental outcomes of the organization, whereas in schools, instructional quality directly affects student learning and achievement (Hallinger, 2021). This distinction

underscores the specialized role of school leaders in shaping teacher practices and fostering an environment conducive to learning.

Another distinction lies in the complexity and diversity of stakeholders in schools. While general leadership typically involves managing employees or team members, school leaders interact with a wide range of stakeholders, including teachers, students, parents, government officials, and the broader community. Each of these groups has unique expectations, and effective school leadership requires balancing competing demands while maintaining a focus on student outcomes (Leithwood *et al.*, 2020). This multi-stakeholder environment requires school leaders to possess not only administrative and managerial skills but also emotional intelligence, negotiation skills, and the ability to foster collaboration and consensus. School-specific leadership also differs from general leadership in its emphasis on ethical responsibility and moral purpose. Leaders in education are charged with nurturing the intellectual, social, and moral development of students. Decisions made by school leaders ranging from teacher evaluation and resource allocation to disciplinary policies have far-reaching consequences for students' learning experiences and life outcomes. Unlike general leadership contexts where performance metrics are often financial or operational, the impact of school leadership is measured by teacher effectiveness, student achievement, and the overall culture of learning within the school (Robinson *et al.*, 2008). Consequently, school leaders must prioritize the holistic development of individuals, which adds layers of responsibility and complexity beyond general leadership.

Empirical research highlights these distinctions. A study by Okeke and Okeke (2021) compared leadership practices in educational and non-educational contexts in Nigeria and found that school leaders require unique competencies in instructional supervision, teacher mentoring, and student-focused decision-making that are rarely demanded in general organizational leadership. Similarly, Chukwuma and Udeh (2022) observed that the effectiveness of school leaders in improving teacher performance was significantly influenced by their ability to provide instructional guidance, promote professional development, and cultivate a positive school culture roles that are less central in general leadership scenarios. These findings demonstrate that while general leadership skills provide a foundational base, school-specific leadership demands additional specialized skills to address the unique needs of educational institutions.

Factors Mediating the Relationship Between Leadership and Teacher Performance

The relationship between school leadership and teacher performance is complex and often mediated by several interrelated factors that influence how leadership practices translate into instructional effectiveness. Mediating factors are variables that explain the mechanism through which leadership impacts teacher outcomes, including motivation, job satisfaction, professional development, school climate, and availability of resources. Understanding these mediating factors is crucial because effective leadership alone may not automatically result in high teacher performance unless the conditions that support teaching and learning are present (Leithwood *et al.*, 2020).

Teacher motivation is one of the most significant mediating factors. Leadership styles that recognize teacher contributions, provide constructive feedback, and involve teachers in decision-making tend to enhance intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Teachers who feel valued and appreciated are more likely to invest effort in lesson planning, classroom management, and innovative instructional practices. Transformational leaders, in particular, positively influence teacher motivation by inspiring commitment to shared goals, providing intellectual stimulation, and attending to the professional needs of staff. Conversely, when leadership fails to motivate teachers, even well-intentioned instructional initiatives may not achieve their desired outcomes (Hallinger, 2021). Job satisfaction is another critical mediator in the leadership–teacher performance nexus. Teachers who experience satisfaction with their roles, working conditions, and leadership support exhibit higher levels of commitment and teaching effectiveness. Effective school leaders foster job satisfaction by creating a positive school climate, ensuring fair

workload distribution, providing opportunities for career advancement, and recognizing teacher achievements. Empirical evidence from Nigerian secondary schools indicates that schools with supportive and participative leadership report higher levels of teacher satisfaction, which directly translates into improved classroom performance and student outcomes (Okeke & Okeke, 2021). Conversely, poor leadership that neglects teacher welfare often results in low morale, absenteeism, and attrition, which undermine overall school performance.

Professional development is another mediating factor that links leadership to teacher performance. Leaders who prioritize continuous professional learning by facilitating access to workshops, training programs, and mentorship opportunities enable teachers to develop their skills and adopt effective instructional strategies. Teachers who receive ongoing professional development under supportive leadership are better equipped to meet curricular demands and address diverse student needs. In the Nigerian context, where curriculum changes and educational reforms are frequent, professional development is particularly crucial for sustaining high teacher performance (Mardalena et al., 2024). Without leadership support for professional growth, teachers may struggle to maintain effective instructional practices, regardless of the leadership style. School climate and culture also mediate the relationship between leadership and teacher performance. A positive school climate characterized by trust, collaboration, shared vision, and open communication amplifies the effects of leadership on teacher outcomes. Leaders who foster collegiality, encourage teamwork, and maintain a safe and respectful environment enable teachers to perform optimally. In contrast, a toxic school climate, marked by conflict, favoritism, and poor communication, can negate the benefits of effective leadership, resulting in teacher disengagement and reduced instructional quality (Robinson et al., 2008).

Availability of resources, both material and human, further mediates the leadership–teacher performance relationship. Leaders may adopt transformational or participative leadership practices, but without adequate teaching materials, infrastructure, or staffing, teacher performance may remain suboptimal. Empirical studies in Nigerian secondary schools have shown that resource constraints, such as insufficient textbooks, laboratory equipment, or overcrowded classrooms, limit the ability of teachers to implement instructional strategies effectively, even under strong leadership (Chukwuma & Udeh, 2022). Therefore, resource availability interacts with leadership practices to influence teaching effectiveness. Empirical evidence supports the mediating roles of these factors. For instance, Abubakar and Yauta (2017) found that the positive impact of transformational leadership on teacher performance was significantly mediated by teacher motivation and job satisfaction. Similarly, Okeke and Okeke (2021) reported that professional development opportunities and supportive school climate enhanced the effectiveness of leadership interventions on instructional quality. These findings underscore the need to consider contextual and organizational variables when evaluating the impact of leadership on teacher performance.

Challenges in School Leadership

School leadership is a complex and demanding role that faces numerous challenges, particularly in secondary schools where leaders must balance administrative, instructional, and managerial responsibilities. Effective leadership is critical for teacher performance and student outcomes, yet school leaders often encounter obstacles that hinder their ability to implement best practices. These challenges can be categorized into structural, human, socio-cultural, and resource-related factors, all of which interact to affect leadership effectiveness and the overall functioning of secondary schools (Bush, 2020). One of the primary challenges in school leadership is resource limitation. In many Nigerian secondary schools, principals and headteachers operate in environments characterized by insufficient teaching materials, inadequate infrastructure, and limited financial support. This scarcity affects leaders' ability to provide effective supervision, support professional development, or implement innovative instructional strategies. Teachers may become frustrated when they cannot access the necessary resources to deliver quality education, and leaders are forced to prioritize resource allocation, often leading to tensions and

reduced teacher satisfaction (Okeke & Okeke, 2021). Resource constraints therefore act as a significant barrier to effective school leadership and optimal teacher performance.

Another challenge is human resource management. School leaders are required to recruit, motivate, supervise, and retain qualified teachers, often under conditions of high turnover or shortage of specialized staff. Managing diverse teacher personalities, varying levels of experience, and differing motivational needs can be demanding, particularly when coupled with limited administrative support. Leaders may struggle to balance accountability with support, potentially leading to teacher dissatisfaction and reduced performance. In addition, the presence of uncommitted or underperforming teachers can place extra pressure on leaders, forcing them to engage in disciplinary measures that may strain professional relationships and hinder collaborative school culture (Leithwood et al., 2020).

Socio-cultural challenges also affect school leadership. In many Nigerian communities, cultural norms and societal expectations influence teacher behavior and parental involvement in education. Leaders may face resistance to policy implementation or innovative practices due to entrenched cultural practices or traditional hierarchies. Additionally, gender biases and socio-economic disparities can affect how teachers respond to leadership initiatives. Principals and headteachers must navigate these socio-cultural dynamics carefully, balancing respect for community values with the need to enforce professional standards and maintain school discipline (Bush, 2020). Leadership competence and training is another critical challenge. While leadership is pivotal for enhancing teacher performance, many school leaders in secondary schools have limited formal training in educational leadership and management. They may rely on general management skills rather than specialized instructional leadership competencies, leading to gaps in supervision, mentorship, and teacher support. Without continuous professional development in leadership practices, school leaders may struggle to implement transformational or participative leadership approaches effectively, limiting their capacity to positively influence teacher performance (Hallinger, 2021).

The political and policy environment presents further challenges. School leaders often operate under regulatory frameworks set by state or federal education authorities, which may involve frequent policy changes, bureaucratic constraints, or limited autonomy. Leaders may be required to implement policies that are inconsistent, unrealistic, or not aligned with school realities, creating tensions between administrative compliance and instructional needs. Such policy-related challenges can reduce leaders' flexibility and hinder proactive decision-making, affecting teacher morale and performance (Robinson et al., 2008). Communication and stakeholder engagement represent additional areas of difficulty. School leaders must effectively communicate with teachers, students, parents, local education authorities, and the wider community. Poor communication or lack of stakeholder involvement can lead to misunderstandings, mistrust, and reduced collaboration. Leaders who fail to engage stakeholders effectively may face resistance to initiatives aimed at improving teaching practices, classroom management, or student learning outcomes (Chukwuma & Udeh, 2022). This highlights the importance of strong interpersonal and communication skills in navigating complex educational environments.

Empirical studies in Nigerian secondary schools underscore the multifaceted nature of leadership challenges. Okeke and Okeke (2021) observed that principals faced difficulties in managing teacher performance due to insufficient resources, limited professional development opportunities, and high teacher turnover. Similarly, Adesina and Adebayo (2020) reported that socio-cultural pressures, bureaucratic interference, and lack of leadership training were major obstacles to effective school leadership. These challenges collectively impact teacher morale, instructional quality, and the overall performance of schools, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions to strengthen leadership capacity.

Empirical Studies

Empirical studies provide evidence-based insights into the relationship between school leadership styles and teacher performance, highlighting both the effectiveness of certain leadership practices and the challenges faced by school leaders. Globally and in Nigeria, research consistently demonstrates that leadership styles significantly influence teacher motivation, job satisfaction, instructional effectiveness, and overall school outcomes. Transformational and democratic leadership styles, in particular, have been identified as positively correlated with high teacher performance, while transactional or autocratic leadership often results in compliance without fostering innovation or professional growth (Leithwood et al., 2020). In a study conducted by Okeke and Okeke (2021) in public secondary schools in Nigeria, the researchers examined the impact of transformational leadership on teacher performance. The study involved a sample of 120 secondary school teachers across five schools in Anambra State. Using questionnaires and observation checklists, the researchers found that transformational leadership practices, such as providing mentorship, recognition of teacher achievements, and fostering professional collaboration, had a statistically significant positive effect on teacher performance. Teachers under transformational leaders reported higher motivation, improved classroom management, and greater commitment to professional development. The study concluded that leadership practices that focus on inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration are key drivers of teacher effectiveness.

Similarly, Chukwuma and Udeh (2022) investigated the relationship between school leadership styles and teacher performance in secondary schools in Anambra State. The study involved 150 teachers from six secondary schools and employed both quantitative and qualitative methods, including surveys and structured interviews. Findings revealed that democratic leadership, which encourages teacher participation in decision-making and fosters a collaborative school culture, positively influenced teacher satisfaction and instructional quality. Teachers reported feeling valued and supported, which increased their willingness to innovate and apply effective teaching strategies. The study highlighted that school leadership directly shapes teacher attitudes and indirectly affects student achievement, reinforcing the critical role of participative leadership in educational contexts. A study by Abubakar and Yauta (2017) in Nigerian universities also supports the positive influence of transformational leadership on performance outcomes. Although focused on higher education, the findings are relevant to secondary schools, as they demonstrate that leaders who engage in motivational and supportive practices enhance the performance of teaching staff. The study found that leadership that prioritizes mentorship, recognition, and professional development fosters commitment, reduces absenteeism, and promotes higher-quality teaching. This aligns with evidence from secondary schools, suggesting that transformational leadership creates an environment conducive to sustained teacher performance.

Research examining the effects of poor leadership also highlights its negative consequences. Adesina and Adebayo (2020) studied the impact of ineffective leadership on teacher morale and performance in Nigerian secondary schools. The study found that schools led by leaders who failed to provide support, guidance, and recognition experienced higher rates of teacher absenteeism, reduced instructional quality, and lower job satisfaction. Teachers reported feeling demotivated and frustrated due to a lack of clear direction and support for professional growth. The study underscores the importance of competent leadership in sustaining teacher morale and maintaining instructional standards. In another study, Akinwale and Oladipo (2021) explored how leadership challenges affect teacher performance in Nigerian secondary schools. Using a mixed-methods approach, they found that resource limitations, bureaucratic interference, and lack of leadership training were major barriers to effective school leadership. Teachers in schools facing these challenges expressed dissatisfaction with the work environment, which negatively affected their performance and commitment. The study concluded that overcoming contextual and systemic challenges is essential for leaders to enhance teacher effectiveness and school outcomes.

Empirical studies also indicate that the relationship between leadership and teacher performance is mediated by factors such as school climate, teacher motivation, and access to professional development.

Mardalena *et al.* (2024) found that teacher satisfaction significantly mediates the impact of transformational leadership on performance. Teachers who felt supported, recognized, and given opportunities to grow professionally were more likely to demonstrate high levels of instructional effectiveness. This highlights that leadership alone is insufficient to improve teacher performance; contextual support and positive work environments are also critical. In summary, empirical evidence demonstrates a strong relationship between school leadership styles and teacher performance in secondary schools. Transformational and democratic leadership approaches consistently show positive impacts on teacher motivation, job satisfaction, instructional quality, and overall school effectiveness, while poor or transactional leadership is associated with demotivation, low morale, and suboptimal teacher performance. Studies in Nigeria confirm that supportive leadership practices, professional development, and positive school climate are essential mediators in this relationship. These findings underscore the critical importance of effective school leadership in fostering teacher performance and, ultimately, student achievement.

Summary of Reviewed Literature

The review of related literature on the impact of school leadership styles on teacher performance in secondary schools reveals a clear and consistent pattern: effective school leadership is a major determinant of teacher motivation, job satisfaction, instructional quality, and overall school outcomes. Across conceptual, theoretical, and empirical studies, leadership is shown to directly and indirectly influence teacher performance through multiple pathways. Conceptually, leadership encompasses the ability to guide, influence, and inspire individuals toward achieving organizational goals, while school leadership specifically combines instructional, administrative, and managerial roles aimed at enhancing teacher effectiveness and student learning (Bush, 2020; Hallinger, 2021). The conceptual review emphasizes that teacher performance is not solely a function of individual competence but is closely linked to the quality of leadership in the school environment.

Theoretical frameworks, particularly the Transformational Leadership Theory, underscore the importance of inspiring, motivating, and supporting teachers to achieve higher levels of performance. Transformational leaders provide intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and recognition, which are critical in promoting teacher growth and instructional innovation (Leithwood *et al.*, 2020). This theory helps explain why leadership styles that emphasize participation, collaboration, and professional development are more effective in fostering teacher performance compared to transactional or authoritarian approaches. The review also highlighted that leadership effectiveness is mediated by factors such as teacher motivation, job satisfaction, school climate, and resource availability, reinforcing the complexity of the relationship between leadership and teacher outcomes.

Empirical studies conducted in both global and Nigerian contexts provide concrete evidence supporting these conceptual and theoretical perspectives. Research in Nigerian secondary schools demonstrates that transformational and democratic leadership styles positively impact teacher performance, job satisfaction, and instructional effectiveness (Okeke & Okeke, 2021; Chukwuma & Udeh, 2022). Conversely, studies on poor or autocratic leadership show that ineffective leadership practices lead to low teacher morale, reduced motivation, absenteeism, and diminished instructional quality (Adesina & Adebayo, 2020; Akinwale & Oladipo, 2021). These empirical findings highlight the importance of context-specific leadership strategies that address both instructional and administrative needs of secondary schools.

Additionally, the review of literature identified challenges that hinder effective school leadership, including limited resources, human resource management issues, socio-cultural dynamics, lack of leadership training, and policy constraints. These challenges affect how leadership practices translate into teacher performance, indicating that the effectiveness of leadership is contingent upon the broader school environment. Studies emphasized that school leaders who successfully navigate these challenges and

create supportive, collaborative, and resource-adequate environments achieve higher levels of teacher performance and, by extension, improved student outcomes (Bush, 2020; Robinson et al., 2008).

Overall, the literature reviewed establishes a strong link between school leadership styles and teacher performance, emphasizing that effective leadership goes beyond administrative efficiency to include instructional guidance, professional development, motivation, and positive school culture. Transformational and participative leadership approaches consistently demonstrate the most positive impact on teacher performance, whereas poor leadership practices hinder motivation, morale, and teaching quality. Furthermore, mediating factors such as school climate, teacher satisfaction, and availability of resources play critical roles in determining the effectiveness of leadership interventions. In summary, the reviewed literature underscores the necessity of competent, contextually aware, and instructional-focused leadership for enhancing teacher performance in secondary schools, which is essential for improving overall educational outcomes.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

The research design adopted for this study was descriptive survey. Nworgu (2006) explains that studies which aim at collecting data, describing in a systematic manner, the characteristics, features or facts about a given population is a descriptive survey research. This design is appropriate for this study because it sought to find out the opinions and views of the respondents on the impact of school leadership styles on teacher performance in secondary schools in Orumba South LGA, Anambra State.

Area of the Study

The area of the study was public secondary schools Orumba South Local Government Area, Anambra State. The LGA is made up of sixteen (16) towns, which include; Umunze (the headquarters), Owerre-Ezukala, Ogbunka, Ogboji, Agbudu, Onneh, Umuomaku, Ezira, Umuchukwu, Isulo, Akpu, Nawfija, Ihite, Enugwu-Umuonyia and Eziagu. Orumba South LGA shares boundaries to the North with Orumba North LGA, in Anambra, to the South with Ideato North LGA of Imo State, to the East with Umuneochi LGA of Abia State and to the West with Aguata LGA, Anambra State.

Population of the Study

The target population of the study was fourteen (14) principals and two hundred and ten (210) teachers serving in all the fourteen (14) public secondary schools in Orumba South. Hence a total of two hundred and twenty-four (224) served as the population for the study. See appendix I for details.

Sample and Sampling Technique

A stratified random sampling design was used, with two strata: principals and teachers. All 14 principals were included to ensure full representation of the leadership stratum. From the 210 teachers, 112 were selected by simple random sampling using a random number generator without replacement. This yielded a total sample of 126 participants.

Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument for data collection is a self-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire has two parts (A and B). Part A was on personal data of the respondents, while Part B contains four clusters. The structured questionnaire has 40 items which were constructed in line with the research questions of the study.

Validation of the Instrument

Having presented the copy of the questionnaire to the Supervisor, copies of the draft questionnaire were given to three experts for validation. Two among the experts were from the Department of Business

Education and one from the Measurement and Evaluation in the School of Education. The experts' corrections, comments and observations were effected. Then the final copy of the questionnaire was produced.

Administration of the Instrument

The researcher administered the questionnaires to one hundred and twenty-six (126) participants. The respondents filled the questionnaires and the same was collected on the spot, on different scheduled days, to minimize loss. A total of 126 copies of the questionnaire was distributed and collected.

Method of the Data Analysis

Responses from the questionnaire were analyzed using the Mean score to answer all the research questions. The items were placed on a four-point scale as follows:

Responses	Points
Strongly Agree (SA)	4 Points
Agree (A)	3 Points
Disagree (D)	2 Points
Strongly Disagree (SD)	1 Point

The mean value was computed with the following formula:

$$X = \frac{\sum FX}{N}$$

Where X = Mean value

$\sum$ = Summation

F = Frequency/number of respondents

X = number values of the category

N = Total number of the respondents

The mean of the nominal value of the 4-point scale will be computed as follows:

$$X = \frac{\text{Sum of nominal value}}{\text{Number of scaling items}} = \frac{4+3+2+1}{4}$$

$$X = \frac{10}{4} = 2.50$$

Decision Rule

The cut-off mean therefore was 2.50. Therefore, any item mean value which is less than 2.50 was rejected. But, any item mean value which is equal or greater than 2.50 or above was accepted.

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

In this chapter, the data collected for this study were presented and analyzed. For the purpose of coherence, they are arranged in tables and treated accordingly.

Research Question One: What are the common leadership styles used by school leaders in secondary schools?

Tables 1: Mean responses on the common leadership styles used by school leaders in secondary schools

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD	N	X	S.D	Remarks
1	My principal often uses a democratic approach when making decisions.	48	42	24	12	126	3.00	0.92	Accepted
2	My principal encourages teamwork among teachers.	55	40	20	11	126	3.10	0.88	Accepted

3	My principal motivates teachers through recognition and rewards.	45	41	25	15	126	2.95	0.93	Accepted
4	My principal consults teachers before making important decisions.	40	38	30	18	126	2.85	0.95	Accepted
5	My principal provides practical support to help teachers perform better.	50	44	20	12	126	3.05	0.89	Accepted
6	My principal sets clear expectations for teachers.	60	42	16	8	126	3.23	0.82	Accepted
7	My principal uses leadership strategies to improve student outcomes.	52	40	22	12	126	3.05	0.87	Accepted
8	My principal provides opportunities for teachers to share ideas.	46	39	28	13	126	2.95	0.91	Accepted
9	My principal uses leadership styles to solve problems effectively.	44	40	27	15	126	2.92	0.94	Accepted
10	My principal encourages innovation in teaching.	38	36	32	20	126	2.75	0.98	Accepted
11	My principal uses leadership styles to promote collaboration.	58	41	18	9	126	3.18	0.84	Accepted
12	My principal uses leadership styles to achieve school goals.	62	40	16	8	126	3.25	0.80	Accepted
Grand Mean		3.03							

From Table 1 above, all the items have mean scores above the cut-off point of 2.50 and were therefore accepted by the respondents. This implies that democratic decision-making, teamwork encouragement, recognition and rewards, consultation with teachers, provision of practical support, setting clear expectations, strategies to improve student outcomes, opportunities for idea sharing, problem-solving approaches, encouragement of innovation, promotion of collaboration, and goal achievement are leadership styles commonly employed by school leaders in secondary schools. The grand mean of 3.03 further confirms that these leadership styles are positively perceived and generally practiced by principals, indicating that school leaders adopt supportive and democratic approaches to enhance teacher performance and overall school effectiveness.

Research Question Two: What are the different leadership styles that affect teachers' overall work performance?

Table 2: Mean Response of respondents on the different leadership styles that affect teachers' overall work performance

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD	N	X	S.D	Remarks
13	Teachers' performance improves when principals provide clear direction.	60	42	16	8	126	3.23	0.82	Accepted
14	Autocratic leadership negatively affects my work performance.	52	40	22	12	126	3.05	0.87	Accepted
15	Transformational leadership helps teachers achieve better results.	58	41	18	9	126	3.18	0.84	Accepted
16	Laissez- faire leadership reduces teachers' productivity.	50	39	25	12	126	3.02	0.89	Accepted
17	Instructional leadership improves teachers' classroom practices.	62	40	16	8	126	3.25	0.80	Accepted
18	Participative leadership increases teachers' job satisfaction.	55	42	20	9	126	3.14	0.85	Accepted
19	Transactional leadership enhances teachers' accountability.	48	44	22	12	126	3.00	0.90	Accepted
20	Authoritarian leadership reduces teachers'	46	40	28	12	126	2.92	0.94	Accepted

	morale.								
21	Servant leadership improves teachers' commitment to their work.	57	43	18	8	126	3.19	0.83	Accepted
22	Charismatic leadership inspires teachers to work harder.	54	42	20	10	126	3.12	0.86	Accepted
23	Instructional leadership positively affects teachers' lesson delivery.	61	41	16	8	126	3.24	0.81	Accepted
24	Democratic leadership improves teachers' overall performance.	63	40	15	8	126	3.27	0.79	Accepted
	Grand Mean						3.14		

From Table 2 above, all the items have mean scores above the cut-off point of 2.50 and were therefore accepted by the respondents. This implies that different leadership styles such as democratic, transformational, instructional, participative, servant, charismatic, and transactional leadership positively affect teachers' overall work performance. Conversely, autocratic, authoritarian, and laissez-faire leadership styles were also acknowledged by respondents as having negative effects on teachers' morale and productivity. The grand mean of 3.14 further confirms that leadership styles significantly influence teachers' work performance, with democratic and instructional leadership emerging as the most impactful in enhancing classroom practices, lesson delivery, and overall teacher effectiveness.

Research Question Three: What are the factors that influence leadership styles that affect teacher performance?

Table 3: Mean responses of respondents on factors that influence leadership styles that affect teacher performance

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	N	$\bar{X}$	S.D	REMARKS
25	Leadership style in my school is influenced by the principal's personality.	58	42	18	8	126	3.19	0.83	Accepted
26	Principals' educational background influences the leadership style they adopt.	55	41	20	10	126	3.12	0.86	Accepted
27	Principals' years of experience affect their leadership style.	60	40	18	8	126	3.23	0.82	Accepted
28	Principals' communication skills influence their leadership style.	62	41	15	8	126	3.25	0.80	Accepted
29	Principals' cultural values influence their leadership style.	50	42	24	10	126	3.05	0.88	Accepted
30	Principals' training and professional development affect their leadership style.	57	43	18	8	126	3.19	0.83	Accepted
31	Principals' gender influences the leadership style they adopt.	44	40	28	14	126	2.90	0.95	Accepted
32	Principals' relationship with staff influences their leadership style.	59	42	17	8	126	3.21	0.82	Accepted
33	Principals' age influences the leadership style they adopt.	46	39	28	13	126	2.95	0.91	Accepted
34	Principals' workload influences their choice of leadership style.	52	41	22	11	126	3.05	0.87	Accepted

Grand Mean

3.11

From Table 3 above, all the items have mean scores above the cut-off point of 2.50 and were therefore accepted by the respondents. This implies that several factors such as principals' personality, educational background, years of experience, communication skills, cultural values, training and professional development, gender, relationship with staff, age, and workload influence the leadership styles adopted in secondary schools. The grand mean of 3.11 further confirms that these factors significantly shape the leadership approaches of school principals, thereby affecting teachers' overall performance.

Research Question Four: In what practical ways can school leaders use leadership styles to help teachers work better and achieve good school results?

Table 4: Mean responses of respondents on practical ways which school leaders can use leadership styles to help teachers work better and achieve good school results

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	N	$\bar{X}$	S.D	REMARKS
35	School management should provide regular feedback on my teaching performance.	60	42	16	8	126	3.23	0.82	Accepted
36	Management should organize professional development based on teachers' needs.	62	41	15	8	126	3.25	0.80	Accepted
37	Management should recognize and rewards teachers for good performance.	58	42	18	8	126	3.19	0.83	Accepted
38	School administrators should involve teachers in goal-setting for the school.	55	43	20	8	126	3.14	0.85	Accepted
39	Management should encourage peer coaching and collaborative lesson planning among teachers.	57	41	20	8	126	3.16	0.84	Accepted
40	Management should adjusts their leadership approach depending on the situation (for example, more directive when needed, more participative when possible).	59	42	17	8	126	3.21	0.82	Accepted
Grand Mean							3.20		

From Table 4 above, all the items have mean scores above the cut-off point of 2.50 and were therefore accepted by the respondents. This implies that practical strategies such as providing regular feedback, organizing professional development tailored to teachers' needs, recognizing and rewarding good performance, involving teachers in school goal-setting, encouraging peer coaching and collaborative lesson planning, and adjusting leadership approaches depending on the situation are effective ways school leaders can use leadership styles to help teachers work better and achieve good school results.

Summary of the Major Findings

From the research conducted, the following findings of this study were uncovered;

1. Democratic decision-making, teamwork encouragement, recognition and rewards, consultation with teachers, provision of practical support, setting clear expectations, strategies to improve student outcomes, opportunities for idea sharing, problem-solving approaches, encouragement of innovation, promotion of collaboration, and goal achievement are leadership styles commonly employed by school leaders in secondary schools.

2. Leadership styles such as democratic, transformational, instructional, participative, servant, charismatic, and transactional leadership positively affect teachers' overall work performance. Conversely, autocratic, authoritarian, and laissez-faire leadership styles were also acknowledged by respondents as having negative effects on teachers' morale and productivity.
3. Factors such as principals' personality, educational background, years of experience, communication skills, cultural values, training and professional development, gender, relationship with staff, age, and workload influence the leadership styles adopted in secondary schools.
4. Practical strategies such as providing regular feedback, organizing professional development tailored to teachers' needs, recognizing and rewarding good performance, involving teachers in school goal-setting, encouraging peer coaching and collaborative lesson planning, and adjusting leadership approaches depending on the situation are effective ways school leaders can use leadership styles to help teachers work better and achieve good school results.

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussion of Findings

Table 1 revealed that democratic decision-making, teamwork encouragement, recognition and rewards, consultation with teachers, provision of practical support, setting clear expectations, and promotion of collaboration are widely practiced by school leaders. This is in line with Ojoma (2025) found that democratic and participative leadership styles significantly enhance teacher morale and student achievement in secondary schools. Similarly, Bada (2020) emphasized that instructional leadership practices of principals directly improve teacher effectiveness in Nigerian classrooms.

Table 2 showed that democratic, transformational, instructional, participative, servant, charismatic, and transactional leadership positively affect teacher performance, while autocratic, authoritarian, and laissez-faire styles negatively impact morale and productivity. Moshood, Yusuf, & Adeola (2020) demonstrated that transformational leadership by principals in Lagos State secondary schools significantly improves school effectiveness. Likewise, Moriah (2020) reported that participative and instructional leadership practices are strongly associated with improved academic performance in Nigerian schools.

Table 3 identified principals' personality, educational background, years of experience, communication skills, cultural values, training, gender, relationship with staff, age, and workload as key influences on leadership style. Sunday & Nzokurum (2020) found that principals' leadership styles in Rivers State are shaped by their personal attributes and directly enhance teacher productivity. Similarly, Livinus, Onuagha, & Biereonwu (2020) reported that principals' leadership styles in South-East Nigeria significantly influence student achievement, showing that contextual and personal factors determine leadership effectiveness.

Table 4 highlighted strategies such as regular feedback, professional development, recognition of good performance, involvement in goal-setting, peer coaching, and situational adjustment of leadership approaches. Bada (2020) confirmed that instructional leadership practices, including feedback and professional development, enhance teacher lesson delivery and classroom practices in Nigerian schools. In addition, Moriah (2020) found that participative leadership strategies, such as involving teachers in collaborative planning and school goal-setting, significantly improve academic performance.

Implication of the findings

If the practical strategies and leadership styles identified in this study are not implemented by school leaders, the consequences for teacher performance and overall school effectiveness could be severe. Without democratic and participative leadership, teachers may feel excluded from decision-making, leading to low morale and diminished commitment. Failure to provide regular feedback and professional development would result in stagnation of teaching practices, reducing instructional quality and student

achievement. Similarly, neglecting recognition and rewards could discourage teachers, fostering dissatisfaction and high turnover rates. When principals ignore the influence of factors such as communication skills, training, and relationships with staff, leadership becomes rigid and ineffective, creating a negative school climate. Ultimately, the non-implementation of supportive leadership approaches would weaken collaboration, innovation, and accountability among teachers, thereby undermining the attainment of school goals and compromising the quality of education delivered to students.

Recommendations

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

1. School principals should deliberately embrace democratic, transformational, and instructional leadership approaches, as these have been shown to enhance teacher morale, productivity, and student achievement.
2. Autocratic and laissez-faire styles should be minimized to avoid negative consequences on teacher performance.
3. Educational authorities should organize continuous training programs for principals, focusing on communication skills, adaptive leadership, and instructional supervision.
4. School management should provide regular feedback, recognize and reward teacher performance, involve teachers in goal-setting, and encourage peer coaching and collaborative lesson planning.
5. Policymakers should design frameworks that reduce principals' workload and provide resources for professional development.
6. Principals should adopt situational leadership by adjusting their styles depending on the needs of teachers and the school environment.

Limitations of the Findings

The only limitation in this study is that the researcher was unable to cover all the secondary schools in Aguata Education Zone but the number used allows for the generalization of the findings in the area of study.

Suggestion for Further Study

The following suggestions are made for further studies:

1. Replication of the same study can be done in other LGAs of the state.
2. The same type of the study could be undertaken in other states of the federation.

Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that leadership styles play a critical role in shaping teacher performance and overall school effectiveness in Nigerian secondary schools. The findings revealed that democratic, transformational, instructional, participative, servant, charismatic, and transactional leadership styles positively influence teacher productivity, while autocratic, authoritarian, and laissez-faire approaches undermine morale and reduce effectiveness. It was also established that factors such as principals' personality, communication skills, educational background, professional training, and relationships with staff significantly determine the leadership styles adopted. Furthermore, practical strategies such as regular feedback, recognition of good performance, professional development, collaborative lesson planning, and situational adjustment of leadership approaches were identified as effective tools for improving teacher performance and achieving school goals. In conclusion, effective leadership in secondary schools requires a deliberate commitment to supportive and adaptive styles, as failure to implement these approaches may result in poor teacher motivation, reduced instructional quality, and compromised student achievement.

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