

## PRINCIPALS' TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICE AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN CALABAR EDUCATION ZONE OF CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA

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### **Abstract**

*This study investigated principals' transformational leadership practice and organizational commitment among secondary school teachers in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria, with a population of 2053 teachers across all the public secondary schools in the study area. Stratified random sampling technique was utilized to draw a sample of 821 teachers as respondents. An instrument for data collection was developed by the researcher. The instrument was entitled: "Principals' Transformational leadership Practice and Organizational Commitment Among Secondary School Teachers Questionnaire (PTLPOCASSTQ)." Using Cronbach Alpha method, the reliability index was 0.84 which was regarded as high enough to justify the use of the instrument for data collection. Data gathered were coded and analyzed using ANOVA of a simple linear regression. The result of the analysis indicated that principals' transformational leadership practices in terms of idealized influence and individualized consideration significantly predicted organizational commitment among secondary school teachers in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State. Arising from the results of the analysis, one of the recommendations was that, there should be synergy between Secondary Education Board and Ministry of Education to invest in training programs and workshops to enhance principals' transformational leadership practices in terms of idealize influence to ensure that principals behave in a manner that will command respect and trusted in their administrative methods as well as identifying with the teachers.*

**Key Words:** Consideration, Influence, Leadership, Organization, Transformation

### **Introduction**

Globally, education all over the world serves as a mechanism for national development through the production of human capital to meet the ever – changing needs of the society (Dias & Tebaldi, 2012; Marginson, 2019). Based on this, efforts have been intensified by various stakeholders in educational industry to ensure that quality education is delivered at all levels of education by the teachers. Such efforts are manifested in governments of various countries trying tirelessly in allocating resources to education sector to ensure that educational services are provided based on the needs and aspirations of individuals in particular and the nation at

large for economic growth and development (Shaturaev,2021, Hsu, 2021). Besides government involvement, private individuals, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), religious organizations, philanthropists, donor organizations, alumni organizations, to mention a few, also play significant role in this regard (Morrar & Sultan, 2020; Gali & Schechter,2020; Molla, 2022, Onyeukwu, 2022).

Irrespective of the above stated efforts towards improving educational services in Nigeria, issues related to poor quality of education still remains the concern of the researchers, employers of labour and the general public (Ochuba, 2009; Ogunode, 2022; Ololube, 2016). It has been documented that, leadership in the school system is prerequisite in the attainment of educational goals and objectives (Amanchukwu *et al.*,2015; Day & Sammons, 2016). Nevertheless, even though scholars have made tremendous efforts in documenting empirical and opinion papers on the importance leadership in the school system, there seems to be limited scholarly opinion and empirical papers on transformational leadership practices organizational commitment among secondary school teachers Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. The current study was designed to investigate principals' transformational leadership practices and organizational commitment among secondary school teachers Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria

School leadership and teachers' commitment are among the components that uphold school performance in parallel with the success of a school. An absence of these may diminish the efforts of a school to achieve its aims and objectives. Strong leadership will increase teachers' trust in principals, significantly enhancing their commitment to give their best to the school. Conversely, ineffective leaders will generate dissatisfaction among their followers. Moreover, one of the common problems encountered at schools and a dilemma for teachers and schools is the differing leadership practices, attitudes, and strategies adopted by principals and headmasters (Li *et al.*, 2019).

Leadership in practices in general entails school administrators' ability to guide and direct teachers to attain the objectives and goals of the school (Okon & Asuquo, 2017). It also entails the ability of a leader to guide, direct, control, advice, coach, give mentorship guidance and influence the followers positively towards attainment of organization predetermined goals. Leadership is a crucial administrative practice that influences the subordinates to work cooperatively and willingly for the accomplishment of objectives. It has been stressed that until leadership displays total commitment in the school system, quality and effectiveness in educational programmes will remain a mirage (Ekpoh & Asuquo, 2018; Asuquo & Ekpoh, 2021). In this connection, many scholars have made efforts in documenting results of empirical evidence and theoretical opinions on the role of leadership practices in educational system.

It has been noted that, organizational leadership is very important and it is regarded as a significant success factor in all organization and as such all administrators must need to show their capacities and feel the need to cooperate with others for the accomplishment of the desired goals (Korejan & Shahbazi, 2016). Leadership in educational organization refers to a leaders' ability to inspire confidence and support among teaching and non-teaching staff members for

the purpose of achieving educational organization's aims. It has been noted that, leadership practices adopted by principals have the ability to impact teachers' level of commitment in the school system (Mansor et al., 2021).

Specifically, leading, managing and administering effective school system in line with the global best practice and to respond to the dynamic nature of the society requires innovative style of leadership which is transformational in nature (Zaman *et al.*, 2020). Transformational leadership stresses improvement of the school conditions in general (Okon, 2016). The dimensions of transformational leadership as documented in the literature include idealized influence, individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation (Okon, 2016; Ekpoh & Asuquo, 2018).

The aspect of idealized influence of transformational leadership has to do with extent to which leaders behave in a way that is admirable, such that it influences and commands respect and trust from the subordinates (Huang, Liu, & Huang, 2021). Individualized consideration aspect of transformational leadership has to do with a situation where a leader displays mentorship and coaching ability and also cares, support and provides opportunity for the subordinates to grow personally and professionally (Ekpoh & Asuquo, 2018; Kim & Shin, 2019). Individualized consideration of transformational leadership is manifested in the school administrators' open communication and interaction with the subordinates. It is in this connection that Okon & Asuquo (2017) noted that with effective communication leaders inform, give clarification to the followers on the tasks to be done and how it is to be performed and how to improve on the performance if falls short of expectation. The intellectual stimulation of transformational leadership manifests in a situation where leaders actively solicit new ideas and new ways of doing things in the school system by stimulating the subordinates to be creative (Okon, 2016). It has been stated that a leader with inspirational motivation of behave in such a way that get others motivated, generate enthusiasm and commitment (Okon, 2016).

Commitment per se can be defined as the agreement among members of an organization to the mission and vision along with their willingness to continue serving and displaying strong loyalty to the organisation (Li *et al.*, 2019). In the context of this study, organizational commitment among secondary school teachers is viewed as the extent to which teachers their assigned responsibilities in schools, its goals and the willingness of the teachers to remain in the organization. Again, the interest and effort of the teachers in the actualization of the educational goals also indicate organizational commitment among secondary school teachers

On the other hand, Meyer and Allen as cited in Ekpoh & Asuquo (2018) identified types of organizational commitment to include affective, continuance and normative commitment. Affective deals with teachers' attachment with school organization, its goals and objectives; continuance deals with the concern of teachers on the cost of leaving the profession and the lack of employment opportunities, while normative deals with teachers' loyalty and obligation to remain in the teaching profession (Ekpoh & Asuquo, 2018).

Without teachers' commitment to school goals, students stand to suffer and the school system may not be able to produce graduates that can compete globally. The present-day school system has witnessed the erosion of teachers' commitment. This is evident in teachers' involvement in activities such as examination malpractice, greed, dishonesty, desperation for materialism, indiscipline, poor attitude to work and so on (Ekpoh & Asuquo, 2018). Without teachers' commitment to school goals, students stand to suffer and the school system may not be able to produce graduates that can compete globally.

## Literature Review

Evidence from literature suggests that effective application of transformational leadership style increases organizational commitment of subordinates (followers). Empirical studies have shown that, transformational leadership seeks to inspire and empower members of the organization to focus on a common vision and collaborative approach which builds a strong school culture and commitment of staff (Ekpoh & Asuquo, 2018). Arumugam, Yahya, Yaakob, & Rozlina (2015) conducted a study to identify the relationship between principals' transformational leadership style and secondary school teachers' commitment in the southern zone of Sungai Petani district in Kedah. In the study, 235 teachers were randomly selected from 10 schools in the southern zone of Sungai Petani district, Kedah. The results showed that there was no difference in the level of education and the level of transformational leadership style practiced by the principals. The study also showed a significant relationship between principals' transformational leadership and teachers' commitment where principals' inspiring motivation dimension is the domain of transformational leadership style.

Mansor *et al.* (2021) stressed that the increasing of transformational leadership of the headmaster will be followed by the increasing performance of teachers and that, professional headmaster will supervise the appearance of teachers and students at their schools, give a positive feedback for the improvement and development of systems and learning methods, encourage the use of time and facilities to learn effectively. Kim & Shin (2019) noted that transformational leadership has received growing attention in leadership studies. In their study, they explored transformational leadership issues in an Asian context. Survey responses from 491 employees working for foreign subsidiaries in Korea were analyzed. They framed transformational leadership behaviors as a two-dimensional structure including organization-related behaviors and person-related behaviors. The result of their study showed that both organizational related behaviours and person-related behaviour were mediated by psychological empowerment to determine organizational commitment. More importantly, the findings indicated that the empowering process driven by both leadership behaviors is contingent on organizational structure. Specifically, centralization negatively moderated the empowering process of person related behaviours. Formalization positively moderated the empowering process of organizational related behaviours and negatively moderated that of person-related behaviours. These findings have noteworthy value by virtue of quantitatively revealing the organizational structure wherein the empowering process of transformational leadership behaviors is effectively induced in South Korea.

Huang, Liu, & Huang (2021) examined the effects of departmental-level academic leaders' transformational and contingent reward leaderships on university faculty's organizational commitment through the mediating role of psychological empowerment. A total of 1278 university faculty from 25 research intensive Chinese universities participated in a questionnaire survey. The results showed that both transformational and contingent reward leaderships had positive effects on university faculty's psychological empowerment and organizational commitment. They further showed that university faculty's psychological empowerment positively mediated the relationships between both transformational and contingent reward leaderships and organizational commitment. This study although related to the current research was in the university system while the current study focuses on the secondary school level.

Al-Husseini & Elbeltagi (2016) examined the impact of transformational leadership on product and process innovation, and the differences between these impacts in public and private higher education institutions (HEIs) in Iraq. Questionnaires and interviews were administered to 439 teaching staff and 10 leaders from private and public HEIs. Employing multi-group structural equation modelling (SEM) with AMOS 20, the research showed that transformational leadership plays a pivotal role in enhancing product and process innovation and that the style would be ideal in an Iraqi educational context as it would promote strategies for developing innovation in both sectors. The interviews revealed that there are similarities and differences between public and private HEIs in Iraq regarding the relationship between TL and both product and process innovation. Although this study is related to the current study, it is however different from the current study in the sense that it did not address the aspect of organizational commitment among secondary school teachers of which this study is focusing on.

Another study was conducted by (Metaferia, Baraki, & Mebratu, 2023) to explore the link between school principals' transformational leadership style and teachers' organizational commitment in Addis Ababa government secondary schools, Ethiopia. The research employed correlational design. Stratified random sampling technique was applied to draw a representative sample of 385 teachers for the study. The result of this study showed that transformational leadership is less practiced in Addis Ababa government secondary schools. The study further revealed that transformational leadership is positively and significantly related to teachers' organizational commitment.

## **Statement of the Problem**

Teachers' organizational commitment among secondary school teachers in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria, has been of concern to stakeholders in the study area. Some teachers exhibit behaviours that are not indicating commitment to their duties. Such behaviours are manifested in their nonchalant attitudes to work, lack discipline, lateness to school, involvement in examination malpractices and engagement in other economic activities like buying and selling. All these seem to distract their attention from effective teaching and learning in the school system.

Many secondary school teachers have also been observed to have been enrolled in full time academic programmes with or without study leave. This situation has been observed to have negatively affected teachers' commitment to their assigned responsibilities in secondary schools in the study area. As such, they have been observed to be less committed in their teaching and in the taking of part in matters that are meant for the progress and development of the school. Meanwhile, every teacher is expected to be committed to their responsibilities in the area of effective teaching so as to produce graduates who can think for themselves and also be self-reliance. Therefore, the situation of poor commitment on the part of teachers to their assigned responsibilities calls for appropriate leadership practices to address the observed ugly trend in the secondary school system. It is based on the observed problems that the researcher was motivated to investigate principals' transformational leadership practices and organizational commitment among secondary school teachers in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria

## **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to examine principals' transformational leadership practices and organizational commitment among secondary school teachers in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to find out whether:

1. Principals' idealized influence predict organizational commitment among secondary school teachers in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria
2. Principals individualized consideration predict organizational commitment among secondary school teachers in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria

## **Research Questions**

1. To what extent does principals' idealized influence predict organizational commitment among secondary school teachers in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria?
2. To what extent does principals' individualized consideration predict organizational commitment among secondary school teachers in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria?

## **Statement of Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. Principals' idealized influence do not significantly predict organizational commitment among secondary school teachers in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria
2. Principals individualized consideration do not significantly predict organizational commitment among secondary school teachers in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria

## Methodology

The research design adopted in this study was a survey design. The study was carried out in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria with a population of 2053 teachers across all the public secondary schools in the study area. Stratified random sampling technique was utilized to draw a sample of 821 teachers as the respondents for the study. An instrument, entitled: “Principals’ Transformational leadership Practices and Organizational Commitment Among Secondary School Teachers Questionnaire (PTLPOCASSTQ)” was developed by the researchers for data collection. The instrument comprised two sections, A and B. Section A of the instrument measured transformational leadership practices of idealized influence, individualized consideration. Each of the dimensions of transformational leadership practices had their respective five (5) items totaling 10 items which required responses from the respondents. It was designed such that, the respondents ticked transformational leadership practices by their principals in terms of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

Section B was designed using a 4- point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) to measure organizational commitment among secondary school teachers. This section was not divided into sub-sections but it had 7 items measuring organizational commitment as a whole.

The instrument was validated by three lecturers in the Department of Educational Management and another three lecturers in Test and Measurement of the Department of Educational Foundations, University of Calabar. Using Cronbach Alpha method, the reliability index was 0.84 which was regarded as high enough to justify the use of the instrument for data collection. The instrument was administered by the researchers and the research assistants to the respondents in their various schools after due permission from their principals. Data gathered were coded and analyzed using Simple Linear

## Presentation of Results

The research questions were answered first before the hypotheses.

**Research Question 1:** To what extent does principals’ idealized influence predict organizational commitment among secondary school teachers in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria?

**Table 1: Descriptive summary of a simple linear regression analysis showing the prediction of organizational commitment among secondary school teachers by principals’ idealized influence**

R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	SE
.646	.417	.417	7.412

*Predictor: Principals’ idealized influence.*

The explanatory variable is principals’ idealized influence, whereas the criterion variable is organizational commitment among secondary school teachers. The descriptive statistics of a simple linear regression analysis were used to answer the research question. Table 1 reveals that the correlation between principals’ idealized influence and organizational

commitment among secondary school teachers is 0.646, indicating a moderate positive relationship. Table 1 further shows that approximately 41.7 % of the variability in organizational commitment among secondary school teachers is explained by principals' idealized influence as indicated by the adjusted coefficient of determination ( $Adj. R^2 = .417$ ). This implies that other predictors can be held accountable for 58.3% of the unexplained proportion of the variance.

**Research Question 2:** To what extent does principals' individualized consideration predict organizational commitment among secondary school teachers in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria?

**Table2: Descriptive summary of a simple linear regression analysis showing the prediction of organizational commitment among secondary school teachers by principals' individualized consideration**

R	R2	Adjusted R2	SE
.655	.429	.428	9.236

*Predictor: Principals' individualized consideration*

The explanatory variable in this research question is principals' individualized consideration, whereas the criterion variable is organizational commitment among secondary school teachers. The descriptive statistics were used to provide answer to the research question 1. The result of the analysis is presented in Table2 which shows a moderate positive correlation ( $R = 0.655$ ) between principals' individualized consideration and organizational commitment among secondary school teachers. As suggested by the adjusted coefficient of determination ( $Adj. R^2$ ), approximately (42.8%) of the variability in organizational commitment among secondary school teachers is explained by principals' individualized consideration. This leaves 57.2% of the variance unexplained, which may be attributed to other factors not considered

**Null Hypothesis 1:** Principals' idealized influence does not significantly predict organizational commitment among secondary school teachers in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria

**Table 3: ANOVA of a simple linear regression analysis showing how principals' idealized influence predicts organizational commitment among secondary school teachers**

Model	SS	Df	MS	F	P
Regression	26287.21	1	26287.21	434.8*	.000
Residual	47760.62	790	60.46		
Total	74047.83	791			

$a = 12.992; B = 1.061; SE = 0.052; Beta = 0.598; t = 20.979; p < .05$

\*Significant at  $p < .05$

A simple linear regression analysis was performed at a significance level of 0.05 to test the hypothesis 1. The result as presented in Table 3 reveals that, principals' idealized influence significantly predicted organizational commitment among secondary school teachers in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State. With this result, the null hypothesis was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was retained. The regression coefficients affirm the presence of a meaningful relationship, indicating that a one percent change in principals' transformational leadership practices in terms of idealized influence is associated with a 1.061 increase in organizational commitment among secondary school teachers, other things being equal.

**Null Hypothesis 2:** Principals individualized consideration does not significantly predict organizational commitment among secondary school teachers in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria

**Table 4: ANOVA of a simple linear regression analysis showing how principals' individualized consideration predicts organizational commitment among secondary school teachers**

Model	SS	Df	MS	F	P
Regression	24234.46	1	24234.46	552.42*	.000
Residual	34661.22	790	43.87		
Total	68895.68	791			

a = 12.992; B = 1.064; SE = 0.052; Beta = 0.598; t = 20.979; p < .05

\*Significant at  $p < .05$

A simple linear regression analysis was performed at a significance level of 0.05 to test the hypothesis 1. The result as presented in Table 4 reveals that, principals' individualized consideration significantly predicted organizational commitment among secondary school teachers in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State. With this result, the null hypothesis was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was retained. The regression coefficients affirm the presence of a meaningful relationship, indicating that a one percent change in principals' individualized influence is associated with a 1.061 increase in organizational commitment among secondary school teachers, other things being equal.

### Discussion of Findings

The discussion of the findings of this study is presented in the following sub-headings:

#### **Principals' idealize influence and organizational commitment among secondary school teachers.**

The first finding of this study is that principals idealize influence significantly predicted organizational commitment among secondary school teachers in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. Specifically, the finding suggests that as principals' idealize influence improves, so does the organizational commitment among secondary school teachers. The finding implies that, for every unit increase in principals' idealize influence, there is a

corresponding increase in organizational commitment among secondary school teachers. Several possible explanations could be made from this finding.

This finding is in support of the position of Martin, Crossland & Johnson, (2001) who stressed that, transformational leadership elicits commitment rather than compliance by creating a community in which each person has a sense that he/she is a stakeholder in the organization's mission. It is also in tandem with the work by Sergiorani (2007) that, principals' idealize influence seeks to inspire and empower members of the organization to focus on a common vision and collaborative approach which builds a strong school culture and commitment of staff. The result of this study also collaborates with the finding of empirical investigation by Kim & Shin (2019) whose result showed that both organizational related behaviours and person-related behaviour were mediated by psychological empowerment to determine organizational commitment. This finding implies that when principals display transformational leadership practices by ways of behaving in admirable manner, commanding respect from teachers, being trusted in their administrative methods and allowing teachers to identify with them, teachers may in turn get committed in their respective schools by always feeling happy as members of educational organization.

## **Principals' individualized consideration and organizational commitment among secondary school teachers.**

The second finding of this study is that principals' individualized consideration significantly predicted organizational commitment among secondary school teachers in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. Particularly, the finding suggests that as principals' individualized consideration improves, so does the organizational commitment among secondary school teachers.

This finding is in collaboration with Arumugam, Yahya, Yaakob, & Rozlina (2015) whose study showed a significant relationship between principals' individualized consideration dimension and teachers' commitment. By implication, secondary school principals who practice individualized consideration are always encouraging their teachers by motivating them for professional development. They act as mentors and display coaching tendency and allow open communication with their teachers as well as giving clarification on how activities are to be performed in order to improve their performance.

## **Conclusion**

This study primarily examined principals' transformational leadership practices and organizational commitment among secondary school teachers in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. This quantitative study has provided evidence of the critical role of principals' transformational leadership practices in shaping organizational commitment among secondary school teachers. Specifically, principals' transformational leadership practices in terms of idealize influence and individualized considerations have been confirmed as key predictors of organizational commitment among secondary school teachers in terms of their feeling very happy to be members of educational organization, taking the problems of the

school as theirs, having zero tendency to leave teaching job and believing that they have obligation to serve their schools to the best of their ability.

## Recommendations

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

1. In conjunction with the secondary education board, the Ministry of Education should invest in training programs and workshops to enhance principals' transformational leadership practices in terms of idealize influence to ensure that principals behave in admirable manner, command respect, trusted in their administrative methods as well as identifying with the teachers.
2. Secondary school principals should demonstrate idealized consideration by promoting and supporting teachers' professional development of teachers, mentoring and coaching teachers as well as improving upon their open communication methods so as make teachers to feel very happy to be a member of educational organization, feel as if problems in educational organization are my own personal problems, always think that I could easily become as attached to another organization rather than educational sector and have an have outstanding of obligation to remain in the school system

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