

Influence of School Leadership Style on the Job Performance of Agricultural Science Teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in Gombe State, Nigeria

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.100900122>

Received: 11 September 2026; Accepted: 16 September 2026; Published: 02 October 2026

ABSTRACT

The study examined how school leadership styles influence the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary schools in Gombe State, Nigeria. The study was guided by four specific objectives, four research questions, and four null hypotheses. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study was 477, made up of 321 agricultural science teachers in government senior secondary schools in Gombe State. A representative sample of respondents, 270 agricultural science teachers and 156 principals, was selected using appropriate sampling techniques. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire titled *School Leadership Style and Agricultural Science Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire (SLSASTJPQ)*, which was validated by experts in educational management and vocational education. A pilot study was conducted to test the reliability of the instrument, and a Cronbach's alpha reliability of 0.723 coefficient was obtained, indicating that the instrument was reliable for the study. Data collection was carried out with the assistance of trained research assistants across the three educational zones of the state. The collected data were analysed using the mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions, while the null hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance using simple linear regression with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The findings of the study revealed that transformational, transactional, instructional, and democratic leadership styles have a significant influence on the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary schools in Gombe State. The study concluded that effective school leadership plays a crucial role in enhancing teachers' instructional effectiveness, commitment, and overall job performance. It was therefore recommended that school principals should adopt appropriate leadership styles, particularly transformational, instructional, and democratic leadership approaches, to improve the job performance of agricultural science teachers. In addition, educational authorities should organise regular leadership training programmes for school administrators to strengthen effective leadership practices in secondary schools.

Keywords: Agricultural science students, Job performance, Leadership style, Motivation.

INTRODUCTION

The term "leadership" is often used in workplaces, in politics, and even in self-help circles. A leader is someone who inspires passion and motivation in followers. Such a person or entity is one with a vision and the path to realizing it; one or an entity who ensures their team has support and tools to achieve their goals (Perry, 2022). In educational circles and institutions, the practice and concept of leadership is also relevant. "Good leadership in schools is the practice of encouraging and enabling school-wide teaching expertise to achieve a strong rate of progress for all learners. Leadership can be driven by principals and executive staff in traditional leadership roles, as well as by school leaders and teachers without defined leadership roles" (Southern Cross University, 2019). Leadership can be defined as a social process by which individuals work together to produce results that they could never achieve alone (Center for Creative Leadership, 2024).

Leadership, within the educational context, is not entirely different per se. It can be understood as the process of guiding a team towards shared objectives, fostering motivation, and providing support to ensure the successful accomplishment of goals. It encompasses a spectrum of actions, including direction-setting, motivation, inspiration, and support, all aimed at enabling subordinates to fulfill their duties effectively. Leadership manifests through various styles, each characterized by distinct traits, actions, and behaviors employed by leaders to influence the work of others. Leadership is characterized by an affective relationship between leaders and followers, aiming to bring about real shifts and results in pursuit of common organizational success (Torlak, 2019). Effective leadership entails providing clear vision, boosting subordinates' self-confidence, and facilitating effective coordination and communication to achieve organizational goals (Baek, Byers & Vito, 2018).

Leadership styles, such as transformational and transactional leadership, have been shown to significantly impact teacher job satisfaction and performance. Transformational leaders inspire and motivate their staff through a shared vision and personal commitment, while transactional leaders focus on structured tasks and reward systems. Recent research supports these observations, demonstrating the varied impacts of different leadership styles on teacher outcomes. For instance, Hallinger (2018) found that leadership, which emphasizes the principal's role in fostering an effective teaching and learning environment, significantly improves teacher performance and student achievement. The existing research broadly confirms that such styles significantly impact teacher satisfaction and performance (Hallinger, 2018; Blase & Blase, 2019), three critical gaps persist: (1) Contextual specificity no study examines this relationship among agricultural science teachers, who face unique practical/resource challenges; (2) Geographical urgency Gombe State's rural schools, central to Nigeria's agricultural development goals, remain unstudied despite declining teacher performance; and (3) Practical need identifying the most effective leadership style can directly inform training programs to retain teachers and improve agricultural education outcomes, aligning with national policy priorities.

A leader is someone who inspires and motivates others to achieve a common goal. They have a vision and the ability to guide their team towards realizing it. A leader is one who inspires and motivates others to achieve a common goal ensures their team has support and tools to achieve their goals via the possession of vision and the ability to guide the team to achieve such goals. Such a person or entity provides support resources and encouragement to facilitate the desired success (Perry, 2022). A leader has a shared vision aligned with core values and understands what it will take to reach their team goals. Leaders adopt various leadership strategies tailored to specific situations to enhance employee performance and achieve organizational objectives (Ribeiro, Yücel & Gomes, 2018) Teachers play a pivotal role in fulfilling their professional responsibilities and enhancing job performance serves as a crucial element for organizational growth (Anra & Yamin, 2017). Leaders, particularly those employing high levels of behavioral individualized influence, demonstrate trust and personal belief in their subordinates, characterized by exemplary morals, strong commitments, ethical values, and prioritization of subordinate welfare (Wen et al., 2019).

Agricultural science education designates the teaching, instruction, and training available to students, farmers, or individuals interested in the science, business, and technology of agriculture. It includes both theoretical and hands-on, real-world fieldwork-based training (Nkandu 2022). Agricultural education is part of the curriculum of primary and secondary schools as well as tertiary institutions such as colleges, universities, and vocational and technical schools. It is essential for fostering sustainable agricultural practices, improving food security, and promoting rural development. In many developing countries, agriculture is a cornerstone of the economy and its advancement is crucial for economic growth. This is equally true for Nigeria. Agricultural Science Education remains one area where the nation's focal glasses should be focused upon given the public policy thrusts of the present and current fourth republic toward agriculture. The pronouncements and policy inclinations of government in the area of agricultural production and development as well as the repositioning of the agricultural sector warrants greater enlightenment and awareness creation which the agricultural sector needs to galvanize and rejuvenate it. This can be aided via agricultural science education and thus the need for greater attention in this area particularly with regard to professionalism, quality of personnel and tutelage as well as the delivery of educational service in this area.

Agricultural Science education is a gateway to job creation and entrepreneurship development. The relevance and place of agriculture and societal advancement cannot possibly be overemphasized. Therefore, paying



attention to the job performance of agricultural science teachers is important, as it directly impacts the quality of education that students receive (Ekundayo & Kolawole, 2014) as well as the propagation of requisite interest in agriculture as a vocation. The performance of teachers holds significant importance in contributing to the development of disciplines in institutions of learning (Shah, 2017). In educational institutions, a primary focus of higher authorities is on the performance of academic staff to accomplish organizational objectives. Heads of institutions prioritize the adoption of supportive leadership practices, thereby fostering an effective working environment conducive to the enhancement of teachers' performance. Effective leadership entails concentrating on the social needs of employees to ensure success (Ali, Farid & Ibrarullah, 2016). Conversely, achieving desired outcomes necessitates the adoption of the most suitable leadership style. The performance of teachers is directly intertwined with the efficacy of the leadership style implemented within the organization.

Research has shown that transformational leadership contributes to higher levels of teacher motivation and job satisfaction by promoting professional development and a shared sense of purpose (Leithwood & Sun, 2018). Transactional leadership, with its clear structures and reward systems, helps maintain order and predictability in the school environment, which can also positively affect teacher performance (Kwan, 2020). These findings underscore the importance of understanding and implementing diverse leadership styles tailored to the unique needs of educational settings. Effective leadership not only enhances teacher satisfaction and performance but also contributes to the overall success and improvement of educational institutions (Bush & Glover, 2016).

Statement of the Problem

The performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary schools in Gombe State, Nigeria, is crucial for the development of students who are well-equipped with practical and theoretical knowledge in agriculture. Despite the recognition of agricultural education, many senior secondary schools in Gombe State continue to struggle with optimal teacher performance. This issue is particularly significant in rural areas where resources are scarce, and educational infrastructure is often lacking. School leadership is a critical factor influencing teacher effectiveness. While transformational and transactional leadership are known to impact teacher performance generally, their specific effects on agricultural science teachers in Gombe State remain unexplored. This gap is critical because these teachers face unique challenges, including the need for practical, hands-on pedagogy and integrating modern agricultural practices.

The prevalent laissez-faire leadership approach in many institutions, particularly public ones, exacerbates issues like inadequate curriculum monitoring and implementation, hindering comprehensive learning beyond cognitive skills. Consequently, there is an urgent need to investigate how these specific leadership styles influence the job performance of agricultural science teachers in Gombe State. Understanding this relationship is essential for developing targeted leadership strategies to enhance teacher effectiveness, improve agricultural education quality, and support professional growth in this vital field.

Purpose of the Study

The study seeks to;

1. Determine the influence of transformational leadership style on the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school.
2. Determine the influence of transactional leadership style on the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school.

Research Questions

This study is, as such, guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the influence of transformational leadership style on the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school?

2. What is the influence of transactional leadership style on the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses will be formulated and tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

Ho1: Transformational leadership style has no significant influence on the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school.

Ho 2: Transactional leadership style has no significant influence on the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school.

METHODOLOGY

A correlational survey design was employed for this study. Specifically, this design enables the collection of data at a single point in time, providing a snapshot of participants' responses to the survey questions (Creswell, 2014). The research was conducted in Gombe State, Nigeria. Gombe State is situated in the northeast zone of Nigeria and is comprised of eleven local governments. Gombe State is geographically partitioned into three distinct education zones, specifically referred to as Gombe South, Gombe Central, and Gombe North zones. The population of the study comprises all agricultural science teachers in public senior secondary schools that are offering Agricultural Science in Gombe State. The total population of the study is 477 (321 agricultural science teachers and 156 principals) from 156 public senior secondary schools that offer Agricultural Science in Gombe State. The sample of the study comprised 300 agricultural science teachers and principals. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire to be developed by the researcher titled: Influence of School Leadership Style on Job Performance of Agricultural Science Teachers in Senior Secondary Schools Questionnaire (ISLSJPASSQ). The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach's alpha of 0.7. The data gathered from the administration of the research instruments were analysed using descriptive statistical tools of Mean ($\bar{x}$) and standard deviation (σ). The arithmetic mean for the values was computed as $5+4+3+2+1=15/5=3$. Therefore, any item with a weighted mean of 3 was considered accepted, and any item with a weighted mean less than 3 was considered rejected as a decision rule. Simple linear regression was used with the aid of SPSS to test the null hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. The decision rule for testing the null hypothesis is to reject the null hypothesis if $P < 0.05$, and if $P > 0.05$, do not reject the null hypothesis.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1. What is the influence of transformational leadership style on the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school?

Table 1. Mean and Standard Deviation of responses on the influence of transformational leadership style on the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school

Item	Mean ₁	SD ₁	Mean ₂	SD ₂
	n=270		n=30	
The principal motivates teachers to achieve more than they thought possible.	3.52	1.40	3.11	1.52
The principal promotes creativity and innovation in teaching agricultural science.	3.31	.80	3.00	1.68
The principal regularly communicates a clear and inspiring vision for the school.	3.01	1.45	4.72	.66



The principal recognizes and rewards teachers for their efforts and achievements.	3.14	1.53	2.70	1.41
Teachers feel empowered by the principal to make instructional decisions.	4.03	1.03	4.65	.56
The principal fosters collaboration and teamwork among teachers.	4.38	1.00	3.93	1.11
The principal encourages professional development for teachers.	3.89	1.16	4.44	.86
Teachers are inspired by the principal's enthusiasm and commitment.	2.93	1.50	3.92	1.15
The principal sets high expectations for both teachers and students.	2.87	1.69	2.90	1.50
The principal provides constructive feedback that helps teachers improve their job performance.	4.65	.87	3.00	1.68
Grand Mean	3.57	1.24	3.63	1.21

The descriptive statistics in Table 1 show that 300 respondents responded to the 10 items on the instrument, indicating the influence of transformational leadership style and the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school. 3.57 mean score of 3.57 and 1.24 standard deviation for the transformational leadership style, and 3.64 mean score of 3.64 and 1.21 standard deviation of the job performance, indicated that the indicating influence of transformational leadership style on the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary schools is strong.

The result of the study revealed that transformational leadership style has a positive influence on the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary schools. The overall mean scores of 3.57 and 3.64 obtained from the two groups of respondents indicate that respondents generally agreed that principals' transformational leadership practices contribute to improved teachers' job performance. The relatively high mean scores suggest that transformational leadership behaviours are evident in the schools and are perceived as important factors in enhancing teachers' effectiveness. The finding further revealed that principals' ability to motivate teachers to achieve more than they initially thought possible contributes to teachers' job performance.

Research Question 2. What is the influence of responses on the transactional leadership style on the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school?

Table 2. Mean and Standard Deviation of responses on the influence of transactional leadership style on the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school

Item	Mean ₁	SD ₁	Mean ₂	SD ₂
n= 270		n=30		
The principal uses rewards and incentives to motivate teachers.	2.57	1.421	3.11	1.52
The principal addresses issues only when problems arise.	4.63	.52	3.00	1.68
The principal sets clear goals and expectations for teachers.	3.85	1.18	4.72	.66
Teachers receive performance-related rewards from the principal.	4.38	1.00	2.70	1.41
The principal emphasizes adherence to rules and regulations.	3.86	1.15	4.65	.56

The principal takes corrective action when teachers fail to meet expectations.	2.80	1.47	3.93	1.11
Teachers are regularly monitored to ensure they meet performance targets.	2.87	1.69	4.44	.86
The principal focuses on short-term tasks and objectives.	4.65	.87	3.92	1.15
Teachers feel motivated by the structured environment created by the principal.	2.57	1.42	2.90	1.50
The principal's leadership style is focused on maintaining order and discipline.	4.63	.52	3.00	1.68
Grand Mean	3.68	1.12	3.63	1.21

The descriptive statistics in Table 2 show that 300 respondents responded to the 10 items on the instrument indicating the influence of transactional leadership style and the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school. 3.68 mean average and 1.12 standard deviation for the transformational leadership style and 3.63 mean average and 1.21 standard deviation of the job performance indicated that the indicating influence of transactional leadership style on the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school is strong. The result further indicates that the principal's emphasis on maintaining order and discipline recorded a mean of 4.63 (SD = 0.52) among teachers, while the corresponding mean for principals was 3.00 (SD = 1.68). This suggests that teachers perceived the principal's emphasis on order and discipline more strongly than principals themselves reported. Similarly, the statement that the principal addresses issues only when problems arise recorded a mean of 4.63 among teachers but 3.00 among principals. This indicates the presence of passive management-by-exception behaviour, in which the principal intervenes mainly when problems occur. The finding that the principal sets clear goals and expectations for teachers also received a high mean of 3.85 (SD = 1.18) from teachers and 4.72 (SD = 0.66) from principals. This suggests that clear expectations and performance standards are important features of the leadership approach in the schools. Clear goals can help teachers understand what is expected of them and may contribute to better planning, classroom teaching, syllabus coverage, and accountability.

The following hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance in this study:

Ho1: Transformational leadership style has no significance influence on the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school.

Table 4.3 Regression of Transformational leadership style and job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	47.986	1	47.986	223.942	.000 ^b
	Residual	53.141	248	.214		
	Total	101.127	249			
a. Dependent Variable: TEACHERS' JOB PERFORMANCE						
b. Predictors: (Constant), What is the influence of transformational leadership style on the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school?						

Table 4.4 Model summary of Transformational leadership style and job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.689 ^a	.475	.472	.46290
a. Predictors: (Constant), What is the influence of transformational leadership style on the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school?				

Results of the analysis in Tables 4 and 5 show the regression used to test the influence of transformational leadership style on the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school. The result revealed that there is a significant influence of transformational leadership style on the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school, $F_{(1, 249)} = 223.94$, $p = 0.000$. Since the p-value (0.000) is less than the 0.05 alpha level, we can conclude that the null hypothesis should be rejected. This means there is a significant influence of transformational leadership style on the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school. Similarly, the model summary shows how the independent variable explains the variance in the dependent variable. The result shows that the transformational leadership style explained 47.5% of the variance in the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school based on this study.

Ho 2: Transactional leadership style has a significant influence on the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school.

Table 4.5 Regression of Transactional leadership style and job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	38.199	1	38.199	150.540	.000 ^b
	Residual	62.928	248	.254		
	Total	101.127	249			
a. Dependent Variable: TEACHERS JOB PERFORMANCE						
b. Predictors: (Constant), What is the influence of transactional leadership style on the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school?						

Table 4.6 Model summary of Transactional leadership style and job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.615 ^a	.378	.375	.50373
a. Predictors: (Constant), What is the influence of transactional leadership style on the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school?				

Results of the analysis in Tables 7 and 8 show the regression used to test the influence of transactional leadership style on the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school. The result revealed that there is a significant influence of transactional leadership style on the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school, $F_{(1, 249)} = 150.54$, $p = 0.000$. Since the p-value (0.000)

is less than the 0.05 alpha level, we can conclude that the null hypothesis should be rejected. This means there is a significant influence of transactional leadership style on the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school. Similarly, the model summary shows how the independent variable explains the variance in the dependent variable. The result shows that the transactional leadership style explained 37.8% of the variance in job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school based on this study.

Findings of the Study

The study generated the following findings:

1. Transformational leadership style has significance influence on the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary school, $F_{(1, 249)} = 223.94$, $p = 0.000$.
2. Transactional leadership style have significant influence on the job performance of agricultural science teachers in senior secondary schools, $F_{(1, 249)} = 150.54$, $p = 0.000$.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study's findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. Strengthen Transformational Leadership Practices: Educational authorities should organize targeted leadership development programs that equip principals with skills in vision-building, inspirational communication, individualized support, and staff motivation.
2. Minimize Reliance on Transactional Leadership: Principals should reduce excessive use of command-and-control leadership approaches and instead adopt more supportive and empowering methods that align with modern educational demands.

Suggestions for Further Studies

1. Examine Moderating or Mediating Variables: Future research may explore whether factors such as teacher motivation, self-efficacy, school climate, or organizational commitment mediate or moderate the relationship between leadership styles and teacher job performance.
2. Apply Mixed-Methods Research Designs: Since this study used a quantitative approach, future studies could adopt qualitative or mixed-methods designs to gain deeper insights into how teachers perceive and experience different leadership styles.

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