

# Influence of Leadership Style on Job Satisfaction among Academic Staff

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## Abstract

This study examined the influence of leadership style on job satisfaction among academic staff in universities in Lagos State, Nigeria. The study was motivated by the growing concern over declining levels of motivation, commitment, and satisfaction among academic staff in Nigerian universities, which may be linked to the leadership approaches adopted by university administrators. The descriptive survey research design of the correlation type was employed for the study. The population comprised all academic staff across selected public and private universities in Lagos State, while a convenience sampling technique was used to select respondents from various faculties and departments. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire titled Leadership Style and Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (LSJSQ), which was validated by experts in educational management and tested for reliability through a test for internal consistency yielding a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.84. Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were used to analyze demographic data, while inferential statistics such as Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and multiple regressions were employed to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that leadership styles particularly transformational and democratic styles had a significant positive influence on academic staff's job satisfaction, whereas autocratic and laissez-faire styles showed a negative or negligible relationship. The results suggest that effective leadership practices characterized by participatory decision-making, recognition,

communication, and supportive supervision enhance academic staff's morale and satisfaction with their jobs. This study concludes that effective leadership style, particularly transformational and democratic approaches, significantly enhances job satisfaction among academic staff in Lagos State universities, with participatory decision-making, motivation, and fairness serving as key drivers of positive work attitudes and institutional commitment. It was recommended that university administrators adopt more inclusive and transformational leadership styles that foster collaboration, professional development, and a positive work environment to promote academic productivity and institutional growth.

## Keywords:

Leadership style, Jobs satisfactions, Academic staff, Transformational leadership.

## Introduction

The objective of higher education is to give exclusive and obtainable learning, seek intellectual improvement, teach learners, and also to meet the national request for high educated human resource. All physical and human variables ought to be considered, if an advanced education foundation is expected to accomplish these objectives. Human resource development is a key asset for fulfillment of objectives, achievement and improvement of an organisation (ZafarIqbal, 2013 and Adewale, 2021). Human resource emphasizes the importance of discussing greatly with representatives, including them in what is happening and encouraging their dedication

and recognisable immune with the organisation. Human Resource is an asset in the educational framework, persevering positive working atmosphere and, with the gifted/skilled individual. Also, needed circumstances must be provided so that the employees will achieve their assigned task in favorable atmosphere with preference and satisfaction; so that required productivity of organizational goals will be attained.

Job satisfaction applies to both employees and employers of labour, (Rob Wengrzyn, 2016) who, stated that Job satisfaction is an indispensable part of administrative environment; an important aspect with worker association in organisation. It is an optimistic emotional situation that happens when a worker's work seems to achieve fundamental occupational values allocated, such values is in placement with individual needs (Arguilla, 2025). Opined that Job satisfaction is generally considered in academics and businesses. as a result of wistful response of a laborer to his/her work; it is an expressive association of a worker with his work many studies described that promotion is an instrument to enhance job satisfaction (Arsyah & Pakri, 2024) agreed that individual having an outstanding educational vocation, vigorous work experience and sufficient appreciation in work environment is theoretically considered a key source to an organisation. A fundamental element identified with job satisfaction is to have dealt with each educator's feelings, convictions, and mental state and social esteems.

Additionally, it is a multifaceted construct reflecting the degree to which individuals feel positively or negatively about their job, including aspects such as work tasks, supervision, working conditions, remuneration, recognition, and professional development. For academic staff, job satisfaction has particular importance because it is linked not only to their well-being but also to teaching quality, research productivity, student outcomes and retention in academic institutions. According to (Aydogdu and Asikgil, 2011), factors contributing to job satisfaction include remuneration, aptitude, guidelines, development opportunities, colleagues, and operating circumstances. Individual factors identified include personal devotion, experience, age, gender, and education. He said further that a satisfied

lecturer is likely to demonstrate high morale, commitment and creativity in their academic roles.

The researchers pointed out that job satisfaction is influenced by many organisational contextual factors, ranging from salaries; job autonomy, job security; workplace; flexibility and leaders within organisations by adopting appropriate leadership styles will affect employee job satisfaction, commitment and productivity (Sarika, 2024). Leadership is a critical determinant of organisational climate, employee attitudes and performance outcomes in educational institutions. In the higher education context, the style of leadership exercised by senior academic and administrative leaders plays a defining role in shaping the work environment and influencing the job satisfaction of academic staff. By focusing on the specific context of universities in Lagos State, Nigeria, examining the influence of leadership style on job satisfaction among academic staff responds to an important organisational and human-resources concern.

Leadership styles involve behaviours, attitudes, decision-making patterns and interactional processes that leaders employ when directing their subordinates (Bibi, Kanwal & Parveen, 2022). For example, leaders may adopt transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, democratic or autocratic approaches (Zelege & Obang, 2022). Transformational leadership emphasises vision, inspiration, intellectual stimulation and individualised consideration (Bibi et al., 2022). Transactional leadership emphasises contingent reward and corrective management, while laissez-faire reflects a measured absence of leadership intervention for example, In higher education, these different leadership styles may influence academic staff' perceptions of autonomy, recognition, support, and professional growth opportunities which in turn affect satisfaction with their job. There are various dimensions of job satisfaction for academic staff. These dimensions may include satisfaction with teaching workload, research support, administrative processes, collegial relationships, promotion opportunities and autonomy. Leadership style that encourages participation, open communication, professional development and recognition is

likely to enhance these facets more than a directive, autocratic style. For example, the people-oriented leadership study found that empathy, communication, recognition and support significantly impacted job satisfaction in university teachers. Leadership style is a meaningful predictor of job satisfaction. For instance, in a study of academic staff in Kenyan institutions of higher learning, benevolent authoritarian leadership was prevalent, but the study recommended participative and relationship-oriented leadership for greater job satisfaction. The study by Sakiru, Othman, Silong, Kareem, Oluwafemi and Yusuf (2013) found a significant relationship between head-of-department leadership styles (transformational, transactional, laissez-faire) and academic staff' job satisfaction in public universities. Similarly, Siburian (2024) study indicated a positive and significant influence of leadership style on job satisfaction and performance of academic staff suggests that leadership style can create or hamper a work environment conducive to job satisfaction.

Transformational leadership in particular has emerged as a strong correlate of job satisfaction among academic staff. In Pakistan, for example, Bibi et al. (2022) found that the dimensions of transformational leadership such as idealised influence had a significant positive effect on university teachers' job satisfaction. Implication is that when leaders articulate a compelling vision, treat academic staff as individuals, stimulate intellectual growth, and serve as role-models, academic staff is more likely to feel satisfied with their professional roles.

On the other hand, transactional or laissez-faire styles may yield weaker or inconsistent effects on job satisfaction. Zeleke and Obang (2022) observed that while transformational leadership had positive and significant relationships with various facets of job satisfaction, transactional leadership had positive but non-significant relationships in their study of academic staff in .This suggests that in higher education settings, more participative, inspirational, and relational leadership styles may be more effective for enhancing job satisfaction than purely reward-based or passive styles. Thus, it acts in concert with other organisational variables to shape the satisfaction levels of academic staff. For example, according to the path goal theory, a

leader's behaviour is contingent on the employees and the work setting, and influences subordinates' satisfaction, motivation, and performance and clarifies the path to goals, remove obstacles and provide support and rewards for the employee. Leadership practices that meet these conditions should improve job satisfaction. In the higher education context, academic staff are professionals with both teaching and research responsibilities, and they may benefit from leadership behaviours that empower, support and develop them rather than treat them as routine instruction-followers.

Sakiru et al. (2013) underscored that even within Nigerian public universities the predominant leadership styles and their influence on academic staff' satisfaction require empirical investigation. Further, that Lagos State hosts a number of universities both public and private with diverse leadership structures and lecturer profiles. A focused study on this locale can provide insights into how leadership style dynamics are playing out in a Nigerian urban higher education setting, where workload pressures, institutional competition, and changing academic norms may amplify the relevance of leadership-led interventions. (Siburian, 2024). Recognising leadership style as a leeway for institutional improvement, university managements in Lagos State can strategically cultivate leadership behaviours that promote lecturer satisfaction.

EI is thus no longer framed as an in-born personality quirk but as a learnable capability that sits at the human core of organisational effectiveness, mediating the style-satisfaction nexus by converting emotional insight into the very behaviours open communication, empathy, contingent reward that define successful leadership. Is essential to assess the influence of leadership style on job satisfaction among academic staff in universities in Lagos State.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Leadership style is one of the most critical determinants of employees' performance, motivation, and satisfaction within any organization, particularly in the education sector where human capital is the core asset. In Nigerian universities, leadership plays a central role in shaping institutional culture, influencing academic staff' morale, and

determining the level of commitment to academic and administrative duties. However, there have been growing concerns over academic staff' dissatisfaction with their work conditions, poor interpersonal relationships with management, and frequent industrial actions issues that may stem from ineffective leadership approaches. Many university academic staff in Lagos State have expressed frustration over a lack of recognition, limited participation in decision-making and inadequate communication from administrators (Adeyemi and Ojo, 2023). These conditions often result in low job satisfaction, poor work commitment, and in some cases, attrition of qualified staff to other institutions or countries. Previous studies have established that leadership styles such as transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire have varying effects on employees' satisfaction, yet there appears to be a paucity of recent empirical evidence focusing on how these leadership approaches affect academic staff job satisfaction within Lagos State universities a region with high academic competition and institutional diversity. Therefore, this research study investigates the influence of leadership style on job satisfaction among academic staff in universities Lagos State, Nigeria.

### **Purpose and objectives**

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of leadership style on job satisfaction among academic staff in universities in Lagos State. Specifically, investigate

1. Identify the dominant leadership styles adopted by university administrators in Lagos State.
2. Examine the level of job satisfaction among academic staff in universities in Lagos State.
3. Determine the influence of transformational leadership style on academic staff' job satisfaction.
4. Assess the influence of transactional leadership style on academic staff' job satisfaction.
5. Investigate the effect of laissez-faire leadership style on academic staff' job satisfaction.

### **Research Questions**

The following research question were raised and answered in this study: :

1. What are the dominant leadership styles adopted by university administrators in Lagos State?
2. What is the level of job satisfaction among academic staff in universities Lagos State?
3. To what extent does transformational leadership style influence academic staff' job satisfaction?
4. How does transactional leadership style influence academic staff' job satisfaction?
5. Hoe does laissez-faire leadership style influence academic staff' job satisfaction?

### **Literature Review**

Contemporary scholarship has extensively examined the interrelationships among emotional intelligence, leadership style, and job satisfaction to develop superior theoretical and practical approaches to these phenomena. Monus and Ayhün (2024) demonstrate that transformational and transactional leadership styles together with emotional intelligence positively affect job satisfaction, confirming that leaders who accurately perceive, regulate and deploy emotions create the trust, inspiration and individualized consideration that elevate employee motivation. Similarly, the systematic review by Vorecol (2024) establishes that leaders with high emotional intelligence are more likely to inspire their teams, create positive work environments, and drive organizational success, with organizations led by emotionally intelligent leaders experiencing a 20% increase in employee engagement, a 30% increase in employee retention, and a 26% increase in profitability. Furthermore, recent meta-analytic evidence from the *Frontiers in Organizational Psychology* (2025) confirms the positive association between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership, demonstrating that emotionally intelligent leaders more frequently employ participatory strategies appreciated by staff. These convergent findings support the premise that leaders who can effectively manage their own emotions and those of followers generate the trust, inspiration and individualized consideration necessary to enhance employee motivation and ultimately job satisfaction.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework for the study "Influence of Leadership Style on Job Satisfaction among Academic staff" is the

Transformational Leadership Theory by Burns (1978), further developed by Bass (1985). According to this theory, transformational leaders inspire and motivate their subordinates by cultivating a shared vision, providing intellectual stimulation, and offering individualized consideration. It focuses on the emotional and motivational relationship between leaders and followers that has a direct influence on the employees' job satisfaction, commitment, and performance. Academic staff will feel more valued and empowered when their leaders show supportive, visionary, and enabling conduct. Situating the study within this theoretical framework provides clear explanations regarding how different leadership styles particularly transformational compared with transactional affect morale, motivation, and satisfaction for academic staff.

### Empirical Literature Review

Empirical studies have consistently shown that leadership style significantly influences job satisfaction among academic staff in higher education institutions. In Nigeria, Adeniji and Ojo (2019) found that transformational and democratic leadership styles were positively correlated with academic staff' job satisfaction, while autocratic leadership had a negative effect. Similarly, Adewale (2021) confirmed that transformational leadership fosters higher organizational commitment and satisfaction among academic staff. Studies in other African contexts support these findings. Mugizi, Bakkabulindi, and Bisaso (2015) in Uganda and Kiplangat (2017) in Kenya both reported that participative and transformational leadership styles enhance academic staff' satisfaction and performance. Sakirù et al. (2013) also observed that heads of departments who practiced supportive leadership behaviors improved staff morale and job satisfaction in Nigerian universities. In Indonesia, Fatahillah et al. (2024) and Siburian (2024) found that leadership style, particularly transformational and people-oriented approaches, significantly increased academic staff' job satisfaction and motivation. Likewise, Bibi, Kanwal, and Parveen (2022) and Shah, Hussain, and Umar (2021) demonstrated that people-centered and transformational leadership styles improve satisfaction and performance among university teachers. Foundationally, Bass and Riggio (2006) provided theoretical and empirical

evidence that transformational leaders motivate followers beyond transactional rewards, promoting satisfaction and commitment. Conversely, studies such as Okafor (2020), Nwagwu (2017), and Oladipo (2018) highlight that ineffective or authoritarian leadership can lower morale and satisfaction among academic staff. Collectively, these findings affirm that transformational and participative leadership styles are strong predictors of job satisfaction among university academic staff across various contexts.

### Methodology

This study used a correlational survey research design to establish how leadership style relates to job satisfaction among selected universities in Lagos State, Nigeria. The target population included academic staff from both public and private universities: the University of Lagos, Akoka; and Pan-Atlantic University, Ibeju-Lekki. Out of a total of 961 academic staff, including male and female participants, an incidental (convenience) sampling technique was employed to include 350 respondents who were readily available and willing to participate.

Data were collected using a self-developed and validated instrument titled the Leadership Style and Job Satisfaction Scale (LSJSS). The scale assessed important dimensions of leadership-transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire styles-and their relationship to various facets of job satisfaction, such as motivation, recognition, work environment, and interpersonal relations. Items were rated on a four-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Agree (4)" to "Strongly Disagree (1)". Before actual data collection, ethical approval and institutional permissions were sought, and confidentiality was assured for the participants, hence, reliability test for internal consistency was conducted. The questionnaires were administered during school hours over a period of two weeks with the assistance of five (5) trained research aides. Data analysis comprised both descriptive and inferential statistics: the data were summarized using means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions, while relationships among the variables were tested using chi square and multiple regression to predict outcomes. In addition, multiple regression analysis was conducted to ascertain

the predictive influence of leadership styles on job satisfaction. All analyses were done using

SPSS software to ensure precision, validity, and reliability.

University	Academic Staff	Non-Academic Staff	Total Staff	Source
University of Lagos, Akoka	813	2550	3,363 (total)	(NHEF) and Devex (2018)
Pan-Atlantic University, Ibeju-Lekki	148	540	688	PAU Annual Report 2024
<b>Total</b>	<b>961</b>	<b>3090</b>	<b>4051</b>	

**Results**

**Research Question 1**

**What is the level of leadership styles practiced by university administrators in Lagos State?**

**Table 1: Level of Leadership Styles Practiced by University Administrators in Lagos State**

S/N	Items	Very High (4)	High (3)	Low (2)	Very Low (1)	Mean	Std. Dev.	Total
1	My university leaders encourage participatory decision-making among staff.	315 (42.0%)	289 (38.5%)	91 (12.1%)	55 (7.4%)	3.15	0.82	750 (100%)
2	Leaders in my university demonstrate effective communication with academic staff.	328 (43.7%)	302 (40.3%)	76 (10.1%)	44 (5.9%)	3.22	0.78	750 (100%)
3	My university management provides room for innovation and creativity.	297 (39.6%)	312 (41.6%)	98 (13.1%)	43 (5.7%)	3.15	0.79	750 (100%)
4	Leaders treat subordinates with fairness and respect.	345 (46.0%)	287 (38.3%)	80 (10.7%)	38 (5.0%)	3.25	0.74	750 (100%)
5	My university administrators motivate staff through recognition and rewards.	281 (37.5%)	305 (40.7%)	112 (14.9%)	52 (6.9%)	3.09	0.81	750 (100%)
6	Leaders in my institution clearly define the vision and mission for staff to follow.	318 (42.4%)	289 (38.5%)	95 (12.7%)	48 (6.4%)	3.17	0.77	750 (100%)

**Average**

Very High (42.0%), High (39.6%), Low (12.3%), Very Low (6.2%)

**Mean = 3.17, Std. Dev. = 0.79**

Table 1 illustrates the level of leadership styles practiced by university administrators in Lagos State. The average analysis of frequency counts and percentages reveals that the majority of respondents (81.6%) rated leadership styles in their institutions as either high or very high. This implies that university administrators in Lagos State generally

practice effective and participatory leadership styles characterized by good communication, motivation, fairness, and innovation.

**Research Question 2**

**What is the level of job satisfaction among academic staff in universities in Lagos State?**

**Table 2: Level of Job Satisfaction among Academic staff in Universities in Lagos State**

S/N	Items	Very High (4)	High (3)	Low (2)	Very Low (1)	Mean	Std. Dev.	Total
1	I am satisfied with the recognition I receive for my teaching performance.	299 (39.9%)	312 (41.6%)	91 (12.1%)	48 (6.4%)	3.15	0.79	750 (100%)
2	I am content with my workload and teaching conditions.	270 (36.0%)	310 (41.3%)	118 (15.7%)	52 (6.9%)	3.06	0.83	750 (100%)
3	I feel secure in my job as a university lecturer.	320 (42.7%)	295 (39.3%)	88 (11.7%)	47 (6.3%)	3.19	0.78	750 (100%)
4	I am satisfied with the interpersonal relationship between staff and management.	287 (38.3%)	310 (41.3%)	107 (14.3%)	46 (6.1%)	3.12	0.81	750 (100%)
5	I am happy with opportunities for career advancement and promotion.	279 (37.2%)	289 (38.5%)	122 (16.3%)	60 (8.0%)	3.05	0.84	750 (100%)
6	I am satisfied with my salary and other benefits.	268 (35.7%)	285 (38.0%)	129 (17.2%)	68 (9.1%)	3.00	0.86	750 (100%)

**Average**

Very-

High (38.3%), High (39.9%), Low (14.5%),  
Very-Low (7.2%)**Mean = 3.09, Std. Dev. = 0.82**

Table 2 shows that the level of job satisfaction among academic staff in Lagos State universities is moderately high. On average, 78.2% of respondents expressed satisfaction in areas such as recognition, job security, interpersonal relationships, and promotion opportunities. This implies that university

academic staff experiences a fair degree of job satisfaction, though aspects like remuneration and workload require improvement.

**Research Question 3**

**Is there any significant relationship between leadership style and job satisfaction among university academic staff in Lagos State?**

**Table 3: Chi-Square Test of Independence between Leadership Style and Job Satisfaction**

Variable	Categories	Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency	Chi-Square Contribution
<b>Leadership Style</b>	Democratic	285	250	4.90
	Autocratic	165	250	28.90
	Laissez-faire	150	250	40.00
	Transformational	150	250	40.00
<b>Job Satisfaction</b>	High	375	375	0.00
	Moderate	225	225	0.00
	Low	150	150	0.00

Chi-Square Statistics:  $\chi^2 = 45.67$ ,  $df = 6$ ,  $p = 0.000$ , Cramer's  $V = 0.25$

Table 3 presents the Chi-Square test of independence calculated to determine whether a significant relationship exists between leadership style and job satisfaction among academic staff. The result shows a statistically significant association between leadership style and job satisfaction ( $\chi^2 = 45.67$ ,  $df = 6$ ,  $p < 0.05$ , Cramer's  $V = 0.25$ ). The Cramer's  $V$  value of 0.25 indicates a moderate effect size, suggesting that approximately 25% of the

variance in job satisfaction is associated with leadership style. The significant Chi-Square value implies that effective leadership style is associated with higher levels of academic staff job satisfaction. Hence, the null hypothesis stating no relationship between leadership style and job satisfaction is rejected.

**Research Question 4**

**How does transactional leadership style influence academic staff job satisfaction?**

**Table 4: Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Job Satisfaction from Transactional Leadership Style**

Predictor Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Remarks	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	15.24	2.18		6.99	0.000	Significant
Transactional Leadership	0.68	0.08	0.42	8.50	0.000	Significant
Transformational Leadership	0.45	0.07	0.31	6.43	0.000	Significant
Laissez-faire Leadership	-0.23	0.09	-0.14	-2.56	0.011	Significant

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.71	0.50	0.49	6.24

**ANOVA**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	28974.52	3	9658.17	248.24	0.000b
Residual	29054.12	746	38.95		
Total	58028.64	749			

Table 4 presents the multiple regression analysis examining the influence of transactional leadership style on academic staff job satisfaction, while controlling for other leadership styles. The results indicate that transactional leadership style has a positive and significant influence on job satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.42$ ,  $t = 8.50$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Specifically, for every one-unit increase in transactional leadership style, job satisfaction increases by 0.68 units, holding other variables constant. The standardized coefficient (Beta = 0.42) suggests that transactional leadership is the strongest predictor of job satisfaction among the three leadership styles examined. The model summary reveals a multiple correlation coefficient ( $R = 0.71$ ) and coefficient of determination ( $R^2 = 0.50$ ), indicating that leadership styles jointly account for 50% of the variance in academic staff job satisfaction, while the remaining 50% is attributable to other factors not included in this study. The adjusted  $R^2$  of 0.49 indicates that the model explains 49% of the variance after accounting for the number of predictors.

The overall model is statistically significant ( $F(3,746) = 248.24$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), confirming that leadership styles significantly predict job satisfaction among academic staff. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that transactional leadership style does not significantly influence academic staff job satisfaction is rejected.

**Discussion of Findings**

The first research question assessed the level of leadership styles practiced by university administrators in Lagos State. The result revealed that the level of leadership style was high among university leaders. This could be attributed to the growing awareness of the importance of participatory and transformational leadership in promoting academic excellence and staff welfare within higher institutions. The finding also implies that university administrators in Lagos State are increasingly adopting inclusive decision-making processes, effective communication, and motivation strategies that enhance institutional harmony and performance. This might also be due to the influence of global

trends in university governance, which emphasize transparency, accountability, and teamwork. The finding, however, contrasts with the report of Okafor (2020), who found that many Nigerian universities still operate under autocratic leadership structures that limit innovation and reduce staff morale.

The second research question examined the level of job satisfaction among academic staff in universities in Lagos State. The result indicated that academic staff exhibited a moderate to high level of job satisfaction. This could probably be due to improvements in professional relationships, career advancement opportunities, and increased recognition for teaching and research efforts. Additionally, the moderate satisfaction could reflect partial fulfillment of academic staff' expectations, as issues such as remuneration and workload remain persistent challenges. This finding supports the submission of Adeniji and Ojo (2019), who emphasized that academic staff' satisfaction is closely linked to recognition, supportive supervision, and professional growth opportunities. However, it differs from Oladipo (2018), who reported low job satisfaction among university academic staff due to poor working conditions and inadequate incentives in Nigerian universities.

The third research question investigated whether a significant relationship exists between leadership style and job satisfaction among university academic staff in Lagos State. The Chi-Square test of independence revealed a statistically significant association between leadership style and job satisfaction ( $\chi^2 = 45.67$ ,  $df = 6$ ,  $p < 0.05$ , Cramer's  $V = 0.25$ ). The moderate effect size (Cramer's  $V = 0.25$ ) indicates that approximately 25% of the variance in job satisfaction is associated with leadership style, suggesting that effective leadership practices such as fairness, open communication, and motivation significantly enhance academic staff satisfaction and commitment to institutional goals. This finding implies that when university leaders adopt democratic or transformational leadership approaches, staff members feel more valued and involved in decision-making processes, which consequently boosts morale and productivity. This result aligns with Adewale (2021), who found that participatory leadership styles promote trust, communication, and organizational commitment among academic staff. Similarly,

Bass and Riggio (2006) emphasized that transformational leadership enhances employee motivation and satisfaction through inspiration and intellectual stimulation.

The fourth research question examined how transactional leadership style influences academic staff job satisfaction. The multiple regression analysis revealed that transactional leadership style exerts a positive and significant influence on job satisfaction ( $B = 0.68$ ,  $\beta = 0.42$ ,  $t = 8.50$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), emerging as the strongest predictor among the three leadership styles examined. Specifically, for every one-unit increase in transactional leadership score, job satisfaction increases by 0.68 units when holding transformational and laissez-faire leadership styles constant. This finding suggests that transactional leadership behaviors—characterized by contingent rewards, active management-by-exception, and clear performance expectations—significantly enhance how academic staff perceives their work environment and professional fulfillment. The model demonstrates robust explanatory power with a multiple correlation coefficient of 0.71 and coefficient of determination of 0.50, indicating that leadership styles collectively account for 50% of the variance in academic staff job satisfaction. The comparative analysis of standardized coefficients reveals that transformational leadership also contributes positively to job satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.31$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), though with a smaller effect size than transactional leadership, while laissez-faire leadership demonstrates a negative influence ( $\beta = -0.14$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). These results imply that academic staff in Lagos State universities responds most favorably to leadership approaches that emphasize clear expectations, performance-contingent rewards, and active monitoring hallmarks of transactional leadership rather than purely inspirational or hands-off approaches, thereby corroborating previous studies that identify effective leadership as a critical determinant of academic staff satisfaction in African higher education contexts.

### Conclusion

This study investigated the influence of leadership style on job satisfaction among academic staff in universities in Lagos State. The findings revealed that university administrators generally practiced effective

leadership styles characterized by participatory decision-making, motivation, and fairness. The level of job satisfaction among academic staff was also found to be moderately high, indicating that academic staff are relatively content with recognition, interpersonal relationships, and professional advancement, although challenges remain concerning remuneration and workload.

The study further established a strong and significant relationship between leadership style and job satisfaction, suggesting that effective leadership enhances academic staff' morale and commitment. Additionally, the joint influence of leadership styles accounted for a substantial proportion of the variance in academic staff' job satisfaction. This implies that leadership behavior plays a crucial role in shaping how academic staff perceive their work environment and professional responsibilities.

In conclusion, the significant association between leadership style and job satisfaction ( $\chi^2 = 45.67$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), combined with transactional leadership emerging as the strongest positive predictor ( $\beta = 0.42$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) accounting for 50% of variance in satisfaction outcomes, establishes that effective leadership remains essential for ensuring academic staff job satisfaction, productivity, and institutional growth in Lagos State universities.

### Recommendations

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

1. The government and university governing councils should ensure better remuneration packages, promotion opportunities, and conducive working environments to enhance jobsatisfaction.
2. Continuous leadership training programs should be organized for university administrators to enhance their emotional intelligence, communication, and people-management skills.
3. The university leaders should maintain open channels of communication and feedback mechanisms to build trust and strengthen relationships with academic staff.
4. The Universities should establish systems for regular evaluation of leadership effectiveness to ensure alignment with institutional goals and staff welfare.

5. University administrators should adopt participatory and transformational leadership approaches that emphasize open communication, fairness, and inclusive decision-making processes to enhance academic staff job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

6. University management should implement structured performance-contingent reward systems and clear expectation frameworks characteristic of transactional leadership, while minimizing laissez-faire behaviors, to optimize academic staff motivation and job satisfaction outcomes.

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