



Principals' intellectual stimulation and teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between principals' intellectual stimulation and teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Oyo State, Nigeria. This study identified specific intellectual stimulation strategies employed by principals to assess the level of job satisfaction among teachers and evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies. A descriptive research design was used for the study. A random sampling technique was used to select 352 teachers from 30 public secondary schools in nine local government areas in Oyo State, Nigeria. The findings indicate that teachers who perceived their principals as intellectually stimulating reported higher job satisfaction. The findings revealed that certain intellectual stimulation strategies positively impact teachers' job satisfaction, highlighting the importance of leadership practices in educational settings. It suggests that teachers who perceive their principals as intellectually stimulating are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs, motivated to perform at their best, and more committed to their professional roles. The study concludes that principals must embrace their role as intellectual stimulators and champions of continuous learning to cultivate a positive work environment.

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui hubungan antara stimulasi intelektual kepala sekolah dan kepuasan kerja guru di Sekolah Menengah Negeri di Negara Bagian Oyo, Nigeria. Studi ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi dan mengevaluasi efektivitas strategi stimulasi intelektual yang digunakan oleh kepala sekolah untuk menilai tingkat kepuasan kinerja guru. Desain penelitian yang digunakan pada studi ini adalah penelitian deskriptif. Teknik pengambilan data yang digunakan adalah teknik random sampling untuk memilih 352 guru dari 30 Sekolah Menengah Negeri di sembilan wilayah pemerintah daerah di Negara Bagian Oyo, Nigeria. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa kepala sekolah yang menerapkan strategi secara intelektual melaporkan kepuasan kerja yang lebih tinggi. Temuan mengungkapkan bahwa kepala sekolah yang melakukan stimulasi intelektual berdampak positif pada kepuasan kerja guru dan memperlihatkan pentingnya praktik kepemimpinan dalam lingkungan pendidikan. Hal ini memperlihatkan kepala sekolah yang dapat menstimulasi secara intelektual cenderung membuat guru lebih puas dengan pekerjaan mereka, termotivasi untuk bekerja sebaik mungkin, dan dapat lebih berkomitmen secara profesional. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa kepala sekolah harus menjalankan peran mereka sebagai stimulator intelektual dan pendukung pembelajaran berkelanjutan untuk menumbuhkan lingkungan kerja yang positif.

Kata Kunci: kepala sekolah; kepemimpinan; kepuasan kerja guru; stimulasi intelektual

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INTRODUCTION

In educational administration, the role of the principal is essential in shaping a school's academic and professional environment. Intellectual stimulation, a component of transformational leadership, involves behaviors that encourage innovation and critical thinking among staff (Magasi, 2021). The principal's leadership style can significantly influence the performance and satisfaction of the teaching staff (Elmazi, 2018; Sahara & Suriansyah, 2020). Among various leadership styles, transformational leadership, characterized by the ability to inspire and intellectually stimulate staff, stands out as particularly impactful. Principals who actively engage in intellectual stimulation are instrumental in shaping the academic environment and contributing to the overall job satisfaction of the teaching staff (Ibrahim et al., 2014; Leithwood & Sun, 2012). Understanding teachers' perceptions can provide educational policymakers, school administrators, and principals valuable insights.

Job satisfaction among teachers is a critical factor in the effectiveness and success of any educational institution. Research has shown that job satisfaction among teachers is linked to various aspects of their work environment, including the leadership provided by school principals (Aldridge & Fraser, 2016; Rachmawati & Suyatno, 2021; Toropova et al., 2021). Principals who exhibit intellectual stimulation in their leadership approach are more likely to inspire and motivate their teaching staff, positively impacting job satisfaction. Therefore, exploring how teachers perceive the intellectual stimulation their principals provide and its correlation with their job satisfaction is a significant area of study that warrants attention.

Consequently, teacher's job satisfaction is essential to ensure their commitment to the school's productivity. It creates valuable and positive change with the end goal of developing followers into leaders. Leaders who intellectually stimulate their followers to challenge assumptions, take risks, and solicit followers' ideas. They do not publicly criticize mistakes but instead seek to learn from them, fostering an environment where creativity and problem-solving are highly valued. In educational administration, principals who engage in intellectually stimulating behaviors can profoundly impact their school's culture. They encourage teachers to explore new teaching methods, integrate technology into the classroom, and engage in continuous professional development. By promoting an environment that values intellectual growth and innovation, principals can help teachers feel more competent and motivated, leading to higher job satisfaction. Job satisfaction among teachers is influenced by various factors, including work conditions, professional development opportunities, and administrative support (Kilag et al., 2020; Sahito & Vaisanen, 2020). Several positive outcomes can occur when principals engage in behaviors that intellectually stimulate their teachers.

First, enhanced professional growth is a significant benefit. Teachers are more likely to pursue advanced training and professional development opportunities when their principals intellectually stimulate them. This increases competence and career satisfaction as teachers feel more equipped and confident in their professional abilities. Second, exposure to innovative teaching methods and the encouragement to implement new strategies can improve teaching practices (Iksan et al., 2014). When principals promote intellectual stimulation, they foster an environment where teachers feel encouraged to experiment with

new techniques and integrate novel approaches in the classroom. This not only enhances classroom effectiveness but also improves student outcomes, which in turn increases teacher satisfaction.

Third, a principal who fosters a culture of intellectual stimulation creates a supportive and collaborative work environment (Leithwood et al., 2021). Such an environment reduces feelings of isolation and stress among teachers, contributing significantly to overall job satisfaction. Teachers feel more connected to their colleagues and supported by their administration, leading to a more positive and productive work atmosphere. According to Jackson in a book titled "*The Pedagogy of Confidence: Inspiring High Intellectual Performance in Urban Schools*" intellectually stimulating teachers often feel more empowered to make decisions regarding their teaching practices. This increased autonomy leads to greater ownership and control over their work, enhancing job satisfaction. When teachers are trusted to innovate and make instructional decisions, they are more likely to feel valued and respected. This study focused on understanding how these behaviors influence teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Oyo State.

Statement of the Problem

The essential role of principals in shaping the academic and professional environment of public secondary schools is well-documented. Specifically, intellectual stimulation, a critical component of transformational leadership, is recognized for encouraging innovation and critical thinking among teachers. While the benefits of intellectual stimulation are clear, principals may face challenges in implementing this leadership approach effectively. These challenges include resistance to change, limited resources for professional development, and varying levels of teacher readiness and motivation.

The management style used by the head of the school will directly or indirectly influence the level of teachers' job satisfaction (Yan-Li & Hassan, 2018). Despite its acknowledged importance, there is limited empirical research on how principals' intellectual stimulation strategies influence teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Oyo State. This study identifies the specific strategies principals employ to foster an intellectually stimulating environment, assess the current levels of job satisfaction among teachers, and evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies.

The perception of principals' intellectual stimulation and its impact on job satisfaction among teachers in public secondary schools in Oyo State is a significant concern. This study addresses the issue of teacher job satisfaction, which directly affects the quality of education and the learning environment for students. The perception of principals' intellectual stimulation can shape teachers' working conditions and overall satisfaction levels. Suppose principals are not effectively stimulating their teaching staff's intellectual curiosity and professional growth. In that case, it can lead to demotivation, disengagement, and decreased job satisfaction, negatively affecting the quality of instruction, student engagement, and overall academic performance. Understanding the relationship between principals' intellectual stimulation and teachers' job satisfaction is crucial for identifying areas of improvement and implementing targeted interventions to enhance working conditions for

educators. The study also shed light on the factors contributing to teachers' job satisfaction in the region.

The main objective of this study was to examine the Teachers' perception of principals' intellectual stimulation and job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Oyo State. The specific objectives were: 1) To investigate the perceived effectiveness of specific intellectual stimulation strategies employed by principals in enhancing teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Oyo State; 2) Assess the teachers' perceptions of their principals' intellectual stimulation strategies and their job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Oyo State; 3) Assess the extent to which principals effectively apply intellectual stimulation strategy in creating a stimulating and supportive environment for teachers.

The research questions of this study were to examine the teachers' perception of principals' intellectual stimulation and job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Oyo State. The questions were: 1) How effectively do principals employ specific intellectual stimulation strategies to enhance teachers' job satisfaction?; 2) How do teachers' perceptions of their principals' intellectual stimulation strategies influence their job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Oyo State?; 3) To what extent do principals effectively apply intellectual stimulation strategy in creating stimulating and supportive environment for teachers?.

Research Hypothesis

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between principals' intellectual stimulation and teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Oyo state

LITERATURE REVIEW

Intellectual Stimulation

Intellectual stimulation in educational leadership involves promoting an environment where teachers are encouraged to challenge existing norms, think creatively, and develop new solutions to problems. Key strategies include fostering a culture of continuous learning, providing opportunities for professional development, and encouraging collaborative problem-solving. Intellectual stimulation is a core component of transformational leadership, a concept extensively researched and developed by James MacGregor Burns and Bernard Bass (Andersen, 2015). Transformational leadership aims to create significant positive changes in followers, ultimately transforming them into leaders. Intellectual stimulation is behaviors that foster creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving among followers (Thuan, 2020).

In educational leadership, intellectual stimulation involves creating an environment where teachers are motivated to challenge the status quo, think innovatively, and develop new solutions to complex problems (Hasanah et al., 2024). This leadership approach is essential in fostering an academic culture that thrives on continuous improvement and excellence. Principals can foster a learning-oriented environment by encouraging teachers to engage in lifelong learning. This initiative may include pursuing further education, attending workshops, and participating in seminars. Continuous learning is crucial for teachers to stay abreast of the latest educational trends and methodologies, enhancing their professional competence

and effectiveness (Borko et al., 2010). For instance, principals might facilitate access to online courses or provide stipends for teachers to attend educational conferences. By fostering an atmosphere where learning is a constant pursuit, principals help build a dynamic and adaptive teaching community.

Principals recognize the importance of professional development in enhancing teacher performance and satisfaction. They provide ample opportunities for teachers to attend training programs, professional courses, and in-service education. These initiatives improve teachers' skills and knowledge and boost their confidence and job satisfaction. For example, principals can schedule regular in-service training sessions focused on new pedagogical strategies or educational technologies. Additionally, encouraging teachers to earn advanced certifications or degrees can lead to personal growth and deeper professional fulfillment.

Collaborative problem-solving is integral to intellectual stimulation. Principals can facilitate this by organizing team-building activities, peer learning sessions, and collaborative projects. Such initiatives encourage teachers to collaborate, share ideas, and develop innovative solutions to educational challenges. This collaborative approach improves problem-solving skills and fosters a sense of community and mutual support among teachers. For example, creating cross-disciplinary teams to tackle school-wide issues can lead to more comprehensive and creative solutions. Regularly scheduled meetings where teachers discuss classroom challenges and brainstorm can also enhance collective expertise and camaraderie.

By implementing these strategies, principals can create an intellectually stimulating environment that promotes continuous growth, professional development, and collaborative innovation among teachers. This can lead to a more dynamic and effective educational setting, benefiting students and the broader school community.

Teachers' Job Satisfaction

Leadership practices, work conditions, interpersonal relationships, and professional growth opportunities influence teachers' job satisfaction. High levels of job satisfaction are associated with improved teacher performance, reduced turnover, and better student outcomes (Kraft et al., 2016; Toropova et al., 2021). Many factors influence teachers' job satisfaction, including leadership practices, work conditions, interpersonal relationships, and professional growth opportunities. Understanding the intricacies of these factors provides a comprehensive backdrop to how they interplay to affect teachers' contentment and effectiveness in their roles. High levels of job satisfaction are crucial as they are associated with improved teacher performance, reduced turnover, and better student outcomes.

Leadership Practices

Leadership practices play an essential role in shaping teachers' job satisfaction. Effective school leadership involves administrative competence and the ability to inspire and intellectually stimulate the teaching staff. Principals who adopt transformational leadership styles tend to have a more profound impact on job satisfaction. Transformational leaders are characterized by their ability to inspire, intellectually stimulate and provide individualized consideration to their teachers.

Research indicates that principals who engage in transformational leadership behaviors such as setting a vision, providing intellectual stimulation, and giving personalized support significantly boost teachers' job satisfaction. These leaders foster an environment where teachers feel valued, motivated, and empowered to innovate their teaching practices (Eliophotou-Menon & Ioannou, 2016). Supportive leadership practices, which include recognizing teachers' achievements, providing constructive feedback, and ensuring teachers have the necessary resources, also contribute significantly to job satisfaction (Cansoy, 2019). When teachers feel supported by their administration, they are more likely to feel a sense of professional well-being and job fulfillment.

Work Conditions

Work conditions encompass both the physical and psychological aspects of the teaching environment. A conducive work environment is essential for maintaining high levels of job satisfaction. Adequate facilities, resources, and a safe, comfortable physical environment are foundational to job satisfaction. Teachers need classrooms that are conducive to learning, which include appropriate teaching aids, manageable class sizes, and a safe, clean school environment (Johnson et al., 2012). Teachers' perceptions of their workload and their level of autonomy in their classrooms are crucial. Excessive workload and lack of control over teaching methods and curriculum can lead to burnout and job dissatisfaction. Conversely, job satisfaction increases when teachers have a reasonable workload and the freedom to make instructional decisions (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019).

Interpersonal Relationships

The quality of interpersonal relationships within the school community significantly affects job satisfaction. Peer relationships should be strong and supportive relationships among colleagues that provide emotional and professional support. Collaboration and collegiality among teachers lead to a more positive work atmosphere and higher job satisfaction. Teachers who feel part of a supportive professional community are more likely to experience job satisfaction (Vangrieken et al., 2015). Positive relationships with students are also critical. Teachers who feel respected and valued by their students and who see their efforts translate into student success report higher levels of job satisfaction. The reciprocal nature of respect and engagement between teachers and students fosters a rewarding teaching experience (Mainhard et al., 2018).

Professional Growth Opportunities

Opportunities for professional growth are a key determinant of job satisfaction. Teachers with access to professional development are likelier to feel competent and fulfilled in their roles. Engagement in ongoing professional development allows teachers to stay current with educational trends, enhance their teaching skills, and pursue career advancement. Programs that provide relevant, high-quality training and opportunities for teachers to collaborate and reflect on their practice are particularly effective in boosting job satisfaction (Soine & Lumpe, 2014). Clear pathways for career advancement and recognition of professional achievements

contribute to job satisfaction. According to Behrstock-Sherratt in a book titled "*Creating Coherence in the Teacher Shortage Debate: What Policy Leaders Should Know and Do*," teachers who perceive opportunities for promotion and professional recognition within their school or district are more likely to feel motivated and satisfied.

Impact of Principal Intellectual Stimulation and Job Satisfaction

Previous studies have shown a significant correlation between transformational leadership practices, intellectual stimulation, and teacher job satisfaction. Principals who engage in intellectual stimulation create a supportive environment that enhances teachers' professional fulfillment and commitment. Research indicates that intellectual stimulation profoundly impacts teacher performance and job satisfaction (Eliophotou-Menon, 2014; Kouni et al., 2018; Ribeiro et al., 2018; Tesfaw, 2014). When principals engage in intellectually stimulating behaviors, several positive outcomes can be observed:

1. Enhanced Teaching Practices

Teachers encouraged to think critically and creatively are more likely to adopt innovative teaching methods. This can lead to more effective teaching practices, improved student engagement, and better learning outcomes. For instance, teachers who regularly attend workshops on cutting-edge educational technologies or pedagogical strategies can implement these new ideas in their classrooms, making lessons more interactive and engaging. Enhanced teaching practices contribute significantly to higher levels of job satisfaction among teachers, as they see tangible improvements in their students' performance and engagement (Nyamubi, 2017).

2. Professional Growth and Development

Intellectual stimulation promotes continuous professional growth. According to Sass in "*Certification Requirements and Teacher Quality: A Comparison of Alternative Routes to Teaching*" revealed that teachers are motivated to pursue advanced degrees, specialized certifications, and other professional development opportunities. For example, a teacher who feels supported in pursuing a master's degree in education or a certification in a specialized area such as special education or STEM is likely to develop deeper expertise in their field. In a book titled "*Professional Capital: Transforming Teaching in Every School*" Hargreaves and Fullan stated that professional growth enhances teachers' competence, career satisfaction, and commitment to schools. At the same time, further education opens new career opportunities and provides a clear path to advancement.

3. Supportive Work Environment

The principal who fosters intellectual stimulation creates a supportive and collaborative work environment (Butaki et al., 2024). Teachers feel valued and respected, knowing their ideas and contributions are encouraged and appreciated. This supportive environment reduces feelings of isolation and stress, leading to higher job satisfaction and a more positive work

atmosphere (Buonomo et al., 2023). For example, regular staff meetings where teachers can share their experiences and solutions to common challenges create a sense of community. Knowing that their principal and colleagues support their professional growth and value their input makes teachers more likely to remain committed and enthusiastic about their work.

4. Increased Autonomy and Empowerment

Teachers who are intellectually stimulated often experience a greater sense of autonomy and empowerment. Teachers feel more confident in making instructional decisions and implementing new classroom strategies (Lee & Nie, 2014). For instance, trusted teachers who develop their curriculum based on innovative pedagogical practices will feel more invested in their teaching. This increased autonomy leads to greater ownership and control over their work, further enhancing job satisfaction. Empowered teachers are likelier to take initiative and demonstrate leadership, contributing to a more dynamic and proactive school culture.

METHODS

This study examined principals' intellectual stimulation and job satisfaction in Public Secondary Schools in Oyo State, Nigeria. A descriptive research design was used for the study. The total number of public secondary schools in Oyo State is 563, with 11,430 teachers. The Taro Yamane formula was used to determine the sample size, calculated using $n = N / 1 + N (e^2)$. A random sampling technique was used to select 387 teachers from 30 public secondary schools in nine local government areas in Oyo State, Nigeria. The research instrument was the Principals' Intellectual Stimulation and Teachers' Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (PISTJSQ). The research instrument was reviewed by three experts from Educational Management and Educational Measurement and Evaluation within and outside Al-Hikmah University to ensure content validity. The pilot study assessed the questionnaire's reliability and clarity with Cronbach's alpha, which measured internal consistency at 0.05.

The structured questionnaire was distributed to teachers to measure their perceptions of principals' intellectual stimulation and teachers' job satisfaction, while 352 respondents were retrieved for data analysis. The self-design questionnaire used was on four Likert Scale of Strongly Agree (SA) 4 points, Agree (A) 3 points, Disagree (D) 2 points and Strongly Disagree (SD) 1 point with three sections: specific intellectual stimulation strategies, teachers' job satisfaction and principals' application of intellectual stimulation strategies. The researchers retrieved 352 copies for data analysis using descriptive statistics (mean) to summarise the data on principals' intellectual stimulation and teachers' job satisfaction. In contrast, inferential statistics (PPMC) was used to test the research hypothesis and examine relationships between variables. The mean rank rating was also used in the analysis, ranging from 0.00 – 2.49 = Low / Ineffective and 2.50 – 4.00 = High / Effective.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1: How effectively do principals employ specific intellectual stimulation strategies to enhance teachers' job satisfaction?

Table 1. Descriptive analysis of principals' Specific intellectual stimulation strategies that teachers find most effective in enhancing their job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Oyo State

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Remark
1	Principal facilitates professional learning communities.	198	137	17	-	3.51	Effective
2	Principal encourages teachers to conduct action research on new trends.	141	185	26	-	3.33	Effective
3	Principal provides opportunities for teachers to present their work at seminars.	90	200	61	1	3.08	Effective
4	Principal supports teachers in implementing innovative teaching methods.	92	243	17	-	3.21	Effective
5	Principal creates a modern culture of inquiry and experimentation.	77	212	61	2	3.03	Effective

Source: Research 2024

The results in **Table 1** show that teachers perceive most strategies as moderately to highly effective in enhancing their job satisfaction. The highest mean score (3.51) is for the statement "Principal facilitates professional learning communities" which is considered the most effective. Teachers also value opportunities for research and development, as indicated by the high mean score for encouraging action research on new trends. Teachers highly value Professional Learning Communities, as they provide collaborative learning opportunities and the sharing of ideas. Action Research is highly valued, as teachers value exploring new trends and implementing research-based practices in their classrooms. Presenting at seminars is also highly valued but may not be as readily available or utilized as other strategies. Supporting innovation is moderately effective, indicating a need for greater emphasis on experimentation and creativity in the classroom. A culture of inquiry and experimentation is associated with the lowest mean score (3.03), suggesting that teachers may perceive their schools as lacking a supportive environment for questioning assumptions and exploring new ideas.

Research Question 2: How do teachers' perceptions of their principals' intellectual stimulation strategies influence their job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Oyo State?

Table 2. Descriptive analysis of teachers' perceptions of their principals' intellectual stimulation strategies influences their job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Oyo State

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Remark
1	I am satisfied with my job as a teacher.	198	137	17	-	3.20	High
2	I felt valued and respected by my principal.	141	185	26	-	3.29	High
3	I am motivated to come to work each day.	90	200	61	1	3.40	High

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Remark
4	I felt a sense of accomplishment in my work.	92	243	17	-	3.36	High
5	I am proud to be a teacher in this school.	77	212	61	2	3.32	High

Source: Research 2024

Table 2 presents a descriptive analysis of teachers' perceptions of their principals' use of intellectual stimulation strategies and their impact on their overall job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Oyo State. The data revealed a moderate to high level of job satisfaction among teachers, with a strong emphasis on feeling motivated and experiencing a sense of accomplishment in their work. The highest mean score (3.40) is associated with "I am motivated to come to work each day," indicating a strong sense of purpose and engagement in their roles. The second highest mean score (3.36) is for the statement, "I felt a sense of accomplishment in my work," emphasizing the importance of feeling successful and making a tangible impact in their roles. The third highest score (3.32) indicates teachers feel pride in being associated with their school, indicating a positive school culture and a sense of belonging. The highest score (3.29) is for "I felt valued and respected by my principal," indicating that feeling appreciated and supported by leadership plays a role in job satisfaction. Despite the moderate overall job satisfaction (3.20), the strong emphasis on motivation and accomplishment suggests that these factors contribute to a more positive work experience for teachers.

Research Question 3: To what extent do principals effectively apply intellectual stimulation strategy in creating a stimulating and supportive environment for teachers?

Table 3. Descriptive analysis of principals' effective application of intellectual stimulation strategy in creating a stimulating and supportive environment for teachers in public secondary schools in Oyo State State

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Remark
1	Passionately shares new ideas and perspectives with teachers.	169	155	28	-	3.40	Effective
2	Encourages teachers to engage in professional development.	111	185	55	1	3.15	Effective
3	Sets high expectations for teachers and students to meet up with contemporary challenges.	124	172	56	-	3.19	Effective
4	Provides constructive feedback on assigned tasks and support to help teachers grow.	117	191	44	-	3.21	Effective
5	Encourages teachers to take risks and try new approaches.	98	141	113	-	2.96	Effective
6	Provides teachers with resources and opportunities to develop my skills.	61	255	34	2	3.07	Effective

Source: Research 2024

Table 3 presents a descriptive analysis of teachers' perceptions of their principals' use of intellectual stimulation strategies in public secondary schools in Oyo State. The results show that teachers perceive their principals as moderately effective in applying these strategies. Oyo State, public secondary school teachers, perceive their principals as moderately effective in applying intellectual stimulation strategies. The highest mean score (3.40) is associated with the statement "Passionately shares new ideas and perspectives with teachers," suggesting that principals are generally successful in introducing and communicating new concepts and approaches. The second highest mean score (3.21) is for the statement "Provides constructive feedback on assigned tasks and support to help teachers grow," indicating that principals are perceived as providing helpful guidance and assistance for teacher development. The highest mean score (3.19) is associated with "Sets high expectations for teachers and students to meet contemporary challenges," indicating that principals are generally perceived as setting high standards and encouraging teachers to adapt to evolving needs. However, the mean score for encouraging professional development (3.15) is lower than other strategies, suggesting that professional development might not be consistently emphasized or supported. The lowest mean score (2.96) is for encouraging teachers to take risks and try new approaches, suggesting that teachers might perceive their principals as less supportive of experimentation and innovation. The lowest mean score (3.07) suggests that resources and opportunities might not be readily available or adequately utilized for professional growth.

Research Hypothesis

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between principals' intellectual stimulation and teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Oyo state.

Table 4. Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation showing significant influence of principals' intellectual stimulation on teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Oyo State

Variable	N	Mean	Std	Df	p-value	Cal. R-value	Sig	Decision
Principals' Intellectual Stimulation	352	16.16	2.1645	350	.001	.639	.000	Significant
Teachers' job satisfaction	352	16.57	2.3439					

Source: Research 2024

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis reveals a strong positive correlation between principals' intellectual stimulation and teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Oyo State. The results showed a statistically significant positive correlation ($r = .639$, $p < .001$). This suggests that as principals' intellectual stimulation practices increase, teachers' job satisfaction also tends to increase. The analysis was conducted on 352 teachers, providing a sufficiently large sample size for a statistically significant correlation. The correlation coefficient ($r = .639$) indicates a strong positive relationship between the two variables. The p-value of less than .001 is significantly smaller than the conventional alpha

level of .05. This means that the probability of obtaining such a strong correlation by chance is extremely low, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. The p-value indicates that the correlation is statistically significant. This finding suggests that principals who actively engage in intellectual stimulation practices, such as sharing new ideas, encouraging professional development, and fostering a culture of inquiry, are likelier to create a work environment that enhances teachers' job satisfaction.

Discussion

The findings of this study align with previous research on the impact of intellectual stimulation strategies and leadership behaviors on teacher job satisfaction. The effective approaches identified in public secondary schools in Oyo State, such as facilitating professional learning communities, encouraging action research, setting high expectations, and providing constructive feedback, resonate with existing literature. Research objective one seeks to unveil the teachers' perceptions of their principals' use of intellectual stimulation strategies in public secondary schools in Oyo State. The result revealed that the previous studies emphasized the role of transformational leadership, which includes intellectual stimulation in fostering innovative work behavior and enhancing employee performance (Afsar & Umrani, 2020; Chebon et al., 2019). Similarly, there is a positive relationship between transformational leadership and teachers' job satisfaction (Eliophotou-Menon & Ioannou, 2016; Ibrahim et al., 2014).

Research objective two examined the principals' application of intellectual stimulation to influence teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Oyo State. The result showed high levels of job satisfaction reported by teachers in Oyo State. These findings are consistent with studies emphasizing the importance of supportive school climates and leadership behaviors in promoting teacher well-being (Aldridge & Fraser, 2016; Magasi, 2021). Additionally, the absence of a significant difference in job satisfaction between male and female teachers aligns with research, which suggests that leadership style and work culture are more influential factors than gender in determining job satisfaction among teachers (Sahara & Suriansyah, 2020). Furthermore, research objective two assessed the specific intellectual stimulation strategies that teachers find most effective in enhancing their job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Oyo State. The results revealed positive perceptions of teachers' use of intellectual stimulation strategies by principals at Oyo State. These outcomes are consistent with the findings of studies on teacher collaboration that underscore the significance of school working conditions (Vangrieken et al., 2015; Toropova et al., 2021). Additionally, this result gives credence to the previous study that found that principals' efforts to share new ideas, encourage professional development, and provide resources for skill development resonate with the literature on effective leadership behaviors that promote a supportive and empowering work environment (Leithwood & Sun 2012; Leithwood et al., 2021).

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the importance of principals' intellectual stimulation in enhancing teachers' job satisfaction. It emphasizes the role of principals in creating a supportive and intellectually stimulating environment that positively influences teacher performance and student outcomes in public secondary schools. By encouraging critical thinking and innovation, principals can enhance professional development and job satisfaction, ultimately improving student educational outcomes. This research shows that teachers who perceive their principals as intellectually stimulating are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs, feel motivated to perform at their best, and exhibit greater commitment to their professional roles. This has broader implications for the quality of education and student outcomes within the school.

Educational policymakers, school administrators, and stakeholders should recognize the critical link between principals' intellectual stimulation and teachers' job satisfaction. Efforts should be directed toward equipping principals with the necessary skills, knowledge, and resources to effectively foster a culture of intellectual stimulation within their schools. Professional development programs should incorporate modules emphasizing the importance of intellectual stimulation and provide practical strategies for implementation. Mechanisms for evaluating and recognizing principals who excel in promoting intellectual stimulation should be established to incentivize and promote best practices across public secondary schools. The study suggests a paradigm shift in school leadership, particularly in public secondary schools in Oyo State. Principals must embrace their role as intellectual stimulators and champions of continuous learning to cultivate a positive and enriching work environment for their teaching staff.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The authors guarantee no conflict of interest in publishing this article and ensure any references from other works were appropriately acknowledged and cited, demonstrating their commitment to maintaining scientific and ethical integrity throughout the research and writing process.

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