

## EFFECT OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP STYLE ON ACADEMIC STAFF IN FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY (FUT) MINNA, NIGER STATE

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### Abstract

*This paper examines the effect of transformational leadership styles on academic staff at the Federal University of Technology (FUT) Minna, Niger State. Transformational leadership is a leadership approach that inspires and motivates followers to achieve beyond their expectations, fostering intellectual stimulation, individualised consideration, inspirational motivation, and idealised influence. Academic staff motivation plays a vital role in enhancing job satisfaction, productivity, and overall performance in the higher education sector. This study utilises a survey research design, employing a questionnaire-based survey to collect data from academic staff members at FUT Minna. Maslow's hierarchy of needs was adopted, and the study revealed that the application of transformational leadership styles significantly influences the job satisfaction of academic staff members. Transformational leadership is also characterised by leaders who inspire and motivate their followers to achieve higher levels of performance and commitment. Among the recommendations were that the majority of respondents acknowledged the positive impact of transformational leadership styles on job satisfaction among academic staff at the Federal University of Technology (FUT) Minna and that the university administration should invest in comprehensive training and development programmes for academic administrators. These programmes should focus on enhancing their transformational leadership skills, enabling them to better inspire, motivate, and support their teams.*

**Keywords:** Transformational leadership, academic staff motivation, job satisfaction, higher education, Federal University of Technology (FUT) Minna, Niger State.

### Introduction

The increasing levels of education have contributed to economic growth, through both a productivity effect and a participation effect, with the latter being particularly important (Karmel, 2014). Nations and governments are advised to keep education on top priority in public policies as higher education develops high skill labour for nation building that contributes positively to economic growth (Khattak, 2012). Additionally, scientific discoveries prompt modern advancements, through scholarly turn off, and give an excellent picture of universities contributing to economic development (Hatakenaka, 2015).

Also, education has set a top priority in many countries; with quite a number striving to associate with flagship universities (Luxbacher, 2013). Also, the recent global economic changes have exposed the importance of tertiary education that serves as a foundation for national development (Bajunid, 2011; Hallinger, 2014). Furthermore, universities can play a less immediate yet vital role to the society by putting forward the social, cultural, and scholarly tone of a local area (Hatakenaka, 2015). In addition, reputable universities that are research-oriented are considered key in entering the current knowledge-driven economy that leads to economic growth and productivity of both developed and developing countries (Altbach, 2009).

In the realm of higher education, leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping the trajectory of institutions and their constituents. One particular leadership style that has garnered substantial attention is transformational leadership. This leadership approach is characterized by its emphasis on inspiring and motivating individuals to transcend their personal interests for the collective good, fostering an environment of innovation, growth, and achievement. The Federal

University of Technology (FUT) Minna, located in Niger State, Nigeria, stands as a vibrant academic institution that undoubtedly stands to benefit from such leadership practices.

Understanding the effect of the transformational leadership style on academic staff at FUT Minna has the potential to offer valuable insights to university administrators, policymakers, and practitioners in the field of education. By identifying the nuances of this relationship, institutions can make informed decisions about leadership development programs, fostering an environment that cultivates academic excellence, enhances staff engagement, and contributes to the overall advancement of the university's mission.

Transformational leadership is the style of leadership in which the leader identifies the needed changes, creates a vision to guide the change through inspiration, and executes the change with the commitment of the members of the group (Carless, Wearing & Mann, 2000).

In the context of the Federal University of Technology (FUT) Minna, located in Niger State, Nigeria, there exists a notable concern regarding the impact of the transformational leadership style on the academic staff. The effectiveness of leadership within an educational institution plays a critical role in shaping the overall work environment, employee motivation, and ultimately the quality of education provided to students. However, despite the potential benefits associated with transformational leadership, a knowledge gap persists regarding the specific effects of this leadership style on the academic staff members at FUT Minna.

In terms of the period of study, the analysis covers the years 2017 to 2021. This period was chosen because it was a period when the Vice Chancellor, Abdullahi Bala, assumed office as the seventh Vice-Chancellor of the Federal University of Technology, Minna,

Previous research has addressed some aspects of transformational leadership and performance of manufacturing and other service organisations that are profit oriented in nature (Al-Abrow, 2013; Ali, Jan, Ali, & Tariq, 2014; Bacha, 2014; Birasnav, 2014; Chen, Bian & Hou, 2015; Fernet, Trepanier, Austin, Gagne & Forest, 2015; Masa'deh, Obeidat & Tarhini, 2016; Soane, Butler & Stanton, 2015; Sun, Xu and Shang, 2014).

Other studies also exist in the area of higher institution performance with quite a number focusing on student academic performance in universities (Arulampalam, Naylor & Smith, 2012; Christiana, 2014; Kostopoulos, Kotsiantis & Pintelas, 2015; Joe, Kpolovie, Osonwa, & Iderima, 2014; Nzewi, Chiekiezie & Ikon, 2016; Ogedebe, Emmanuel & Musa, 2012; Richardson, Abraham & Bond, 2012). Some have a narrow scope, concentrating on single university (Ali & Musah, 2012; Christiana, 2014; Hilman & Siam, 2014; Kasim & Noh, 2012; Joe et al., 2014) where respondents have common demographic and cultural attributes. Literature suggests a use of wider scope regarding the number of universities and region for a better result (Ali & Musah, 2012). Other scholars, attempted to outline features of best universities (Abdulkareem, & Oyeniran, 2011; Altbach, 2009; Collins & Ho, 2014; Mpaata, 2010; Salmi, 2009 & 2015; Shin & Jang, 2013) with a very little attention to the leadership style. Therefore, the objective of this paper is to examine the "Effect of Transformational Leadership Style on Academic Staff in Federal University of Technology (FUT) Minna, Niger State." In specific, the study seeks to: examine the extent application of transformational leadership styles influence the job satisfaction of academic staff at the Federal University of Technology (FUT) Minna, Niger State; and ascertain how the perceived transformational leadership style of academic administrators at Federal University of Technology (FUT) Minna impact the commitment of academic staff members

By the foregoing, this paper will be guided by the following research questions:

- i. To what extent does the application of transformational leadership styles influence the job satisfaction of academic staff at the Federal University of Technology (FUT) Minna, Niger State?
- ii. How does the perceived transformational leadership style of academic administrators at

Federal University of Technology (FUT) Minna impact the commitment of academic staff members?

## Literature Review

### Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership refers to leaders who seek to create ideas and new perspectives to create a new path of growth and prosperity for the organisation. By developing commitment, passion, and loyalty among managers and staff, they mobilise the organisation's members to make fundamental changes in the foundation and basis of the organisation in order to be prepared and to gain the necessary capabilities for moving in new directions and reaching higher ideal performance peaks (Mirkamali et al., 2014).

The transformational leader constantly looks for potential motives in followers and aims to draw followers' attention to superior needs and the conversion of individual interests into collective interests. According to Bass and Avolio, transformational leadership is a conscious, moral, and spiritual process that provides development patterns for organisations through reliable equal power leadership. Transformational leaders explain the organisation's future prospects and provide a model consistent with the prospects, improve acceptance of group goals, provide a wide range of support for individuals in the organisation, and encourage them to pursue the organisation's goals (Mortazavi and Nikkar, 2014).

According to Bass (1985), transformational leadership comprises four dimensions. First, idealised influence is the degree to which followers realise leaders' value, confidence, belief, power, and ethical or moral orientation; their willingness to identify with these attributes; and a diversion from self-interest to higher collective goals (Antonakis & House, 2002). Second, inspirational motivation describes how leaders articulate visions to inspire and motivate subordinates to reach desired goals (Antonakis & House, 2002). Third is intellectual stimulation, which refers to leaders who challenge the status quo and underlying assumptions, encourage followers to do so, and are open to new and creative solutions to problems (Antonakis & House, 2002). The final dimension is individualised consideration. Here, like mentors or coaches, leaders provide emotional support and consideration for each follower (Antonakis & House, 2002). Through these four dimensions, transformational leaders engage followers and accomplish significant outcomes (Burns, 1978).

### Concept of Motivation

A cause for doing anything is called a motive. The strength, direction, and circumstances that lead people to act in particular ways are all topics of motivation. The term "motivation" can be used to describe a variety of things, including people's goals, how they choose their goals, and methods others use to try to modify their behaviour.

Getting other people to move in the direction you want them to in order to achieve a result is the goal of motivating them. Setting your own goals and following through with a plan of action to get there are both essential components of self-motivation. Goal-oriented behaviour can be used to characterise motivation. When people believe that a course of action will probably result in the achievement of a goal and a worthwhile reward — one that meets their needs and wants — they are motivated.

People who are highly motivated act in a discretionary manner; most jobs allow the individual to choose how much effort to put out. Such individuals may be self-motivated, which is the ideal sort of motivation as long as it indicates that they are moving in the right direction to accomplish what they are there to do. However, a greater or lesser degree of motivation is required of the majority of us. As explained below, there are two different types of motivation and theories describing how they operate.

## Types of motivation

The two types of motivation are intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation.

### Intrinsic motivation

Intrinsic motivation can arise from the self-generated factors that influence people's behaviour. It is not created by external incentives. It can take the form of motivation by the work itself when individuals feel that their work is important, interesting and challenging and provides them with a reasonable degree of autonomy (freedom to act), opportunities to achieve and advance, and scope to use and develop their skills and abilities. Deci and Ryan (1985) suggested that intrinsic motivation is based on the needs to be competent and self-determining (that is, to have a choice).

Intrinsic motivation can be enhanced by job or role design. According to an early writer on the significance of the motivational impact of job design (Katz, 1964): 'The job itself must provide sufficient variety, sufficient complexity, sufficient challenge and sufficient skill to engage the abilities of the worker.' In their job characteristics model, Hackman and Oldham (1974) emphasized the importance of the core job dimensions as motivators, namely skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback.

### Extrinsic motivation

Extrinsic motivation occurs when things are done to or for people to motivate them. These include rewards, such as incentives, increased pay, praise, or promotion; and punishments, such as disciplinary action, withholding pay, or criticism. Extrinsic motivators can have an immediate and powerful effect, but will not necessarily last long. The intrinsic motivators, which are concerned with the 'quality of working life' (a phrase and movement that emerged from this concept), are likely to have a deeper and longer-term effect because they are inherent in individuals and their work and not imposed from outside in such forms as incentive pay.

### Empirical Review

Rinaldi, Yunia, and Evanita (2018) analyse the influence of transformational leadership and motivation on the performance of the faculty of economics, state university of Padang. The research was conducted with a quantitative approach with 47 respondents as samples. The collected data were processed using path analysis to determine the influence of exogenous variables, namely transformational leadership and work motivation, on an endogenous variable, which is employee performance. The results showed that transformational leadership had a significant positive effect on work motivation; transformational leadership had a significant positive effect on employee performance; and work motivation had a significant positive effect on employee performance at the State University of Padang.

Arif and Akram's (2018) investigate transformational leadership's impact on organisational performance and the mediating role of organisational innovation the study revealed that organisational innovation has had a significant impact on organisational performance. The research found that transformational leadership and organisational performance have a strong relationship. Therefore, it will help the managers create such a leadership style in the organisations. Pakistani organisations need an environment where leaders motivate and encourage the employees who wish to become more creative and effective in leading successful organisations.

Alessa (2021) Highlighting the characteristics of transformational leadership and their effects on the public universities in Saudi Arabia, the study enlightens the urgent need to test the behavioural intentions in the public universities in Saudi Arabia. To achieve this goal, many major databases were used. The period of the study was set from 2011 to 2020, as the topic of the study is the current transformational leadership within the public universities in Saudi Arabia. There were a total of 47,400,000 studies on transformational leadership on Google; however, only 22 studies

were reviewed that were entirely conducted in Saudi Arabian Universities. The results demonstrated that in the public universities in Saudi Arabia, transformational leadership is practised across four dimensions: ideal effect, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. The documentary research approach was used to review the most recent aspects of administrative literature on the theory of transformational leadership and its organisational outcomes. In addition, NVIVO 11 was used to make a thematic analysis of the linkages between transformational leadership and organisational outcomes: organisational commitment, knowledge management practises, morale, employee empowerment, level of job satisfaction, administrative creativity, organisational citizenship behaviour, and the level of transformation towards quality and job enrichment. Therefore, behavioural tendencies such as organisational commitment, empowerment, job satisfaction, and knowledge management practises have been studied more interestingly and critically. Furthermore, these behavioural aspects need to be explored more in public universities in Saudi Arabia.

Xuan, Hoang, and Thanh (2022) evaluate the impact of transformational leadership style and employee creativity on organisational innovation in universities in Vietnam. We employed Bayesian exploratory factor analysis and Bayesian regression analysis with primary data on leader-employee pairs to explore the abovementioned effects. The findings show that the components of transformational leadership style, including idealised influence (II), inspirational motivation (IM), intellectual stimulation (IS), and individual consideration (IC), have positive impacts on organisational innovation (OI) and employee creativity (EC). The findings also imply that employee creativity (EC) is a mediating factor in the impact of transformational leadership style (TLS) on organisational innovation (OI). Finally, increasing intrinsic motivation (INM) can increase the positive impact of transformational leadership style (TLS) on employee creativity (EC). Based on the results, we propose policy implications to promote organisational innovation in Vietnamese universities in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The study adopted Maslow's hierarchy of needstheory (1954).

#### **Maslow's hierarchy of needs**

The needs hierarchy created by Maslow in 1954 is the most well-known. According to his theory, there are five main need categories that apply to all humans, starting with basic physiological requirements and progressing through a hierarchy of safety, social, and esteem needs to the need for self-fulfilment, which is the highest need of all. When a lower need is met, the next highest one rises to take precedence, and the person shifts their focus to meeting this need. But one's need for self-fulfilment will always remain unmet. "Man is a wanting animal," and only an unmet need may drive behaviour, with the dominant need serving as the primary driver. As people advance in the requirements hierarchy, their psychological development occurs, although this is not always a linear process. Even if they are temporarily dormant as motivators, the lesser needs persist, and people frequently revert to previously met needs.

The Maslow hierarchy of needs is widely used and has an intuitive appeal. It has been criticised for its apparent rigidity (different people may have different priorities, and it is difficult to accept that one needs to progress steadily up the hierarchy) and for the misleading simplicity of Maslow's conceptual language, but it has not been verified by empirical research such as that conducted by Wahba and Bridwell (1979). Maslow himself expressed scepticism regarding the applicability of a rigidly ordered hierarchy.

### **Methodology**

This study used survey research as its methodology. Both primary and secondary data were used in this investigation. Questionnaires and documents were used to obtain the data for this study. The population of this study consists of all 800 academic staff members of the Federal University of

Technology (FUT) Minna, Niger State. 130 academic staff members were chosen as the sample size using purposive sampling methods. The Likert scale is used as the measurement scale in this investigation.

## Results and Discussion

### Transformational Leadership Styles

**Table 1:** Responses on whether immediate supervisor exhibits a clear vision and direction for the Department/unit.

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	80	61
Undecided	5	4
Disagree	45	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>100</b>

**Sources:** field survey, 2023

Responses on whether immediate supervisor exhibits a clear vision and direction for the Department/unit. Revealed 80 representing (61%) of the respondents agreed while 5 representing (4%) of the respondents were undecided and 45 representing (35%) of the respondents disagreed.

**Table 2:** Responses on whether immediate supervisor provides constructive feedback and guidance for improvement

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	50	38
Undecided	10	8
Disagree	70	54
<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>100</b>

**Sources:** field survey, 2023

The respondents were asked to state whether immediate supervisor like the Head of Department provide constructive feedback and guidance for improvement, the data obtained revealed 50 representing (38%) of the respondents agreed while 10 representing (8%) of the respondents were undecided and 70 representing (54%) of the respondents disagreed to the stated questions.

**Table 3:** Responses on whether transformational leadership employed by supervisor have contributed to job satisfaction

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	75	57.7
Undecided	10	7.6
Disagree	45	34.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>100</b>

**Sources:** field survey, 2023

Responses on whether transformational leadership employed by supervisor have contributed to job satisfaction revealed 75 representing (57.7%) of the respondents agreed while 45 representing (34.6%) of the respondents disagreed and 10 representing (7.6%) of the respondents were undecided as to whether transformational leadership employed by supervisor have contributed to job satisfaction.



**Table 4:** Responses on how well academic administrators at FUT Minna communicate their expectations and vision for the university's growth and success

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	74	56.9
Undecided	7	5.4
Disagree	49	37.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>100</b>

**Sources:** field survey, 2023

Respondents were asked to state how well academic administrators at FUT Minna communicate their expectations and vision for the university's growth and success, the data obtained revealed 74 representing (56.9%) of the respondents agreed while 7 representing (5.4%) of the respondents were undecided and 49 representing (37.6%) of the respondents disagreed to the stated question.

**Table 5:** Responses on transformational leadership style of academic administrators fosters a sense of shared purpose and community among academic staff members

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	68	52
Undecided	7	5.5
Disagree	55	42
<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>100</b>

**Sources:** field survey, 2023

The data obtained on transformational leadership style of academic administrators fosters a sense of shared purpose and community among academic staff members revealed 68 representing (52%) of the respondents agreed while 7 representing (5.5%) of the respondents were undecided and 55 representing (42%) of the respondents disagreed that transformational leadership style of academic administrators fosters a sense of shared purpose and community among academic staff members

**Table 6:** Responses on academic staff being valued and appreciated for contributions to FUT Minna

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	90	69
Undecided	5	4
Disagree	35	27
<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>100</b>

**Sources:** field survey, 2023

The responses on academic staff being valued and appreciated for contributions to FUT Minna revealed 90 representing (69%) of the respondents agreed while 5 representing (4%) of the respondents were undecided and 35 representing (27%) of the respondent disagreed, thus, the finding revealed that academic staff are been value and appreciated for their contribution which speak much about the leadership styles.

### Discussion of findings

The study examines the effect of transformational leadership styles on academic staff at the Federal University of Technology (FUT) Minna, Niger State. The majority of respondents in the study acknowledged that the application of transformational leadership styles significantly influences the job satisfaction of academic staff members.

Transformational leadership is characterised by leaders who inspire and motivate their followers to achieve higher levels of performance and commitment. The findings of this study align with the

principles of transformational leadership, as the majority of respondents recognised that leaders at FUT Minna who exhibit such leadership styles create a positive work environment that enhances job satisfaction. This could be attributed to leaders' abilities to communicate a compelling vision, provide intellectual stimulation, and offer individualised support to their academic staff.

Additionally, the study's findings imply that the academic administrators at FUT Minna's transformational leadership style also have a significant impact on the levels of commitment among academic staff members. The transformative leaders' ability to foster a sense of shared purpose, encourage innovation, and provide opportunities for professional growth was seen as contributing to higher levels of commitment among the academic staff.

The findings underscore the importance of transformational leadership in the academic context, specifically at FUT Minna. The study highlights how the application of this leadership style positively affects both job satisfaction and commitment among academic staff members. Institutions aiming to enhance the overall work experience and engagement of their academic staff could consider adopting and promoting transformational leadership practises among their administrative leaders.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, the findings highlight a strong consensus among participants regarding the significant impact of transformational leadership styles on job satisfaction among academic staff at the Federal University of Technology (FUT) Minna, Niger State. The study also emphasises how academic administrators at FUT Minna's transformational leadership strategy play a crucial role in determining the levels of commitment among academic staff members. These results underscore the importance of fostering transformational leadership practises within the university setting to enhance both job satisfaction and commitment among academic staff.

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations are proposed to further enhance academic staff motivation in FUT Minna:

- i. Given that the majority of respondents acknowledged the positive impact of transformational leadership styles on job satisfaction among academic staff at the Federal University of Technology (FUT) Minna, the university administration should invest in comprehensive training and development programmes for academic administrators. These programmes should focus on enhancing their transformational leadership skills, enabling them to better inspire, motivate, and support their teams.
- ii. Building on the finding that the transformational leadership style of academic administrators at FUT Minna influences the commitment of academic staff members, it is advisable to establish collaborative decision-making platforms. These platforms should encourage open dialogue, active participation, and shared decision-making processes between administrators and academic staff.

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