Principals' transformational and transactional leadership styles and teachers' job satisfaction: A perspective from high school teachers

Van Dat Tran *, An Giang University, Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City, An Giang, 90000, Vietnam.
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3032-0713

Thi Thanh Hue Tran, An Giang University, Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City, An Giang, 90000, Vietnam.
https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3819-8326

Minh Tuan Lam Le, An Giang University, Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City, An Giang, 90000, Vietnam.
https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0425-9805

Abstract

The significant impact of school principals' transformational and transactional leadership styles on teachers' job satisfaction has been documented in different settings of education. However, until now, limited research in this field has been conducted in the setting of high school education. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the influence of transformational and transactional leadership styles of principals on teachers' job satisfaction. The present study utilised the multifactor leadership questionnaire and the Minnesota satisfaction questionnaire to collect data from 387 teachers in 24 high schools. The results of correlation coefficient analyses showed significantly positive effects of the transformational leadership and significantly negative effects of the transactional leadership on teachers' job satisfaction. The results of multiple regression analyses also revealed that both principals' leadership styles predicted teachers' intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction. The findings of this study support an implementation of the transformational leadership style in the educational context to undertake necessary changes in leadership practices to improve teachers' job satisfaction. The study suggests that future studies should examine the impacts of these leadership styles on other teachers' outcomes, such as self-efficacy, responsibility, turnover and retention.

Keywords: Job satisfaction, leadership styles, transactional leadership, transformational leadership.

---

* ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE: Van Dat Tran, An Giang University, Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City, An Giang, 90000, Vietnam.
 E-mail address: tvdat@agu.edu.vn / Tel.: +84-913-678-974

1. Introduction

Educational environment in the 21st century has been undergoing constant changes to satisfy increasing requirements of stakeholders (Maheshwari, 2021). In the context of current educational reform, to create positive changes and build successful and productive learning environments, school principals are expected to lead schools through challenges associated with increasingly complex environment, demanding curriculum standards, students' diverse learning needs and expected outcomes (Meyer & Norman, 2020). Especially, school principals are also required to support teachers whose job satisfaction and commitment contribute to better performance and school effectiveness (Cansoy, 2018).

In schools, leadership is considered as a process of encouraging and supporting teachers and students to participate enthusiastically in realising and achieving the school goals (Yeigh et al., 2019). The teacher performance and school effectiveness depend primarily on the role of principals and their leadership styles (Maheshwari, 2021; Marlow et al., 1997; Northouse, 2016). Recently, contemporary research has paid more attention to leadership styles and the effects of principals' transformational and transactional leadership styles on teachers' effective and psychological outcomes (Elmazi, 2018; Johnson, 2017; Maheshwari, 2021; Sun et al., 2017; Tentama et al., 2021). There has been evidence that transformational and transactional leadership styles greatly affect teachers' job satisfaction (Kheir-Faddul & Dănăiaţă, 2019; Maheshwari, 2021), teachers' performances (Wasonga & Yohannes, 2021; Wen et al., 2019), teachers' organisational commitment (Kheir-Faddul & Dănăiaţă, 2019; Nguni et al., 2006; Sayadi, 2016; Sun et al., 2017; Tentama et al., 2021) and teachers' self-efficacy (Haddad & Ashqar, 2020; Houck, 2018; Short, 2016). Although recent studies showed the significant effects of principals' transformational and transactional leadership styles on teachers' outcomes, few studies have investigated the relationship between these leadership styles and teachers' job satisfaction in the Vietnamese educational context. This may be a knowledge gap for school principals in developing leadership practices to effectively improve their teachers' job satisfaction in particular and school effectiveness in general.

This study, therefore, aims to identify teachers' perceptions of principals' transformational and transactional leadership styles and examine effects of these leadership styles on teachers' job satisfaction. It also aims to investigate the extent to which these leadership styles predict teacher's job satisfaction. The present study will play a complementary role to existing research, in determining and confirming this correlation in the context of general education in Vietnam. The results from this study may help principals adjust their own leadership styles and leadership practices to promote teachers' job satisfaction.

1.1. Theoretical framework

Leadership is defined as a process of influencing and supporting a group or individuals to achieve a desired goal of an organisation (Bass, 1999), or a system that involves input (human resource, time and resources), process (the interaction between human and resources over time) and outcome (level of motivation and performance) (Bass & Riggio, 2014). In practice, leaders often use many different leadership styles or different modes of behaviour to influence employees to achieve organisational goals. In recent years, research on principals' leadership styles in schools has focused more on the transformational and transactional leadership styles because of their significant effects on teachers' outcomes (Anastasiou & Garametsi, 2021; Anderson, 2017; Haddad & Ashqar, 2020; Maheshwari, 2021).

1.1.1. Transformational leadership

Leaders, who practice transformational leadership work together with their followers to identify the changes needed, create a vision to lead and execute transformation. Leaders also improve followers' awareness, motivate them to perform 'beyond expectation' and strengthen followers' commitment to achieve the objectives (Bass, 1999). Transformational leaders act as change agents whose personal values, vision, commitment and passion inspire and support followers to work towards achieving organisational goals (Bass & Riggio, 2014). They also encourage supporters to prioritise the vision and goals of the organisation over their own interests and build trust to motivate followers to exceed expectations in improving organisational effectiveness and productivity (Anderson, 2017; Sun et al., 2017).

Research by Bass (1999), which extended Burns' (1978) research and Maslow's (1954) theory of needs, identified four aspects of transformational leadership including 'idealised influence, inspirational motivation, individualised consideration and intellectual stimulation'. Bass and Riggio (2014) further specified that transformational leaders often demonstrate five behaviours including idealised influence attributed (IIa), idealised influence behaviour (IIb), inspirational motivation (IM), intellectual stimulation (IS) and individualised consideration (IC). IIa refers to leaders who exhibit an exemplary role model for followers and instil pride in their followers for the relationship with other group members (Anderson, 2017). IIb refers to leaders with high moral and ethical standards establish trust among their followers to develop a shared vision of the organisation (Bass & Riggio, 2014). IM refers to leaders who inspire others by giving examples and motivate followers' commitment in achieving the shared goals (Anderson, 2017; Bass & Riggio, 2014). IS refers to leaders who challenge followers to solve problems with creative solutions and involve followers in the process of making decisions (Sun et al., 2017; Yeigh et al., 2019). IC refers to leaders who provide a supportive environment and spend more time teaching and coaching followers as well as developing new leaders based on individual needs (Wasonga & Yohannes, 2021). This study identified the aforementioned components of transformational leadership as independent variables.

1.1.2. Transactional leadership

There is transaction or a process of exchanging principles between leaders and their followers for the designed outcomes when transactional leadership is practiced (Northouse, 2016). This leadership style focuses on motivating others through mutual agreements about requirements and rewards as well as punishments for subordinates (Bass & Riggio, 2014). Transactional leadership is different from transformational leadership in the sense that the transactional leaders do not prioritise followers' needs or personal growth. Transactional leaders are not able to build up a powerful emotional relationship with followers or motivate followers to reach their potentials. Bass (1999) specified four elements of transactional leadership, including contingent reward (CR), active management by exception (AmbE), management by exception passive (MbEP) and laissez-faire (LF). CR refers to how leaders establish goals, obtain necessary resources and offer rewards for good performance, or use punishments for employees' misbehaviours (Anderson, 2017). AmbE refers to the extent to which leaders carefully monitor the performance of followers and oversee mistakes (Bass & Riggio, 2014). MbEP refers to the extent to which leaders may address issues until they are acknowledged by others and usually the leaders are unable to interfere until major issues occur (Sun et al., 2017). LF refers to the extent to which leaders avoid accountability, active presence and decision making (Bass, 1999). This study identified the four above components of transactional leadership as independent variables.

1.1.3. Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is described as 'how people feel about their jobs and different aspects of their jobs… it is the extent to which people like (satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction) their jobs' (Spector, 1997, p. 2) or 'the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the perception of one's job as fulfilling or allowing the fulfilment of one's important job values' (Locke, 1976, p. 1342). This concept refers to the extent to which teachers' occupational needs (e.g., fulfilment, accomplishment and recognition) are satisfied or the positive attitude they have towards the job and the working environment (Evan, 1997). Previous studies show that teachers seem to be more satisfied with teaching-related aspects, such as professional interests and personal development, but dissatisfied with such external factors as working environments, salary and interpersonal relations (Bogler, 2001; Northouse, 2016; Spector, 1997). A correlation is found between teachers' job satisfaction with their happiness, commitment to teaching, motivation and especially, with school principals' leadership styles (Evan, 1997; Johnson, 2017; Kouali, 2017; Ma'ruf et al., 2020; Wasonga & Yohannes, 2021; Wen et al., 2019).

There are some instruments used in measuring teachers' job satisfaction among which the Minnesota satisfaction questionnaire designed by Weiss et al. (1967) has been universally used until now. The 20-item instrument was used to assess three components of teachers' job satisfaction including intrinsic, extrinsic and general satisfactions. Intrinsic satisfaction (IS) has facets related to the job itself, whereas extrinsic satisfaction (ES) has facets related to the environment where the work is done (Crossman & Harris, 2006). IS is related to the employee's creativity, success, responsibility, safety, independence, social position, ethical values etc. When the factors of personal satisfaction originate from within the individual, this internal satisfaction will lead to changes in individuals' behaviours. On the contrary, the ES is related to external influencing factors that depend on individuals' working environment (Bogler, 2001; Spector, 1997; Woods & Weasmer, 2004). These factors may include salary, promotion, organisational policy, recognition and support from the organisation. This study identified two components of job satisfaction including the IS and ES as dependent variables.

1.1.4. Effects of leadership styles on job satisfaction

In recent years, transformational and transactional leadership styles have attracted more attention from educational researchers because of their significant effects on teachers' outcomes. Several studies have investigated the association between these leadership styles of school principals and teachers' job satisfaction and reported that the transformational leadership style was positively related to teachers' job satisfaction. A study by Biggerstaff (2012) examined 179 elementary teachers about their perceptions of the principals' leadership style and their job satisfaction in the United States. The results suggested that all five aspects of transformational leadership and the CR aspect of the transactional leadership style were positively related to teachers' job satisfaction.

Another study by Sadeghi and Pihie (2013) investigated department heads' leadership styles and lecturers' job satisfaction in Malaysia. Inspirational motivation and idealised influence are found to be the most common behaviours in transformational leadership practiced by the department heads and recognised transformational leadership as the most influential style that enhanced lecturers' job satisfaction. In addition, Waters (2013) explored the effects of leadership styles on several measures of job satisfaction of 211 primary school teachers in Australia. The teacher participants in this study believed that their principals had more transformational leadership behaviours. The results also indicated that the transformational leadership style was positively correlated with job satisfaction and that teachers' job satisfaction was higher when principals employed more transformational in leadership style.

In addition, Wahab et al. (2014) revealed a significant relation between the transformational leadership style and teachers' job satisfaction and commitment in primary schools in Malaysia. Yangaiya and Magaji (2015) also showed the positive relationship between the transformational leadership style and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Nigeria, and found that teachers' empowerment acted as a mediator to the relationship between school leadership and job satisfaction. In a study on the relationship between teachers' job satisfaction and principals' leadership styles for 235 elementary schools in the United States, Schwartz (2017) highlighted noteworthy connections between the leadership styles and the job satisfaction of teachers. The findings also showed that transformational leadership practiced by principals positively influenced teachers' overall job satisfaction.

Similarly, Cansoy's (2018) systematic review showed that compared to other leadership styles, transformational leadership – an important predictor of job satisfaction – had a stronger relationship with teachers' job satisfaction while laisser-faire leadership had a negative relationship with teachers' job satisfaction. Moreover, Maheshwari (2021) examined the effect of the leadership styles of principals on 144 high school teachers' job satisfaction and performance in Vietnam. The results of path analysis showed that teachers' job satisfaction and performance positively correlated to transformational leadership and negatively correlated to transactional leadership. The findings also suggested that job satisfaction functions as a moderator variable between the leadership styles of principals and teachers' performance. Generally, the shared findings among prior studies in different contexts show a positive correlation between the transformational leadership style and teachers' job satisfaction.

1.1.5. Purpose of the study

Although significant relationships between principals' transformational and transactional leadership styles and teachers' job satisfaction have widely been found in previous research in different countries, few studies have investigated this link in the Vietnamese educational context. In Vietnam, only four studies examined the effect of school environment factors on teachers' job satisfaction and other professional aspects or the relationship between principals' leadership styles and teachers' organisational commitment and performance (Maheshwari, 2021; Suong et al., 2019; Thu et al., 2017; Tran & Le, 2015). Therefore, this study aims to identify teachers' perceptions of principals' transformational and transactional leadership styles, examine the relationships between these leadership styles and teachers' job satisfaction and find out the extent to which transformational and transactional leadership styles may predict teachers' job satisfaction. The study explores the following research hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: School principals use the transformational leadership style more than the transactional leadership style.

Hypothesis 2: Transformational and transactional leadership styles influence teachers' job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3: Transformational and transactional leadership styles predict teachers' job satisfaction.

2. Methods

2.1. Research design

The present study utilised a correlational design to identify teachers' perceptions of transformational and transactional leadership styles, examine the relationships between these two leadership styles and teachers' job satisfaction and find out the extent to which transformational and transactional leadership styles predict teachers' job satisfaction. In this study, transformational and transactional leadership style components are independent variables, while job satisfaction components are dependent variables.

2.2. Participants

This research utilised a convenience sample of 387 teachers including 195 females (50.40%) and 192 males (49.60%) from 24 high schools in the Mekong Delta region of Vietnam. The participants' average teaching experience was 13.64 years [standard deviations (SD) = 7.03] and average age was 38.27 years (SD = 10.85). The participants were in charge of several subjects (e.g., Literature, Mathematics, English, History, Chemistry, Physics and Biology). All teachers from 24 high schools (grades 10–12) were invited to voluntarily participate in this study after the researchers obtained permission from the high school principals. The participants' personal details and identities were kept confidential. The two questionnaires were sent to the teachers at the beginning of the second semester of the school year. The researchers received completed questionnaires directly from the teachers participating in the study.

2.3. Instruments

2.3.1. Multifactor leadership questionnaire (MLQ)

The 45-item MLQ designed by Bass and Avolio (1995) was utilised to assess 9 behaviours of transformational and transactional leadership as well as 3 outcomes of leadership (i.e., extra effort, effectiveness and satisfaction). The present study only used 20 items to measure 5 components of the transformational leadership style: IIa (e.g., 'Instils pride in me for being associated with him/her'), IIb (e.g., 'Talks about their most important values and beliefs'), IM (e.g., 'Talks optimistically about the future'), IS (e.g., 'Seeks differing perspectives when solving problems') and IM (e.g., 'Considers me as having different needs, abilities and aspirations from others'). The study also used 16 items to measure 4 components of the transactional leadership style, including CR (e.g., 'Provides me with assistance in exchange for my efforts'), AmbE (e.g., 'Focuses attention on irregularities, mistakes, exceptions and deviations from standards'), MbEP (e.g., 'Fails to interfere until problems become serious') and LF (e.g., 'Delays responding to urgent questions'). Each component consisted of four items and was answered on a scale from 1 to 5 points (1 = not at all, 5 = frequently). Table 1 presents the descriptive data of this questionnaire.

2.3.2. Minnesota satisfaction questionnaire (MSQ)

The 20-item MSQ developed by Weiss et al. (1967) was used to assess 3 components of teachers' job satisfaction, including IS, ES and GS. The present study only utilised 18 items to measure the IS and ES. The IS comprises 12 items (e.g., 'The chance to do different things from time to time') and the ES includes 6 items (e.g., 'The competence of my supervisor in making decisions'). Each item was asked to answer on a 5-point scale from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied). Descriptive data of independent and dependent variables are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Descriptive Data of Independent and Dependent Variables

Variable	Mean (M)	SD	Alpha coefficient (α)	No. Items
Independent				
Transformational leadership				
IIa	3.90	0.66	0.84	4
IIb	3.83	0.74	0.81	4
IM	3.82	0.81	0.89	4

IS	3.66	0.57	0.76	4
IC	3.65	0.49	0.79	4
Transactional leadership				
CR	3.83	0.81	0.87	4
AmbE	2.09	0.66	0.77	4
MbEP	2.16	0.74	0.83	4
LF	2.33	0.57	0.79	4
Dependent				
Job satisfaction				
IS	3.89	0.55	0.82	12
ES	3.56	0.50	0.85	6

n = 387.

2.4. Data analysis

All the descriptive and inferential data from both survey instruments were analysed. The correlation coefficient analyses were used to investigate the relationships between independent variables (nine components of two leadership styles) and dependent variables (two components of job satisfaction). In addition, multiple regression analyses were performed to investigate the prediction level of independent variables (predictor variables) for dependent variables (outcome variables). The significance level for all tests was statistically set at $p < 0.05$.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Results

3.1.1. Principals' leadership styles perceived by their teachers

As reported in Table 1, teachers perceived their principals' transformational and one component of transactional leadership (CR) at a higher level than the transactional leadership style (AmbE, MbEP and LF). For transformational leadership style, the mean scores of components ranged from 3.65 to 3.90. The components with the highest mean were IIa (*M* = 3.90, SD = 0.66), IIb (*M* = 3.83, SD = 0.74), IM (*M* = 3.82, SD = 0.81), IS (*M* = 3.66, SD = 0.57) and IC (*M* = 3.65, SD = 0.49). For transactional leadership style, the mean scores of components ranged from 2.16 to 3.83. The component with the highest mean was CR (*M* = 3.83, SD = 0.81), while teachers scored their principals lowest in AmbE (*M* = 2.09, SD = 0.66), MbEP (*M* = 2.16, SD = 0.74) and LF (*M* = 2.33, SD = 0.57).

3.1.2. Relationships between principals' leadership styles and teachers' job satisfaction

The results in Table 2 show that the bivariate associations between the nine components of two leadership styles and the two components of job satisfaction were statistically significant at the 0.01 level. All five components of the transformational leadership style showed positive correlational relationships with the IS (*r* ranged from 0.27 to 0.72) and ES (*r* ranged from 0.44 to 0.72). Similarity, all four components of the transactional leadership style had correlational relationships with job satisfaction. However, the component, CR, had positive correlational relationships with the IS (*r* = 0.70) and ES (*r* = 0.44), while the three remaining components, including AmbE, MbEP and LF, had negative correlational relationships with IS (*r* = −0.68, −0.72 and −0.27, respectively) and ES (*r* = −0.50, −0.52, −0.44, respectively).

Table 2

Correlations Matrix Between Leadership Styles and Job Satisfaction

Transformational and transactional leadership styles	Job satisfaction	
	IS	ES
IIa	0.68**	0.50**
IIb	0.72**	0.52**
IM	0.70**	0.45**
IS	0.27**	0.44**
IC	0.31**	0.72**
CR	0.70**	0.44**
AmbE	−0.68**	−0.50**
MbEP	−0.72**	−0.52**
LF	−0.27**	−0.44**

$n = 387$ ** $p < 0.01$.

3.1.3. Prediction of teachers' job satisfaction from principals' leadership styles

The results of various regression analyses in Table 3 further indicated that all five components of the transformational leadership style predicted teachers' job satisfaction. The models explained 64% of the variance in the IS variable ($R^2 = 0.64$), $F = 143.05$, $p < 0.001$, and 65% of the variance in ES variable ($R^2 = 0.65$), $F = 144.23$, $p < 0.001$. All five components of transformational leadership were positively and statistically significant and correlated with both IS and ES, with the beta values of IIa ($\beta = 0.12$ and 0.24, respectively), IIb ($\beta = 0.34$ and 0.20, respectively), IM ($\beta = 0.36$ and 0.21, respectively), IS ($\beta = 0.29$ and 0.11, respectively) and IC ($\beta = 0.26$ and 0.56, respectively). The results indicated that IIb, IM, IC and IS were the strongest predictors of teachers' IS, while IIa and IC were the weakest predictors.

In addition, the results in Table 4 show that the four components of transactional leadership explained 65% of the variance in the IS ($R^2 = 0.65$), $F = 177.20$, $p < 0.001$, and 46% of the variance in the ES ($R^2 = 0.46$), $F = 113.20$, $p < 0.001$. The three components of transactional leadership were negatively, statistically and significantly associated with the two dimensions of job satisfaction, with the beta values of AmbE ($\beta = −0.12$ and −0.25, respectively), MbEP ($\beta = −0.32$ and −0.23, respectively) and LF ($\beta = −0.26$ and −0.42, respectively). Only CR was positively and statistically significant with IS ($\beta = 0.37$) and ES ($\beta = 0.12$). The results indicated that all four components of transactional leadership predicted teachers' job satisfaction. Among these, CR, MbEP and LF were the strongest predictors of job satisfaction, while AmbE was the weakest.

Table 3

Multiple Regression Analyses of Transformational Leadership and Job Satisfaction

	Model 1 IS			Model 2 ES		
	R^2	F	p	R^2	F	p
	0.64	143.05	0.000	0.65	144.23	0.000
Variable	β	t	p	β	t	p
IIa	0.12	2.02*	0.043	0.24	4.02**	0.000
IIb	0.34	6.44**	0.000	0.20	1.06**	0.002
IM	0.36	5.59**	0.000	0.21	1.57**	0.001
IS	0.29	7.85**	0.000	0.11	3.03**	0.003

IC	0.26	6.70**	0.000	0.56	14.21**	0.000

Predictors: IIa = idealised influence attributed, IIb = idealised influence behaviour, IM = inspirational motivation, IS = intellectual stimulation, IC = individualised consideration.

Dependent variables: IS = intrinsic satisfaction, ES = extrinsic satisfaction.

*$p < 0.05$.

** $p < 0.01$.

Table 4

Multiple Regression Analyses of Transactional Leadership and Job Satisfaction

	Model 3			Model 4		
	IS			ES		
	R^2 (Adjusted)	F	p	R^2 (Adjusted)	F	p
	0.65	177.20	0.000	0.46	113.20	0.000
Variable	β	t	p	β	t	p
CR	0.37	5.64**	0.000	0.17	2.89*	0.037
AmbE	−0.12	−1.99**	0.000	−0.25	−3.47**	0.001
MbEP	−0.32	−6.20**	0.000	−0.23	−3.63**	0.000
LF	−0.26	−8.34**	0.000	−0.42	−10.90**	0.000

Predictors: CR = contingent reward, AmbE = active management by exception, MbEP = management by exception passive, LF = laissez-faire leadership.

Dependent variables: IS = intrinsic satisfaction, ES = extrinsic satisfaction.

*$p < 0.05$.

** $p < 0.01$.

4. Discussion

This study aims to investigate teachers' perceptions of transformational and transactional leadership styles, examine the relationships between these leadership styles and teachers' job satisfaction and identify the extent to which these leadership styles predict teachers' job satisfaction. The results confirmed the first hypothesis that school principals used the transformational leadership style more than the transactional leadership one. The study found that teachers viewed their principals as transformational leaders more than transactional ones. Specifically, school principals with transformational leadership behaviours received higher scores. This pointed out that the teachers believed that their principals often promoted constructive relationships, respected the members and prioritise the interests of the organisation over their own (Anderson, 2017; Bass, 1999; Cansoy, 2018; Sun et al., 2017; Sunaryo et al., 2021; Wasonga & Yohannes, 2021; Yeigh et al., 2019). Also, the teachers agreed that their principals built trust with staff and carefully examined the moral and ethical aspects in making decisions (Bass & Riggio, 2014). In addition, the teachers often believed that their principals promoted a shared vision and encouraged the teachers to realise the objectives of the schools and increased teachers' attentiveness of problems. Furthermore, principals promoted teachers' ability to examine problems from different angles and provided the teachers with support, inspiration and experiences (Bass & Riggio, 2014). These findings are supported by previous studies in Vietnam (Suong et al., 2019; Thu et al., 2017), which showed greater principals' implementation of transformational leadership, as perceived by Vietnamese high school teachers.

The findings also indicated that the principals with the transactional leadership behaviours in terms of AmbE, MbEP and LF demonstrated lower overall scores, except for the CR component. This shows the teachers agreed that their principals did not strictly monitor their performance and did not thoroughly record their mistakes (Bass & Riggio, 2014). In addition, the teachers believed that their principals were willing to set objectives and to make their expectations clear (Anderson, 2017; Bass,

4156

1999; Meyer & Norman, 2020; Mirsultan & Marimuthu, 2021; Nyenyembe et al., 2016; Sayadi, 2016; Wen et al., 2019). Moreover, the teachers believed that their principals often avoided interference and often empowered others when problems occurred (Bass & Avolio, 2014). The results also indicated that the teachers believed the principals often rewarded staff for their efforts (Cansoy, 2018; Collie et al., 2012; Maheshwari, 2021). These findings are supported by the result of the study (Thu et al., 2017) that Vietnamese high school teachers perceived the transactional leadership style as being used less by their principals, except for the CR component.

The results also confirmed the second hypothesis that transformational and transactional leadership styles influenced teachers' job satisfaction. In this study, leadership styles had both positive and negative significant correlations with teachers' job satisfaction. All five constituents of transformational leadership and one transactional leadership constituent (CR) are statistically significant at the 0.001 level and positively correlated with teacher's job satisfaction. It means that increased transformational leadership levels were related with increased teachers' job satisfaction. These findings align with the results of previous studies (Amudha & Poornimarani, 2019; Cansoy, 2018; Elmazi, 2018; Maheshwari, 2021; Mirsultan & Marimuthu, 2021; Nazim & Mahmood, 2016; Newman et al., 2016; Purba & Rohiat, 2020; Sun et al., 2017; Thu et al., 2017; Wasonga & Yohannes, 2021; Yeigh et al., 2019), which found a significant and positive association between the transformational leadership style and teachers' job satisfaction. This finding also confirmed the conclusion of Bogler's (2001) study that 'principals' transformational leadership affected teachers' satisfaction both directly and indirectly through their occupation perceptions'. Bogler (2001, p. 668) further stated that 'principals who demonstrate transformational behaviour, such as paying personal attention to the needs and interests of the teachers, providing for intellectual stimulation and challenges, raising teachers' expectations and motivation to devote and investing extra efforts, are assumed to encourage teachers to view their occupation as more rewarding and central to their lives'.

In the present study, the CR had a positive and moderate relationship with both intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfactions. This finding confirmed those of previous studies (Biggerstaff, 2012; Cansoy, 2018; Maheshwari, 2021; Mirsultan & Marimuthu, 2021; Nguni et al., 2006; Sayadi, 2016; Schwartz, 2017; Shila & Sevilla, 2015; Wasonga & Yohannes, 2021; Waters, 2013) in which the CR component positively impacted the levels of teachers' job satisfaction. The CR is viewed as a constructive style of transactional leadership in which leaders clarify expectations and offer recognition when followers achieve objectives (Anderson, 2017; Cansoy, 2018; Meyer & Norman, 2020). As found in the present study, this style of leadership was widely accepted by Vietnamese high school teachers and positively connected with two components of teachers' job satisfaction. The positive impact of the CR on teachers' job satisfaction might reflect the fact that Vietnamese school principals often acknowledge teachers' performance by offering teachers CR (e.g., salary, advancement and status).

Conversely, the three remaining dimensions of the transactional leadership, including active management-by-exception, MbEP and LF negatively correlated with the job satisfaction of teachers. Similar findings were found in the literature (Cansoy, 2018; Haddad & Ashqar, 2020; Maheshwari, 2021; Nguni et al., 2006; Schwartz, 2017; Shila & Sevilla, 2015; Wahab et al., 2014; Yangaiya & Magaji, 2015), which indicated that these leadership components reduce levels of teachers' job satisfaction and commitment. In fact, these three transactional leadership dimensions have negative influences on teachers' job satisfaction, which are consistent with previous research (Anderson, 2017; Maheshwari, 2021; Nguni et al., 2006; Sayadi, 2016). As Bass (1985) argues, these leaders are identified as unproductive and thus their behaviours are not effective in motivating followers.

In addition, the results of multiple regression analyses confirmed the third hypothesis that both transformational and transactional leadership styles predicted teachers' job satisfaction. This finding is supported by previous studies (Cansoy, 2018; Maheshwari, 2021; Nguni et al., 2006; Sun et al., 2017; Yeigh et al., 2019), which showed that behaviours of transformational and transactional leaders predicted teachers' job satisfaction. The teachers' job satisfaction has become more significant because 'teacher's satisfaction reduces attrition, enhances collegiality, improves job performance and has an impact on student achievement' (Woods & Weasmer, 2004, p. 186). The results of the present study are congruent with previous research done in other countries reported in the literature, despite the difference in the culture of Vietnam and other countries. The present study's findings also confirmed Bass's (1999) claim about the universal features of leadership styles across different societies. Therefore, the present study supports the implementation of the transformational leadership style and the CR component of the transactional leadership style in the setting of Vietnamese education. In addition, transformational leadership should be a core element in training programmes for pre-service and in-service teachers. Transformational leadership should also be promoted in professional development programmes for school principals in Vietnam to help these leaders improve leadership effectiveness for increased teachers' job satisfaction and performance.

5. Conclusion

The study showed that principals were perceived by Vietnamese high school teachers as more transformational than transactional in their leadership styles. In addition, significantly positive influences of transformational leadership style and significantly negative influences of transactional leadership style on teachers' job satisfaction were found in the present study. The results also showed that principals' leadership styles predicted teachers' job satisfaction. These findings indicate that teachers with higher levels of job satisfaction perceived their school principals as more transformational in their leadership style and demonstrating more the CR behaviour of transactional leadership style. The findings also indicated that all components of the two leadership styles predicted teachers' intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfactions. This finding agrees with the conclusion of Marlow et al.'s (1997) study that principal leadership has also been an integral contributing factor to teachers' job satisfaction.

Insights from the study findings suggest that school principals should maintain behaviours of transformational leadership and the CR behaviour of transactional leadership to improve teachers' job satisfaction in the high school setting of Vietnam. Particularly, transformational principals with idealised influence behaviours inspire their teachers through exceptional personal performance and provide a vision that is worthy of inspiration to followers (Bass & Riggio, 2014). Transformational principals with inspirational motivation behaviours inspire their teachers by setting high goals, building a team spirit and clarifying expectations (Anderson, 2017). Transformational principals with intellectual stimulation behaviours challenge teachers' own critical thinking, viewpoints as well as values of the organisation and motivate their teachers to be more innovative, analytical and productive (Avolio et al., 1999; Bass, 1999). Transformational principals with individualised consideration behaviours act as a team coach by focusing on teacher needs, thereby helping teachers to reach their full growth and potential (Wen et al., 2019). Transactional principals with CR behaviours ensure the schools' goals are reached through teachers' efforts (Bass, 1999).

6. Recommendations

The present study has certain limitations although some significant findings were reported. First, the study was conducted with a small sample of 387 high school teachers in the rural school context, which may affect the representativeness of the entire population of teachers and principals. Therefore, future

studies should utilise a larger sample from different levels of education in different settings in Vietnam to validate the results of this study. Second, this study did not examine whether or not the teachers' background (e.g., age, sex and teaching experience) related to teachers' assessments of the leadership styles and teachers' job satisfaction. Future research can investigate these relationships. Third, the study only utilised the quantitative design by using closed-ended questions from two standardised questionnaires to obtain data. Thus, further research should employ a mixed-methods or qualitative approach to obtain deeper understanding about teachers' perceptions of leadership styles and their job satisfaction. Finally, the present study only investigated the influences of leadership styles on teachers' job satisfaction. Hence, future studies should examine the impacts of these leadership styles on other teachers' outcomes such as self-efficacy, responsibility, turnover and retention.

Acknowledgement

References

Amudha, J., & Poornimarani, R. (2019). The impact of transformational leadership style practiced by principals in determining the job satisfaction of teachers working at private degree colleges in Bangalore city. *Think India*, *22*(2), 237–250. https://doi.org/10.26643/think-india.v22i2.8725

Anastasiou, S., & Garametsi, V. (2021). Perceived leadership style and job satisfaction of teachers in public and private schools. *International Journal of Management in Education*, *15*(1), 58–77. https://doi.org/10.1504/IJMIE.2021.111817

Anderson, M. (2017). Transformational leadership in education: A review of existing literature. *International Social Science Review*, *93*(1), 1–13.

Avolio, B. J., Bass, B. M., & Jung, D. I. (1999). Re-examining the components of transformational and transactional leadership using the multifactor leadership questionnaire. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, *72*(4), 441–462. https://doi.org/10.1348/096317999166789

Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (1995). *Multifactor leadership questionnaire, leader form, rater form, and scoring key for MLQ form 5x-short*. Mind Garden.

Bass, B. M. (1985). *Leadership and performance beyond expectations*. Free Press.

Bass, B. M. (1999). Two decades of research and development in transformational leadership. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, *8*(1), 9–32. https://doi.org/10.1080/135943299398410

Bass, B. M., & Riggio, R. E. (2014). *Transformational leadership* (2nd ed). Routledge.

Biggerstaff, J. K. (2012). *The relationship between teacher perceptions of elementary school principal leadership style and teacher job satisfaction.* Western Kentucky University. https://digitalcommons.wku.edu/diss/22

Bogler, R. (2001). The influence of leadership style on teacher job satisfaction. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *37*(5), 662–683. https://doi.org/10.1177/00131610121969460

Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership*. Harper & Row.

Cansoy, R. (2018). The relationship between school principals' leadership behaviours and teachers' job satisfaction: A systematic review. *International Education Studies*, *12*(1), 37–52. https://doi.org/10.5539/ies.v12n1p37

Collie, R. J., Shapka, J. D., & Perry, N. E. (2012). School climate and social-emotional learning: Predicting teacher stress, job satisfaction, and teaching efficacy. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *104*(4), 1189–1204. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0029356

Crossman, A., & Harris, P. (2006). Job satisfaction of secondary school teachers. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, *34*(1), 29–46. https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143206059538

Elmazi, E. (2018). Principal leadership style and job satisfaction of high school teachers. *European Journal of Education*, *1*(3), 76–82. https://doi.org/10.26417/ejed.v1i3.p109-115

Tran, V. D., Tran, T. T. H., & Le, M. T. L. (2022). Principals' transformational and transactional leadership styles and teachers' job satisfaction: A perspective from high school teachers. *Cypriot Journal of Educational Sciences*. *17*(11), 4148-4162. https://doi.org/10.18844/cjes.v17i11.8062

Evan, L. (1997). Understanding teacher morale and job satisfaction. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *3*(8), 831–845. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X(97)00027-9

Haddad, L. D., & Ashqar, R. (2020). The impact of principal leadership style on teachers' happiness and consequently their self efficacy. *Journal of Education and Culture Studies*, *4*(4), 10–18. https://doi.org/10.22158/jecs.v4n4p10

Houck, K. O. (2018). *An examination of the relationships between principals' transformational style and teachers' perceptions of self -efficacy.* Grand Canyon University. https://www.academia.edu/38787585/An_Examination_of_the_Relationships_between_Principals_Transformational_Style_and_Teachers_Perceptions_of_Self_Efficacy

Johnson, Z. T. (2017). *Teacher perceptions of administrator leadership styles regarding job satisfaction.* Lindenwood University. https://digitalcommons.lindenwood.edu/dissertations/201

Kheir-Faddul, N., & Dănăiaţă, D. (2019). The influence of leadership style on teachers' job motivation and satisfaction in the Druze sector of Israel. *Timisoara Journal of Economics and Business*, *12*(1), 17–42. https://doi.org/10.2478/tjeb-2019-0002

Kouali, G. (2017). The instructional practice of school principals and its effect on teachers' job satisfaction. *International Journal of Educational Management*, *31*(7), 958–972. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEM-11-2016-0253

Locke, E. A. (1976). The nature and causes of job satisfaction. In M. D. Dunnette (Ed.), *Handbook of industrial and organizational psychology* (pp. 1297–1349). Rand McNally.

Ma'ruf, Z., Annisa, D., Lestari, S., & Akmal. (2020). Teachers' job satisfaction: Does school principals' leadership style matter? a systematic review. *International Journal of Scientific and Technology Research*, *9*(1), 4279–4284. https://doi.org/: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/338749942

Maheshwari, G. (2021). Influence of teacher-perceived transformational and transactional school leadership on teachers' job satisfaction and performance: A case of Vietnam. *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1080/15700763.2020.1866020

Marlow, L., Inman, D., & Betancourt-Smith, M. (1997). Beginning teachers: Are they still leaving the profession? *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas*, *70*(4), 211–214. https://doi.org/10.1080/00098655.1997.10544200

Maslow, A. (1954). *Motivation and personality*. Harper & Row.

Meyer, M. W., & Norman, D. (2020). Changing design education for the 21st century. *She Ji: The Journal of Design, Economics, and Innovation*, *6*(1), 13–49. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sheji.2019.12.002

Mirsultan, N., & Marimuthu, T. (2021). The relationship of transformational and transactional principal leadership on teacher job satisfaction and secondary student performance in Subang Jaya, Malaysia. *Open Journal of Leadership*, *10*(3), 241–256. https://doi.org/10.4236/ojl.2021.103016

Nazim, F., & Mahmood, A. (2016). Principals' transformational and transactional leadership style and job satisfaction of college teachers. *Journal of Education and Practice*, *7*(34), 18–22. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1126682

Newman, S., Holt, C., & Thompson, R. (2016). Teacher perceptions of leadership styles in distinguished Title I schools and the effect on teacher satisfaction and effort in a South Central Texas major suburban school district. *Journal of Education and Human Development*, *5*(4), 36–42. https://doi.org/10.15640/jehd.v5n4a4

Nguni, S., Sleegers, P., & Denessen, E. (2006). Transformational and transactional leadership effects on teachers' job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior in primary schools: The Tanzanian case. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, *17*(2), 145–177. https://doi.org/10.1080/09243450600565746

Northouse, P. G. (2016). *Leadership theory and practice* (7th ed, Vol. 53, Issue 9). Sage Publications.

Nyenyembe, F. W., Maslowski, R., Nimrod, B. S., & Peter, L. (2016). Leadership styles and teachers' job satisfaction in Tanzanian public secondary schools. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, *4*(5), 980–988. https://doi.org/10.13189/ujer.2016.040507

Purba, I. R. D. P., & Rohiat, R. (2020). The influence of school headmaster transformation leadership and work satisfaction on teachers organizational committee. *Journal of Educational Management and Leadership*, *1*(1), 22–24. https://doi.org/10.33369/jeml.1.1.22-24

Tran, V. D., Tran, T. T. H., & Le, M. T. L. (2022). Principals' transformational and transactional leadership styles and teachers' job satisfaction: A perspective from high school teachers. *Cypriot Journal of Educational Sciences*. *17*(11), 4148-4162. https://doi.org/10.18844/cjes.v17i11.8062

Sadeghi, A., & Pihie, Z. A. L. (2013). The role of transformational leadership style in enhancing lecturers' job satisfaction. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, *4*(8), 264–271. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3746710

Sayadi, Y. (2016). The effect of dimensions of transformational, transactional, and non-leadership on the job satisfaction and organizational commitment of teachers in Iran. *Management in Education*, *30*(2), 57–65. https://doi.org/10.1177/0892020615625363

Schwartz, G. J. (2017). *The relationship between teacher job satisfaction and principal leadership styles.* Carson-Newman University. https://classic.cn.edu/libraries/tiny_mce/tiny_mce/plugins/filemanager/files/Dissertations/DissertaionsFall2017/Gwendolin_J._Schwartz.pdf

Shila, J., & Sevilla, A. (2015). The impact of the principals' leadership style on teachers' job satisfaction and organizational commitment: An Indian perspective. *International Journal of Education and Management Studies*, *5*(1), 1–7. https://doi.org/10.15614/ijpp%2F2015%2Fv6i1%2F88445

Short, J. J. (2016). *Teachers' self-efficacy and their perceptions of principals' transformational leadership practices.* Baker University. https://kipdf.com/queue/teachers-self-efficacy-and-their-perceptions-of-principals-transformational-lead_5ac5216e1723ddd8d0ac8f23.html

Spector, P. E. (1997). *Job satisfaction: Application, assessment, causes and consequences*. Sage. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452231549

Sun, J., Chen, X., & Zhang, S. (2017). A review of research evidence on the antecedents of transformational leadership. *Education Sciences*, *7*(1), 1–27. https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci7010015

Sunaryo, W., Tukiran, M., Yusnita, N., & Wulandar, D. (2021). Develop model of transformational, transactional leadership style, teachers perception and teachers satisfaction: Evidence from Indonesian high schools. *Psychology and Education Journal*, *58*(1), 2305–2319. https://doi.org/10.17762/pae.v58i1.1107

Suong, H. T. T., Thanh, D. D., & Dao, T. T. X. (2019). The impact of leadership styles on the engagement of cadres, lecturers and staff at public universities - Evidence from Vietnam. *Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business*, *6*(1), 273–280. https://doi.org/10.13106/jafeb.2019.vol6.no1.273

Tentama, F., Merdiaty, N., & Subardjo, S. (2021). The job satisfaction of university teachers. *Journal of Education and Learning (EduLearn)*, *15*(1), 48–54. https://doi.org/10.11591/edulearn.v15i1.17054

Thu, P. D. X., Mergler, A., & Pillay, H. (2017). Leadership styles of Vietnamese higher education leaders: Transformational, transactional, or laissez-faire. *Can Tho University Journal of Science*, *07*, 126–137. https://doi.org/10.22144/ctu.jen.2017.058

Tran, V. D., & Le, M. T. L. (2015). School environment factors as predictors for teachers' teaching efficacy, teacher stress and job satisfaction. *International Education Research*, *3*(2), 28–46. https://doi.org/10.12735/ier.v3i2p28

Wahab, J. A., Fuad, C. F. M., Ismail, H., & Majid, S. (2014). Headmasters' transformational leadership and their relationship with teachers' job satisfaction and teachers' commitments. *International Education Studies*, *7*(13), 40–48. https://doi.org/10.5539/ies.v7n13p40

Wasonga, T. A., & Yohannes, M. E. (2021). Leadership styles and teacher job satisfaction in Ethiopian schools. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership*, *1*(1), 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1177/17411432211041625

Waters, K. K. (2013). *The relationship between principals' leadership styles and job satisfaction as perceived by primary school teachers across NSW independent schools.* University of Wollonggong. http://ro.uow.edu.au/theses/4074

Weiss, D. J., Dawis, R. V., England, G. W., & Lofquist, L. H. (1967). *Manual for the Minnesota satisfaction questionnaire*. University of Minnesota.

Wen, T. B., Theresa, C. F. H., Kelana, B. W. Y., Othman, R., & Syed, O. R. (2019). Leadership styles in influencing employees' job performances. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, *9*(9), 55–65. https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarbss/v9-i9/6269

Woods, A. M., & Weasmer, J. (2004). Maintaining job satisfaction: Engaging professionals as active participants. *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas*, *77*(3), 118–121. https://doi.org/10.1080/00098650409601242

Tran, V. D., Tran, T. T. H., & Le, M. T. L. (2022). Principals' transformational and transactional leadership styles and teachers' job satisfaction: A perspective from high school teachers. *Cypriot Journal of Educational Sciences*. *17*(11), 4148-4162. https://doi.org/10.18844/cjes.v17i11.8062

Yangaiya, S. A., & Magaji, K. (2015). The relationship between school leadership and job satisfaction of secondary school teachers: A mediating role of teacher empowerment. *PEOPLE: International Journal of Social Sciences*, *1*(1), 1239–1251. https://doi.org/10.20319/pijss.2015.s21.12391251

Yeigh, T., Lynch, D., Turner, D., Provost, S. C., Smith, R., & Willis, R. L. (2019). School leadership and school improvement: An examination of school readiness factors. *School Leadership and Management*, *39*(5), 434–456. https://doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2018.1505718