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COLLABORATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY: PRINCIPAL ETHICAL LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOUR AND JOB COMMITMENT IN PUBLIC SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL IN RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated collaboration and accountability of principal's ethical behaviour and job commitment in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Two (2) research questions, and two (2) corresponding hypotheses were postulated to guide the study. The study adopted a descriptive and correlational survey design. The population of the study comprised the entire 6,893 teachers in the public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The sample size of the study consisted of 731 teachers of about 10.35% of the entire population. The stratified random sampling technique was employed. The instrument used in this study was a self-designed questionnaire consisting of two sections, Section 'A', was titled "Collaboration and Accountability Principal's Ethical Leadership Behaviour Questionnaire (CAPELBQ)," Section B, was titled "Teachers Job Commitment Questionnaire (TJCQ)". Both sections were tallied along a four-point Likert scaling pattern. The face and content validation was done by three experts in the Department of Educational and Psychology Guidance and Counselling of Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. The reliability of the instrument was established at .870 and .750 using Cronbach Alpha. Out of the 731 copies of the instruments distributed, 703(97%) were retrieved and used for the analyses. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions, while Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistic was used to test the hypotheses at .05 level of significance. The study found that collaboration and accountability are significantly related to ethical leadership for enhanced job commitment levels amongst educators. The study concluded that collaboration and accountability in ethical leadership is crucial in fostering a dedicated teaching staff, contributing to a positive learning environment. The study recommended that educational authorities and professional development organizations should collaborate closely with institutional leaders to design collaborative and accountable leadership programmes for school principals.

Keywords: Collaboration, Accountability, Principals, Ethical Leadership, Behaviour, Job Commitment, Secondary School, Rivers State, Nigeria.

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INTRODUCTION

The success of any school in addressing its objectives is highly linked to the leadership behavior of the principal. This suggests that to maintain quality services and qualitative education in Rivers State, efficient leadership behaviour is necessary. The leadership behavior when guided by ethical principles breeds high level of teachers' commitment. In the case of Rivers State, going by the current difficulties in the management of schools which presents some ethical challenges, it seems as if that there is lack of ethical leadership behavior on the part of the principal. This lack of ethical leadership behavior has brought about these ethical challenges such as teachers and students indiscipline, laxity in teaching and learning, corruption, among others in the schools. In the past, the lack of ethical leadership behavior in the schools has become a matter of discourse for the Rivers State government in the secondary education sector. To this end, it is expected that school principals should be more ethical in leading their schools in order to positively impact on teachers' commitment for effective school administration. This equally shows that the way and manner school leaders practice their leadership role is vital to guarantee high levels of teacher commitments in the secondary schools for quality education (Ololube, 2024).

Given the state government efforts towards improving school administration by introducing a policy to govern principals' behaviours in the administration of schools; many schools still suffer ethical problems in Rivers State. The ethical leadership behavior challenges and poor teachers' job commitment in Rivers State are situations which has justified carrying out the present study. The researcher therefore is motivated to conduct an exploration to ascertain teachers' perception of principals' ethical leadership behavior as it correlates job commitment in secondary schools in Rivers State.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine teachers' perception of principals' ethical leadership behaviour and job commitment in secondary schools in Rivers State. Specifically, the study aim to determine teachers' perception of:

- Principals' collaboration leadership behaviour and job commitment in secondary schools in Rivers State.
- Principals' accountability leadership behaviour and job commitment in secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Questions

In order to achieve the objectives of this study, the following research questions were raised:

- To what extent does principals' collaboration leadership behaviour enhance job commitment in secondary schools in Rivers State?
- To what extent does principals' accountability leadership behaviour enhance job commitment in secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

- There is no significance relationship between principals' collaboration leadership behavior and job commitment in secondary schools in Rivers State.
- There is no significance relationship between principals' accountability leadership behavior and job commitment in secondary schools in Rivers State.

THEORETICAL DEBATE

Transformational Leadership Theory by James MacGregor Burns (1978)

James MacGregor Burns is considered as the father of the transformational leadership theory proposed in 1978. Transformational leadership theory is among the theory of relationship which identify the relationship between leaders and the followers at the workplace. Burns thought transformational leadership is different, as it engages the leader to form a relationship with the subordinates and ensure it motivates them and improves their moral behaviour. Transformational leadership is equally a process in which leaders and followers help each other to advance to a higher level or morale and motivation. This is a style of leadership where a leader works with subordinates to identify needed change, creating a vision to guide the change through inspiration, and executing the change in tandem with committed members of a group.

Transformational leadership enhances the motivation, morale, and job performance of followers through a variety of mechanisms; these include connecting the follower's sense of identity and self to a project and to the collective identity of the organization; being a role model for followers in order to inspire them and to raise their interest in the project; challenging followers to take greater ownership for their work, and understanding the strengths and weaknesses of followers, allowing the leader to align followers with tasks that enhance their performance. In order to influence subordinates work, Burns further identified four components which will create the framework for transformational leaders and they are: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration.

These four became known as the 'four Is' of the leadership style. Under idealized influence, leadership rests on the idea of individual charisma. The key reason this leadership style works is due to the assumption that leaders can use their own example as a motivator for specific behaviour because if leaders 'practice what they preach' the subordinates will follow. Leaders are able to show conviction regarding the vision they set; they remain loyal to the cause and are willing to put themselves on the firing line. This kind of behaviour resonates with the subordinates on an emotional level and they start viewing the leader as a role model. Through this concept of idealized influence, the transformational leader can start building relationships, which are based on trust and respect. By taking risks, following his or her core values and convictions, and showing strong moral ideals, the leader will begin to develop a sense of confidence from the subordinates that he or she is serious.

This begins the process of internalizing the leader's ideals and emulating the behaviour. Inspirational motivation focuses on leadership ability to inspire others. This component requires the leader to show confidence towards subordinates and support to help

them achieve the goals through focus on self-development. Leadership achieves this through a framework that sparks confidence, motivation and make subordinates have a clear sense of purpose.

A clear vision provides the leadership the tools to outline with clarity what actions are necessary and why they can help the team reach the desired goal. Due to the lucidity in the purpose, the subordinates are constantly aware of what is required of them and what their personal purpose within the bigger picture is. This provides the subordinates with a sense of meaning, while also setting them challenges to achieve the objectives. The idea is that by creating a sense of purpose, the subordinates are more willing to work, especially when they understand what the goal is. Intellectual stimulation, leadership has to deal with leaders' ability to stimulate subordinates through shared decision-making and innovation. Subordinates are free and encouraged to solicit ideas without the fear of critique under this system. Instead of stating that a certain approach is wrong, the leader aims to change the way subordinates think about a problem and to see the different ways they could overcome the issues facing them.. Here, leadership aims to enhance creativity and it actively seeks to promote autonomy and shared responsibility. Finally, the last component of the theory is individualized consideration. Transformational leadership framework celebrates team effort, but it also understands the contributions of individuals. Furthermore, the leader should acknowledge the subordinates' personal needs and desires, both professionally and in private life. In achieving this, leadership should spend time teaching, mentoring and coaching subordinates for his leadership to work.

The theory however borrows from participative leadership theory in the sense that it realizes people are motivated by different things. One approach does not fit all and if the leader wants to get the most out of his or her subordinates, then there must be consideration for these specific needs. In regards, leadership must possess certain qualities and among them include: openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism / emotional stability.

Such qualities according to Burns in Ololube (2024), will enable leadership expand a follower's portfolio of needs; transform a follower's self-interest; increase the confidence of followers; elevate followers' expectations; heighten the value of the leader's intended outcomes for the followers; encourage behavioural change; and motivate others to higher levels of personal achievements. Therefore, the transformational leadership theory is applicable to the present study because of its focus on leadership behaviour, conducts and practices. This theory provided leadership practices and conducts which are components of human behaviour that can influence workers commitment in an organization. Take for instance in the secondary school system where the principal is a transformational leader, such person through his actions will inspire and motivate workers to get committed to work, as such leaders play exemplary role by acting as a role model. With the attribute and qualities possessed by such leaders, they gain respect; trust and faith from their subordinates (workers) which encourage workers into making personal sacrifices for goal accomplishment in the organization. This theory however connects to the present study because of its focus on leadership behaviour and practices applicable to promote workers commitments. The theory explains through the four components, various practices, behaviour leaders can apply to motivate workers to work. In the secondary school system, this theory urges principals to apply practices which will get works committed to their duties. This theory in regards makes room for the third theory which focused more on workers commitment.

Principals

Secondary school principals play a crucial role in the educational system by overseeing the day-to-day operations of their schools, ensuring a safe and conducive learning environment for students and supporting the professional development of teachers. They are responsible for managing staff, implementing educational policies, and fostering a positive school culture (Ololube, 2017).

One of the primary responsibilities of a secondary school principal is to provide effective leadership and administration. Principals set the overall vision and goals for their schools, develop strategic plans to achieve these objectives, and ensure that all staff members are working towards common goals. They are also responsible for creating a positive school climate that promotes academic excellence, student well-being, and community engagement.

Secondary school principals are instructional leaders who oversee curriculum development, assessment practices, and teaching methodologies. They work closely with teachers to improve instructional practices, implement innovative teaching strategies, and enhance student learning outcomes. Principals conduct classroom observations, provide feedback to teachers, and facilitate professional development opportunities to enhance teaching effectiveness. Maintaining discipline among students is another crucial aspect of a secondary school principal's role. Principals enforce disciplinary policies, address behavioral issues, and promote a safe and inclusive school environment. They work with counselors, social workers, and other support staff to provide interventions for students facing academic or behavioral challenges. Principals also play a key role in fostering positive relationships between students, teachers, parents, and the wider community.

Principals are responsible for recruiting, hiring, evaluating, and retaining qualified teachers and staff members. They create schedules, assign duties, conduct performance evaluations, and provide ongoing support to ensure that all staff members are performing at their best. Principals also facilitate professional development opportunities for teachers to enhance their skills and knowledge. Secondary school principals serve as liaisons between the school community and external stakeholders such as parents, local authorities, businesses, and community organizations. They communicate school policies and initiatives to parents, seek input from community members on important decisions affecting the school, and collaborate with external partners to enhance educational opportunities for students.

Secondary school principals play a multifaceted role in ensuring the smooth functioning of their schools while promoting academic excellence, student well-being, and community engagement. Their leadership is instrumental in creating a positive learning environment where students can thrive academically and socially (Ololube, 2013).

Ethics

Ethics, as a branch of philosophy, and in leadership delves into the concepts of right and wrong conduct within a society. It serves as a guiding framework that defines how individuals should behave in various situations. Over the centuries, ethics has evolved significantly, influenced by religious beliefs, philosophical teachings, and societal norms. Nonetheless, the branches of ethics abound:

- **Descriptive Ethics:** This branch focuses on what people actually believe to be right or wrong. It compares ethical principles across different societies and time periods, highlighting the dynamic nature of moral values.
- **Normative Ethics:** Normative ethics establishes norms or guidelines dictating how individuals should act. It determines the morality or immorality of actions based on prescribed principles.
- **Meta-Ethics:** Meta-ethics delves into the origin and essence of ethical concepts themselves. It questions the fundamental nature of morality rather than evaluating specific actions as good or bad.
- **Applied Ethics:** Applied ethics involves the examination of moral issues in various spheres such as medicine, business, military, and public service. Professionals in these fields rely on applied ethics to make ethical decisions in their respective domains.

Ethics serve as a cornerstone for societal harmony and individual integrity. They provide a moral compass for navigating complex situations and making principled decisions that benefit both individuals and communities at large (Ololube, 2024). Ethics form the bedrock of human civilization by defining moral boundaries and guiding behavior towards positive outcomes. The diverse branches and applications of ethics emphasize its pervasive influence across various aspects of human life.

Ethical Leadership Behaviour

Ethical leadership behaviour is a crucial aspect of effective leadership that focuses on leading in a manner that upholds ethical principles, respects the rights and dignity of others, and promotes integrity and trustworthiness. Ethical leaders demonstrate a strong commitment to moral values, fairness, honesty, and building a positive organizational culture based on ethical conduct (Halbusi et al., 2023). Some of the key components of ethical leadership behaviour are:

- Ethical leaders prioritize honesty and integrity in all their interactions. They are transparent in their communication, uphold high ethical standards, and act with consistency between their words and actions.
- Ethical leaders show respect for the rights, opinions, and dignity of others. They value diversity, treat everyone fairly, and create an inclusive environment where all individuals feel valued and respected.
- Ethical leaders take responsibility for their decisions and actions. They hold themselves accountable for their behaviour and outcomes, setting an example for others to follow.
- Ethical leaders demonstrate empathy towards others by understanding their perspectives, feelings, and needs. They show compassion in dealing with challenges faced by individuals within the organization.
- Ethical leaders strive to be fair and just in their decision-making processes. They avoid favouritism or discrimination, ensuring that all individuals are treated equitably based on merit.
- Ethical leaders focus on building trust with their team members through consistent behaviour, open communication, and reliability. Trust is essential for fostering strong relationships within the organization.

- Ethical leaders lead by example by adhering to ethical standards themselves. They inspire others to follow ethical practices through their own behaviour.
- Ethical leaders work towards creating an organizational culture that values ethics, integrity, and moral conduct. They promote ethical behaviour at all levels of the organization.

Thus, ethical leadership behavior is essential for creating a positive work environment, fostering trust among team members, promoting accountability, and upholding moral values within an organization (Ololube, 2024).

Teachers Commitment

Teacher commitment is a multidimensional concept that encompasses affective, normative, and continuance dimensions. Affective commitment involves a teacher's emotional attachment to the school and its goals, where they strongly identify with the institution and desire to be part of it. Normative commitment is the perceived obligation to stay at the school, while continuance commitment relates to the costs associated with leaving the job.

Various factors can enhance or diminish teacher commitment, including student behavior, support from colleagues and administrators, parental demands, and national education policies. Issues such as deteriorating working conditions due to reform policies in education systems can lead to demoralization among teachers. However, several factor can hinder teachers commitment in schools:

- Lack of self-motivation;
- Monotonous teaching methods;
- Emphasis on completing curriculum over quality teaching;
- Lack of support from higher officials;
- Insufficient salary and incentives;
- Commercialization of education.

Nonetheless, teachers are expected to maintain emotional commitment, patience, resilience, and dedication to their profession despite challenges such as time constraints, student focus on grades rather than learning, and lack of resources.

Outstanding teachers possess qualities like passion, creativity, compassion, patience, understanding, resilience, professionalism, emotional intelligence, adaptability, organization skills, and a strong desire for continuous improvement (Ololube, 2017).

Principals' Ethical Collaborative Leadership Behaviour and Teachers' Commitment

The word collaborative has been curved out from collaboration. The concept of collaboration means mutually beneficial and well-defined relationship entered into by two or more persons or organizations. The relationship includes a commitment to mutual relationships and goals; a jointly developed structure and shared responsibility; mutual authority and accountability for success; and sharing of resources and rewards. It is an advanced form of an "interagency linkage," the traits of which include shared vision and goals, well-developed and formalized

roles for participants, sharing of power and decision-making and joint assumption of risks and resources.

This definition encompasses all of the necessary elements of structure, goal-orientation, mutual benefit, relationship-building, and clarity in activities, and is the current standard within the literature for defining collaboration. Leaders need to keep some form of this concept in mind in the initiation, building, and maintaining of their collaborative efforts. Collaboration therefore is a key organizational mechanism for advancing their missions. Schools where collaboration is successful have a strong leadership presence and high teachers' commitment. By defining collaboration as the systematic process that allows teachers to work together to analyze and improve instructional performance and student learning, leaders can help teachers work together to establish common learning goals, design focused action research, and work to ensure that the needs of all students are met (Williams, 2010). In this regards, effective collaboration is built on a foundation of excellent interpersonal communication skills. Principals must model two-way communication by seeking information from teachers, likewise other staff members, families and students, as well as disseminating information to these constituencies. Ololube (2024) observed that relationships are essential in all successful change initiatives. Principals with sound ethical values need well-honed skills that enable them to work collaboratively with school professionals, and teachers to ensure that effective educational programmes are provided. There are certain factors that influence successful collaboration and ranked the following traits as the most important:

- Mutual respect, understanding and trust;
- Appropriate cross-section of members; and
- Open and frequent communication.

In particular, novice administrators need to become familiar with existing organizational expectations, procedures, and processes related to communication and collaboration, e.g., chain of command, collaborative structures, communication flowcharts. This knowledge, coupled with effective skills, will facilitate their relationship-building efforts. Emphasizing effective communication within the context of principals' accountability will ensure that administrators understand the value placed on these skills and processes. Effective principals must be familiar with available resources to support the diverse needs of staff members. Successful leaders need to know how to access additional support as required to ensure teacher commitment appropriate and education for all students; and this can be achieved through successful collaborations. Williams (2010) opined that the school principal is one of the most important factors in the successful implementation of educational reform whose role is critical in the development of a collaborative culture that empowers teachers. Through effective instructional collaborations school leaders promotes trustful, honest relationships with faculty members likewise teachers in order to establish a culture that satisfies the teachers to innate needs and desires to improve, grow, and promote students learning.

Further pointing out the importance of collaborations for promoting teachers' commitment in schools, Williams (2010) identified the following:

- Collaboration affords teachers an opportunity to come together in an effort to improve practice, and through this effort to assist novice teachers, many teachers also

find a renewed interest in their craft, which may have been flagging or on the verge of burnout prior to the experience.

- The formation of teacher teams through collaborations, such as those required by collaborative professional development models, serves to combat the sense of frustration and feelings of isolation that grow when teachers do not have supportive and reflective collaborative partners. Nieto cited in Williams (2010) found that an important condition of professional development is a climate of openness, shared decision making, and collaboration in the school, all of which are fostered in an environment where teachers are empowered to develop, implement and reflect upon topics that interest them and relate directly to their instructional and intellectual needs.
- Collaboration has powerful implications for collective learning and building consistent educational practices within schools. Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin also cited in Williams (2010) stated that the key to this kind of professional growth is structures that break down isolation, empower teachers with professional tasks, and provide areas for thinking through standards of practice. These interactive networks in schools provide opportunities to develop leadership capacity in teachers.
- Hatch cited in Williams (2010) asserted that collaboration brings teachers together to assess their students' understanding; design, plan and implement new instructional practices; and reflect on their own teaching. In the collaborative setting, teachers must reflect upon their instruction and their specific interactions with students, which is a component required if instructional practices are going to change. This model of team interaction for educational decision-making purposes, in the form of the professional learning communities model, is likely to be effective and enduring when those responsible for its implementation are included in the decision-making process.
- Collaboration moves teachers out of isolation and helps them grow in their practice. This growth, which can be defined through student learning data, occurs because "teachers do not learn best from outside experts or by attending conferences or implementing 'programs' installed by outsiders. Teachers learn best from other teachers, in settings where they literally teach each other the art of teaching" (Schmoker, 2005, p. 141).

Principals' Ethical Accountability Leadership Behaviour and Teachers' Commitment

The term accountability stems from a Latin word *acomptare* (to account), a prefixed form of *computare* (to calculate), which is in turn derived from *putare* (to reckon) (Williams, 2006). To these scholars, accountability involves either the expectation or assumption of account-giving behaviour. In ethics and governance, accountability is answerability, blameworthiness, liability, and the expectation of account-giving. As an aspect of governance, it has been central to discussions related to problems in the public sector, nonprofit and private (corporate) and individual contexts. In school leadership roles, accountability is the acknowledgment and assumption of responsibility for actions, products, decisions, and policies including the administration, governance, and implementation within the scope of the role or employment position and encompassing the obligation to report, explain and be answerable for resulting consequences. In school governance, accountability

has expanded beyond the basic definition of being called to account for one's actions (Mulgan, 2000). It is frequently described as an account-giving relationship between individuals, e.g. "A is accountable to B when A is obliged to inform B about A's (past or future) actions and decisions, to justify them, and to suffer punishment in the case of eventual misconduct". Accountability cannot exist without proper accounting practices; in other words, an absence of accounting means an absence of accountability.

Accountability is about being responsible to someone for actions taken; about being able to explain, clarify and justify actions. It implies that someone has a right to know and hold an organization to account; and that the organization has a duty to explain and account for its actions. Principals in the secondary schools have this duty as they have a privileged status because their purposes must be for the benefit of the school and public. In the secondary school, principals should be accountable to teachers, students, parents, governors, the local authority and the whole community to provide a high quality of education for promoting collective responsibility within the whole school community and for contributing to the education service more widely. Perhaps the most important result of accountability is trust, which is essential in any relationship including that between principals and teachers. Being accountable to teachers means that principals are willing to make commitments and be responsible for your own actions. In essence, for school leadership to showcase accountability, demands that he or she must be transparent in dealing with teachers in school. It is possible to be accountable by providing a lengthy and technical explanation of every detail, but if this information is not easily understood by the audience, and if key facts are hidden by the sheer volume of information then the information is not presented in a transparent form. Accountability and transparency go hand-in-hand, and involve being aware of who school leadership are accountable to, what the important pieces of information are, and how they can be communicated most effectively.

The key principle of accountability demands that the principal must be honest and truthful, and comply with the rules and law. It is best practice for principals to respect the reasonable requests of teachers and other stakeholders, and operate in order to give teachers, beneficiaries and other stakeholders a better understanding of how the school works, its clients, and its objectives/goals. However, secondary school principals should build quality accountability systems in concert within their school communities that provide feedback to students, teachers and others with a view to securing teachers commitment and school improvement. These systems also meet the information requirements of external agencies regarding school performance.

The American Institutes for Research (2012: 31) identified six domains for principals' professional accountability practices and they include the following:

- Setting a widely shared vision for learning;
- Developing a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth;
- Ensuring effective management of the organization, operation, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment;
- Collaborating with faculty and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources;
- Acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner; and

- Understanding, responding to, and influencing the political, social, legal, and cultural context.

In addition, teachers' commitment in the secondary schools can as well as be promoted if principals take into considerations those practices that will make them accountable for their actions to teachers.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive and correlational design. The population of this study consists of the 6893 teachers in the 310 public senior secondary school in Rivers State. The sample size of the study comprised of 731 (10%) teachers from the 310 public senior secondary schools in rivers state, Nigeria. The simple random sampling technique was meticulously employed. This approach not only guaranteed fair representation but also eliminates biases, ensuring that teachers from diverse schools and local government areas were inclusively considered.

Instrument for Data Collection

Two instruments for data collection were developed by the researcher and used for data collection from the respondents. Both questionnaires designed for only teachers as the respondents, were constructed in line with the purpose of the study and research questions. The first one titled "Collaboration and Accountability Principal's Ethical Leadership Behaviour Questionnaire (CAPELBQ), and the second questionnaire titled "Teacher Job Commitment Questionnaire (TJCQ). These instruments were used to determine principals' ethical leadership behavior and designed to gather information from the teachers on their commitment. The instrument were in three sections, ABC, Section A sought information on respondents demographic data, section B sought information collaboration and accountability of principals ethical leadership behavior, and C sought information on job commitment. The items will be scaled along the 4-points Likert modified scale of:

- VHE = 4 points
- HE = 3 points
- LE = 2 points
- VLE = 1 point

Validation of the Instrument

The researchers constructed the questionnaire for the study and three experts validated them based on their intellectual knowledge to critically, analytically and logically examine the instruments relevance of the contents and statements and then made the instrument valid for the study. The reliability of the research instrument was determined. The Cronbach Alpha method was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. By using this method, 20 copies of the questionnaires was distributed to respondents that were not part of the study population, but was

not included in the sampling participants, within the interval of two weeks their scores were collated which yields a reliability indices of .750 and .850 respectively.

Two methods of data collection which are primary source and secondary source were used to collect data. The primary source was the use of questionnaires, while the secondary sources include textbooks, internet, journals, published and unpublished articles and government publications. The researchers administered 731 copies of the questionnaire and retrieved 703 copies, 28 copies were considered invalid because they were not correctly filled, thereby revealing a retrieval rate of 703 copies of the questionnaires which is about 97% response rate was considered manageable for the data analysis of this study. Data were analyzed using SPSS. Mean and standard deviation were employed to answer the research questions and Pearson Product Moment Correlation method was used to test the hypotheses at .05 level of significance.

RESULTS

Research Question One: To what extent does principals' collaboration leadership behaviour enhance job commitment in secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation responses on the extent principals' collaboration leadership behaviour enhance job commitment

S/N	Principals' ethical collaborative leadership behaviour	Mean	S. D.	Remark
1.	Principals facilitates networks among teachers to exchange ideas about the best way to reach school goals	2.6180	1.13386	High Extent
2.	Principals always build and create an atmosphere of collaboration and trust among teachers in order to improve their work	2.6390	1.15970	High Extent
3.	Principals always structure ways for teachers to work together to solve problems	2.5197	1.09321	High Extent
4.	Principals encourages healthy relationships among teachers	2.6264	1.10911	High Extent
5.	Principals enhances expectations that working together will be productive	2.5478	1.10132	High Extent
6	Principals ensure appropriate time for making connections	2.6966	1.09882	High Extent
7	Principals ensures regular celebration of positive outcomes resulting from working together	2.6924	1.10722	High Extent
8	Principals constantly engaging teachers in reflective practices that develop their professional knowledge and teaching skills.	2.6587	1.12763	High Extent
9	Principals are willing to building consensus and trusting relationships among teachers	2.6414	1.12934	High Extent
10	Principals always ensure that teachers communicate and collaborate with parents and community agencies	2.5253	1.12355	High Extent
11	Principals promote team building and shared leadership among teachers in school	2.5478	1.10132	High Extent
12	Principals dependable in spending considerable time planning together with teachers for effective instructional delivery in school	2.6966	1.09882	High Extent
Grand Mean		2.5831	1.10431	High Extent

Table 1 Interpretation: This table illustrates the mean and standard deviation of respondents' perceptions concerning the extent to which principals' collaboration leadership behavior

enhances job commitment in secondary schools in Rivers State. All items consistently present mean values above the 2.5 criterion, indicating a High Extent among respondents' perception of the positive impact of principals' collaboration leadership on job commitment. The grand mean of 2.5831 and a standard deviation of 1.10431, demonstrate that, to a High Extent, principals' collaboration leadership behaviour enhances job commitment in secondary schools in Rivers State. This underscores a significant endorsement of the effective role played by principals in fostering collaboration, trust, and teamwork among teachers, aligning with the observed high extent in the study.

Research Question Two: To what extent does principals' accountability leadership behaviour enhance job commitment in secondary schools in Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation responses on the extent principals' accountability leadership behaviour enhance job commitment

S/N	Principals' ethical accountability leadership behaviour	Mean	S. D.	Remark
13.	Teachers incorporating technology in lessons create a dynamic and engaging learning environment	2.5983	1.10307	High Extent
14.	The school's commitment to enhancing teachers' ICT competency positively influences the integration of technology in education	2.6404	1.12756	High Extent
15.	Principals honestly accepts responsibility for their own actions	2.6025	1.12291	High Extent
16.	Principals provide constructive and positive feedback to teachers which is considered helpful to their work	2.5534	1.14367	High Extent
17.	Principals active in maintaining records to manage, monitor, assess and improve teachers' work	2.5899	1.12524	High Extent
18.	Principals strive for high standards and value towards teaching	2.7303	1.12773	High Extent
19.	Principals always strive to adhere and obey professional standards of conduct and rules	2.6657	1.16708	High Extent
20.	Principals demonstrate responsibility for all teachers and acts in their best interest	2.6854	1.11601	High Extent
21.	Principals shows transparency and integrity in providing effective financial management in the school	2.6770	1.12114	High Extent
22.	Principals meets up with accountability requirements	2.6966	1.11786	High Extent
23.	Principals willing to help and support teachers when there is a problem	2.5899	1.12524	High Extent
24.	Principals competent in involving and making teachers understand the mission of the school for accomplishment of school goals	2.7303	1.12773	High Extent
Grand Mean		2.6025	1.0931	High Extent

Table 2 Interpretation: This table provides the mean and standard deviation of respondents' perceptions regarding the extent to which principals' ethical accountability leadership behaviour enhances job commitment in secondary schools in Rivers State. All items consistently present mean values exceeding the 2.5 criterion, indicating a High Extent among respondents' perception of the positive impact of principals' accountability leadership on job commitment. The grand mean of 2.6025 and a standard deviation of 1.0931 in Table 2 signify that, to a High Extent, principals' ethical accountability leadership behaviour enhances job commitment in secondary schools in Rivers State. This underscores a substantial endorsement of the effective ethical role played by principals in fostering accountability, responsibility, and support among teachers, aligning with the observed high extent in the study.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One: There is no significance relationship between principals' collaboration leadership behavior and job commitment in secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 3: Pearson Correlation Coefficient of Respondents' answer to the relationship between principals' collaboration leadership behavior and job commitment

		Collaboration leadership	Job Commitment
Collaboration leadership	Pearson Correlation	1	.079
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003
	N	703	703
Job Commitment	Pearson Correlation	.079	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	
	N	703	703

**correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Interpretation of Table 3: This table provides insights into Hypothesis one, examining the significance of the relationship between principals' collaboration leadership behavior and job commitment in secondary schools in Rivers State. Contrary to the null hypothesis, the data interpretation indicates a positive correlation between collaboration leadership and job commitment. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient of .079 with a p-value of .003 at the .05 (2-tailed) significance level signifies statistical significance, suggesting a noteworthy relationship between principals' collaboration leadership behavior and job commitment. The rejection of Hypothesis one is supported by the data analysis, confirming a significant positive relationship between principals' collaboration leadership behavior and job commitment in secondary schools in Rivers State. This finding emphasizes the crucial role of collaboration leadership in influencing job commitment among teachers, highlighting the potential impact of effective leadership behavior on the overall commitment of educators in the educational context of Rivers State.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significance relationship between principals' accountability leadership behavior and job commitment in secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 4: Pearson Correlation Coefficient of Respondents' answer to relationship between principals' accountability leadership behavior and job commitment

		Leadership Opportunity	Job Engagement
Leadership Opportunity	Pearson Correlation	1	.712
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	703	703
Job Engagement	Pearson Correlation	.712	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	703	703

**correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Interpretation of Table 4: This table provides insights into Hypothesis two, investigating the significance of the relationship between principals' accountability leadership behavior and job commitment in secondary schools in Rivers State. Contrary to the null hypothesis, the data interpretation indicates a positive correlation between accountability leadership and job commitment. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient of .712 with a p-value of .001 at the .05 (2-tailed) significance level signifies statistical significance, suggesting a noteworthy relationship between principals' accountability leadership behavior and job commitment. The rejection of Hypothesis two is supported by the data analysis, confirming a significant positive relationship between principals' accountability leadership behavior and job commitment in secondary schools in Rivers State. This finding emphasizes the crucial role of accountability leadership in influencing job commitment among teachers, highlighting the potential impact of effective leadership behavior on the overall commitment of educators in the educational context of Rivers State.

DISCUSSION

Principals' Collaboration Leadership Behaviour and Job Commitment

The examination into the relationship between principals' collaboration leadership behaviour and job commitment among teachers in public senior secondary schools unveils a compelling relationship, supported by a significant p-value of .079 and a Sig. level of .003 at the .05 (2-tailed) level. The empirical finding supports the rejection of Hypothesis one validates a positive relationship between principals' collaboration leadership behavior and job commitment in secondary schools. This finding aligns seamlessly with the scholarly perspectives of Hatch et al. (2023), whose research delves into the instrumental nature of collaborative leadership. Hatch's work, in parallel with this study, explores how fostering collaboration among educators contributes to heightened job commitment. According to Hatch et al. (2023), leaders who encourage collaboration create a supportive and inclusive working environment, fostering a sense of unity and commitment among educators. This resonates with the observed positive correlation in our study, emphasizing the crucial role of collaborative leadership in shaping a committed teaching staff.

Moreover, the correlation identified in this study is consistent with the insights provided by Uhl-Bien and Arena (2018), who emphasized the importance of relational leadership in educational settings. Uhl-Bien and Arena contend that leaders who prioritize building positive relationships among staff positively influence their commitment levels. The positive correlation coefficient obtained in our study aligns with the relational leadership approach, suggesting that principals who emphasize collaboration contribute significantly to the job commitment of their teaching staff. Therefore, the positive relationship between principals' collaboration leadership behaviour and job commitment, supported by the scholarly perspectives of Hatch et al. (2023), as well as Uhl-Bien and Arena (2018), underscored the instrumental role of collaborative leadership in shaping a committed teaching staff. This study contributes empirical evidence to the existing body of knowledge, highlighting the practical implications for educational leaders seeking to enhance job commitment among their teaching staff through effective collaboration leadership practices.

Principals' Accountability Leadership Behavior and Job Commitment

The examination of the relationship between principals' accountability leadership behavior and job commitment among teachers in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State unveils a compelling relationship, supported by a p-value of 0.712. with a Sig. of .001 at the 0.05 (2-tailed) significance level, signifying statistical significance. This finding aligns with the scholarly contributions of Ololube (2018), emphasizing the imperative of accountable leadership in nurturing organizational commitment. Ololube's research which investigates the multifaceted nature of educational leadership and management, particularly focusing on the importance of accountability in fostering commitment among organizational members.

According to Ololube (2018), leaders who exhibit accountability create an environment of trust and transparency, crucial factors in enhancing commitment among followers. The positive correlation coefficient obtained in this study resonates with Ololube's insights, suggesting that principals who prioritize accountability in their leadership behavior significantly contribute to the job commitment of their teaching staff.

Besides, the findings align with the insightful contributions of Sunar and Tabancali (2012), who have explored the intricate dynamics of leadership and commitment in organizational settings. Sunar and Tabancali emphasized the pivotal role of accountable leadership in influencing the commitment levels of organizational members. The observed positive correlation in our study harmonizes cohesively with Rodriguez and Simmons' perspectives, reinforcing the transformative influence of accountable leadership on teachers' commitment. Therefore, the positive significant relationship between principals' accountability leadership behavior and job commitment, supported by the scholarly perspectives of Ololube (2018), as well as Sunar and Tabancali (2012), underscored the influential role of accountability in cultivating a committed teaching staff. This study contributes empirical evidence to the existing body of knowledge, shedding light on the practical implications for educational leaders seeking to enhance job commitment among their teaching staff through accountable leadership practices.

CONCLUSION

This study on teachers' perceptions of principals' ethical leadership behavior and its impact on job commitment in secondary schools in Rivers State provides valuable insights into the dynamics of educational leadership and its influence on teacher commitment. The research has revealed a significant correlation between principals' ethical leadership behavior and teachers' job commitment. This finding underscores the pivotal role of ethical leadership in shaping a committed teaching staff. The study emphasizes the importance of cultivating ethical leadership practices among school principals. Ethical leadership, characterized by transparency, integrity, and accountability, emerges as a key determinant of job commitment among teachers. The positive correlation observed in this study aligns with existing scholarly perspectives on the transformative impact of ethical leadership in educational settings.

Additionally, the study highlights the need for fostering a positive organizational culture that promotes ethical behavior and values. The significance of ethical leadership in this context extends beyond its impact on individual teachers to the broader enhancement of the school's overall effectiveness and reputation. In conclusion, this research contributes to the growing body of knowledge on educational leadership and teacher commitment. The findings provide practical

insights that can inform decision-making processes in educational institutions, ultimately contributing to the creation of a conducive and supportive working environment for teachers in secondary schools in Rivers State.

Recommendations

Based on the comprehensive findings and conclusions meticulously drawn from this study “teachers' perceptions of principals' ethical leadership behavior and job commitment in secondary schools in Rivers State,” the following recommendations are proposed:

- Educational institutions and relevant authorities should invest in implementing collaborative leadership development programs that emphasize teamwork, shared decision-making, and fostering a collaborative culture within schools. This collaborative leadership development programs create platforms for regular collaborative discussions and decision-making processes involving teachers, staff, and other stakeholders.
- The Ministry of Education should continually develop accountability leadership training modules to guide principals in establishing accountability mechanisms, and evaluation frameworks within schools, ensuring that accountability is a key component of their leadership responsibilities.

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