

# **JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN NIGERIAN ECONOMY**

**VOL 5(1) March, 2025**

**ISSN: 1597-1937**

**Publications of Lagos State University  
Centre for General Nigerian Studies  
P.M.B. 0001, LASU Post Office,  
Ojo, Lagos Nigeria.**

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*A publication of*  
**Lagos State University**  
P.M.B. 0001. LASU Post Office  
Ojo Lagos

***Printed by:***



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## EDITORIAL DESK

**T**he Centre for General Nigerian Studies has continued to be a frontier for knowledge dissemination through her series of publications, among other activities being performed by the directorate.

This volume 5 journal of Contemporary Issues in Nigerian Economy of March 2025 housed a total of 18 well researched articles from scholars across the geographical boundaries of the Africa sub region. The team of experienced editors subjected the articles to peer review, and their plagiarism checks have satisfied the guild of editors.

The journal is recommended to researchers, scholars, lecturers, and students to read, and the planners can leverage on recommendations as panacea to the doldrums confronting the socio-economic and educational spheres of the Sub Sahara Africa nations

I wish all the contributors and readers Barka Eid Fitri and Easter in advance

**Prof. M.O.B Mohammed** FNAEAP  
*Lead Editor*

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## PRINCIPALS' TRANSACTIONAL LEADERSHIP STYLE AS CORRELATE OF TEACHERS' CORRUPT PRACTICES IN FEDERAL UNITY SCHOOLS OF SOUTH WEST, NIGERIA

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Cite (APA): Shittu T. O., Mbamaonyeukwu M. & Mohammed M. O. (2025). Principals' Transactional Leadership Style as Correlate of Teachers' Corrupt Practices in Federal Unity Schools of South West, Nigeria. *Journal of Contemporary Issues in Nigerian Economy (JCINE)* 5(1) 110-115

DOI: <https://zenodo.org/records/15175570>

### Abstract

*This study examined principals' transactional leadership style as a correlate of teachers' corrupt practices in federal unity schools of southwest, Nigeria. The research objective was to fill the gap and determine how principals' transactional leadership style mitigate corrupt practices orchestrated by teachers in federal unity schools of southwest, Nigeria. The study adopted a correlational design. The study population comprised 2,478 principals and teaching staff in the 19 federal unity schools from Southwest, Nigeria. Taro Yamane formula was used to determine a sample size of 344 teachers and selected through quota sampling techniques. Two research questions were asked to guide the study and two null hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 significance level. Two research instruments titled 'The Principals' Transactional Leadership Style Questionnaire' (PTLSQ) and the 'Teachers' Corrupt Practices Questionnaire' (TCPQ) were used for data collection. The validity of the instruments was determined by test experts on content validity and reliability consistency of the instruments was 0.74 and 0.77 using Cronbach alpha. The data collected were analysed using inferential statistical analysis. Pearson Product Moment correlation was used to analyse hypotheses through Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 22.0. The findings of hypotheses 1 and 2 showed that: a significant relationship existed between principals' transactional leadership style and teachers' corrupt practices in federal unity schools in southwest, Nigeria ( $r = .692$ ;  $N=344$ ;  $p<0.05$ ); and a significant relationship existed between principal's incentive framework and teachers' corrupt practices in federal unity schools in southwest, Nigeria ( $r = .722$ ;  $N=344$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). Based on the findings, the study concluded that the principal transactional leadership style through the uses of punishment and reward system can mitigate teachers' corrupt practices in school. Therefore, it is recommended amongst others that policymakers should organize conferences, seminar, workshop and symposium on adoption of transactional leadership style in federal unity schools in south west, Nigeria to curb the menace of corrupt practices among teaching staff.*

**Keywords:** Corrupt Practices, Principal, Teacher, and Transactional Leadership



## Introduction

Globally, leadership plays a pivotal role in any formal organisation. Leadership appears to be a systematic process whereby superior officers influence subordinates to perform a particular task of organisation. Leadership is ubiquitous which takes place in school organisation. School is a place where the minds of students are shaped, knowledge is gained, and futures are built in primary, secondary and tertiary. School leadership refers to the superiors responsible for guiding and managing school activities toward achieving goals and objectives. Effective school leaders are principal who play a crucial role in shaping the school culture, improving student outcomes, and supporting teacher development. The principal is the chief administrator and leader of a school, typically responsible for managing the school's operations, staff, and students. Principals oversee the development and implementation of educational programs, policies, and procedures. Perhaps, principal transactional leadership is a style of leadership that focuses on exchanging rewards and punishments for specific behaviors and performances. This approach emphasizes the transaction or exchange between the leader and the follower.

However, principal transactional leadership focuses on tasks and goals; emphasis on rewards and punishments; clear expectations and standards; hierarchical structure; and the leader-follower relationship is based on reciprocity. According to Mohammed, Shittu and Lawal (2019), Transactional leadership is a style of leadership in which the leader promotes compliance of his/her followers through both rewards and punishments. Transactional leadership is based on the principle of exchange of rewards between leaders and subordinates (Mottoh, 2015). Secondary schools Principals are seen to be responsible for managing the people's characters, the programme, and the structure through leadership. Corrupt practices in secondary school have become a contagious disease that spread to federal unity school in Southwest, Nigeria. Corruption refers to unethical behaviour orchestrated by a person to achieve personal gain as against the public position. Principals have the primary responsibility of accomplishing the nation's aims and objectives of secondary school education as stipulated in the National Policy on Education (NPE, 2014). In Nigerian unity secondary school system, principals' transactional leadership are those who set clear goals for teachers and provides bonuses for meeting those goals; closely monitor teacher performance and provide regular feedback; and impose disciplinary action on erring teachers who engage in any corrupt practices in school. However, corruption seems to be worrisome and a national disease that spread across the industry, government, non-governmental organisation, the agricultural sector, health sector, social organisation, religious institutions and educational sectors in Nigeria. Corruption observed to be unethical abuse of power, authority and influence toward achieving personal gain.

## Statement of the Problem

It has been observed that corruption has posed serious challenge to the quality of education in Southwest Unity Secondary School in Nigeria. It seems that some Unity School teachers heavily engaged in corrupt practices due to poor remuneration and salary structure; poor working conditions; indiscipline, bribery, embezzlement of funds, nepotism, tribalism, lack of accountability and transparency; inadequate staff training and sponsorship; societal economic pressures and expectations; poverty and pauper life which damages the reputation of the teaching profession, undermine academic integrity and erode quality standard of secondary education. The widespread of teachers corrupt practices bedeviled Southwest Federal Unity Secondary School in Nigeria and this abysmal situation undermines integrity of the teaching profession among teachers in southwest federal unity secondary school in Nigeria. However, the ugly situation fascinated the

interest of the researcher to dwell into principals' transactional leadership style and corrupt practices among secondary school teachers in Southwest Unity School. The extent of teachers' efficiency, effectiveness, and productivity is decreasing which undermined trust in professional teaching responsibility.

### **Objective of the Study**

The objective of this study was to:

1. examine the relationship between principal transactional leadership style and teacher's corrupt practices in federal unity schools in southwest, Nigeria.
2. determine the relationship between the principal's incentive framework and teacher's corrupt practices in federal unity schools in southwest, Nigeria.

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following Null hypotheses were raised:

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between principal transactional leadership style and teacher's corrupt practices in federal unity schools in southwest, Nigeria.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between the principal's incentive framework and teacher's corrupt practices in federal unity schools in southwest, Nigeria.

### **Literature Review**

Transactional leadership is a style of leadership in which the leader promotes compliance of his/her followers through both rewards and punishments. Transactional leadership gives full authority to the leader and the followers must follow orders to receive a reward by meeting the end result, or a consequence for not meeting the result or goal. They are more concerned with following existing rules than making organizational changes (Malos, 2012). Transactional leadership means the leaders lead primarily by using social behaviour exchanges for maximum benefit at low cost. Transactional leadership style known as managerial leadership, it focuses on the role of supervision, organization, and group performance (Akhigbe et al. 2014). The study anchored on transactional leadership theory which attempts to create a mutually beneficial partnership between the leader and the followers in an organization (Lumpkin, 2008). Transactional theories are built on a system of rewards and consequences that follow all actions and inactions within the organization. While transactional leadership may have its place, transactional leadership tends not to be a successful leadership style used in the school environment (Moore, 2012).

In the Southwest Federal Unity Secondary School, some teachers observed to be engaged in corrupt practices. Teacher corrupt practices seem to be immoral, or behaviour exhibited by teachers in their professional occupations. These practices can undermine the integrity of the education system, compromise student learning, and damage the reputation of the teaching profession particularly in Southwest Unity Secondary School, Nigeria. These corrupt practices including Bribery by accepting or soliciting bribes from students, parents, or colleagues in exchange for grades, favours, or other benefits; cheating and academic dishonesty by assisting students in cheating, falsifying grades, or engaging in other forms of academic dishonesty; embezzlement by misusing school funds, resources, or assets for personal gain; favoritism by showing unfair preference to certain students, colleagues, or parents, often in exchange for personal benefits; grade inflation by inflating grades to benefit students, colleagues, or the school's

reputation; misuse of power by using authority to exploit, intimidate, or harass students, colleagues, or parents; nepotism by hiring, promoting, or giving unfair advantages to family members or friends; sexual misconduct by engaging in inappropriate or exploitative relationships with students; theft by stealing school property, resources, or assets; unprofessional conduct; and engaging in behaviour that undermines the integrity of the teaching profession in southwest unity secondary school, Nigeria. Despite government to improve the quality of education, teacher corrupt practices remain a persistent challenge in public schools. Principals' leadership styles have been identified as a critical factor influencing teacher behavior. However, the relationship between principals' transactional leadership style and teacher corrupt practices in federal unity secondary schools remains poorly understood. This study provides insights into the factors that contribute to corrupt practices in federal unity schools and findings that would promote ethical leadership and reduce corruption among professional teachers in the Nigerian secondary school system.

### Methodology

The research design was correlational. The target population comprised 2, 478 teaching staff in the Southwest Unity Secondary School, Nigeria. The Taro Yamane sample size formula was used to selected 344 teachers for the study through quota sampling technique. An instrument titled: 'Principals' Transactional Leadership Style Questionnaire' (PTLSQ) and the 'Teachers' Corrupt Practices Questionnaire' (TCPQ) were used for data collection. The questionnaire was administered on the selected unity secondary teachers in Lagos, Ogun, Osun, Ondo, Oyo and Ekiti state for the study. The questionnaire is divided into two sections: Section A and B. Section A contains the personal information of the respondents and section B contains the questionnaire items structured around the search questions. Each statement is measured on a four-point modifier Likert-type-rating scale, namely: "Strongly Agree (SA)", "Agree (A)", "Strongly Disagree (SD)" and "Disagree (D)". The data collected were properly analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient. Content validity of the instruments was ensured by test experts and the reliability index of the instrument was persistently determined through Cronbach's alpha at 0.74 and 0.77 meaning that the instrument is reliable. Data collected were analyse via Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 22.0.

### Testing of Hypotheses

#### Hypothesis One

There is no relationship between principal transactional leadership style and teacher's corrupt practices in federal unity schools in southwest, Nigeria.

**Table 1: Pearson's correlation analysis between principal transactional leadership style and teacher's corrupt practices in federal unity schools in southwest, Nigeria.**

Variables			Principal Transactional Leadership Style	Teachers' Corrupt Practices
Principal Transactional Leadership Style		Pearson Correlation	1	.692**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
		N	344	344
Teachers' Corrupt Practices		Pearson Correlation	.692**	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
		N	344	344

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 1 indicates a positive significant relationship between principal transactional leadership style and teacher's corrupt practices in federal unity schools in southwest, Nigeria ( $r = .692$ ;  $N=344$ ;  $p < 0.05$ , 2-tailed). Hence, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between principal transactional leadership style and teacher's corrupt practices in federal unity schools in southwest, Nigeria is rejected. This implies that a significant relationship existed between principal transactional leadership style and teacher's corrupt practices in federal unity schools in southwest, Nigeria. This finding contrast Adegbesan in Imakpokpomwan, Erhabor and Obialo (2022) who found that school administration in some states in Nigeria covered in their study was autocratic which is necessary to mitigate corrupt practices among teachers in secondary schools.

### Hypothesis Two

There is no significant relationship between the principal's incentive framework and teacher's corrupt practices in federal unity schools in southwest, Nigeria.

**Table 2: Pearson's correlation analysis between principal's incentive framework and teacher's corrupt practices in federal unity schools in southwest, Nigeria.**

Variables		Principal Incentive Framework	Teachers' Corrupt Practices
Principal Incentive Framework	Pearson Correlation	1	.722**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	344	344
Teachers' Corrupt Practices	Pearson Correlation	.722**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	344	344

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 2 indicates a positive significant relationship between principal's incentive framework and teacher's corrupt practices in federal unity schools in southwest, Nigeria. ( $r = .722$ ;  $N=344$ ;  $p < 0.05$ , 2-tailed). Hence, the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the principals' incentive framework and teachers' corrupt practices in federal unity schools in southwest, Nigeria is rejected. This implies that a significant relationship existed between principal's incentive framework and teacher's corrupt practices in federal unity schools in southwest, Nigeria. This finding is in line with Godson-Wejimogu and Obialo (2020) that the transformational style of leadership was compared with the transactional leadership style and the result showed that while transactional leaders approach their followers intending to trade one thing for another, transformational leaders are visionary, they seek to appeal to their followers' better nature and move them towards higher and more universal needs and purposes.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, reward and punishment are two sides of the same coin which the school principal adopts to mitigate teachers corrupt practices in Unity Secondary School. Based on the findings of this study, a significant relationship existed between principal transactional leadership style and teacher's corrupt practices in federal unity schools in southwest, Nigeria. The study concluded that teacher corrupt practices can damage the reputation of the teaching profession and undermine the morale of colleagues; student learning and achievement, ultimately affecting their prospects;

it is therefore concluded that principal transactional leadership style is required to mitigate corrupt practices orchestrated by some teaching staff in southwest unity secondary school in Nigeria.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Policymakers should organize conferences, seminar, workshop and symposium on adoption of transactional leadership style in federal unity schools in south west, Nigeria to curb the menace of corrupt practices among teaching staff.
2. School principals should adopt a transactional leadership style and focus on the uses of reward and punishment to mitigate widespread corruption among teachers.
3. Authorities of federal unity secondary school should promote a culture of transparency and accountability to curb corrupt practices among teachers.
4. Federal government should monitor the implementation of the current education policies to addressing corrupt practices in the school system.
5. School principal should prioritize professionalism and embrace integrity among teacher by uphold the highest standards of ethical behaviour in their practice.

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