

# Empowering Educators: How Transformative Leadership in Chinese Public Schools Improves Teacher Job Satisfaction

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## Abstract

The expansion of the school's development is justified by the school principal's successful leadership style. Unlike some corporate organizations, managing a school is dynamic and requires perseverance in the face of negative consequences caused by a variety of factors. On another note, cultivating an excellent principal capable of balancing the school ecosystem and maintaining positive relationships with its stakeholders is challenging. Hence, the purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between principals' transformational leadership style and teachers' job satisfaction, as well as to emphasize the importance of leaders' support for teachers. Three hundred Chinese primary school teachers participated in a quantitative descriptive and correlational study. SPSS 27.0 was used to perform descriptive analysis, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression on the data. As instruments, the Scholars' Transformational Leadership Questionnaire and Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) were used. According to the findings, there is a strong positive relationship between the principal's transformational leadership style and teacher job satisfaction. Both the independent variables and the constructs had positive correlation coefficients with teacher job satisfaction. There was even less comfort found in the finding that teacher job satisfaction predicts teachers' perceptions of their school as well as motivations. Henceforth, a study on principal leadership style is still worthwhile in the hope that the school will find a mutually beneficial

arrangement that will give better hope to teachers' profession.

**Keywords:** teachers' job satisfaction, principal transformational leadership style

## 1. Introduction

The school principal plays the most important role in managing the school and leading the teachers in an array of circumstances. Aside from a slew of issues plaguing the school environment these days, school principals have been grappling with digitization and technological transformation, particularly in the teaching and learning environment. The principal's leadership style is critical because it shapes the influential factors that will propel the school to greater heights. The vast majority of principals are unaware that their leadership style influences teachers' job satisfaction. Teacher performance, for instance, is greatly reliant on leadership style, as well as a degree of organizational success that benefits the school ecosystem (Urick, 2020). Huang et al. (2013), for example, emphasized that humanistic consideration and job satisfaction of teachers warrant school success as part of the school principal's leadership style. It is noted that effective teaching by teachers has a significant impact on student success, as does effective leadership by a qualified principal (Jošanov-Vrgović & Pavlovic, 2018).

Teachers are stressed out because they have too many work responsibilities, such as completing performance appraisals, grading students, and organizing school activities (Jia, 2020). With trivial cases of teacher burnout and leaving the teaching profession, it is difficult to keep teachers motivated when schools are asked to achieve and perform an overabundance of teacher's responsibilities such as organizing unrelated academic activities and generating the school's income. As a result, teacher job satisfaction suffers. Because teachers are responsible for both teaching and administration works, the school principal plays an important role in genuinely improving teachers' attitudes towards their profession and at the same time, adhering to top-down decisions.

To alleviate the plight of high teacher turnover, factors that contribute to low job satisfaction or even teacher departure ought to be addressed. Teacher's profession is hampered by low pay, excessive workloads, dynamic school environments, and limited opportunities for professional development (Jin et al., 2021). Meanwhile, there is evidence that higher teacher job satisfaction is associated with principal leadership styles (Mckinney et al., 2015), a key focus of the research. School principals must consider whether their leadership style influences teacher turnover because the quality of leadership-employee relationships has a greater impact on employee job satisfaction (Bogale, 2020).

School principals should examine or modify their leadership styles and consider whether doing so will result in the retention of more teachers pursuing careers in education. Leadership styles deemed too strict or rigid can reduce teacher motivation and satisfaction. Poor leadership is one of the primary reasons that teachers leave their jobs before reaching retirement age (Podolsky et al., 2017). If school administrators want quality teachers to stay in their positions for a long time, they must make the necessary changes. Leaders who deserve teachers' respect and loyalty, according to Bowles and Arnup (2016), must; a) have

an inclusive or compatible leadership style, b) encourage teachers, and c) collaborate with teachers to make decisions. These characteristics are also present in transformational leadership.

The principal, as the school's leader, has an impact on not only all of the teachers but also on the students and other staff members. In addition to overseeing daily operations, the principal is in charge of teacher training, curriculum planning, school development, and compliance with the laws and regulations of the local Education District office. As a result, the principal has a significant impact on the entire school. Principals who are compassionate and can change their leadership style when necessary can create and promote a positive school climate. As a result, if the principal allows teachers to participate in school decisions, the school will reap even more benefits from this positive school strategic direction.

As a result, there is a current need for a change in leadership style, which has traditionally used rewards and punishment to increase the stability of school organizations. Based on the issues and problems mentioned about educational leadership programs, this article seeks to understand teachers' perceptions of principals' leadership styles in current school contexts and to investigate the relationship between principal transformative leadership styles and teachers' job satisfaction.

## **2. Review of Literature**

Teacher stress reflects, to some extent, teachers' job satisfaction. It refers to the teacher's experience of negative emotions as a result of various aspects of the teacher's responsibilities (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). According to a 2021 study by Steiner and Woo, approximately 30% of teachers experience more severe stress than the average working person due to the unique nature of their jobs. They surveyed 2,075 U.S. adults, and the study found that 78% of U.S. teachers regularly experience workplace stress, nearly twice as much as the general employed population (40%) (Steiner & Woo, 2021). Related research has found a link between teacher satisfaction and stress levels, teacher health, burnout, and student achievement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). As a result, it is critical to understand the stressors for teachers and assist them in managing work-related stress, such as teaching stress and workload stress (Collie et al., 2012).

This is because exposing teachers to high levels of stress for an extended time will undoubtedly have an impact on their health and immunity, resulting in lower teacher satisfaction. In their study, Opdenakker and Van Damme (2006) discovered that teachers who were more satisfied with their jobs were more likely to devote more time and energy to directing students' learning and encouraging student participation in the mathematics classroom. Klusmann et al. (2008) investigated the relationship between mathematics teachers' job satisfaction, stress levels, and instructional curriculum in another study. Scholars also discovered that teachers who were more satisfied with their jobs were more willing to give students more space for independent learning. Teachers, for example, allowed students to create their learning plans.

School leadership styles have an impact on the positive climate, teacher morale, and job

satisfaction in the classroom. Furthermore, Unseld-Hopkins (2002) found that teacher satisfaction is strongly related to teacher performance. Furthermore, Eldred (2010) discovered that principal transformational leadership influences teacher satisfaction through factors such as management attitudes, work environment, and available resources. If working conditions do not meet teachers' basic resource needs, teacher satisfaction may suffer, contributing to teachers' desire to quit. Some related research has also looked at the relationship between transformational leadership styles in schools and teacher job satisfaction (DeMatthews & Izquierdo, 2017). Giving teachers more autonomy, for example (including increased opportunities for teachers to participate in decision-making and take control of their classroom), can boost teacher satisfaction.

Furthermore, when school administration recognizes teachers' contributions to school development and observes that educators' working conditions need to be improved and then implements these changes, this greatly contributes to teacher job satisfaction (DeMatthews & Izquierdo, 2017). Transformational leaders will consider giving teachers more autonomy in their management style, which also contributes to the overall climate. Teachers will not feel needed or valued in their workplace if they believe their decisions will not be valued by administrators or will not be useful in school decision-making (Unseld-Hopkins, 2022). Leaders must therefore manage in such a way that teachers can successfully participate in decision-making and thus develop their potential to participate in the development of their schools.

Teachers who receive professional development claim they have the opportunity to participate in school decision-making. If leaders who are also teachers able to understand the situation and able to strategize on reducing workplace tension (Unseld-Hopkins, 2022). Teachers who are actively supported by school leaders are more likely to thrive in that school in the long run. In a few cases, teachers who work under democratic leadership, for example, feel in control of their professional development, i.e., in control of their future, and are more motivated to advance their careers and work for the betterment of the school. Principals do not have to be both instructional and transformational leaders, but those who are will develop professional support for teachers, both in terms of professional and personal development, which will help them grow.

The research was conducted to achieve the following objectives: (a) to determine the demographic variables of the respondents such as gender, age, education level, years of teaching experience, role as a class adviser, and weekly teaching load; (b) to determine the level of principal transformational leadership styles perceived by teachers; (c) to determine the level of job satisfaction among teachers, and (d) to determine the relationship between perceived principal transformational leadership styles and teachers' job satisfaction in primary schools in Xinyang City, China.

Figure 1 shows the correlation of the study variables. The conceptual framework describes the relationship between teachers' perceived principal transformational leadership style and teachers' job satisfaction and the independent and dependent variables of the study are presented.

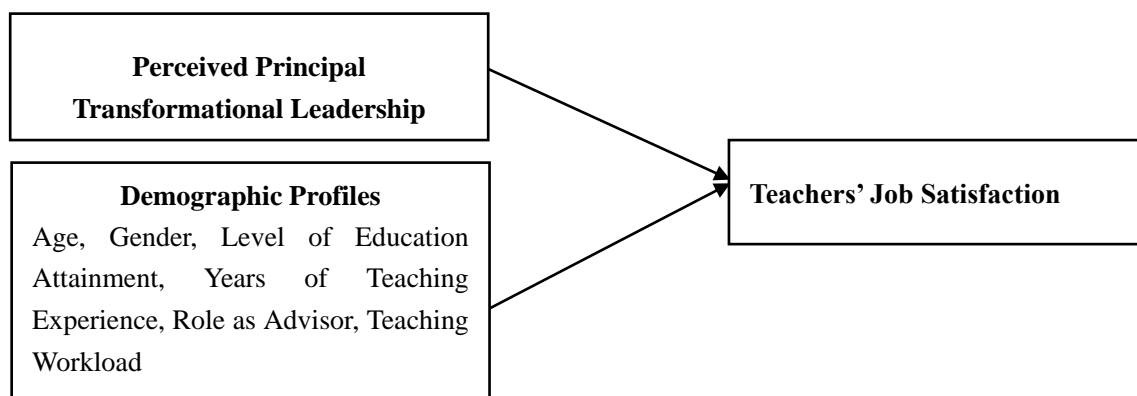


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

### 3. Methodology

A quantitative descriptive and correlational study was conducted on 300 primary school teachers in rural Xinyang City, China. Teachers' demographic information was gathered to delve deeper into the relationship between teachers' profiles and job satisfaction. To reduce bias, a random sampling technique was used, and an approval letter was provided by the education district office before data collection. The questionnaire was divided into three sections: (a) demographic information about the respondents, (b) a transformational leadership questionnaire based on the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) developed by Bass (2000) and Chao-Ping (2005); and (c) the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) developed by Spector (1994). The internal consistency of the items was tested using reliability analysis and Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for each variable was found above 0.8. The details of the reliability results as detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. The Cronbach Alpha value for the MLQ and JSS

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha
Inspirational motivation	.896
Exemplary moral conduct	.831
Intellectual stimulation	.853
Individualized consideration	.800
<b>Total MLQ (20 items)</b>	<b>.956</b>

Pay	.746
Promotion	.766
Supervision	.717
Benefits	.815
Contingent Rewards	.780
Operating Procedures	.694
Co-workers	.742
Nature of work	.706
Communication	.732
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<b>Total JSS (36 items)</b>	<b>.963</b>
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## 4. Results

### 4.1 Demographic Findings

Three hundred questionnaires were returned (100% response rate), and the demographic findings are detailed in Table 2. The study location had an unequal distribution of male and female teachers. With 97 male teachers (32.3%) and 203 female teachers (67.7%), it was clear that the majority of respondents were female teachers. The majority of the teachers were between the ages of 25 and 45. Two hundred and eight (69.4%) of them in total. In terms of education, the majority of teachers (167, or 55.7%) held bachelor's degrees. In regards to teaching experience, the number of teachers who had been teaching for less than 20 years accounted for 79.7% of the total, with 25.7% teaching for less than 5 years, 32.3% teaching for 6 to 10 years, and 21.4% teaching for more than 21 years. The study also reported teachers' class role as an adviser where 176 of the respondent hold a position as a class adviser, accounting for 58.7% of the total sample size, while 41.2% were not classroom teachers. In terms of weekly teaching workload, 70.0% of teachers had 11 or more lessons per week, with 40.0% of teachers having between 11 and 15 lessons per week and 30.0% of teachers having 16 or more lessons per week. This shows the high number of lessons per week for teachers in rural primary schools. Of these teachers, only 30% teachers had less than 10 lessons per week.

Table 2. Demographic Profile of the Respondents (n=300)

Variable	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender			
Male	97	32.3	32.3
Female	203	67.7	100.0
Age group			
< 25	31	10.3	10.3
26-35	107	35.7	46.0
36-45	101	33.7	79.7
46 and above	61	20.3	100.0
Level of Education Attainment			
College and below	116	38.7	38.7
Bachelor	167	55.7	94.3
Master	12	4.0	98.3
PhD/Doctoral	5	1.7	100.0
Years of teaching experience			
<5	77	25.7	25.7
6-10	97	32.3	58
11-20	65	21.7	79.7
21-30	47	15.7	95.3
31 and above	14	4.7	100.0
Role as class adviser			

Yes	176	58.7	58.7
No	124	41.2	100.0
Weekly teaching workload			
<5	14	4.7	4.7
6-10	76	25.3	30.0
11-15	120	40.0	70.0
16 and above	90	30.0	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

#### *4.2 Inferential Analysis Based on Years of Teaching Experience*

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) results show that teachers' perceptions of principal transformational leadership and teaching experience have a 0.05 level of significance ( $F=4.00$ ,  $p=0.007$ ). There was also a significant difference between teachers' job satisfaction and teaching experience, with a more statistically significant difference in group mean differences ( $F=7.751$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). Further analysis of the means revealed the magnitude of the differences in teaching ages on the two variables. When the mean values for perceived transformational leadership of principals are compared by teaching age, teachers with 0-5 years of experience have the highest mean values, while those with 6-10 years of teaching experience have significantly higher levels of perceived leadership than those with 11-20 years of teaching experience and those with 31 years of teaching experience or more, and those with 21-30 years of teaching experience have intermediate levels. Teachers with less than 5 years of teaching experience continue to be the most satisfied, followed by those with 21-30 years of teaching experience, 6-10 years, 11-20 years, and 31 years or more.

Table 3. One-way ANOVA for teachers teaching years of experience

<b>Years of teaching experience</b>	<b>Principal Transformational Leadership(Mean±SD)</b>	<b>Teacher Job Satisfaction (Mean±SD)</b>
Under 5(n=77)	3.792±0.494	3.724±0.453
6-10(n=97)	3.645±0.511	3.518±0.429
11-20(n=65)	3.473±0.833	3.412±0.740



21-30(n=47)	3.600±0.483	3.635±0.312
>=31(n=14)	3.346±0.766	3.089±0.776
F	4.000	7.751
p	0.007	0.000

Note. N= sample size

#### 4.3 Inferential Analysis Based on Teaching Workload

Table 4 shows that there was a significant effect of teaching workload on perceived principal transformational leadership at the  $p<0.05$  ( $F=6.906$ ,  $p=0.000$ ) level based on ANOVA results. Similarly, the relationship between job satisfaction and teaching workload was found to be significant at the  $p<0.05$  level ( $2.944$ ,  $p=0.033$ ). Further analysis of the means enables the magnitude of the differences in teaching workload on the two variables to be determined. When the means for each teaching workload grouping are compared, the means for perceived transformational leadership of principals and job satisfaction are closer and both are at a moderate level. Teachers with a weekly workload of 11-15 lessons had the highest level of perceived leadership. In terms of teacher job satisfaction, there were differences in job satisfaction between the workload samples with 11-15 lessons per week and those with 16 or more lessons per week. The significant difference in job satisfaction between teachers with 11-15 lessons per week and teachers with 16 lessons or more suggests that 15 lessons may be the threshold of job satisfaction for rural teachers and that more lessons than this may reduce teacher satisfaction and teaching efficacy, and therefore may be used as a basis for subsequent research to arrange a reasonable workload for rural teachers.

Table 4. One-way ANOVA for weekly teaching workload

Teaching workload	Principal Transformational Leadership (Mean ±SD)	Teacher Job Satisfaction (Mean ±SD)
<=5(n=14)	3.593±0.641	3.359±0.684
6-10(n=76)	3.562±0.637	3.441±0.587
11-15(n=120)	3.625±0.645	3.598±0.530
>=16(n=90)	3.58±0.533	3.395±0.478
F	6.906	2.944
p	0.000	0.033

Note. N= sample size

#### 4.4 Level of Principal Transformational Leadership Perceived By Teachers

Table 5 shows how primary school teachers perceive transformational leadership. The mean value was 3.624, which is a satisfactorily high level; the standard deviation is 0.610, indicating that there is little individual variation in the transformational leadership of different primary school principals' and teachers' perceptions of this leadership. In terms of sub-dimensions, the mean scores are as follows: exemplary moral conduct (M=3.80, SD=0.74), intellectual stimulation (M=3.75, SD=0.92), inspirational motivation (M=3.72, SD=0.85), and individualized consideration (M=3.23, SD=0.79). It can be seen that the principal's exemplary moral conduct was the most recognized by the teachers, at a high level and based on a standard deviation of 0.74, indicating that there was less deviation in the perception of this dimension by different teachers; Intellectual stimulation came second, also at a high level, but with a standard deviation of 0.92, indicating that there was some variation in the perceived intellectual stimulation dimension evaluated by different primary school teachers, which was acceptable; Inspirational stimulation was slightly lower than the first two dimensions, the standard deviation is also in the middle of the four dimensions, indicating that teachers' perceptions of this dimension are generally different. The principal's individualized consideration for teachers is slightly lacking, and the standard deviation shows that the deviation between teachers' perceptions of this dimension is small, indicating that different principals generally need to improve their personalized care and should better understand and care for teachers personal situations.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics Result on Principal Transformational Leadership

Construct	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	Mean	SD
Inspirational Motivation	1.00	5.00	3.72	0.85
Exemplary Moral Conduct	1.20	5.00	3.80	0.74
Intellectual Stimulation	1.20	5.00	3.75	0.92
Individualized Consideration	1.00	5.00	3.23	0.79
<b>Principal Transformational Leadership</b>	<b>1.10</b>	<b>4.95</b>	<b>3.62</b>	<b>0.61</b>

#### 4.5 Level of Teachers' Job Satisfaction

Table 6 describes teachers' job satisfaction and the level of each sub-dimension. The mean value of overall job satisfaction of primary school teachers is 3.546, which is at a moderate level, with a standard deviation of 0.541, thus indicating that the rural primary school teachers in this survey are generally satisfied with their jobs and that the differences in satisfaction ratings between individual teachers are not significant. In terms of teacher satisfaction in each dimension, the mean values, in descending order, were: Nature of work (M=3.888, SD=0.941), Supervision (M=3.851, SD=0.866), Communication (M=3.739, SD=0.937), Operating Procedures (M=3.738, SD=0.930), Coworkers (M=3.618, SD=0.891), Fringe Benefits (M=3.557, SD=0.938), Contingent rewards (M=3.346, SD=0.894), Pay (M=3.264, SD=0.635), Promotion (M=2.915, SD=0.985). Except for promotion and pay, teachers showed moderate to high levels of satisfaction with all other aspects, with the nature of work and supervision being the most satisfied, with supervision having a relatively low standard deviation, indicating that different teachers felt higher satisfaction with the supervision of their immediate supervisors, as well as with the nature of their work and the tasks assigned to them. There was also a high level of acceptance of the rules and procedures laid down by the school, i.e. the operational procedures. Primary school teachers are also more positive about collegiality and communication within the school, reflecting a generally good level of harmony and cooperation in the relationship between teachers. Teachers also showed moderate approval of the contingent rewards offered by their schools, with a slightly higher standard deviation, demonstrating that there is some variation in teachers' perceptions of the contingent rewards offered by different primary schools. Finally, salary and promotion are indeed the areas that need the most improvement in schools, and teachers generally report that salary issues need to be improved, while teachers feel the least satisfied with promotion, and there is a large degree of individual variation in this dimension across primary schools.

Table 6. Descriptive Analysis of Teacher's Job Satisfaction Based on Studied Dimensions

Dimension	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pay	1.75	5.00	3.264	0.635
Promotion	1.00	5.00	2.915	0.985
Supervision	1.25	5.00	3.851	0.866
Fringe Benefits	1.00	5.00	3.557	0.938
Contingent rewards	1.25	5.00	3.346	0.894
Operating Procedures	1.00	5.00	3.738	0.930

Coworkers	1.00	5.00	3.618	0.891
Nature of work	1.00	5.00	3.888	0.941
Communication	1.00	5.00	3.739	0.937
<b>Teacher job satisfaction</b>	<b>1.19</b>	<b>4.42</b>	<b>3.546</b>	<b>0.541</b>

#### *4.6 The Relationship Between Teachers Perceived Principal Transformational Leadership Style and Job Satisfaction*

The Pearson correlation coefficient was used to examine principals' transformational leadership style, its sub-dimensions, and teacher job satisfaction. The correlation between the two variables was determined based on (UCLA, 2021), whether the probability of significance value was greater than 0.05, and if  $p < 0.05$ , the correlation between the two variables was significant at the 0.05 level; the correlation between the two variables was also determined based on the absolute value of the correlation coefficient  $r$ . According to Turney (2022), the correlation is weakly positive when  $r < 0.3$ , moderately positive when  $0.3 \leq r \leq 0.5$ , and strongly positive when  $r > 0.5$ . The following table shows the Pearson correlation coefficients for the independent and dependent variables as stated in Table 7.

Table 7. Total Pearson Correlation Coefficient

Correlations			
		Principal Transformational Leadership	Teacher job satisfaction
Principal Transformational Leadership	Pearson Correlation	1	0.736**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	300	300
Teacher job satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	0.736**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	300	300

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The principal transformational leadership and its dimensions were correlated with teacher job satisfaction according to the detailed dimensional Pearson correlation coefficient as stated in Table 8. The overall correlation coefficient between the two variables was 0.736, which was significant ( $p < 0.01$ ), resulting in a strong positive correlation. The four dimensions of transformational leadership of principals were also moderately positively correlated with teachers' job satisfaction, with the highest to lowest correlation coefficients being exemplary moral conduct ( $r = 0.647$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), intellectual stimulation ( $r = 0.586$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), Inspirational motivation ( $r = 0.582$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and Individualized consideration ( $r = 0.360$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

Table 8. Sub-dimensional Pearson correlation coefficients

		Correlations				
		Inspirational Motivation	Exemplary moral conduct	Intellectual Stimulation	Individualized consideration	Principal Transformational Leadership
Pay	Pearson Correlation	0.214**	0.207**	0.227**	0.193**	0.285**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.000
	N	300	300	300	300	300
Promotion	Pearson Correlation	0.233**	0.279**	0.279**	0.238**	0.348**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	300	300	300	300	300
Supervision	Pearson Correlation	0.439**	0.547**	0.418**	0.271**	0.564**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	300	300	300	300	300
Fringe Benefits	Pearson Correlation	0.463**	0.488**	0.421**	0.242**	0.546**

	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	300	300	300	300	300
Contingent rewards	Pearson Correlation	0.245**	0.263**	0.278**	0.307**	0.369**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	300	300	300	300	300
Operating Procedures	Pearson Correlation	0.439**	0.502**	0.359**	0.154**	0.490**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.008	0.000
	N	300	300	300	300	300
Coworkers	Pearson Correlation	0.203**	0.270**	0.222**	0.022	0.243**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.699	0.000
	N	300	300	300	300	300
Nature of work	Pearson Correlation	0.481**	0.451**	0.440**	0.277**	0.559**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	300	300	300	300	300
Communication	Pearson Correlation	0.417**	0.477**	0.515**	0.254**	0.566**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

	N	300	300	300	300	300
Teacher job satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	0.582**	0.647**	0.586**	0.360**	0.736**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	300	300	300	300	300
Principal Transformational Leadership	Pearson Correlation	0.637**	0.685**	0.695**	0.510**	0.856**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	300	300	300	300	300

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

## 5. Discussion

This research was carried out in rural primary schools in Xinyang City, a Chinese city with average educational quality. Based on the study's moderate sample size, it was discovered that the findings generally reflected principals' transformational leadership style and teachers' job satisfaction in local primary schools. In general, the results reported that the teachers' perceived levels of transformational leadership of principals were high and teachers' job satisfaction was average.

First, the theoretical implications of this study are to confirm the positive effect of transformational leadership of rural primary school principals on teacher job satisfaction. Teachers play an important role in the teaching and learning processes. Their job satisfaction is critical to their ability to provide high-quality teaching and learning. Understanding the factors that influence teachers' job satisfaction can assist principals in recognizing the value of teachers in school development and teaching, as well as the influence they have on their staff as leaders. While investigating the level and significance of principals, transformational leadership can provide principals with guidance and references to help them improve their leadership in the future.

Previous researchers (see Anastasiou & Garametsi, 2021; Purwanti & Sulaiman, 2023; Vitria et al., 2021; Zhang, 2021) have expressed a strong interest in principal transformative leadership and job satisfaction. They want to know if there is an influence or relationship between these two important variables in educational leadership programs. The influence of transformative leaders dared to sustain teachers' job satisfaction during their teaching service.

Furthermore, the benefits of teachers' job satisfaction should be manifested throughout the teaching career. This circumstance justifies teaching as a noble profession, while transformation in terms of governance and school ecosystem has always been the agenda and mission for the school system to thrive.

Fei et al. (2020) discovered that primary and secondary school principals demonstrated overall high levels of transformational leadership behaviors, with moderate or high scores on all dimensions, including relatively low performance on individualized consideration and high scores on the 'exemplary moral conduct' dimension, which is partially consistent with the findings of this study. Based on school context variables, secondary school principals demonstrated higher levels of transformational leadership than primary school principals. In this area of related research, the variables of school background, size, and principal education level would also be factors to consider.

The findings were also corroborated in the context of Chinese schools by recent findings reported by local researchers. As a result, Zhang, Huang, and Xu (2022) asserted that the impact of transformational leadership on teachers' job satisfaction was significant. Their research contributes to a better understanding of transformational leadership as a successful strategy for increasing teachers' job satisfaction. This is primarily because transformational leadership, as a critical method of school innovation, fosters teachers' intellectual stimulation, enthusiasm for transformation, and teaching improvement, which increases their job satisfaction.

In another study, Zhang (2021) discovered that principals' transformational leadership positively contributes to teachers' well-being and that principals' perceptions of their transformational leadership influence the effectiveness of their leadership and teachers' job satisfaction. The principal's self-assessment perspective is not covered in this study, and future studies will consider increasing the participation of this group of subjects to promote principals' self-perceptions of their leadership and to improve the level of transformational leadership.

The influence of transformative leadership has provenly mitigated the solution of dynamic issues and problems at the school organization. For instance, the increase in motivation has been attested by the transformation of the school administrations. The consistent motivation and solutions offered by transformational leaders, according to research, can boost teachers' confidence, which in turn will have an impact on their performance, which is represented as job satisfaction (Vitria et al., 2021). Purwanti and Sulaiman (2023) explained that the transformation at school merely contributed to a significant effect on teachers' job satisfaction. the school teachers freed them from the complexity of the teacher's role and burnout after they have been given adequate support and assistance. This environment promotes higher job satisfaction levels as compared to schools which retain just the way it is.

In different studies, Aydin et al. (2013), Okoji Olufemi (2015), and Stewart-Banks et al. (2015) discussed the powerful position of principals as a central personnel figure with a broad range of influence on different stakeholders within the school and the community. Because principals have the power to transform the school ecosystem, they afford to play a vital role



to replace misleading actions and norms which are practiced for a long time and do not benefit the school stakeholders. Worth to be noted that the teachers' job satisfaction and student performance are highly dependent on the principal leadership style (Mehmet & Inandi, 2018; Mehdinezhad & Mansouri, 2016; Rana et al., 2016). The effectiveness of principal leadership is strongly correlated with both student achievement and teacher job satisfaction. As a result, it is crucial to comprehend how stakeholders view certain leadership behaviors (Baptiste, 2019).

In contrast to mainstream educational providers, Anastasiou and Garametsi (2021) investigated teachers' job satisfaction in private school settings. It's worth noting that teachers in private schools were more satisfied with their jobs. A transactional leadership model came in second in both public and private schools, with transformational leadership scoring significantly higher in private schools. The findings show that when compared to public school teachers, private school teachers report higher levels of job satisfaction, which may be due to differences in work environments and motivation.

The researchers conducted the aforementioned study in Xinyang City's rural primary schools to advocate for more attention to teacher job satisfaction in local education departments and schools. The researchers determined that the study was valid and rigorously followed the requirements after measuring its value. According to Reyes-Chua et al. (2020), empirical research should be illuminating for future research, provoking reflection on areas that have yet to be explored. The measurement of the research's utility and value was also thought to be practical. The study also enlightened principles on the importance of understanding how teachers perceive their organizations to improve teacher effectiveness and performance, and thus student achievement. By diagnosing teaching staff needs, consideration is given to how to begin meeting those needs and improving the current situation. The implications will also help to extend the practices of future research to further improve school practices regarding teacher group management.

## **6. Conclusion**

To improve teachers' job satisfaction, the current education system also calls for a change in the way principals lead. School principals must adapt their leadership style to capitalize on the value added to create a shared and negotiated vision with teachers that evoke their potential and a sense of belonging to the organization, which is where transformational leadership comes in. The transformational leadership approach guides subordinates by establishing a shared vision of values and humanistic development strategies with members, and this humanistic approach to leadership is favored by many scholars in the fields of business and education, and it has been validated by numerous studies, primarily in the business field.

Future studies could use the interview method to interview rural principals and teachers to obtain more specific information and data. To obtain richer research findings, a variety of data processing and testing methods could be combined when conducting empirical analysis. This study only looks at the leadership behavior of rural primary school principals from the perspective of a teacher. Subsequent studies could include variable dimensions such as rural

school size and the length of service of rural school principals, as well as an investigation of principal influence in additional groups such as rural secondary schools and higher education. Explore the multifaceted explanatory relationship between transformational leadership in principals and teacher job satisfaction. Make more specific practical recommendations to help urban and rural teaching teams develop.

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