



ABSTRACT

The study explored the influence of leadership styles on employees' performance in Taraba State university Jalingo. Two specific objectives with corresponding research questions and hypotheses guided the study. It was a descriptive survey research design involving 346 sample size using Taro Yamane formula from 2,564 target population for the study. 103 academic staff and 243 non-academic staff participated while 25 departments and 8 leadership

LEADERSHIP STYLES AND EMPLOYEES' PERFORMANCE: FOCUS ON TARABA STATE UNIVERSITY JALINGO

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Introduction

Leadership has long been a central topic in organizational behavior, management, and human resource studies. It serves as the driving force behind the success or failure of any organization, as it directly influences employees' attitudes, behaviours and productivity. Over time, the concept of leadership has evolved, transitioning from traditional autocratic approaches to more flexible, participative styles that account for the growing complexity of modern organizations. Leadership is not a one-size fits-all concept; different organizations require different leadership styles to maximize their effectiveness (Ahmad & Evi, 2021).

In other words, leadership styles in universities in developed countries tend to be diverse and influenced by various factors such as institutional culture, departmental dynamics, and individual personality. Abbas (2017) observed that leadership styles in universities in developed countries are not mutually exclusive, and effective leaders often adopt a combination of styles to suit their context and goals. By and large, universities in developed countries tend to value leadership approaches that prioritize collaboration, inclusivity and innovation. In the same vein, leadership styles in African universities are shaped



responsibility offices were selected for the study. Self-developed instrument tagged “Leadership Style and Employees Job Performance Questionnaire (LSEJPQ)” was used for data collection. The questionnaire was given face and content validity in terms of scope of coverage, content relevance, ambiguity and vagueness of expression. A pilot study was conducted on 40 respondents and Split-Half was used to generate data while Cronbach’s Alpha analysis was used to generate reliability coefficient of .834. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions and inferential statistics of regression analysis was used for testing the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that laissez-faire and transformational leadership styles significantly influence on employees’ job performance in the study area. Based on the findings, it was recommended that the Taraba State University leaders ranging from the office of Head of Departments to Directors should properly manage tendencies of laissez faire approach at their domains as it can demoralize creativity among their staff; and it is expected that the leadership of Taraba State University Jalingo should prioritize transformational leadership style being demonstrated by the Vice Chancellor in person of Prof. Sunday Paul Bako who has technically transformed the university community from low profile to high profile university in Nigeria. Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that the leadership styles significantly influence on employees’ job performance in Taraba State University Jalingo.

Keywords: Laissez-faire, transformational, job performance, employees, state university Jalingo.

by various factors, including cultural context, institutional history, and individual leader’s approach. As such, understanding the specific leadership dynamics within a given institution, like Taraba State University, can provide valuable insights into its operational efficiency and employees’ job performance.

From the above, it is obvious that different leadership styles are at the disposal of leaders of an organization. Thus, there seems to be no dominant leadership style mostly used in the university system as studies have shown that varying styles of leadership are utilized in different universities depending on the objectives and needs of the employees. As a further study in this direction, the current study seeks to identify the dominant leadership style employed by the leadership of Taraba State University with a view to ensuring



employees' enhanced job performance. Since, employees' job performance seems to be dependent on the nature of leadership style adopted.

The statement above suggests that leadership style and job performance are inextricably linked. In fact, the relationship between leadership style and employee's job performance cannot be underestimated. Performance is how effectively an individual or team fulfills their responsibilities, meets expectations, and achieves established goals, whereas job performance indicates the level of achievement and quality of work produced by an individual or a team in an organization. For Ayana (2019), job performance connotes both behaviours and actions exhibited by an individual such as collaboration, communication and problem-solving approach towards realization of organizational goals. In this wise, job performance must be directed towards improved productivity and efficiency, employee development and growth, as well as achieving university's goals and objectives. This explains why leadership style plays a crucial role in fulfilling these needs by creating a supportive work environment and offering growth opportunities (Ecclestone, 2017).

However, the current leadership style based on researcher's observation is more of combined style as it contains elements of various leadership strategies. But what has been observed is that most senior staff dedicate reasonable portion of time to mentor and collaborate, but in return there is no compensation for such gesture. This explains why most employees are not discharging their best because there seems to be no recognition/compensation. Besides, in the course of interaction with some staff, the researcher observed that the supposed benefits due to some offices are not granted; as some newly employed staff are yet to be paid for the past fifteen months. In fact, salary arrears are still being pursued since 2022 till date. By implication, staff salary and or reward is not considered as a priority to propel workers' productivity. However, this leadership style is somehow unfavourable to all employees as little of nothing is said about the welfare and well-being of workers that ensure absolute implementation of the decisions made by the management team. In fact, the researcher's interaction with some of the academic staff revealed that they are overstressed as the school is running regular, IDELL, and sandwich programmes concurrently without incentives or bonus during festive periods/end of the year. This ugly situation may influence employees' job performance if not properly and quickly addressed.

From the foregoing, it is obvious that organizational leadership styles may bring about positive or negative influence on employees' job performance. Taraba State University, like many public institutions in Nigeria, operates within a structured framework where leadership practice plays a pivotal role in shaping employees' job performance. That is, if the leadership style prioritized staff well-being there may be increased job performance, but when it is unfavourable to employees, it might lead to low job performance. In order



to provide statistical evidence in ascertaining the intersection between leadership style and employees' job performance. The current study examined the relationship between leadership styles and employees' job performance with particular reference to Taraba State University Jalingo.

Statement of the Problem

The relationship between leadership styles and employees' job performance is a complex and dynamic one, as leadership styles can either boost or drain employees' job performance, depending on the approach used. For instance, transformational, servant, and democratic leadership styles tend to boost job performance, while transactional, autocratic, and laissez-faire styles might drain job performance (Bryman, 2017). At times, lack of input of workers in decision-making process, lack of regular feedback mechanism, poor communication channel, lack of recognition and rewards, as well as lack of trust might lead to low performance of staff in Taraba State University. However, researcher is not aware of any study that focuses on the relationship between leadership style and employees' job performance at Taraba State University, as a further study in this direction, the current study explored the relationship between leadership style and employees' job performance at Taraba State University Jalingo.

Objectives of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to examine the influence of leadership styles on employees' job performance in Taraba State University Jalingo. Specifically, the study sought to:

- i. Determine the influence of laissez faire leadership style on employees' job performance in Taraba State University, Jalingo.
- ii. Ascertain the influence of transformational leadership style on employees' job performance in Taraba State University, Jalingo.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

- i. What is the influence of laissez faire leadership style on employees' job performance in Taraba State University Jalingo?
- ii. What is the influence of transformational leadership style on employees' job performance in Taraba State University Jalingo?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:



H₀₁: There is no significant influence of laissez faire leadership style on employees' job performance in Taraba State University Jalingo.

H₀₂: There is no significant influence of transformational leadership style on employees' job performance in Taraba State University Jalingo.

Literature Review

Laissez-faire leadership style is a hands-off approach to leadership, where leaders give employees a lot of autonomy and freedom to make decisions and take actions. In a university system, laissez-faire leadership can have both positive and negative effects on employees' job performance. For instance, John (2021) highlighted the positive effects as increased autonomy whereby employees are given freedom to make decisions that increase their sense of autonomy and motivation, improved creativity as employees feel more comfortable sharing their ideas and suggestions leading to improved creativity and innovation; and enhanced job satisfaction, feel trusted and valued by their leaders. To this end, it is indeed, hands-off approach to leadership, which gives employees a lot of autonomy and freedom to make decisions. As enumerated above, this leadership style can promote creativity and innovation thereby leading to enhanced job performance, but it can also lead to decreased job satisfaction and productivity if not managed properly. Perhaps Suleiman (2022) was right to have identified negative effects of laissez faire to include lack of guidance and direction whereby employees may feel uncertain and unclear about their roles and responsibilities leading to decreased productivity; inadequate support and resources leading to feelings of frustration and demotivation among employees; and with minimal supervision, employees may feel less accountable for their actions and outcomes leading to decreased performance. This is supported by Adeyemi (2019) who reported that laissez-faire leaders were less effective in boosting employees job performance compared to transformational leaders. Thus, it is negatively related to employees' job satisfaction and performance, but positively related to employee creativity.

In support of this, Tamiru (2021) conducted a study on effects of employees perceived leadership style on employee motivation in St. Mary's University, Ethiopia and reported that in St. Mary's University, employees were significantly affected by the transformational and transactional leadership styles and it was found that laissez-faire leadership style has no significant effect on the dependent variable of employee motivation. Also, Maqbool, Muhammad, Maqbool and Saima (2024) investigated the stance of numerous leadership styles and their effect on teaching to sustain academic performance at the high school level in Multan, Punjab, Pakistan. The findings indicated that democratic leadership has a highly positive impact, and autocratic leadership has a



moderate impact on sustaining academic performance. In contrast, the laissez-faire leadership style has the lowest impact on sustaining academic performance. Additionally, Rexha and Buleshkaj (2024) studied the impact of school leadership styles on teachers' job performance in Kosovo, and revealed that democratic leadership was positively correlated with teachers' extrinsic, intrinsic and general job satisfaction. However, autocratic leadership did not have a significant impact on any aspect of job performance. Interestingly, the laissez-faire leadership style showed impact on job satisfaction and overall job performance. Also, Kristanto and Hartono (2024) conducted a study on the impact of laissez-faire leadership style and internal communication on employees' performance and engagement in Kenoham District of Kutai Kartanegara Regency. The study indicated that laissez faire leadership style has a positive and significant impact on employee engagement; internal communication has a positive and significant impact on employee engagement; employee engagement has a positive and significant impact on performance; laissez faire leadership style has a positive and significant impact on performance; internal communication has a negative and insignificant impact on performance; laissez faire leadership style has a positive and significant impact on performance through employee engagement; and internal communication has a positive and insignificant impact on performance through employee engagement.

On the contrary transformational leadership style is a leadership approach that focuses on inspiring and motivating employees to achieve their full potential and work towards a shared vision. According to Gabriel (2020), the key components of transformational leadership style include a clear and compelling vision for the future of the organization, inspire and motivate employees to work towards the shared vision, empower employees to take ownership and make decision, coach and develop employees to achieve their full potential. To this end, transformational leadership style can have a profoundly positive impact on employee motivation in a university system. In support of this, Agele (2021) affirmed that transformational leadership is positively related to employee job satisfaction, improved motivation and engagement, enhanced creativity and innovation as well as better performance and productivity. Thus, transformational leadership style, if effectively implemented, it is geared towards ensuring better performance on the part of university employees.

In support of the above, scholars like Jimoh and Alleru (2021) averred that transformational leadership style is positively related to employees' job performance and satisfaction in a university setting. Also, Hamza and Abdulkhalid (2020) reported that transformational leadership style is positively related to employee engagement and performance in a university setting; and that it is more effective in encouraging employees compared to transactional leadership style. For effective use of transformational



leadership style, Agele (2021) advanced practices such as development of skills through training and development programmes, empowerment of employees to take ownership and make decisions, coaching and training of employees to achieve their full potential, as well as communication of a clear and compelling vision for the future of the organization. Thus, proper implementation of transformational leadership style requires university leaders to develop skills and create a culture of empowerment, coaching, and development to engage employees so as to boost job performance.

The study by Ombao and De Jesus (2025) on towards success: the impact of school head leadership style on school performance – a systematic review, revealed that five distinct leadership styles, with transformational and democratic leadership emerging as the most effective in promoting quality performance and success. In addition, Adedayo and Fashola (2024) conducted a study on role of transformational leadership on employee performance and satisfaction of non-academic staff of a selected Nigerian public university. The findings revealed that there exists a significant relationship between job satisfaction and transformational leadership ($r = 0.56$; $p < 0.01$); and a significant relationship between employees' performance and transformational leadership ($r = 0.56$; $p < 0.01$). Similarly, Devi and Sumarsono (2021) who conducted a study on influence of transformational leadership style and quality of human resources on employee performance through employee work motivation as mediation variable in regional development planning office in Malang Regency, Indonesia, reported that transformational leadership style significantly correlates to employees' motivation; and that there is significant correlation between quality of human resources and employees' performance. The study further showed a positive significant correlation between transformational leadership style and employees' performance in the study area. Chandrasekara (2019) studied the effect of transformational leadership style on employees' job satisfaction and job performance in apparel manufacturing industry, Sri Lanka and reported that transformational leadership has a positive significant relationship with job satisfaction ($r=0.71$) and job performance ($r=0.74$).

Methodology:

Design

The study adopted descriptive survey design as it describes a target population of study by evaluating or collecting data from its sample.

Population

The target population for this study stood at 2,564 comprising 766 academic staff and 1,798 non-academic staff of Taraba State University, Jalingo.



Sample and Sampling Technique

A sample of 346 out of 2,564 total population was selected using stratified sampling technique. The study covered 8 offices saddled with leadership responsibilities and 25 departments with their academic/non-academic staff. Proportionate sampling technique was used to select 13.5% from each stratum. Thus, 103 academic staff and 243 non-academic staff participated. On the whole, 25 departments, 8 leadership responsibility offices, and 346 respondents were selected for the study while Taro Yamane formula was employed to determine the sample size.

Instrument

A researcher-developed questionnaire titled “Leadership Style and Employees Job Performance Questionnaire (LSEJPQ)” was used as instrument for data collection. The questionnaire had two parts, that is part A and Part B. The part A was used to generate information on the demographic characteristics of the respondents while part B had 2 clusters A-B with 5-items each. The response for each item in the questionnaire was based on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D), and Strongly Disagreed (SD) with a corresponding value of 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively for positively structured items and 1, 2, 3, and 4 respectively for negatively structured items.

Validity and Reliability

The instruments underwent face and content validity in terms of scope of coverage, content relevance, ambiguity and vagueness of expression. A pilot study was conducted on 40 respondents who are not part of sample size but within the study population in the study area. Split-Half was used to generate data while Cronbach’s Alpha analysis was used to generate reliability coefficient of .834.

Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. The decision rule for the research questions was 1.00-1.49 Strongly Disagree, 1.50-2.49 Disagree, 2.50-3.49 Agree and 3.50-4.00 Strongly Agree, while inferential statistics of regression analysis was used for testing the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the influence of laissez faire leadership style on employees’ job performance in Taraba State University Jalingo?



Table 1: Mean Influence of Laissez Faire Leadership Style on Employees' Job Performance in Taraba State University, Jalingo

S/ No	Statement	N	Mean	Std. Dev	Remark
1	Laissez-faire increases sense of autonomy among employees which reflects in productivity of staff.	346	2.92	1.06	Agreed
2	It does not provide necessary guidance for employees.	346	2.90	1.06	Agreed
3	It brings about decreased motivation.	346	2.83	1.05	Agreed
4	Leaders that use laissez-faire do not give support to employees.	346	2.87	1.06	Agreed
5	Laissez-faire decreases level of collaboration among employees.	346	2.82	1.06	Agreed
Cluster mean		346	2.87		Agreed

Source: Field Study (2025)

Table 1 presents respondents' views on the influence of laissez faire leadership style on employees' job performance in Taraba State University Jalingo. The data show that all respondents agreed that laissez faire leadership style influence employees' job performance. With a grand mean of 2.87 and with mean scores ranging from 2.82 to 2.92. These findings affirm that laissez faire leadership style instills sense of autonomy which reflects in employees' better productivity. Overall, the table upholds that items 1-5 are the influence of laissez faire leadership style on employees' job performance in the study area.

Research Question 2: What is the influence of transformational leadership style on employees' job performance in Taraba State University Jalingo?

Table 2: Mean Influence of Transformational Leadership Style on Employees' Job Performance in Taraba State University, Jalingo

S/ No	Statement	N	Mean	Std. Dev	Remark
6	Transformational leadership style improves employees' job satisfaction.	346	2.86	1.09	Agreed
7	Development of oriented leadership leads to enhanced productivity on the part of employees.	346	2.88	1.06	Agreed
8	It helps employees to achieve full potential.	346	2.92	1.06	Agreed
9	It shares compelling vision of organization for employees' optimal delivery.	346	2.85	1.09	Agreed



S/ No	Statement	N	Mean	Std. Dev	Remark
10	It ensures clear communication between leaders and employees.	346	2.78	1.02	Agreed
	Cluster mean	346	2.86		Agreed

Source: Field Study (2025)

Table 2 presents respondents' views on the influence of transformational leadership style on employees' job performance in Taraba State University Jalingo. The data show that all respondents concurred that transformational leadership style influence employees' job performance. With a grand mean of 2.86 and with mean scores (ranging from 2.78 to 2.92). These findings imply that transformational leadership style shares compelling vision of organization for employees' optimal performance. Overall, the table indicates that items 6-10 are the influence of transformational leadership style on employees' job performance in the study area.

Testing of Hypotheses

Research Hypothesis One (H_{01}): There is no significant influence of laissez faire leadership style on employees' job performance in Taraba State University Jalingo.

Table 3: Regression Analysis of Laissez Faire Leadership Style on Employees' Job Performance in Taraba State University, Jalingo

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	37292.182	1	37292.182	475178.094	.000 ^b
Residual	26.997	344	.078		
Total	37319.179	345			

Source: Field Study (2025)

The regression analysis explores the influence of laissez faire leadership style on employees' job performance in Taraba State University Jalingo, and results as shown is statistically significant with an F-statistic of 475178.094 and a p-value of 0.000 at df= 345. The null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is significant influence of laissez faire leadership style on employees' job performance in Taraba State University, Jalingo.

Research Hypothesis Two (H_{02}): There is no significant influence of transformational leadership style on employees' job performance in Taraba State University Jalingo.



Table 4: Regression Analysis of Transformational Leadership Style on Employees' Job Performance in Taraba State University, Jalingo

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	37296.923	1	37296.923	576492.712	.000 ^b
Residual	22.256	344	.065		
Total	37319.179	345			

Source: Field Study (2025)

The regression analysis explores the influence of transformational leadership style on employees' job performance in Taraba State University Jalingo, and results as shown is statistically significant with an F-statistic of 37296.923 and a p-value of 0.000 at df= 345. The hypothesis is hereby rejected. Hence, there is significant influence of transformational leadership style on employees' job performance in Taraba State University, Jalingo.

Discussion of Findings

Table 3 shows significant influence of laissez faire leadership style on employees' job performance with an F-statistic of 475178.094 and a p-value of 0.000 at df= 345, which provides coefficients and statistical significance of independent variable. Based on the table, laissez faire leadership style has significant influence on employees' job performance in Taraba State University, Jalingo.

The finding is in agreement with the study conducted by Krinstanto and Hartono (2024) who reported that laissez faire leadership style has a positive and significant impact on employee performance as it relates to employee engagement and internal communication in Kenoham District of Kutai Kartanegara Regency. The findings of the current study agreed with Rexha and Buleshkaj (2024) whose study indicated significant impact of laissez faire on job performance as it boosts job satisfaction and overall productivity of secondary school teachers in Kosovo. However, the findings of this study disagreed with Maqbool, Muhammad, Maqbool and Saima (2024) whose study revealed that laissez faire leadership style has the lowest impact on sustaining staff academic performance, and autocratic leadership has a moderate impact on sustaining staff academic performance while democratic leadership has a highly positive impact on sustaining teaching staff academic performance at the high school level in Multan, Punjab, Pakistan. Additionally, the findings of this study disagreed with Tamiru (2021) whose study indicated that in St. Mary's University employees were significantly affected by the transformational and transactional leadership styles, whereas laissez-faire leadership style has no significant effect on the performance and employee motivation.



Table 4 shows significant influence of transformational leadership style on employees' job performance with an F-statistic of 37296.923 and a p-value of 0.000 at $df= 345$, which provides coefficients and statistical significance of independent variable. Based on the table, transformational leadership style has significant influence on employees' job performance in Taraba State University, Jalingo.

The finding is in agreement with the study conducted by Ombao and De-Jesus (2025) who reported that transformational and democratic leadership styles are the most effective in promoting quality performance and organizational success as each has unique strengths to address satisfaction of non-academic staff of a selected Nigerian public university. Similarly, the findings of the current study affirmed Adebayo and Fashola's (2024) reports that there is significant relationship between employees' performance and transformational leadership style ($r = 0.56$; $p < 0.01$), and that there exists a significant relationship between job satisfaction and transformational leadership style ($r = 0.56$; $p < 0.01$) in the study area. In addition, the findings of this study agreed with Devi and Sumarsono (2021) whose findings indicated that transformational leadership style significant correlate to employees' motivation; significant correlation between quality of human resources and employees' performance; and that there is a positive significant correlation between transformational leadership style and employees' performance in the study area. In addition, the findings of this study concurred with Chandrasekara (2019) who reported that transformational leadership has a positive significant relationship with job satisfaction ($r=0.71$) and job performance ($r=0.74$); and that the qualities of transformational leadership increased the job satisfaction whereby job performance of employees increase in apparel manufacturing industry, Sri Lanka.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that the leadership styles significantly influence on employees' job performance in Taraba State University Jalingo. It is evident from this study that laissez faire leadership style and transformational leadership style specifically influence employees job performance. Thus, the findings affirmed that leadership styles are positive indicators of employees' job performance as sense of belongingness and opportunity for growth tend to improve job satisfaction of university staff.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:



- i. The Taraba State University leaders ranging from the office of Head of Departments to Directors should properly manage tendencies of laissez faire approach at their domains as it can demoralize creativity among their staff. Therefore, the HoDs, Deans and Directors should harness the latent skills and dexterities of their staff so as to promote employees' job performance in the institution.
- ii. It is expected that the leadership of Taraba State University Jalingo will prioritize transformational leadership style being demonstrated by the Vice Chancellor in person of Prof. Sunday Paul Bako who has technically transformed the university community from low profile to high profile university in Nigeria.

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