PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP STYLE AND TUTOR JOB SATISFACTION: INSIGHTS FROM TUTORS IN PUBLIC COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN GHANA

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Abstract:

This study explored how principals' leadership styles influenced tutor job satisfaction in public Colleges of Education (CoEs) in Ghana. Anchored by the constructivist paradigm, this study adopted a phenomenological research design with a qualitative research approach. Eligible participants for this study included all full-time principals and tutors of the forty-six colleges who had been at their present college for at least three years. Purposive and convenient sampling techniques were utilised to obtain forty participants involving fifteen principals and twenty-five tutors from all the five zones as organised by the National Conference of Principals of Public CoEs in Ghana. This study utilised a semi-structured interview guide in collecting data. Analysing the data thematically revealed that participants (both tutors principals) believed the principals mostly used transformational leadership styles and that tutors were perceived to be satisfied with their job. Again, both tutors and principals expressed a strong liking for transformational leadership as highly influencing tutor job satisfaction. Largely, tutors and principals suggested laissez-faire leadership style as unfavourable to tutor job satisfaction. Thus, effective transformational leadership is pivotal in enhancing tutor job satisfaction in public CoEs in Ghana. Accordingly, principals in public CoEs in Ghana, among others, should focus on strengthening transformational leadership practices in their administrative and managerial roles, and regularly identify and reinforce the factors of tutor job satisfaction.

Keywords: leadership styles, transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, tutor, job satisfaction

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1. Introduction

Effective leadership in educational institutions is essential for creating an environment that supports teaching and learning, with principals and tutors being critical sources of such leadership, leading to better student outcomes (Day & Sammons, 2016; Fackler & Malmberg, 2016; Parveen *et al.*, 2021). Additionally, leadership can indirectly impact performance through corporate social responsibilities, defined as organizations' ethical commitments to economic development and improving the quality of life for their workforce, families, and the broader community (Manzoor *et al.*, 2019). Leadership styles are an essential predictor of job satisfaction and are indispensable in realizing educational goals in tertiary institutions, including public CoEs.

Bernarto *et al.* (2020) argued that leadership is a management practice focusing on persons and social communication in an organization. Thus, the role of principals in shaping the organizational climate and impacting tutor job satisfaction has become a significant focus in educational research. Leadership styles, including transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire, have been associated with different outcomes in educational environments (Northouse, 2019). According to Moslehpour *et al.* (2019), leadership style influences employees' attitudes, serves as an effective organizational engine through leader-employee interactions, and is a critical factor in determining employee satisfaction.

Ghana, like many other countries, has implemented significant reviews and reforms in its educational systems and curricula (Addai-Mununkum & Setordzi, 2023; Adam-Yawson *et al.*, 2021; Adu-Gyamfi *et al.*, 2016), with recent reforms aimed at aligning with global trends and meeting the evolving human resource needs of emerging societies (Ministry of Education, 2018). Education is crucial in supporting global transformation efforts, as evidenced by adopting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), emphasizing equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all (United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organisation, 2017). Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) thus encourages the realignment of school curricula to develop 21st-century skills and competencies, including anticipatory, normative, critical thinking, strategic, collaboration, self-awareness, and integrated problem-solving skills (Leicht *et al.*, 2018).

In response to global trends, Ghana revised its initial teacher education curriculum in 2019, focusing on competencies as a critical driver for the changes (Addai-Mununkum & Setordzi, 2023). The goal is for the next generation of teachers in Ghana to help learners develop six key competencies: critical thinking and problem-solving, creativity and innovation, communication and collaboration, cultural identity and global citizenship, personal development and leadership, and digital literacy (Addai-Mununkum & Setordzi, 2023; NaCCA, 2019). Achieving these goals requires effective leadership from principals of public Colleges of Education (CoEs) in Ghana, who must create a supportive, collaborative, inclusive, and conducive work environment to enhance tutor job satisfaction and enable the development of future global and inspiring teachers.

In Ghana, public CoEs are crucial in training future educators, and the leadership style of principals, which involves the approaches and behaviours used to guide and motivate staff (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2021; Jaques, 2017; Northouse, 2018), is critical to achieving this objective. Globally, job satisfaction is a critical factor in educational organizations (Adu & Ofori, 2023; Agyei, 2023; Broussard & Garrison, 2019), as it reflects employees' overall assessment of their jobs and is closely tied to their mental health (Cao *et al.*, 2022; Fan *et al.*, 2019). Job satisfaction among tutors is paramount because it influences their performance, commitment, and effectiveness in delivering quality education (Jahangir, 2022). Research indicates that leadership styles directly impact job satisfaction, with transformational leadership often linked to higher job satisfaction due to its focus on motivation and personal development (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

In Ghana's public CoEs, where leadership challenges, job satisfaction, resource constraints, and high expectations are significant issues, understanding the relationship between principals' leadership styles and tutor job satisfaction is crucial. Some quantitative research shows that principals' leadership styles, including transformational and transactional approaches, influence tutors' perceptions of their work environment and satisfaction (Kwarteng & Osei, 2019). Kadbey (2018) found that principals who exhibited transformational leadership behaviours increased teacher satisfaction, while laissez-faire leadership led to lower satisfaction. Similarly, Owusu-Mensah *et al.* (2021) discovered that transformational leadership significantly and positively affected tutors' job satisfaction, whereas transactional and laissez-faire styles had adverse effects.

However, some qualitative studies (Ariyantho *et al.*, 2021; Bsoul & Vasiluță-Ștefănescu, 2021; Daily, 2018; Metaferia *et al.*, 2022) on principals' leadership styles and tutor job satisfaction, mainly conducted outside the context of Ghana, found that tutors were satisfied with their job because their principal's transformational leadership practices involved delegation of tasks, participatory decision-making, operating open door policy, and encouraging cordial and professional relationship. From these studies, other transformational leadership behaviours which ensured tutor job satisfaction include providing leadership support, collaboration, professional development, recognition and appreciation of tutors' job performance, and encouraging the use of varied technological tools. The findings from these studies generally portrayed principals functioning as role models in all activities and considered each tutor's needs.

Although principals play a crucial role in influencing educational outcomes, limited research specifically explores the relationship between principals' leadership styles and tutor job satisfaction in these institutions (Adams & Ekwue, 2021). This assertion by Adams and Ekwue (2021) is evident in Ghana, where there is no qualitative study exploring principals' leadership styles and tutor job satisfaction in the setting of public CoEs. Thus, there is a need for more context-specific qualitative research to understand better the influence of leadership styles on tutor satisfaction within the Ghanaian educational context, specifically in public CoEs. This study aims to fill this gap by investigating how principals' leadership styles influence tutor job satisfaction in

Ghana's public CoEs. The findings seek to inform policy and practice to enhance job satisfaction and the overall effectiveness of these colleges.

Effective leadership in Ghana's public Colleges of Education (CoEs) is vital for improving tutor job satisfaction, as principals' leadership styles significantly impact various college activities, including tutor satisfaction. A key responsibility of principals in public CoEs is ensuring that tutors are content in their roles, enabling them to achieve college and educational goals. However, recent industrial actions by the College of Education Teachers Association of Ghana (CETAG) suggest dissatisfaction among tutors with how the Government of Ghana (GoG) is handling aspects of their conditions of service. Additionally, unfavourable leadership styles of principals hinder tutors in achieving their goals (Bickmore & Dowell, 2018; Osei-Owusu, 2023). As a result, some tutors leave public CoEs for mainstream universities and other establishments, possibly due to perceived better leadership and working conditions in these institutions (Jones & Watson, 2017; Bickmore & Dowell, 2018).

There appears to be apathy among some tutors who remain in Ghana's public CoEs, often due to the limitations and weaknesses in principals' leadership styles (Oplatka & Arar, 2018; Osei-Owusu, 2023). Some researchers (Ali, 2018; De Talancé, 2017; Halai & Durrani, 2018; Osei-Owusu, 2023) argued that political influence in appointing principals, along with a lack of intellectual and administrative freedom, has contributed to a decline in principals' competence, negatively impacting tutor job satisfaction and student learning outcomes. The decline in effective leadership styles, leading to lower job satisfaction and enthusiasm among tutors (Ali, 2018; Rizvi & Khamis, 2020), is a crucial reason for conducting this study. Nam and Park (2019) averred that extensive research had shown a significant relationship between leadership style and employees' job satisfaction in various organizations, including educational institutions. In line with this, some researchers (Kalsoom & Zubair, 2018; Lin & Chen, 2018; Njiinu, 2017) have reported a significant positive connection between leadership styles and job satisfaction among employees in educational organizations. However, no extensive study has examined how principals' leadership styles influence tutor job satisfaction in Ghana's public CoEs.

Leadership styles, such as transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire, have distinct effects on job satisfaction (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Northouse, 2018). Transformational leadership, known for inspiration and intellectual stimulation, is typically linked to higher job satisfaction (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Conversely, transactional leadership, focusing on routine and performance-based rewards, may result in varying job satisfaction levels, while laissez-faire leadership, marked by a lack of involvement, is generally associated with lower job satisfaction (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). As public CoEs in Ghana transition into recognized tertiary institutions and implement curriculum reforms to align with Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), principals' roles have become more complex, requiring closer collaboration with tutors (Norviewu-Mortty, 2010; Osei-Owusu, 2023). Understanding how different principal leadership styles influence tutors' job satisfaction is crucial for improving educational outcomes and staff well-being in public CoEs in Ghana.

Some quantitative studies conducted outside the context of Ghana (Avolio & Bass, 2004; Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Kadbey, 2018; Northouse, 2018) and those conducted in the Ghanaian context (Frimpong *et al.*, 2016; Kwarteng & Osei, 2019; Owusu-Mensah *et al.*, 2021), have explored the impact of principals' leadership styles on tutor job satisfaction. However, Addai-Mununkum and Setordzi (2023) argued that quantitative studies often miss capturing participants' personal experiences. Notably, there is a need for qualitative research on the influence of principals' leadership styles on tutor job satisfaction in Ghanaian public CoEs. This study aims to fill this gap by exploring tutors' subjective experiences and interpretations, which may be overlooked in quantitative research (Creswell & Poth, 2018). By doing so, this study seeks to augment the voices of tutors and provide insights that could inform policy and practice in public CoEs in Ghana through answers to the following questions:

1) What leadership styles do principals of public Colleges of Education in Ghana mostly exhibit?
2) What is the description of tutor job satisfaction in public CoEs in Ghana?
3) What leadership style is more conducive to the job satisfaction of tutors in public Colleges of Education in Ghana?
4) What leadership style is a barrier to the job satisfaction of tutors of public Colleges of Education in Ghana?

3. Methodology

This study used a phenomenological research design with a qualitative research approach, both supported by the constructivist paradigm. In the context of public CoEs in Ghana, this study examined the participants' subjective experiences, perceptions, and understanding of principals' leadership styles and tutor job satisfaction. Therefore, this study sought to ascertain how the participants, drawing from their interactions and experiences in Ghana's public CoEs, socially constructed their own knowledge and understanding of leadership styles and tutor job satisfaction. In line with the idea of Addai-Mununkum and Setordzi (2023), this study aimed at comprehending the depth rather than the breadth of the issues under investigation. This study focused on a few tutors and principals whose experiences might be generalized to other situations. In order to describe the phenomenon (experiences) of participants as lived and expressed through their "voice" (Addai-Mununkum & Setordzi, 2023; Cresswell & Poth, 2018), the qualitative approach and the phenomenological design were considered appropriate.

This study was conducted in the context of public CoEs in Ghana, with five zones designed by regional groupings organized by the National Conference of Principals of Public CoEs in Ghana. Purposive sampling was employed to consciously select a range of study-relevant principals and tutors who had specific characteristics from all five zones. The criteria for selecting participants involved a full-time appointment and at least three years of work experience in the present college. In all, a total sample of forty participants, consisting of fifteen principals and twenty-five tutors from all five zones,

were involved in the study. The sample size was considered suitable for a phenomenological study (Fraenkel *et al.*, 2018; Stahl & King, 2020). After interviewing ten principals and eighteen tutors, the data began to repeat (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Hennink & Kaiser, 2022). However, the remaining five principals and seven tutors were interviewed to explore the emergence of new themes.

A semi-structured interview guide was used to collect the qualitative data, allowing for a planned yet flexible interview process. When someone made a thought-provoking remark, open-ended questions guided and probed the discussion further. This led to a wide range of topics being discussed. It also allowed for the ability to reorder the questions, delve further, and look into any new issues throughout the interview. As a result, there were no reservations or ambiguous answers, and a clear explanation of the phenomenon was given. Informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, and data encryption to prevent unauthorized access to data are among the ethical considerations taken into account throughout this study.

The study was deemed trustworthy based on the following criteria: confirmability, credibility, dependability, and transferability (Polit & Beck, 2018; Stahl & King, 2020). In order to assure the findings' credibility, a substantial amount of time (60 days) was spent with participants in order to establish trust, gather comprehensive data, and provide transcripts or interpretations back to them for confirmation of authenticity and to guarantee that their perspectives are accurately represented. A thorough record of every significant stage of the investigation was maintained, and the study's consistency and fidelity were evaluated to ensure the dependability of the results. In order to help people assess whether the study results are applicable in different contexts, this report thoroughly clarified transferability by going into great depth about the study's participants, background, and conclusions. Member checking ensured confirmability by having participants examine results to confirm interpretations and make sure they accurately represented their viewpoints. Again, input from colleagues was requested to gain external insights and obtain fresh perspectives to improve the findings' robustness.

3.1 Data Analyses

This qualitative study investigated principal leadership styles and tutor job satisfaction from the tutors' and principals' perspectives in Ghana's public CoEs. The study sought to ascertain the leadership style mostly used by principals, describe tutors' job satisfaction or otherwise, identify the leadership style that best supports tutors' job satisfaction, and investigate the leadership style that may impede tutors' job satisfaction in Ghana's public CoEs. The analyses were done using themes.

4. Results

This section presents the findings from the qualitative analysis of data collected to address the study's research questions on leadership styles and job satisfaction in public CoEs in Ghana. The results explore the predominant leadership styles exhibited by

principals, the overall state of tutor job satisfaction, and the leadership styles that either enhance or hinder tutor job satisfaction. The findings are organized thematically, highlighting key patterns, perceptions, and experiences shared by participants, providing insights into how leadership practices influence tutors' job satisfaction.

4.1 Leadership Styles Mostly Exhibited by Principals

Analysis of the data generated from the interview sessions in response to the first research question revealed different views on the leadership style mostly displayed by the principals of public CoEs in Ghana. Most tutor participants indicated that their principals practiced a transformational leadership style, while some believed their principals adopted a transactional leadership style. A few tutors believed their principals displayed transformational and transactional leadership styles. On the part of the principals, the results revealed that they mostly used a transformational leadership style. Interestingly, none of the principals interviewed indicated that they use transactional or laissez-faire leadership styles. The following are some of the statements made by tutors on the use of transformational leadership style by their principals:

> *"The principal sets clear targets for every tutor and expects a lot from tutors to achieve them. As a result, the principal always provides the necessary resources and encourages everybody to perform tasks individually or in groups (committees). The principal discusses issues with staff to get their views. When tasks are well executed, the principal congratulates everyone on an excellent job done. The principal's leadership behaviours are transformational."* [Male Tutor, Eastern/Greater Accra Zone]

> *"My principal believes that everyone must discuss issues related to the success of our college. Based on this belief, my principal seeks tutors' views when making decisions. Usually, my principal seeks tutors' views during deliberations during staff or committee meetings."* [Male Tutor, Ashanti/Brong-Ahafo Zone]

> *"Our principal almost always involves tutors in the college's decisions, especially on issues within the tutors' domain. Our principal believes that wisdom is not found in one person's head, so he tries to obtain tutors' opinions to ensure a wide range of ideas are considered and the best ones are implemented. Such demonstrated behaviours make our principal a transformational leader."* [Male Tutor, Northern Zone]

> *"My principal is transformational in nature because tutors are aware of the principal's vision for achieving college goals. My principal outlines the various duties to be performed by individual tutors or committee members. Again, my principal inspires tutors, and through discussion of alternative ideas, informed decisions are made for implementation."* [Female Tutor, Volta Zone]

These responses were similar to the comments by the principals when they were asked to describe the leadership style they mostly adopted in their day-to-day activities. The following are some of the statements made by the principals:

"I mostly adopt the transformational leadership style. I ensure that tutors are aware and clearly understand the tasks to be performed to achieve the goals of the college. As a result, I encourage my tutors to put up the right attitude towards work to achieve the desired changes in the college. I also ensure that most decisions taken in the college are based on tutors' views, either as individuals or in teams. I ask tutors to bring their opinions on issues during staff meetings or committee discussions to make informed decisions. Again, I encourage my tutors to inform me of their challenges in performing their duties to help address them." [Principal, Eastern/Greater Accra Zone]

"I understand and recognize tutors' needs and concerns. I assist them in looking at new and diverse ways of doing things to ensure high performance. I encourage my tutors to believe in themselves and develop creative ideas to address college problems. Where they are in doubt, I encourage them to ask for reasons for certain actions taken by management. Tutors are involved in decision-making, which is very helpful. The reason is that most of the time, many ideas come up, and discussions involving tutors help decide the best way to go. [Principal, Ashanti/Brong-Ahafo Zone]

Some tutors thought that their principals utilized a transactional leadership style. Comments made by some of the tutors to buttress their stance that their principals mostly adopted transactional leadership style include:

"Our principal is primarily transactional in ensuring the performance of tasks to achieve college goals. Almost all the time, my principal monitors the work assigned to tutors and corrects them when expected standards are not met. Again, my principal applies the rules, regulations, and policies to avoid mistakes. However, this approach makes it difficult for tutors to bring out their innovative ideas when addressing issues in college. Hmmmm! you see, sometimes it is understood that when you allow tutors too much freedom, they behave the way they want, which could negatively affect the college. However, too much of this leadership style also reduces morale among tutors." [Male Tutor, Central/Western Zone]

"My principal is so bossy and authoritative that he hardly seeks tutors' views on issues about the college. Even on issues that affect tutors, he only announces his decisions to the staff and expects everybody to go by them. The principal sees any attempt to suggest alternative decisions as sabotaging his administration. Even when tasks assigned are not completed on time because of inadequate resources and support, tutors are not spared. My principal always expects staff members to accept decisions and instructions even when

alternative views of tutors are expressed. My principal has a 'command and control' mentality and hardly trusts tutors." [Male Tutor, Eastern/Greater Accra Zone]

"My principal is a transactional leader because he makes unilateral decisions and hardly involves tutors. At meetings, information is mostly disseminated to staff rather than seeking their views on issues that affect the College." [Male Tutor, Northern Zone]

Another category of teachers was of the view that their principals used both transformational and transactional leadership styles, mainly based on the situation at hand. Some of the responses from the tutors are seen in the following excerpts:

"My principal uses a combination of transformational and transactional leadership styles even though he exhibits a transformational leadership style compared to a transactional one. My principal does not use laissez-faire leadership. You see, my principal ensures a free flow of communication, but he insists on using the approved communication channels to address the concerns of staff and students. He addresses issues of concern to tutors and the college as a whole through the committee system, which uses various ideas of the staff. He mostly delegates responsibilities and ensures that tasks are completed on time. He achieves this through close and careful supervision of activities and ensures mistakes are corrected to help achieve the objectives set." [Female Tutor, Ashanti/Brong-Ahafo Zone]

"Our principal uses transformational and transactional leadership styles at different times. Depending on the situation at hand, my principal uses either of these two leadership styles. Most of the time, my principal discusses issues with us. However, tutors are not involved in the decisions made in certain situations, even though we are informed later about such decisions." [Male Tutor, Eastern/Greater Accra Zone]

"My principal believes that we can perform the functions assigned to us as staff and, as such, ensure we are all involved in decision-making and performing the responsibilities assigned to us. However, when the principal realises that some staff members are not performing as expected, he tries to apply the rules to ensure that the right things are done." [Male Tutor, Central/Western Zone]

The responses from some of the principals also showed that they practiced both transformational and transactional leadership styles. Interestingly, none of the principals interviewed suggested using a laissez-faire leadership style in the administration of their colleges. Similarly, none of the principals opined that they utilized only transactional leadership in administrative and management activities. The responses from the principals corroborated those of the tutors, as shown in the following comments:

"I mainly use a transformational leadership style but sometimes blend it with a transactional leadership style. I have respect for my tutors, especially their capability in

performing their core duties and other delegated responsibilities. This makes me involve them in decision-making and respect their opinion on issues. However, in some cases, tutors are not consulted, but they have to implement my decisions. In such situations, tutors are directed, and I make sure there is effective supervision to ensure that tasks are performed well." [Principal, Volta Zone]

"Generally, my tutors are hardworking, but some of them make things quite difficult for the college because they do not willingly work to help attain goals. Given this, I discuss with tutors the specific responsibilities to be performed and ensure close but careful supervision of the tasks they perform. This helps me to identify the necessary shortfalls of tutors in order to correct them. I regularly discuss with tutors the benefits to gain when we all work hard to achieve the targets set. Outstanding tutors are recognised, and those who do not meet targets are asked to 'step up their game' [improve their performance]. I query tutors who persistently do not follow the norms. This serves as a deterrent to others." [Principal, Central Zone]

"A single leadership style is inadequate due to varying situations, so I mostly use a combination of transformational and transactional styles. I outline and explain very well to tutors the various goals expected to be achieved by the college, and I do my best to help them achieve these goals. I ensure that tutors are motivated to boost their morale at work, encouraged to update their knowledge, skills, and experience to improve their work, and inspired to understand that they can perform more than they think they can. With the knowledge of the maxim, 'leadership by example,' I do well in modelling good values to influence tutors to work hard. Sometimes, I enforce the rules to ensure that things are done well. I clearly outline what tutors are expected to do and give timelines as to when to achieve them. In most cases, tutors who perform very well are recognized." [Principal, Northern Zone]

The deduction made from the responses is that whereas most of the tutors perceived their principals to be exhibiting a transformational leadership style, others believed that their principals showed transactional leadership behaviours. Yet, some tutors opined that their principals combined transformational and transactional leadership styles depending on the situation. These responses from the tutors were similar to those from the principals. The majority of the principals also revealed that they predominantly exhibited transformational leadership behaviours to get tasks performed to achieve college goals, while others viewed themselves as combining transformational and transactional leadership styles. Interestingly, none of the tutors indicated that their principal exercised a laissez-faire leadership style. Similarly, no principal mentioned using a laissez-faire leadership style in their day-to-day activities.

4.2 Tutor Job Satisfaction

Analysis of the interview data on tutor job satisfaction in public CoEs in Ghana portrayed that the tutors were generally satisfied with their jobs. Statements made by some of the tutors on their job satisfaction are as follows:

"It is the desire of every tutor to participate fully in almost all activities of the college in order to achieve the goals set. This can be achieved when the principal provides adequate resources and leadership support. Generally, tutors in my college are satisfied with the work they do. The reasons are that our principal ensures the provision of resources needed for work even though sometimes this comes with some challenges. Tutors are given the needed support and encouragement by the principal. Generally, there is a cordial relationship between the principals and tutors. Again, tutors are made to express their views on issues, and hardworking tutors are recognised for their efforts." [Male Tutor, Northern Zone]

"I am satisfied with my job as a tutor, and most of my colleagues are also satisfied with their work. In my college, tutors are mostly involved in decision-making processes, and when targets are attained, the principal appreciates the efforts of tutors by commending them. My principal's relationship with tutors is cordial, and this encourages tutors to approach the principal even with personal issues." [Female Tutor, Ashanti/Brong-Ahafo Zone]

"One of the most important factors of tutor satisfaction in my college is the principal's leadership style. Our principal's leadership behaviours make tutors feel satisfied with their work. Tutors are praised for completing work and are called to participate in decision-making. To a large extent, there is a fair opportunity for tutors to pursue further studies to improve their knowledge, skills, and experiences." [Male Tutor, Volta Zone]

"My principal's invitation to tutors to participate in decision-making is a great source of satisfaction to me. My principal shows confidence in tutors' ability to meet expectations and ensures that tutors are fairly treated. To a large extent, resources are made available for tutors to perform their duties." [Female Tutor, Eastern/Greater Accra Zone]

"Tutors in my college enjoy a very good interpersonal relationship with the principal. This enables us to share ideas to improve our practice and achieve college goals. Apart from this, tutors can contribute to most of the decisions made in college. The work environment is very conducive, boosting tutors' morale." [Male Tutor, Central/Western Zone]

The principals' responses were quite similar to those of the tutors, confirming their views on their job satisfaction in public colleges of education in Ghana. The following are some of the statements from the principals:

"My tutors are generally satisfied with their work. As a principal, I do my best to get my tutors involved in almost all college activities, especially decision-making and delegation of responsibilities. This makes them feel part of the college's leadership." [Principal, Eastern/Greater Accra Zone]

"Tutors in my college are generally satisfied with their job. Yes, I know they may not be satisfied with everything, but their attitude toward work generally suggests that they are satisfied. This is because of how I relate with them, support them in performing their duties, and their participation in decision-making on issues that affect them and the entire college." [Principal, Northern Zone]

"Several factors affect workers' satisfaction. However, I can say that the tutors in this college are basically satisfied. Tutors are applauded in different ways when they collectively or individually work to achieve set targets. I relate very well with them and ensure that they are involved in most of the college decisions. Tutors are given delegated responsibilities and are supported and encouraged to accomplish tasks." [Principal, Ashanti/Brong-Ahafo Zone]

The responses from tutors and principals on tutors' job satisfaction in public CoEs in Ghana suggest that principals recognize tutors' efforts in achieving their colleges' goals. From the responses, both tutors and principals concur that effective leadership and support are essential for job satisfaction. Tutors appreciate principals who provide adequate resources, involve them in decision-making, and recognize their hard work, fostering a positive work environment and strong relationships. Key factors for tutor satisfaction include active participation in decision-making, regular praise, acknowledgment of achievements, and opportunities for professional growth. Principals similarly highlight the importance of involving tutors in decision-making and delegating responsibilities to make them feel valued and integrated. The principals believe that strong support, positive interactions, and recognition of achievements significantly enhance tutor satisfaction. Ultimately, both tutors and principals view leadership emphasising support, involvement, recognition, and effective resource management as crucial for achieving high tutor job satisfaction.

4.3 Principals' Leadership Styles Conducive to Tutor Job Satisfaction

The analysis of interview data revealed that most tutor participants viewed transformational leadership as beneficial to their job satisfaction. However, a few tutors expressed that their principals' transactional leadership style was more favourable to their job satisfaction. The following are some of the statements from the tutors.

"Transformational leadership improves my job satisfaction. With this, the principal establishes trust and inspires tutors to complete tasks well. When tutors are involved in crucial decisions, they are empowered to assist in the growth of the college. My principal

uses transformational leadership to be transparent with tutors and encourage tutor engagement in most college activities. Tutors are advised, supported, and encouraged individually and as a team to be innovative and creative. This is more conducive to my job satisfaction as a tutor in this college." [Male Tutor, Northern Zone]

"The leadership style that is more favourable to my job satisfaction and the satisfaction of other tutors in my college is the transformational leadership style. My principal is very transparent and discusses issues with tutors to obtain different opinions and make informed decisions. This provides the opportunity for the principal to select from varied ideas. As a result, most tutors become satisfied with their involvement in decision-making and shared responsibilities. Adopting this leadership style brings about strong teamwork since the principal and the tutors work together to achieve the set goals of the college."
[Female Tutor, Ashanti/Brong-Ahafo Zone]

"The transactional leadership style is more conducive to my job satisfaction because it helps the principal make quick decisions compared to the transformational leadership style, where some tutors expect their views to be considered almost always before a decision. When the principal agrees with the views of some of the tutors, those whose views are not considered may be unhappy. It is difficult for the principal to agree with the opinions of all tutors. However, as a competent and experienced leader, the principal can make decisions, and tutors will be directed to accept and implement them." [Male Tutor, Volta Zone]

"My satisfaction is determined by how my principal closely but carefully monitors and supervises the duties assigned to tutors. Again, my satisfaction is dependent on the rewards and recognition that may be given to tutors who perform their tasks well and the corrective measures put in place for tutors who do not work hard. This, in my view, makes all tutors focused and helps them achieve the targets set." [Female Tutor, Central/Western Zone]

Interviews with principals about the leadership style they believed contributes to their tutors' job satisfaction revealed that some principals preferred transformational leadership as the most conducive, while others preferred a combination of transformational and transactional leadership styles. They felt that blending these approaches helps ensure tutors' job satisfaction. Examples of their comments are as follows:

"I believe a transformational leadership style is more conducive to the job satisfaction of my tutors. The reason is that the tutors are inspired and motivated to work and bring their innovative ideas to the college's goals. Through this style, the principal supports the tutors in performing their tasks very well. As a result, tutors are engaged in almost all activities of the college." [Principal, Ashanti/Brong-Ahafo Zone]

"A combination of transformational and transactional leadership styles is more favourable to tutors' job satisfaction. However, the transformational leadership style should dominate because tutors must be inspired, motivated, and supported to share their creative and innovative ideas on issues. On the other hand, effective supervision of tasks performed by tutors serves as a check for tutors who seem lazy and try to avoid work." [Principal, Central/Western Zone]

The views of tutors and principals highlight a strong preference for transformational leadership, which is seen as highly effective in enhancing job satisfaction by fostering trust, participation in decision-making, and promoting transparency. The transformational leadership style is valued for its ability to empower, motivate, and support a collaborative and innovative environment, leading to increased satisfaction and commitment among tutors. While some tutors appreciate the efficiency and structure of transactional leadership, especially in decision-making and performance management, both tutors and principals agree on the importance of adapting leadership styles to meet diverse needs. The principals also emphasize the benefits of a flexible approach that combines transformational leadership for its motivational impact with transactional elements for supervision and accountability, ensuring that all tutors are effectively supported and managed to optimize job satisfaction.

4.4 Principals' Leadership Styles as a Barrier to Tutor Job Satisfaction

On the leadership styles considered a barrier to the job satisfaction of tutors in public CoEs in Ghana, most of the tutors interviewed considered laissez-faire leadership style to be a barrier. However, very few tutors believed that the transactional leadership style was a barrier to job satisfaction. The following are some of the comments from the tutors and principals:

"The leadership style that is a barrier to my job satisfaction is laissez-faire because it shows no clear leadership. If my principal adopts this style, there will be little control in the college, which may result in confusion and conflicts since there will be unguided freedom." [Male Tutor, Northern Zone]

"The laissez-faire leadership style is a barrier to my job satisfaction. If my principal adopts this leadership style, tutors are likely to be encouraged to do things independently. The result may be less work done, poor quality work, and more play among tutors. This will not auger well for the college." [Female Tutor, Ashanti/Brong-Ahafo Zone]

"In my opinion, laissez-faire leadership behaviours negatively affect tutor job satisfaction because such a leadership style more or less assigns responsibility to tutors to identify targets to be met, make decisions themselves, and address problems that may arise. Most tutors will think they are knowledgeable and experienced, so they will do whatever they

like. This may eventually result in unnecessary competition among tutors." [Male Tutor, Central/Western Zone]

"With a transactional leadership style, my principal's focus would be monitoring staff performance to achieve specific college goals. This may not provide enough learning opportunities for the principal and tutors. The principal would insist on the laid-down procedures and processes in performing tasks, which may not encourage creative and innovative ideas from tutors." [Female Tutor, Volta Zone]

The analysis of the responses from the interview with the principals also revealed that largely laissez-faire leadership style is a barrier to tutor job satisfaction in public CoEs in Ghana. However, some principals, like the tutors, indicated that transactional leadership style could also be a barrier to tutors' job satisfaction. Some of the comments made by the principals are as follows:

"A laissez-faire leadership style will not make my tutors happy. This leadership style means the absence of leadership, and it implies that most of the time, I may not be around when expected. Tutors may therefore feel I am not interested in helping them to fulfil their personal and college goals. As such, my tutors may not be satisfied with this leadership behaviour." [Principal, Northern Zone]

"Adopting a laissez-faire leadership style may hinder my tutors' satisfaction. It is true that my tutors are knowledgeable, skilled, and experienced in their line of work, but they will need someone to direct their activities, and that is what I am expected to do as a principal. When there is no direction, the tutors may do things anyhow, preventing the college from achieving its set targets." [Principal, Eastern/Greater Accra Zone]

"When I adopt a solely transactional leadership style, it is likely to result in job dissatisfaction among my tutors. Generally, my tutors are happy with my transformational leadership style. Therefore, they may not be happy when I put up transactional leadership behaviours. For instance, I do not foresee tutors becoming happy when they cannot make input to decide on issues related to them and the college. Again, the constant threats and sanctions describing transactional leadership may not please the tutors." [Principal, Ashanti/Brong-Ahafo Zone]

"A transactional leadership style may negatively affect my tutors' job satisfaction. A transactional leader focuses on irregularities, deviations, and mistakes from the standards set. With this, tutors may see the principal as showing a sense of power and only assisting tutors in exchange for their efforts. Since tutors sometimes may not be part of major decision-making, their creative and innovative ideas may be ignored. This could make transactional leadership style a barrier to the job satisfaction of tutors in my college." [Principal, Volta Zone]

These statements suggest that relatively, tutors and principals of public CoEs in Ghana agree that laissez-faire leadership style is detrimental to tutor job satisfaction due to its lack of direction, which may lead to confusion, poor work quality, and disorganization. The absence of leadership reduces accountability and impedes the college's progress. While tutors and principals also express concerns about transactional leadership for its potential to stifle creativity and create a fear-driven environment, they find transformational leadership to be the most effective. They value transformational leadership's ability to involve tutors in decision-making, foster a positive and motivating environment, and support creativity. Largely, both tutors and principals advocate for a leadership approach that blends clear guidance with involvement and accountability to enhance job satisfaction and ensure the college operates smoothly.

5. Discussion of Findings

The finding from the first research question reveals that both tutors and principals predominantly view their principals as employing transformational leadership styles, which focus on inspiring, motivating, and involving staff in decision-making. Tutors highly value this approach, and it is associated with increased job satisfaction due to its supportive and empowering nature. This finding corroborates that of Daily (2018), who found that principals were more transformational in their daily activities by operating open door policy, providing leadership support, encouraging collaboration, appreciating or recognizing the efforts of tutors, and encouraging tutors to participate in professional development programmes.

The finding also falls in line with Metaferia *et al.* (2022) whose study established that principals practiced transformational leadership by serving as role models, and encouraging staff members to consider new thoughts, use variety of technologies, and attend training programmes, even though these were not operated to their fullest potential. Similarly, Osei Owusu's (2023) study in Catholic High Schools in Ghana established a positive, cordial, professional relationship between principals and tutors. This supports the findings of this study.

However, the study also identifies a blend of transformational and transactional leadership practices. Principals sometimes combine these styles to balance motivation and engagement with the need for structure and accountability. Notably, neither tutors nor principals reported using laissez-faire leadership, suggesting a consensus on its undesirability. This absence highlights a shared preference for active and directed leadership, emphasizing the importance of clear guidance and support in achieving organizational goals and enhancing job satisfaction. Overall, effective leadership in this context involves a strategic mix of transformational and transactional approaches, while avoiding the hands-off approach of laissez-faire leadership.

The study discloses a strong agreement between tutors and principals on the level of tutor job satisfaction in public CoEs in Ghana. Tutors and principals agree that, generally, tutors in colleges are satisfied with the jobs they perform. They recognize that

effective leadership and substantial support are vital for a positive work environment. Principals value and acknowledge the significant contributions of tutors, emphasizing the need to provide necessary resources and recognize their efforts to create a supportive atmosphere. Tutors appreciate principals who involve them in decision-making, offer regular praise, and acknowledge their achievements, which enhances their sense of value and belonging.

Additionally, opportunities for professional growth are crucial for tutors, underscoring the importance of career advancement in job satisfaction. Principals also stress the importance of delegating responsibilities and engaging tutors in college activities to foster strong relationships and positive interactions. Overall, both tutors and principals agree that leadership characterized by support, involvement, and recognition is key to tutors' job satisfaction in public CoEs in Ghana. This finding aligns with that of Ariyantho *et al.* (2021), who established that tutors are satisfied with their jobs because their principals delegated tasks, ensured participatory decision-making, effective communication, and recognition of the efforts of tutors. However, the finding is inconsistent with that of Metaferia *et al.* (2022), who indicated low job satisfaction among teachers in Addis Ababa government schools.

The result from the third research question showed a strong preference for transformational leadership among tutors and principals due to its effectiveness in enhancing job satisfaction. Transformational leadership is appreciated for its ability to build trust, involve tutors in decision-making, and promote transparency, which creates a supportive and innovative work environment. Tutors value this style for its empowering and motivating impact, leading to higher satisfaction and a sense of involvement. While transformational leadership is favoured, there is recognition of the benefits of transactional leadership, particularly in structure, efficiency, and performance management. Principals and some tutors highlight the value of combining both leadership styles: transformational for motivation and empowerment and transactional for performance management and accountability. This balanced approach helps meet diverse needs, optimize job satisfaction, and ensure effective management.

The findings from the fourth research question highlight a shared perspective among tutors and principals in public CoEs in Ghana regarding leadership styles. Tutors and principals agree that, generally, laissez-faire leadership is detrimental to tutor job satisfaction due to its lack of direction, which leads to confusion, poor work quality, and disorganization, ultimately reducing accountability and impeding progress. While helpful in maintaining structure and accountability, transactional leadership is criticized for potentially stifling creativity and creating a fear-driven environment.

In contrast, transformational leadership is favoured for its ability to involve tutors in decision-making, foster a positive and motivating environment, and support creativity. Both tutors and principals appreciate the effectiveness of transformational leadership in engaging and empowering staff, resulting in higher job satisfaction. The finding suggests that a balanced approach, including involvement, motivation, guidance, and supportive aspects of transformational leadership with the structural and

performance management benefits of transactional leadership, is ideal for enhancing tutor job satisfaction and ensuring effective college operations.

5.1 Practical and Policy Implications

The findings from the study have some practical and policy implications. For practice, constant leadership development initiatives especially for principals help to increase the efficacy of leadership in colleges of education. These should centre on transformational leadership qualities including fostering trust, clear vision articulation, staff inspiration and motivational power, and encouragement of innovation. Research has demonstrated that this kind of instruction will equip principals with the tools to promote a cooperative and favourable school environment, which is rather directly related to tutor satisfaction and professional involvement. While transformational leadership is much sought for, the study reveals that the most favourable results come from a hybrid leadership style combining transformational and transactional elements. While simultaneously establishing clear goals, tracking performance, and guaranteeing responsibility (transactional), principals should so seek to inspire and involve tutors in decision-making (transformational). This all-around strategy helps tutors meet their structural and emotional demands, therefore boosting institutional efficiency and job satisfaction.

Tutors place high importance on opportunities for professional growth. Thus, principals and college management should ensure that the processes for career growth as outlined by GTEC are followed. Again, funds should be made available for qualified tutors to pursue further studies, encourage tutors to attend conferences and seminars, internal training courses, and mentoring programmes. These initiatives should be aligned with institutional objectives as well as tutors' personal career aspirations desires of educators. These initiatives should be aligned with institutional goals and tutors' personal career aspirations. When tutors feel supported in their growth, they are more driven, dedicated, committed, and productive.

The results show that laissez-faire leadership, characterized by a lack of direction, control, oversight, and engagement, is detrimental to tutor job satisfaction. Practically, principals must ensure that they are present, engaged, and actively supporting tutors. This include giving timely feedback providing clear directions, setting goals and ensuring access to essential resources. It is critical for principals and college management to understand that maintaining a good and responsible academic atmosphere depends on avoiding laissez-faire impulses. While strictly implemented transactional leadership may cause a fear-driven and too restrictive work culture, it might help to preserve discipline and order. Principals should adopt emotionally intelligent approaches to transactional leadership by focusing on respectful communication, positive reinforcement, and constructive criticism. Recognizing tutors' contributions and offering rewards for exceptional performance, while still holding them accountable, can promote both high standards and a supportive work environment.

Regarding policies, the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Ghana Tertiary Education Commission (GTEC) should formally mandate transformational leadership training as a prerequisite for all present and aspiring principals of public CoEs. This strategy can call for a certification programme or regular refresher courses meant to produce inspirational, visionary, sympathetic principals who can significantly improve institutional results and tutor job satisfaction. Working with the MoE, the GTEC might create a national leadership competency framework to guide leadership practices in public CoEs. While including transactional components that support structure and responsibility, this framework should stress fundamental transformational leadership skills including visionary thinking, teamwork, and empowerment. Such a structure would offer a clear standard for assessing main performance and direction of recruitment and promotion policies. Policies regarding career paths for tutors in public CoEs must to be clearly defined, reinforced, and followed. This may include policies on study leave with pay, promotion criteria that reward innovation and performance, and access to continuous professional development. With this, public CoEs can fully handle one of the most important elements affecting tutor work happiness.

Every college should have a robust monitoring and assessment mechanism to evaluate the success of its leadership practices in each college. These systems should gather feedback from tutors on leadership performance, tutor job satisfaction, and college climate and culture. Results from these evaluations can be used to inform policy decisions, customize leadership training and development, and hold principals accountable for creating supportive and effective working environments. Policy should deign incentive structures that reward public CoEs that exhibit effective leadership, especially those that successfully implement a balanced model of transformational and transactional leadership. This may include awards, additional funding, or public recognition for colleges that show improvements in tutor satisfaction, performance outcomes, and innovation in teaching and learning. Encouraging such practices could help drive continuous improvement and models excellence in the colleges.

6. Conclusions

The study reveals a perspective on leadership styles in public CoEs in Ghana, with a predominant preference for transformational leadership among both tutors and principals. Transformational leadership is valued for its motivational and supportive qualities, which enhance tutor job satisfaction and contribute to achieving college goals. However, the study also notes that some principals adopt a blended approach, combining transformational and transactional leadership styles to address situational demands. This integration balances the inspiring aspects of transformational leadership with the structured, performance-focused elements of transactional leadership. Importantly, neither tutors nor principals reported the use of laissez-faire leadership, highlighting a shared view of its ineffectiveness due to its lack of direction and support. Therefore, it is concluded that while transformational leadership is highly appreciated, an effective

leadership strategy should also incorporate transactional elements to balance inspiration and accountability. The absence of laissez-faire leadership underscores a preference for proactive and engaged leadership that supports tutor satisfaction and promotes institutional success.

The study concludes that effective leadership is pivotal in enhancing high-level job satisfaction among tutors in public CoEs in Ghana. Both tutors and principals agree that principals who actively recognize and support the efforts of tutors significantly contribute to a positive work environment. Key factors driving tutor satisfaction include principals providing adequate resources, involving tutors in decision-making, offering regular praise, acknowledging achievements, and fostering opportunities for professional growth. Principals also emphasize the importance of delegating responsibilities and maintaining strong support and positive interactions to make tutors feel valued and integrated. Ultimately, a leadership style characterized by strong support, active involvement, recognition, and efficient resource management is essential for achieving high levels of job satisfaction among tutors in public CoEs in Ghana.

6.1 Recommendations

1) Principals in public CoEs in Ghana should focus on strengthening transformational leadership practices in their daily activities. Accordingly, principals should recognize tutors' achievements, provide professional development opportunities, and actively involve tutors in decision-making to ensure a collaborative and inclusive work environment. Principals of public CoEs in Ghana should ensure a good work environment by providing adequate resources for tutors. Again, principals should maintain strong support and positive interactions with tutors to make them feel appreciated. More so, principals should focus on efficient resource management to support tutors in their roles effectively and, hence, improve tutor job satisfaction. Principals should also organize team-building activities and collaborative projects that promote solidarity among tutors and between tutors and principals. This will build a strong sense of community to improve job tutor satisfaction and overall morale.

2) Given the research finding that tutors in public CoEs in Ghana are generally satisfied with their jobs, it is recommended that principals continue to identify and reinforce the factors contributing to this satisfaction. Principals can achieve this by maintaining strong leadership practices, ensuring regular professional development opportunities, recognizing and rewarding tutors' contributions, and fostering a supportive work environment. Additionally, principals should regularly assess tutor job satisfaction to identify and address any emerging concerns promptly. This will enhance sustained job satisfaction and college effectiveness.

3) Principals should avoid using a laissez-faire leadership style since it is perceived as a barrier to tutor job satisfaction. Laissez-faire leadership style has the potential for decreased accountability, which could lead to a lack of direction and clarity in

college goals. This hands-off leadership style may also foster disengagement among tutors since minimal guidance can result in uncertainty and reduced motivation. Furthermore, laissez-faire leadership could hinder collaboration and innovation, as the absence of active leadership may prevent the sharing of ideas and best practices necessary for enhancing college effectiveness and sustainability. Effective leadership therefore requires active engagement and clear communication to ensure attainment of college and educational goals.

4) Principals of public CoEs in Ghana should adopt a leadership model that combines transformational and transactional leadership styles. Principals should enhance their transformational leadership skills to create a motivating and supportive environment that improves tutor job satisfaction. While transformational leadership is key, integrating transactional elements to manage performance and maintain accountability is also recommended. Transactional leadership elements are crucial for maintaining clear guidance, structure, and accountability. This balanced approach will address the issues of laissez-faire leadership, such as lack of direction and disorganization, and ensure tutors feel valued and integrated. By blending inspirational and structured leadership qualities, CoEs can improve tutor job satisfaction and enhance overall college leadership effectiveness.

5) Principals of public CoEs in Ghana should be skilled at combining transformational and transactional leadership approaches. Thus, principals should provide the structured aspects of transactional leadership while upholding the motivational aspects of transformational leadership. These skills could be obtained through regular training and development programmes for principals and tutors. As such, the Ghana Tertiary Education Commission (GTEC) should organize regular training programmes in workshops and seminars to focus on leadership skills for principals and job satisfaction strategies for tutors. Again, such workshops and seminars will enhance principals' knowledge, ability, and experience to inspire, motivate, and support tutors to foster a positive work environment, eventually improving tutor job satisfaction in the colleges.

6) Principals of public CoEs in Ghana should monitor and evaluate tutor job satisfaction by implementing periodic job satisfaction surveys to gather feedback from tutors regarding their experiences and perceptions of the principal's leadership and tutor job satisfaction. The survey findings could reveal leadership styles and other factors likely to improve tutor job satisfaction. The use of the generated data could, therefore, help principals make informed adjustments to their leadership practices to enhance tutor job satisfaction.

Conflict of Interest Statement
I declare no conflict of interest.

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