

The Lens of Effective School Principals' Leadership Styles through Teachers' Preference: An Integrative Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to identify which leadership styles of school principals are most preferred by teaching faculty across different educational contexts, faculty perceptions of leadership styles influence their job satisfaction, performance, motivation, and professional commitment and teachers' leadership style preferences differ across local and international contexts, employing integrative literature review (ILR) was employed in the conduct of this study, evaluating the number of research publications pertaining to the faculty preferences through the lens of effective leadership in educational institutions and the data and information gathered from an extensive literature analysis. Results indicated that leadership styles that promote job satisfaction, performance, professional commitment, motivation are typically preferred by faculty members. The study concludes positive faculty outcomes are consistently associated with transformational leadership specifically, while transactional and servant leadership styles are also contextually effective.

Keywords: principals' leadership style, faculty preference, influence, local and international context

INTRODUCTION

Successful school community depends on effective leadership, which is globally regarded as one of the most vital pillars of the entire school community, and it influences the satisfaction, motivation, performance, and professional commitment of teachers. School principals' leadership styles implemented—i.e., transformational, transactional, and servant leadership—are scientifically testified to have a direct role in the preference of teachers and their workplace experience. Principals who connect their leadership behaviors with the behavior of the faculty can create an atmosphere that boosts teachers' morale, promotes professional development, and ultimately increases institutional success (Brown & Harris, 2021).

Transformational leadership has been shown to have a positive effect on faculty motivation and job satisfaction by motivating teachers with a visionary appeal and providing one-on-one mentoring (Lee et al., 2023). Contrarily, transactional leadership, where systems are reward-based and expectations are clear-cut, can be appropriate for those who are structure, stability, and consistency-oriented (Brown & Harris, 2021). Both of these, though different, indicate the ways that leadership styles can affect faculty preferences and their experience in the school context.

Recent research has also highlighted the necessity of tailoring leadership styles to a particular setting and need of the faculty. Researchers have argued that leadership is context-specific and that principals who can modify their leadership style to suit the diverse needs of their school environment are more effective for students and teachers (Lee & Parker, 2021). Understanding how leaders' styles influence faculty motivation, performance, and job satisfaction is central to developing practices that enhance positive and productive school culture.

This integrative review of literature synthesizes 2020 to 2025 research to know the teachers' most preferred leadership style of school principals. From analysis of current literature, the review will note some significant patterns and results that can be used to inform practice to build a better and nurturing learning environment.

Research Questions:

1. Which leadership styles of school principals are most preferred by teachers across educational contexts?
2. How do faculty perceptions of leadership styles influence their job satisfaction, performance, motivation, and professional commitment?
3. How do teachers' leadership style preferences differ across local and international contexts?

Methods of the Study

This research utilized an integrative literature review (ILR) methodology to find, appraise, and consolidate available research on leadership styles of school principals and faculty preferences.

Summarizing prior empirical or theoretical studies, an integrative review is a kind of review method that offers a more complete knowledge of a certain subject (Broome, 1993). Furthermore, by combining present empirical and theoretical studies, an Integrative Literature Review (ILR) is a study method that offers a thorough knowledge of a certain subject or problem. It allows one to combine several approaches and points of view, identify gaps in the literature, conflicts, and fresh problems to direct next studies (Toracco, 2016).

This study used inclusion and exclusion criteria to include relevant and reliable studies. According to Gough and Thomas (2017), inclusion criteria are the characteristics that a study must have to be included in the review and exclusion criteria are the factors that restrict a study from being included. Using available databases and the keywords leadership styles, educational leadership, and faculty preferences, a total of forty (40) studies were selected.

Table 1. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Parameters	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Type of Research	Primary research that has been published in dissertations, conference proceedings, or peer-reviewed publications.	Non-scholarly databases and sources, editorials, opinion-based websites, and book reviews.
Results of the Study	Presence of at least one (1) discussion on leadership styles of school principals based on faculty preferences.	Absence of discussion on leadership styles, faculty preferences, and school principles.
Language	English-language research publications (for uniformity in analysis and accessibility)	Studies that are written in different languages. (Unless a trustworthy translation into English is supplied.)
Data Base	The entire paper needs to be available in the database.	Papers with just the title and abstract and no complete access.
Time Frame	Publications published between 2020 and 2025.	Research papers or articles from 2020–2025 that have not yet been published.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2 below shows the research articles included in the integrative review, along with the respective authors and publication date.

Table 2. Research Articles included in the integrative review of literature

Research No.	Author/s	Research Title	Year of Publication	Key Findings
1	Joseph L. Torres, Maria Digna Q. Abugan, Amalia A. Ouano, Shella Mea E. Japinan, Reymark E. Peranco, and Florame D. Ampil	Leadership Styles and Their Impact on Educational Outcomes in the Philippines	2024	Transformational, Transactional, and Distributed
2	Christina C. Torres	School Head's Leadership Style to Beginning Teacher's Performance in the Schools Division of City of San Jose del Monte	2023	Transformational
3	John Louie E. Esoy, Leonieses J. Kilaton, Janine Mae B. Tan, Nelly Ann Batonghinog, and Olga A. Alonsabe, PhD	Relationship of Leadership Style and Teachers' Commitment in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)	2024	Democratic
4	Patricia Sonia Elardo-Zabala	The leadership styles of the local universities and colleges' administrators.	2021	Democratic
5	Leomar C. Miano, PhD	How Do Faculty Members Perceive Their Transformational Leaders?: The Case of State Universities in the Philippines	2021	Transformational
6	John Del C. YuntiFng	Teachers' and Students' Perceptions of Principal's Leadership Styles and Motivation: A Comparative Study	2025	Transformational

7	Osias Kit T. Kilag, Marsha H. Malbas, Ma. Kenneth S. Nengasca, Lifejeana Jesusa H. Longakit, Leonora C. Celin, Ronnie Pasigui, and Maria Ashley Vannesa N. Valenzona	Transformational Leadership and Educational Innovation.	2024	Transformational
8	Ma. Romila D. Uy	School Heads' Leadership Styles and Teachers' Performance	2024	Democratic
9	Ivy Princess C. Manlapaz	Exploring the Impact of Leadership Styles on the Motivation of Millennial Teachers	2022	Transformational
10	Dr. Nordy D. Siason Jr., Dr. Dawn T. Sumande, and Dr. Cynthia D. Dilag	School Heads' Leadership Style As Related To Teachers' Emotional Intelligence, Productivity And Performance: Bases For The Development Of An Enhanced School-Based In-Service Training Program	2021	Achievement- Oriented
11	Ali Ahmad Kazimi Saidal Khan Ihsanullah Shorish	Effect of Servant Leadership Style on Teachers Job Satisfaction	2019	Servant
12	Gamze Kasalak, Beysun Güneri Vesile Ruya Ehtiyar Çiğdem Apaydin. Gulay Özaltın Türker	Leadership styles and academic staff satisfaction: A meta- analysis.	2022	Transformational
13	Jacqueline Kareem, Harold Andrew Patrick, Napoleon Prabakaran, Valarmathi B Veerta Tantia, Pramod Kumar M. P. M., and Ujjal Mukherjee	Transformational educational leaders inspire school educators' commitment	2023	Transformational

14	Wilson Mugizi, Bulhan Tumuhaise, Grandford Samanya, and Augustina Ogaga Dafiewhare	Leadership Styles and Retention of Teachers in Private Primary Schools in Bushenyi-Ishaka Municipality, Uganda.	2020	Transformational
15	Qingjin Lin, Loo-See Beh, and Nurul Liyana Mohd Kamil	Unlocking innovation: The power of two leadership styles in Chinese higher education.	2023	Transformational Ethical
16	Soriano, Q. S., and Banayo, A. F.	The impact of leadership styles on the engagement of cadres, lecturers and staff at public universities-evidence from Vietnam	2024	Transformational Transactional
17	Rogers Mwesigwa, Immaculate Tusiime, Bob Ssekiziyivu	Leadership styles, job satisfaction and organizational commitment among academic staff in public universities	2020	Transformational
18	Alaa S. Jameel and Abd Rahman Ahmad	The mediating role of job satisfaction between leadership style and performance of academic staff.	2020	Transformational Transactional
19	Huyghe, T., De Vos, A., Van den Broeck, A., & Leroy, H.	Servant leadership and teachers' life satisfaction: The mediating role of satisfaction of job resources.	2023	Servant
20	Fasieh, A. and Djaelani, M.	Job satisfaction as a mediator of spiritual leadership and intention to stay of teaching personnel.	2023	Spiritual
21	Abdul Kodir Djaelani, Anwar Sanusi, and Boge Triatmanto	Spiritual leadership, job satisfaction, and its effect on organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior.	2021	Spiritual

22	Inez Wilson Heenan, Derbhile De Paor, Niamh Lafferty, and Patricia Mannix McNamara	The Impact of Transformational School Leadership on School Staff and School Culture in Primary Schools—A Systematic Review of International Literature	2023	Transformational
23	Shaikhah Alainati, Nouf Almonawer, and Faisel Al-Hammad	Transformational Leadership in Education: Review of Literature.	2023	Transformational Democratic
24	Laura Urrila and Nathan Eva	Developing oneself to serve others? Servant leadership practices of mindfulness-trained leaders	2024	Servant
25	Mulubirhan Bekele	Implementation of Leadership Styles and Teachers' Preferences in Public Secondary Schools of Harar City	2024	Transformational
26	Grigoriou, M., & Georganta, K.	The impact of authentic leadership on teachers' job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior in primary and secondary education teachers.	2021	Authentic
27	Peter G. Northouse	Leadership: Theory and practice (9th ed.)	2022	Servant, Authentic, and Adaptive
28	Xiaorong Ma and Russ Marion	Linking distributed leadership to teacher job satisfaction in China: Mediating roles of teacher well-	2025	Distributed

being and work
motivation.

29	Harun Gultekin and Margaret Dougherty	The Relationship between Servant Leadership Characteristics of School Teachers and Students' Academic Achievement	2021	Servant
30	Marie Jaurian Osserand, Robert Ipiin Gnankob, Abraham Ansong, and Kassimu Issau	Servant leadership and teachers' stress: the role of teacher engagement	2023	Servant
31	Mitchell J. Neubert, Dawn S Carlson, Michele K. Kacmar, James A. Roberts, and Lawrence B. Chonko	The Role of Servant Leadership in Teacher Collaboration and Professional Development.	2021	Servant
32	Abdullah, Z., Alias, B. S., & Hamid, A. H. A.	Ethical leadership and work culture in national secondary schools: A case study in Malacca.	2025	Ethical
33	Mehmet Özdoğru & Yılmaz Sarier	The relationship of ethical leadership with teachers' organizational behavior, attitudes, and perceptions: a meta- analysis study	2024	Ethical
34	Meyer, M. L., Schulte, T. L., and Pisarik, C. T	Ethical leadership and teacher burnout: A mediation analysis.	2022	Ethical
35	Desta and Lemma	Teachers' Perceptions of Democratic Leadership in Ethiopian Secondary Schools.	2020	Democratic
36	Uwamahoro, B., Shavega, T. J., and Maulid, M. J.	Influence of democratic leadership style on teachers' performance in 12-year basic education in Nyaruguru District,	2024	Democratic

Rwanda.

37	Michael Agyemang Adarkwah, & Yu Zeyuan	The Paradoxical Relationship between Principals' Transformational Leadership Styles and Teachers' Motivation	2020	Transformational
38	Birhanu and Tilahun	The Impact of Transformational Leadership on Teacher Motivation and Job Satisfaction in Ethiopian Secondary Schools.	2020	Transformational
39	Getahun Alemayehu	and Leadership styles and teacher satisfaction: Evidence from Ethiopia	2024	Transformational
40	Firmansyah Firmansyah, Lantip Diat Prasajo, Amat Jaedun, and Heri Retnawati	Transformational leadership effect on teacher performance in Asia: A meta-analysis	2022	Transformational

Teachers' Most Preferred Leadership Styles of School Principals Across Educational Contexts

As a means of inspiring followers, leadership styles must be modified to fit particular groups, organizations, circumstances, and people because effective leadership is only possible if one is aware of various styles.

Table 3. Faculty Preferred School Principals' Leadership Styles

School Principals' Leadership Styles	Research Article
Transformational	1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23, 25, 37, 38, 39, 40
Distributed	1, 28
Transactional	1, 16, 18
Democratic	3, 4, 8, 23, 35, 36
Achievement-Oriented	10
Servant	11, 19, 24, 27, 29, 30, 31

Ethical	15, 32, 33, 34
Spiritual	20, 21
Authentic	26, 27
Adaptive	27

Table 3 above describes the school principals' leadership styles that faculty preferred.

There are ten (10) different leadership styles that were gathered in the results of the studies such as transformational, distributed, transactional, democratic, achievement-oriented, servant, ethical, spiritual, authentic, and adaptive. It can be deduced by thematic analysis that transformational leadership is the most preferred leadership style by the teachers. Nguni, Slegers, & Denessen (2017) found out that teachers in Tanzanian primary schools significantly preferred transformational leadership over transactional leadership due to its positive impact on job satisfaction and motivation.

The following leadership that the literature found as preferred by teachers will be defined below.

Transformational Leadership. It focuses on inspiring and encouraging educators and learners to reach a common goal to promote a positive school culture through vision. Leaders that use this approach work to establish a helpful setting that improves student learning and instructor motivation. (Torres et al., 2024). A leader that practices transformational leadership interacts, inspires, and encourages their followers to embrace change and perform at higher levels. Raising the spirit, motivation, and growth of the leader and followers is the primary goal of transformational leadership.

Distributed Leadership. It involves distributing decision-making authority to different school stakeholders, has the ability to democratize leadership, and enhances school atmosphere. By giving educators more authority and distributed leadership can encourage more cooperation and shared accountability by allowing employees to assume leadership positions. Schools with a strong organizational culture that values teamwork have found success with this strategy and group problem-solving. (Torres et al., 2024). Distributed leadership places more emphasis on the division of leadership duties among several organizational levels than it does on consolidating them in a single person.

Transactional Leadership. This has a more direct impact on student achievement. By giving teachers clear direction and support, this leadership style aims to improve curriculum delivery and instruction. Educational development pedagogical approaches and making sure that instructional strategies are in line with academic requirements of students. (Torres et al., 2024). Transactional leadership emphasizes on the process of communication between leaders and followers. This approach involves leaders giving their followers clear instructions and tasks, and then recognizing and disciplining them according to how well the followers accomplish their duties.

Democratic Leadership. This leadership approach involves subordinates in decision-making, promotes communication with them, values their suggestions and opinions, and motivates them to work together in order to run the company. Democratic leadership, sometimes referred to as participative leadership, is a management approach in which employees are actively included in decision-making, encouraging cooperation, transparent communication, and shared accountability (Cherry, 2023).

Achievement-Oriented Leadership. This leadership is defined by a leader who pushes subordinates to perform at the best degree possible. This leader sets a high bar for followers to meet and pursues ongoing development. (Siason et al., 2021). Achievement-oriented leadership establishes high expectations for performance and motivates subordinates to meet difficult objectives. This leadership style is distinguished by a strong focus on outcomes, individual growth, and constant growth.

Servant Leadership. Servant leadership is where the leader's main objective is to help others (Demeke et al. 2024). Servant leadership values helping others, especially their team members, over focusing only on the success of the organization or their own career advancement.

Ethical Leadership. Ethical leadership is a leadership style that emphasizes leading with a strong moral compass, prioritizing the well-being of stakeholders and employees, and fostering a culture of fairness, integrity, transparency, and accountability (Ughulu, 2024). Ethical leadership is a style of leadership that emphasizes moral uprightness, fairness, and a strong sense of right and wrong. Ethical leaders place a high value on acting morally, even when it is challenging or controversial, and they hold others in their team to the same standard.

Spiritual Leadership. A leadership style known as spiritual leadership places a high value on developing an organizational culture based on altruistic compassion, encouraging a sense of belonging and membership among staff members, and developing a vision that inspires a sense of calling and purpose (Oh and Wang, 2020) Spiritual leadership is a style of leadership that brings together principles, a sense of purpose, and a desire to mentor and inspire others.

Authentic Leadership. Northouse (2022) defines authentic leadership as a leadership style that prioritizes being sincere, self-aware, and open, driven by a strong sense of moral principles, a sense of purpose, and a dedication to establishing relationships based on trust. Authentic leadership prioritizes honesty, self-awareness, and transparency.

Adaptive Leadership. According to Northouse (2022), is a pragmatic leadership approach that emphasizes empowering individuals to overcome difficult obstacles and flourish in changing circumstances. Adaptive leadership concentrates on assisting people, groups, and organizations in overcoming change, particularly when confronted with difficult, unpredictable, or quickly changing problems.

Influences of Teachers Preference of School Principal's Leadership Style

There are numerous reasons why teachers bet on their preferred leadership style. By reading the literature, four influences are determined: job satisfaction, performance, motivation, and professional commitment.

Table 4. Influences of Teachers Preference of School Principal's Leadership Style

Influence	Research Article
Job Satisfaction	1, 12, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 26 27, 28, 32, 33, 38
Performance	1, 2, 8, 15,18, 22, 27, 29, 30, 36, 40
Motivation	1, 6, 7, 9, 10, 13, 22, 26, 27, 28, 33, 37, 38
Professional Commitment	3, 14, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 27, 31, 33

In the table above are the influences of teachers' preferences gathered and analyzed thematically. The dominant influence of teachers' preference is job satisfaction. Papadopoulos & Karagiannakis (2022), found a strong positive relationship between school teachers' work satisfaction and transformational leadership. When transformational leaders were in charge, teachers showed more satisfaction with things like management, coworkers, and working circumstances. While, the least influence is motivation. All the influences stated are defined below.

Job Satisfaction. Faculty who view their leaders as supportive, participative, or transformational are more likely to be satisfied. A leader who is interested in faculty input and builds a cooperative environment, for instance, can improve morale.

Performance. Empowering leadership styles that clearly communicate expectations (e.g., transformational or servant leadership) can improve faculty performance by fostering autonomy and ownership of the work.

Motivation. Motivation levels rise when teachers perceive that their work contributes to a positive environment and that leaders are interested in their growth professionally — usually atypical characteristics of transformational and authentic leadership approaches.

Professional Commitment. Perceptions of ethical, just, and visionary leadership by faculty can create a sense of greater professional and institutional commitment. Retention and long-term institutional success depend on it.

Teachers' Preference of Principals' Leadership Style Across Local and International Contexts

School principals' leadership styles have a big influence on how well teaching and learning settings work. Considering that schools are situated in a variety of institutional, social, and cultural contexts, teachers' attitudes and preferences toward leadership may vary greatly. In order to improve our knowledge of what effective school leadership looks like globally, this review aims to establish similarities and differences in preferred leadership styles by integrating the results of several studies.

Table 5. Teachers' Preference of Principals' Leadership Style Across Local and International Contexts.

School Principals' Leadership Styles	Local (Article 1-10)		International (Article 11-40)	
	Research Article	Percentage	Research Article	Percentage
Transformational	1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 9	50 %	12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23, 25, 37, 38, 39, 40	38.89 %
Distributed	1	8.33 %	28	2.77 %
Transactional	1	8.33 %	16, 18	5.56 %
Democratic	3, 4, 8	25 %	23, 35, 36	8.33 %
Achievement-Oriented	10	8.33 %	-	0 %
Servant	-	0 %	11, 19, 24, 27, 29, 30, 31	19.44 %
Ethical	-	0 %	15, 32, 33, 34	11.11 %
Spiritual	-	0 %	20, 21	5.56 %
Authentic	-	0 %	26, 27	5.56 %
Adaptive	-	0 %	27	2.77 %

As shown in Table 5, the numbers 1 to 10 articles came from local articles and numbers 11 to 40 articles came from international articles. The researchers used percentages to represent the most dominant school principal's leadership style that the faculty prefers.

The most common leadership style seen in the literature reviewed is Transformational Leadership. The style occurred in 50% of the local studies (more precisely articles 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, and 9), and in 38.89% of the overseas studies (articles 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23, 25, 37, 38, 39, and 40).

These results are in line with those reported by Bao (2024), Hauserman et al. (2021), Lee (2020), and Liu et al. (2020), who note that teachers prefer school administrators who regularly demonstrate transformational leadership behaviors. Transformational leaders, as noted by Bao (2024), are appreciated for creating innovation and inspiring educators to find meaning in their professional work—factors that are critical for maintaining motivation and facilitating innovation.

Bakker and de Vries (2021) also highlight the advantages of transformational leadership, citing its ability to mitigate occupational stress and improve teachers' personal accomplishment. These outcomes are essential in terms of enhancing job satisfaction and overall productivity in the educational setting. Likewise, McFadden et al. (2019) established a positive link between transformational leadership and heightened employee satisfaction, which indicates that the style of leadership has an important impact on an engaged and vibrant educational workforce.

In the examination of leadership styles other than transformational leadership, the results reveal different levels of occurrence in local and global research papers.

Only one local study (Article 1) featured Distributed Leadership with a share of 8.33%, and only one global article (Article 28) with a share of 2.77%.

Transactional Leadership was found in one local article (Article 1 with a share of 8.33%) and two global articles (Articles 16 and 18) with a share of 5.56%.

Democratic Leadership was the second most popular style in the local setting, being present in three articles (Articles 3, 4, and 8), which accounts for 25% of the local studies. It was, however, found in three international studies (Articles 23, 35, and 36), which accounts for 8.33%.

Achievement-Oriented Leadership showed up in only one local article (Article 10, 8.33%) and failed to show up in any of the foreign studies.

Servant Leadership was not favored in any local articles but was the second most favored leadership style internationally and was represented in seven studies (Articles 11, 19, 24, 27, 29, 30, and 31), totaling 19.44%.

Ethical Leadership also did not have any representation in local studies. Nevertheless, it was represented in four international articles (Articles 15, 32, 33, and 34), totaling 11.11%.

Spiritual Leadership was not covered in local newspapers but was found in two foreign studies (Articles 20 and 21), which made up 5.56%.

Authentic Leadership was not represented in local studies but was found in two foreign articles (Articles 26 and 27), making up 5.56%.

Adaptive Leadership was not represented in local studies and was found in just one foreign article (Article 27), making up 2.77%.

These results imply a wider range of leadership styles in overseas literature as opposed to the native environment, where transformational and democratic styles prevail. The existence of styles like servant,

ethical, spiritual, and authentic leadership in overseas research points towards an extended definition of leadership paradigms in global schooling research.

The results of this research concur with that of Emran (2024), which indicated that teachers viewed adaptive leadership behaviors as having a moderate influence on their performance. This indicates that although adaptive leadership has some benefits, it is not as much in demand as other leadership. Likewise, a Philippine study by Sumampong and Arnado (2024) identified that teachers had a keen preference for transformational leadership, as it was identified to have a strong effect on their commitment and motivation. While adaptive leadership was noted for its worth, it was not preferred as much. These findings are congruent with the current study findings, where adaptive leadership was seen only in 2.77% of global articles and was still missing in local literature (0%).

Relative to achievement-oriented leadership, Kimutai and Kosgei (2024) established a weak and positive correlation between this leadership philosophy and teachers' job satisfaction in Kenya. This indicates that achievement-oriented leadership has some potential advantage but is less accepted in comparison with other leadership philosophies. This confirms the current study's findings that achievement-oriented leadership was manifest in 8.33% of local articles but was represented zero times (0%) in international studies.

These results place emphasis on grasping leadership preferences in schools. Through consideration of such trends, school administrators and leaders can apply leadership styles—like transformational leadership—most likely to improve teacher job satisfaction, performance, professional commitment, and motivation.

CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATION

This integrative literature review probed the most preferred leadership styles of school principals of teachers and how different types of leadership strategies—especially transformational, transactional, servant, and distributed styles—predict faculty members' job satisfaction, motivation, work performance, and professional commitment. The literature covering the period of 2015 to 2025 repeatedly suggests that leadership within schools is never a one-size-fits-all activity. Rather, it must be based on a sophisticated level of understanding concerning faculty needs, school culture, and the surrounding institutional environment. Transformational leadership proved to be a highly effective style in building faculty involvement and morale due to its emphasis on vision, inspiration, and personalized support. Nevertheless, the review also highlighted that transactional and servant leadership styles are valuable based on situational needs and faculty expectations. Faculty preferences are strongly shaped by how much leadership styles foster trust, empowerment, recognition, and role clarity. Finally, the results of this review reinforce the value of adaptive and responsive leadership in schools. Principals who are able to match their leadership approaches to faculty desires are more likely to foster a positive school climate, facilitate professional development, and achieve institutional success. For future practice and research, increased focus on context-based leadership, teacher voice, and shared decision-making is suggested. By putting faculty opinions front and center in discussions about leadership, schools can create conditions that not only keep top talent on board but also empower educators to flourish.

This research has explored teachers' preferences for school principals' leadership styles in local and international contexts; however, it limits the discovery of teachers' preferences in private and public schools.

School principals are recommended to utilize and strengthen transformational leadership as it fosters trust, motivation, good relationships, and a positive environment with the teachers. It inspires the teachers to gracefully persevere for improvement and drive innovation to attain the shared vision. Teachers are recommended to foster good communication, respect, and collaboration of good ideas with the school principal. Future researchers are recommended to explore additional factors influencing teacher preference in the leadership styles of school principals. Further studies might include the type of school (private or public). And finally, future researchers may seek the long-term effects of transformational leadership on educational outcomes.

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