The Transformative Leadership Style of 21st Century Secondary School Principals and its Influence on School Environment

Ms. Saima (Corresponding Author)
M.Phil Scholar, Department of Education, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan.
Email: Saima.amanullah71@gmail.com

Dr. Muhammad Idris
Associate Professor Department of Education, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan. Email: midrees@awkum.edu.pk

Dr. Maksal Minaz
Lecturer, Department of Education, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan.
Email: maksalminaz@awkum.edu.pk

Abstract
The aim of this quantitative study was to find out the transformative leadership style of 21st century secondary school principals and its influence on school environment. The research objectives were; To find out idealised influence (attributes and behaviours) with reference to transformational leadership in 21st century secondary school principals; To investigate inspirational motivation related to transformational leadership of 21st century school principals at secondary level; To assess individualized consideration related to transformational leadership of 21st century school principals at secondary level ; To study the impact of transformational leadership style of 21st century school principals on the environment of school. For the purpose of population 51 male principals and 49 female principals were selected randomly from secondary schools in District Mardan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. To collect data, the research tool was adapted from MLQ 5X (Bass, 2000). The tool was validated and then was pilot-tested to ensure alignment with Pakistan's contextual background, and its dependability was computed. Cronbach's Alpha was considered to be satisfactory (0.83). In addition, data was gathered, and the mean and standard deviation were computed. The study's findings revealed that the 21st century secondary school principals frequently used the components of Idealised Influence (attributes and behaviours), Inspirational Motivation and Individualised Consideration related to Transformational Leadership Style. Furthermore, the 21st principals used transformational leadership style to motivate and inspire subordinates achieve their common objectives by developing shared goals and creative thinking which increased principals' performance as leaders. It was recommended the present investigation can be extended in various educational settings, engaging a greater number of school leaders, to acquire a better understanding of the benefits of transformative leadership.

Key words: 21st century Secondary School Principals, Idealized Influence, and Individualized Consideration, inspirational Motivation

Introduction

The role of principals at schools in deciding educational results has long been acknowledged as critical to improving school performance. This leadership role has evolved in the twenty-first century, representing changes in the philosophy of learning, technology breakthroughs, and shifting demands of society. One of the largest and most notable shifts in educational leadership is the emergence of transformational leadership, a form of leadership that focuses on empowering and motivating teachers and pupils to reach maximum achievement. Transformational leaders create a setting that fosters creativity, cooperation, and a shared goal, which is critical for overcoming the difficulties of contemporary education (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006).

Transformational leadership is especially important in secondary schools, as students experience considerable mental, psychological, and cultural growth. Successful principals who use this technique can foster an encouraging school atmosphere, increase motivation among educators, and, eventually, enhance student achievement. According to study, principals who exhibit qualities of transformational leadership that include inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and idealized influence can create an atmosphere for learning which fosters academic success along with personal development (Hoy & Miskel, 2013; Hallinger, 2003). These leaders additionally set ambitious goals but also perform actions that foster trust and empowerment among instructors, resulting in an equal dedication to the purpose of the institution (Marzano et al., 2005).

The impact of transformative leadership reaches over theories of education to policy as well as implementation. Given the growing pressure on educational leaders to be responsive to technology developments, varied needs of pupils, and ongoing improvements, transformational management is more essential than ever. By concentrating on goals, inspiration, and growth as professionals, those in leadership positions may empower educators and create a setting conducive to achievement and learning for students (Munir, Minaz & Idris, 2024). School heads leadership competencies; a comparative analysis between the perception of male and female secondary school teachers.

While numerous studies indicate that transformational leadership has a positive impact, the depth of this impact and the particular strategies by means of which it influences learning environments are still being investigated (Leithwood et al., 2004; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015). Recognizing such factors could offer helpful insights for teaching and helping leaders at schools successfully tackle the difficulties of 21st-century.

Problem Statement

The increasing challenges of 21st-century education pose substantial problems for school principals, particularly technology breakthroughs, varied student bodies, and managerial demands. While TL is proven to have a good impact on school environments, there is inadequate research on how principals use essential skills like innovative thinking, motivating behavior, personalized attention, and emotional intelligence to handle these issues. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to investigate how the 21st century principals affect the

secondary school environment in Pakistani context.

Objectives of the Study
1. To find out idealised influence (attributes and behaviours) with reference to transformational leadership in 21st century secondary school principals
2. To investigate inspirational motivation related to transformational leadership of 21st century school principals at secondary level
3. To assess individualized consideration related to transformational leadership of 21st century school principals at secondary level
4. To study the impact of transformational leadership style of 21st century school principals on the environment of school

Significance of the Study
This study is significant because it investigates how transformational leadership styles of 21st-century secondary school principals influence the school environment. By studying essential qualities of leadership such as creative thinking, inspirational methods, and personalized assistance, the study will be offering light on how adopting TL principals might build a pleasant and improved educational environment. The findings will assist in guide initiatives aimed at developing leadership and influence policy options targeted at enhancing school management procedures in the face of modern educational difficulties.

Delimitation of the Study
1. The survey had been limited to only District Mardan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.
2. Add to that, the survey will be done specifically among secondary school principals and their schools, with an emphasis on only public secondary schools in District Mardan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

Conceptual Framework
21st century school principal TLS and its impact on school environment
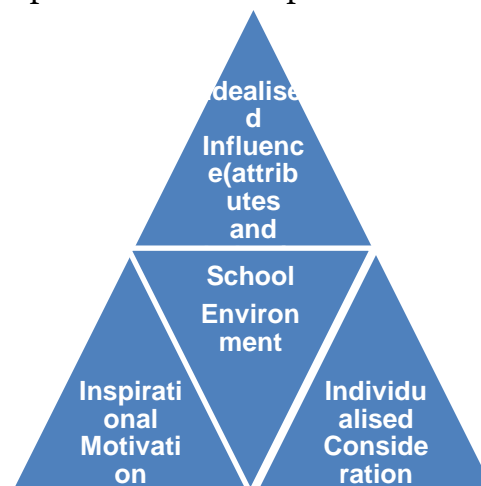
The conceptual framework inspired by the transformational leadership style of 21st century principals and the influence on the environment of secondary school. These elaborate the components of transformational leadership that are idealized

influence (attributes and behaviors), individualized consideration and inspirational motivation which are the major mechanism by which the school leaders can enhance the school environment effectively.

Research Questions
1. What are the idealized influence (attributes and behaviours) related to transformational leadership in 21st century school principals at secondary level
2. What is inspirational motivation related to transformational leadership in the 21st century school principals at secondary level
3. What is individualized consideration related to transformational leadership in 21st century school principals at secondary level
4. What is the impact of transformational leadership style of 21st century principals on secondary school environment

Literature Review
The transformational leadership style was originally suggested in a mature form by James Burns (1978), which Bass (1985) elaborated based on, and it has been recognized as a successful blueprint to educational administration. Transformational leadership, as opposed to transactional leadership, which is centred on incentive and conformity methods, is focused on inspiring and encouraging learners and educators to accomplish extraordinary results. Leaders who exhibit this approach perform actions that promote confidence, self-determination, and collaborative problem solving (Bass, 1999). In a setting of school leadership, transformational principals stimulate creativity and foster a feeling of common goal among their personnel, resulting in an environment conducive to continuous enhancement.

Components of Transformational Leadership
Bernard Bass (1985) suggested four elements of TL. These included;

Idealised Influence Attributes
Idealized influence attributes are associated with the leader's personality traits as well as how different individuals see them. Bass (1985), as well as Bass and Avolio (1994), stated that these traits include integrity in oneself, an overwhelming sense of goals, and an openness to make compromises for the betterment of others, all of which influence the capability of leaders to successfully motivate and direct subordinates. According to recent research, these characteristics are related to a leader's capacity to communicate with subordinates on emotional grounds and motivate them to put their personal goals aside for the betterment of others (Ahmad, Ambad & Mohd 2020).

Idealised Influence Behaviours
Bass and Avolio (1994) define idealized influence behaviors as a component of the transformational leadership model, in which figures of authority act in manners that earn regard as well as confidence. These individuals are confident, express an inspiring mission, and operate in manners that reflect their principles, instilling confidence as well as appreciation in the people they lead.

Recent research maintains to endorse the notion that these attitudes are critical for instilling an elevated level of commitment as well as involvement among members of the team (Northouse, 2019)

Inspirational Motivation
Based on inspirational motivation a leader who wishes to help others adopt a more transformational mentality must be concerned with offering arguments and examples for people to rethink topics such as human relations, technology, and even their own evolving beliefs and attitudes. (Bass, 1985) Leaders employ inspirational motivation to communicate a concise and compelling goal, creating a culture in which individuals are encouraged to achieve tough goals while contributing to a greater purpose. People in leadership positions serve as examples by exhibiting dedication and enthusiasm for the idea they represent (Northouse, 2022).

Intellectual Stimulation
Under the perspective of this element the leader's charisma was deeply rooted in giving inspirational motivation. Leaders communicate with confidence and ease, exuding enthusiasm and passion and articulating their visions of achievable futures (Bass, 1985). Intellectual stimulation is defined as how well a leader can to create a setting in which subordinates are encouraged to challenge the existing situation, consider different points of view, and design fresh solutions to issues (Northouse, 2022).

Individualised Consideration
Given individualized consideration comprises specific consideration along with encouragement for every employee member, supporting their professional development (Bass 1985). In other words, as stated by Bass and Riggio (2006) Individualized Consideration refers to leadership that serve as instructors and mentors, demonstrating real concern with each follower's improvement and establishing a culture that fosters development and cooperation.

Influence on the Secondary School Environment
Secondary schools suffer from particular issues, including a variety of pupils, increased expectations for learning, and a desire to prepare students for after-school programs and professions. Transformational leadership is especially effective in secondary school contexts as it fosters instructor independence, promotes instructional creativity, and stimulates pupils to participate in their schooling (Marzano et al., 2005; Hallinger, 2003). The Transformational leaders promote a common vision and empower teachers, resulting in a school atmosphere in which instructors feel appreciated and are more inclined to use effective teaching practices (Hoy & Miskel, 2013).

According to studies, transformational leadership increases teacher enthusiasm and dedication, which enhances outcomes for learners. For example, as stated by Leithwood and Jantzi (2006), that transformational leadership resulted in significant gains in teacher cooperation and student achievement. Furthermore, as based on Marzano et al., (2005) studies, schools managed by transformational

leaders have superior performance indicators such as increased student involvement and a more positive educational environment.

Research Gap
The research gap in examining 21st-century secondary school principals' transformative leadership styles and their influence on the school environment develops from a lack of awareness of the way particular aspects of transformational leadership—idealized influence, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration—affect today school environments as a result of increasing hurdles such as innovation in technology, variance, and managerial requirements. While transformational leadership has been extensively studied within the education sector (Bass, 1985; Leithwood& Jantzi, 2000; Munir, Minaz, & Idris, M.2024) there's been not much study into how this leadership characteristics influence the atmosphere of schools, staff morale, pupil participation, and the integration of technology in today's rapidly changing educational systems. This gap underlines the need to investigate how principals reconcile these characteristics of leadership with the growing demands of modern educational duties (Gibson & Dempster, 2022; Harris, 2021).

Methodology
The study targeted to identify the transformational leadership style of 21st century principals and their impact on school environment at the secondary level in District Mardan. The study's nature was descriptive, and the research process included the following steps.

Population and Sample
The population of the study included all male and female secondary school principals located in District Mardan. According to (EMIS 2024) there were eighty-six (86) boys while eighty-one (81) girls' secondary schools in District Mardan. Therefore, for the purpose of sampling, fifty-one boys' secondary schools and forty-nine girls' secondary schools were selected randomly. The total sample size was hundred schools.

Research Instrument
A structured questionnaire was developed by using (MLQ 5X) by (Bass et al.,2000). Keeping in view all the aspects of the topic "School Environment" was also added as a second variable to the scale. The scale consisted of 21 items in total.

Data Collection and Interpretations
The data was collected using Google Form. The entire sample size was hundred schools, with ninety-eight valid responses. The gathered data was tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted using mean and standard deviation.

Table 1: To find out idealised influence (attributes) with reference to TL in 21st century secondary school principals
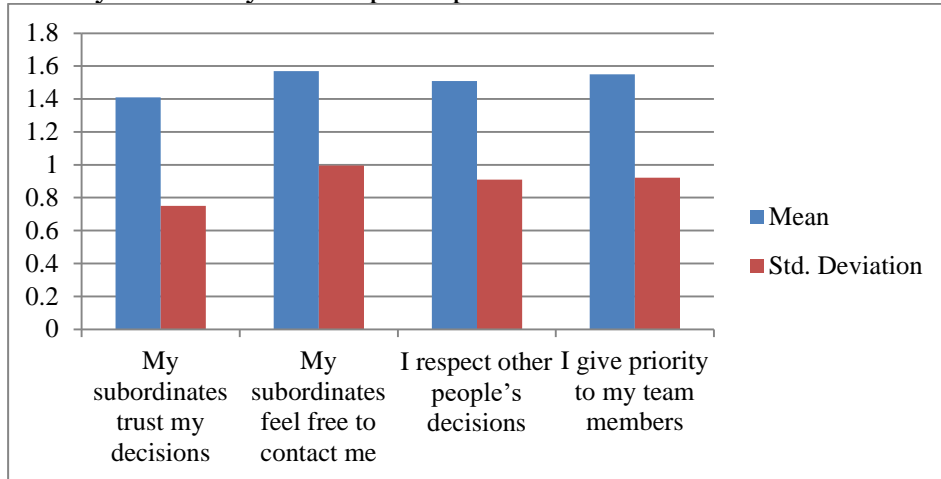
The above histogram graph epitomizes the data of the idealized influence (attributes) of transformational leadership. The results showed that the mean score of the trust on the decisions of the principal's were1.41and standard deviation were .75. The subordinates were confident to contact showed mean score were 1.57 and standard deviation were .99, the respect and acceptance of decision were showed mean score 1.51and standard deviation were .91. While the mean score and standard deviation of the statement that principals may give priority to their team members were 1.55 and .92 respectively. It was concluded that school principals demonstrate honesty, goal, and solid views by utilizing Idealized Influence behaviors. This generates appreciation, creates devotion, and promotes workers to support the school's goals and ideals.

Table 2: To find out idealised influence (behaviours) with reference to TL in 21st century secondary school principals
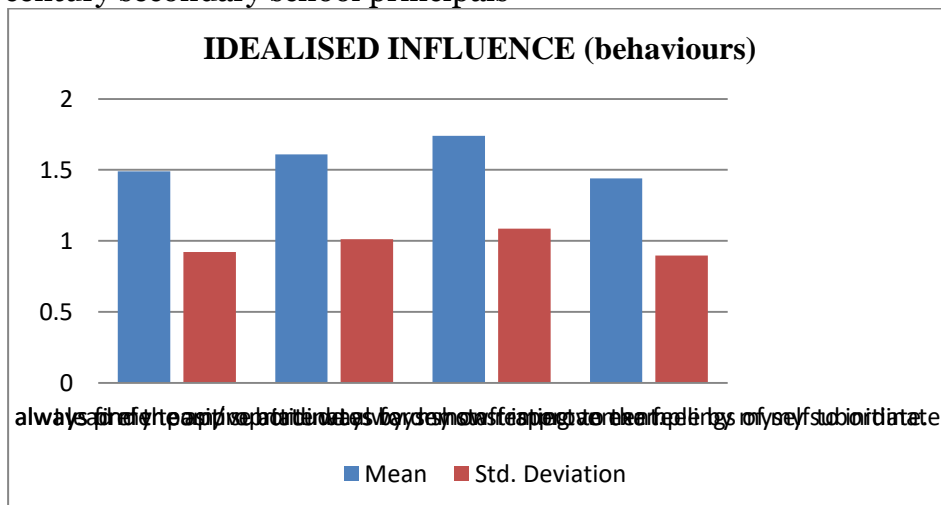

The above histogram graph illustrates the data collected from responded regarding the component of Idealised Influence (behaviours) related to transformational leadership. The results showed that the mean scores concerning

about "positive attitude of the principals" were 1.49 and standard deviation were .992. For "searching suitable ways for subordinates' improvement", the respondents mean score and standard deviation were 1.61 and 1.012 respectively. With respect to "presenting an example for initiation of subordinates" mean score was 1.74 and standard deviation were 1.087 while for the statement of "showing respect to subordinates" mean and standard deviation were 1.44 and .897 respectively. According to the results it is summed up that school principals provide a good model and display high standards of ethics by employing idealized influence practices. This fosters dignity, confidence, and encourages employees to model ethical behavior, therefore improving the whole school culture.

Table 3: To investigate inspirational motivation related to TL of 21st century school principals at secondary level
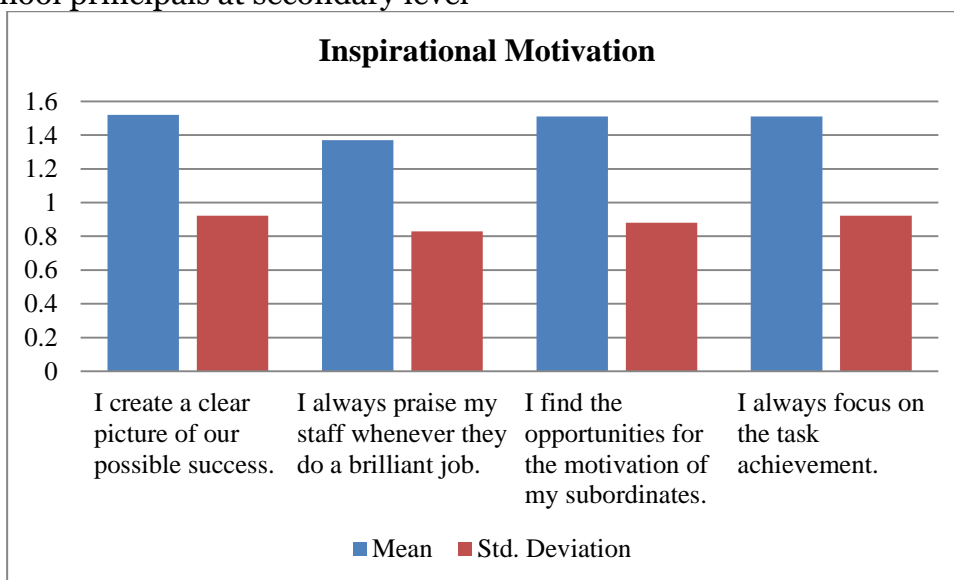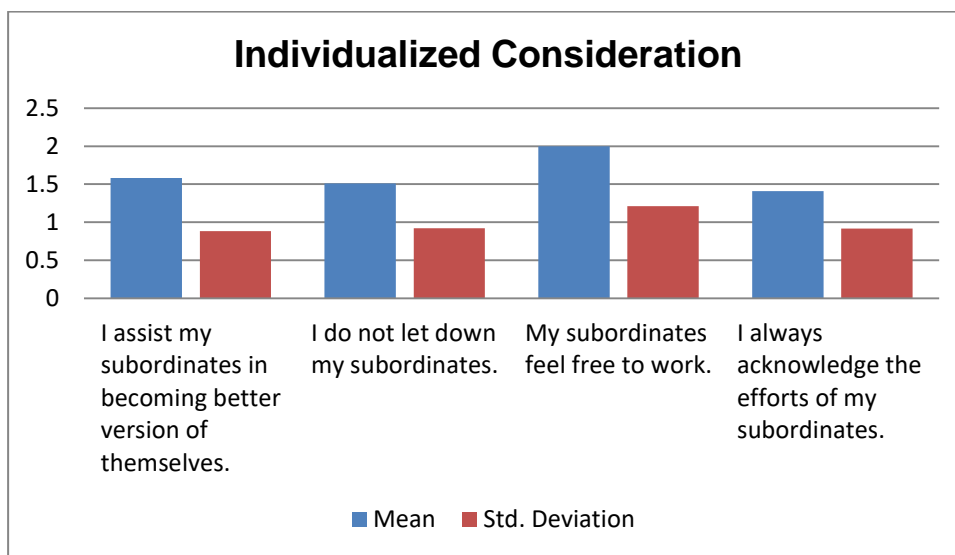

The above graph no. 3 demonstrates the mean and standard deviation scores of Inspirational Motivation regarding transformational leadership. The mean and standard deviation in relation to the statement about "vivid portrait of success" was 1.52 and .922. Relating to "appreciation about doing impressive job" the mean score was1.37 and the standard deviation was .830. While the mean score was same as 1.51 to both of statements, "finding opportunities for motivating staff" and "concentrating on task achievement" and standard deviation were .88 and .922 respectively. In the light of mean and standard deviation results the above graph reveals that principals use Inspirational Motivation in order to motivate and energize employees with an inspiring goal and elevated standards. Which increases optimism, develops a feeling of importance, and encourages dedication towards attaining the objectives set by the school.

Table 4: To assess individualized consideration related to TL of 21st century school principals at secondary level

Individualized Consideration — Mean, Std. Deviation

The above graph no. 4 illustrates the mean and standard deviation of Individualised Consideration regarding Transformational Leadership. The mean and standard deviation as for the statement about "helping the staff to develop themselves" were 1.58 and .884. Relating to "not disappointing the subordinates" mean was 1.51 and standard deviation was .922. Related to the statement of "feeling comfortable while working" the respondents mean score was 2.00 and standard deviation was 1.21 while concerning to the statement of "appreciation regarding the efforts of subordinates" mean was1.41 and standard deviation was .918. In the light of results showed by the above graph it is depicted that school principals exhibit Individualised Consideration to provide personalized assistance and supervision to every employee while meeting their particular requirements and progress.

Table 5: To study the impact of TL of 21st century school principals on the environment of school
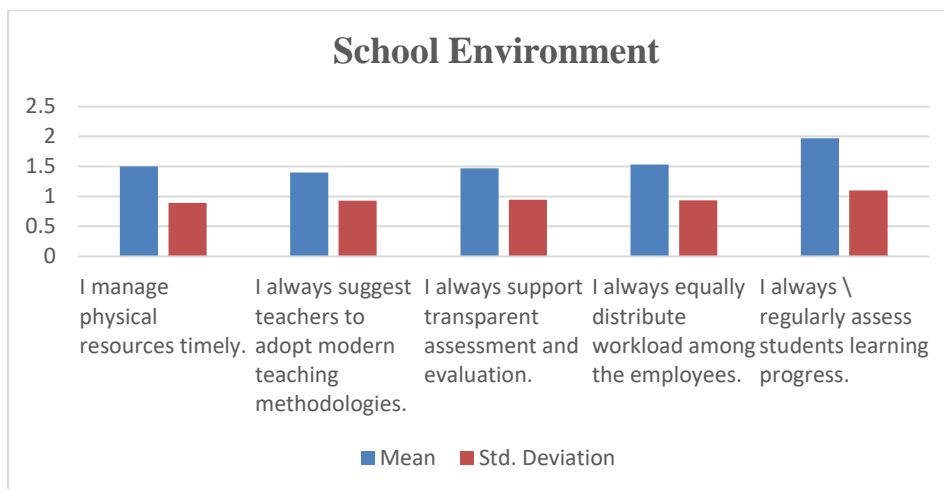
The above histogram graph no. 5 illustrates the data collected from respondents regarding the influence of transformational leadership style of 21st century school principals on the environment of school. The mean and standard deviation related to handling physical resources on-time are 1.50 and .89 respectively. While the mean and standard deviation in relation to recommendation about modern teaching strategies and fair assessment and evaluation were (mean=1.40, 1.47 and SD=.93, .944). Whereas mean score and standard deviation about distribution of workload among subordinates and assessment of students learning development are (mean=1.52, 1.97 and SD=.933, 1.10). The analysis indicated that the 21st century secondary school principals were positive influence on the overall school environment.

Findings
The following findings were drawn in the light of analysis.
1. Mean and standard deviation on principals' decisions were 1.41 and .75, confidence about contacting showed mean and standard deviation 1.57 and .995 while mean and standard deviation for the acceptance of decisions and giving priority to the team members were 1.51, 1.55 and .91,.921 respectively.
2. The value 1.49 plus 1.62 is the mean score of "positive attitude of principals" and "searching suitable ways for subordinates' improvement" while standard deviation for the both statements were .922 and 1.012. The value of 1.74 and 1.44 are the mean scores of "demonstrating example for initiation" and showing respect to feelings of team members" and the standard deviation were 1.087 and .897 respectively.
3. The whole mean score about inspirational motivation regarding (TL) Transformational leadership were 1.52, 1.37, 1.51 and 1.51. 1.37 was recorded as highest mean score.
4. The mean score about individualised consideration regarding TL were 1.58, 1.51, 2.00 and 1.41. The highest mean score was recorded as 1.41.
5. The mean score regarding the influence of Transformational leadership style of 21st century school principals on the environment of school were 1.51, 1.40, 1.47, 1.53 and 1.97. The highest mean score was recorded as 1.40.

Conclusions

Conclusions resulting from the findings of the study were as follows:

It was concluded that the transformative leadership style of 21st-century secondary school principals is vital in creating an effective and vibrant learning environment. By emphasizing vision, creativity, and cooperation, these individuals build an environment of development, inspiration, and inclusiveness. As educational environments change transformative leadership remains critical to creating significant improvements and fostering an inviting environment for learners and their growth.

Recommendations

The findings of the present investigation can be extended in various educational settings, engaging a greater number of school leaders, to acquire a better understanding of the benefits of transformative leadership. Furthermore the leadership training for principals in schools, frequent audits of leadership practices, and stakeholder involvement in evaluations can all help to improve the effectiveness of leadership and school atmosphere.

References

Ahmad, A., Ambad, S. N. A., & Mohd, S. J. a. N. S. (2020). The Trend of Research on Transformational Leadership Literature: A Bibliometric analysis. *International Journal of Human Resource Studies*, *11*(1), 1. https://doi.org/10.5296/ijhrs.v11i1.18074.

Bass, B. M., & Bass, B. M. (1985). *Leadership and performance beyond expectations*

Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (Eds.). (1994). *Improving organizational effectiveness through transformational leadership*. Sage Publications

Bass, B. M., & Riggio, R. E. (2006). Transformational leadership. In *Psychology Press eBooks*. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781410617095.

Gibson, P., & Dempster, N. (2022). *Leading educational change: A study of the transformative leadership practices in inclusive schools*. International Journal of Leadership in Education, 25(4), 467-484.

Hallinger, P. (2003). *Leading educational change: Reflections on the practice of instructional and transformational leadership*. Cambridge Journal of Education, 33(3), 329–352.

Harris, A. (2021). *Leading educational change: A case study approach*. Routledge.

Hoy, W. K., & Miskel, C. G. (2013). *Educational administration: Theory, research, and practice*. McGraw-Hill Education.

Munir, S., Minaz, M., & Idris, M. (2024). School Heads Leadership Competencies: A Comparative Analysis between the Perceptions of Male and Female Secondary School Teachers. Global Educational Studies Review, IX(III), 01–10. https://doi.org/10.31703/gesr.2024(ix-iii).01.

Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D. (2000). *The effects of transformational leadership on student engagement with school*. Educational Administration Quarterly, 36(2), 56-84.

Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D. (2006). *Transformational school leadership for*

large-scale reform: Effects on students, teachers, and their classroom practices. School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 17(2), 201–227.

Leithwood, K., Seashore Louis, K., Anderson, S., & Wahlstrom, K. (2004). *How leadership influences student learning*. The Wallace Foundation.

Marzano, R. J., Waters, T., & McNulty, B. (2005). *School leadership that works: From research to results*. ASCD.

McCall, M. W. (1986). Leadership and performance beyond expectations, by Bernard M. Bass. New York: The Free Press, 1985, 191 pp. $26.50. *Human Resource Management*, *25*(3), 481–484. https://doi.org/10.1002/ hrm. 3930250310

Northouse, P., & Lee, M. (2019). *Leadership case studies in education*. (2nd ed.). London, United King dom: Sage Publications.

Northouse, P. G. (2022). Leadership Theory and Practice (9th ed.). SAGE. - References - Scientific *Research Publishing*. https://www.scirp.org/ reference /referencespapers?referenceid=3699703

Tschannen-Moran, M., & Gareis, C. R. (2015). *The influence of leadership on teacher trust*. Journal of Educational Administration, 53(4), 494–512.