IJAAR PUBLISHING®

Scholarly Journal of Social Sciences Research | ISSN: 2955-0785
Vol. 5, Issue 1 (2026) | www.ijaar.org/sjssr

PRINCIPAL-TEACHERS RELATIONSHIP: A CATALYST FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT IN DELTA STATE PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS, NIGERIA

By

Ufuoma Judith GAIUS – OKOKO *1
Phone NO. : +234 706 182 4362

&

Victor F. PERETOMODE **2
Phone No: + 234 805 475 3102
Correspondent: E-mail: vperetomode1@yahoo.com

**1: is a Postgraduate Student of Educational Administration, Department of Educational Administration & Foundations, Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria

**2: is a Professor of Educational Administration & Higher Education, Department of Educational Administration & Higher Education, Department of Educational Administration & Foundations, Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

This study examines the nature and quality of the relationship between principals and their teachers in public secondary schools, Delta State. This study uses a quantitative approach to test the study's variables. The respondents are principals and teachers in public secondary schools in Delta State with a sample size of 439. The modified standardized research instrument is a four (4) Likert scale questionnaire and the data obtained are analysed using IBM SPSS Version 27. The face and content validity was determined by four professors of educational administration and the test – retest reliability coefficient of the instrument is r = 0.896. The findings show that principal-teacher relationship is high and effective in Delta State public secondary schools and contributes to school improvement, and there is no significant difference between male and female teachers in terms of relationships with their principals. The study on the nature and quality of principal-teachers relationship has added vital empirical data to the knowledge bank in the context of Delta State.

Keywords: Principal – Teacher Relationship, Public Secondary, School Improvement, Delta State

Gaius – Okoko, U. J. & Peretomode, V. F. (2026). Principal-Teachers Relationship: A Catalyst for School Improvement in Delta State Public Secondary Schools, Nigeria. Scholarly *Journal of Social Sciences Research, 5*(1), 1-14. DOI: https://doi.org/10.46654/sjssr51-1785

INTRODUCTION

Principal-teacher relationship is an emotional bond between the principal and the teachers which contributes to the smooth running of school activities. Principal-teacher relationship is the positive dialogue and cooperation between school principals and teachers based on trust, love, and respect. This positive dialogue and cooperation is an important factor in ensuring the effectiveness of schools and improving schools (Özdogru, et al (2025)

A good/ positive principal-teacher relationship is foundational to a successful and thriving school environment and an effective school administration. Principals are not only administrative heads but also instructional/ supervisory heads who influence teaching implementation and professional development. Principals are important in the modification and promotion of school culture and teacher job commitment. These roles cannot be carried out alone without the effective and efficient use of the teachers in advancing the development of secondary schools in Delta State. The elements that promote effective principal-teacher relationship include professional development opportunities, reciprocal respect, trust, collaboration, good and transparent communication, consistent feedback, shared decision-making and joint responsibility for improving the schools. This, in turn, contributes to the promotion of school culture which leads to increased teacher job commitment. A poor or negative principal-teacher relationship, on the other hand, hinders the achievement of favourable school culture and high teachers' job commitment.

A conceptual analogy created by the researchers, is that the principal-teacher relationship in the school is likened to the relationship of the family; where the father is the principal, and the mother(s) are the teachers while the child(ren), are the students. The maids and relatives are the non-teaching staff. When there is a friction between the father and the mother(s), love, respect, collaboration and trust are lost and decision-making, mutual understanding, ideas and logic can hardly flow smoothly thus hindering a healthy relationship and in the family (school). Once this happens, indiscipline, misunderstanding, distrust, bitterness and "I don't care" attitude become the order of the day leading to poor development and communication in the school (family). Another good analogy of the principal-teacher relationship is likened to the ants – the queen (principal), the workers (teachers) and the soldiers (students). Strong cohesion and collaboration among them are yielding high productivity in the colony as compared to schools.

Literature Review

Leadership is the process whereby one individual shows the way to go by influencing others to work voluntarily and collectively together towards the attainment of organisational goals (Peretomode, 2019; Littlejohn, 2021). Leadership style or behaviour, determines principal-teacher relationships and there are several leadership styles such as authoritarian, collaborative/democratic, laissez-Faire, transactional and transformational, instructional/coaching, distributive, ethical, servant, and authentic leadership.

Authoritarian Relationship: In this type, the principal exercises strict control, with little input from teachers. Communication tends to be top-down, with the principal making decisions and expecting teachers to follow instructions without question.

Collaborative/ Democratic Relationship: According to McCormick, (2019), this relationship promotes collaboration, inclusion and teamwork.

Laissez-Faire Relationship: The word 'Laissez-Faire' is derived from a French word meaning "letting people do as they choose." Laissez-faire relationship allows the principal to give the teachers autonomy to make their own decisions and manage their instructional methods (Urriza, 2023). The principal takes a hands-off approach, giving teachers full privilege in managing their classrooms, behaviours, and responsibilities at school. There is minimal guidance or intervention from the principal, which can foster independence but might lead to a lack of cohesion or oversight.

Transactional Relationship: This is more of a give-and-take relationship, where rewards (e.g., promotions or recognition) are offered or exchanged for teachers' performance or adherence to the principal's expectations. It focuses on efficiency and task completion, rather than personal engagement or collaboration.

Transformational Relationship: In this type, the principal's moral and behaviour exemplar, causes the teachers to identify with the leader and imitate his actions; encourages the teachers to act creatively by examining assumptions, alternatives and new approaches or ideas (HIBA, 2023).

Instructional/ coaching relationship: Bassey, et al (2023) identified coaching relationship. Coaching relationship is defined as the relationship where the principal can quickly recognise their team members' strengths, weaknesses and motivations to help everyone improve.

Conflictual Relationship: this relationship is marked or characterised by frequent misunderstandings, disagreement, and lack of trust which arises from different opinions in values, goals, and communication styles (Feirsen & Weitzman, 2021). This kind of relationship goes a long way to negate and hinders school improvement and progress within the school.

Servant Leadership: is a style where the leader prioritizes team members' needs, focuses on serving and supporting them, and empowers them to achieve their goals.

Research Questions:

1. What is the overall nature/ quality of principal-teachers relationship in public secondary schools in Delta State?
2. What differences exist in principal-teachers relationship (PTR) based on teachers' demographic characteristics (gender, location of school, and teachers' years of experience).

Research Hypothesis:

The following hypothesis has been formulated based on the research questions:

1. There will be no significant difference between principal - teachers relationship based on teachers' demographic characteristics: gender (male and female), location of school (rural and urban), and teachers' years of experience.

Operational definitions

For this study, the "Principal" is defined as the individual officially appointed by the Delta State Post Primary Education Board (DSPPEB) as the chief executive and administrative head of a public secondary school. This individual is identified by their official title and is responsible for the day-to-day management, instructional leadership, and overall functioning of the school. Principal-Teachers Relationship is quantitatively measured using a researcher-designed 4-point Likert scale (1 - 4) questionnaire. Teachers requested to indicate

their level of agreement with statements regarding the frequency of their personal interactions with the principal.

Theoretical Framework:

This study on the nature of principal-teachers relationship in public secondary schools in Delta State, Nigeria, can be effectively grounded in humanistic management theory of Mary Parker Follett (1863 – 1933). This theory is also referred to as the human relations management thought.

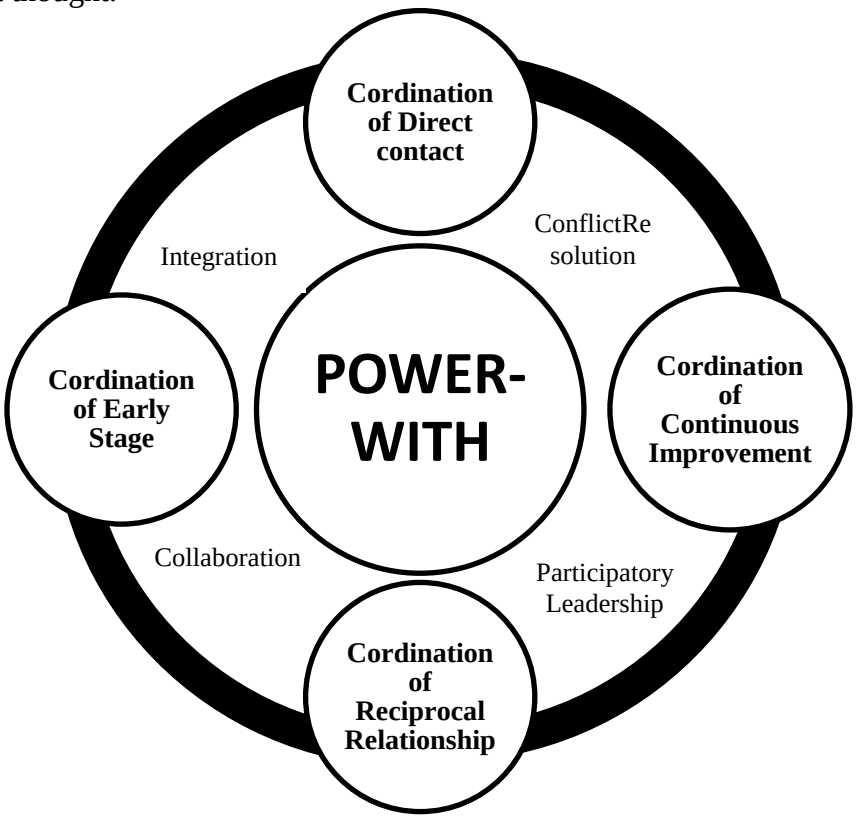


Figure 1: Follett's power-with theory

Follett's management theory focuses on two fundamental elements - coordination and employee engagement (Peek, 2024) and advocated a key principle of underlining her theory to be, "power with" people or (coactive) rather than "power over" people (coercive power). Other principles based on the use of her concept of "power with" are "integration" or non-coercive power-sharing and "group power". (Wikipedia, 2025).Follett's theory emphasised group interactions and participatory leadership in organisations based on four principles of coordination. They are principles of early stage, continuity, direct contact, and reciprocal relationship.

This 'power-with' approach enhances teachers' academic freedom, fosters mutual respect in principals' and teachers' relationships and supports a sense of ownership in school activities. This makes every member of the school feel active and by applying open communication in the principle of coordination of reciprocal relationship, the teachers can communicate their aspirations and challenges. Follett's coordination of direct contact emphasises a participatory and collaborative administrative style where administrators and teachers work together to achieve common goals and improve teacher morale and retention which are foundations of a positive school culture that promotes teachers' commitment.In summary, the principal builds good relationships with teacher by his style of leadership

directly by nurturing trust, two way communication, and support, creates collaboration and meaningful teaching – learning environment.

Nature of principal - teacher relationship in schools

Humans maintain relationships everywhere they go, whether at home, at work, or in any other place. A person can't go through school without at least one type of relationship. All different types of relationships are a necessity for one to live a normal life. People form relationships in the educational system as well. An individual associates with the principal, teachers, classmates, and non-teaching staff in the school (Misbah, Shabana, and Safia, 2020). The relationship between the principal and the teacher is usually referred to as the official relationship created by the principal with the teachers to protect and promote the school culture, to achieve positive completers' outcomes and achieve the shared goals and mission statement of the school in a view to improve and develop schools.

Principal-teacher relationship is a term that is used to describe how principals and teachers in a school relate with one another in carrying out their designated roles. It is an articulating and integrating principle of action in which school staff experiment with a series of schemes, methodological strategies and peer-knowledge with which to solve educational problems. Principal-teacher relationship is seen as an integral part of the school administrative process (Ikenga, & Ogbaga, 2021).

Misbah, Shabana and Safia, (2020) affirmed that whatever the context may be, if the leader is effective, the followers flourish, however, if the leader is ineffective, the followers suffer. Similarly, the actions of the organisation and its representatives, such as support for members or fair decision making, have a significant influence on the member's performance and commitment. Quality principal-teachers relationship ensures teamwork to tackle problems of indiscipline, parental issues, quality education and student's outcome in the school to improve their school of domicile while being accountable in their duties.

A strong relationship between teachers and principals is important for ensuring that students have the academic support they need. At the heart of this partnership or relationship is trust which is something that takes time and conscious effort to build (Waterford.org (2024). Teachers also play a very crucial role in this principal-teacher relationship. Teachers, who cannot accept positive initiatives and change in the school culture and pedagogical abilities, lack the capability for effective communication with the principal and other staff of their school, who also lack trust, professionalism, good attitudes, and behaviour, and undermine the school principal's authority, create a negative possibility for the principal to have a good relationship with the teachers, and create a toxic culture for the school. Thus, the relationship of the principal and teacher is a vice-versa thing which includes the popular universal principle and a Golden Rule that "respect begets respect".

Leadership styles and forms of principal-teacher relationship in schools.

Principals hold the heart of the school, hence, their actions and relationships with their teachers affect the satisfaction, cohesion, and commitment levels of teachers, and principals as well. The role the principals play in the school and the relationships the principals develop with their subordinates have been measured as fundamental component of the subordinates' work performance in various schools (Misbah, Shabana and Safia, 2020).

Misbah, Shabana, and Safia (2020) identified two basic types of principal-teacher relationships in schools namely good or positive and weak or negative:

Good, strong, positive, effective or quality relationship: refers to a quality relationship among leaders and members relentlessly influences the co-worker exchange relationship within an organisation. Good communication, shared values and trust, are important elements in this relationship. Ideally, a principal should be able to create consensus among staff on rules and their enforcement. The principal must have knowledge and understanding of effective communication strategies. Creating a collaborative environment and open communication and trust are ingredients of the democratic style and have been described as some of the most important factor for successful school improvement initiatives (Ogbeche, 2020; Sarwar et al., 2022; Prusak, 2024). When there is a positive and empowering leadership behavious relationship of principal and teachers, they have major enthusiasm regarding each student success, and there is psychological resilience of teachers (Cevik, & Dogan, 2025).

Negative, ineffective or weak relationship: on the other hand, is a situation where the school experiences negative feelings and relationships, a lack of trust and a feeling of disconnect between the principal and teachers in the school environment. This could be devastating to the members of the school community. In a weak relationship, there is an existing element of trust and communication but not enough to infuse the right level of collegiality among the staff in the school leading to the terms of "when it will get to your turn" and "you are on your own". This weak relationship between the principal and teachers could affect the school improvement and therefore calls for collaborative efforts to work to achieve a favourable school environment in order to achieve a common goal for the good of both students and staff.

Strategies to promote good principal-teacher relationship in schools

Some of the strategies for effective or positive principal-teacher relationships that can also contribute to school improvement and described as follows (Misbah, Shabana, and Safia, 2020):

Appreciation or gratitude: One of the five magical words is 'thank you 'which is a strategy that can be used by a good administrator to motivate teachers. Appreciating teachers for their hard work and high level of commitment to the school and students. Appreciation by the principal to the teachers and by the teachers to the principal may also result in improving the principal-teacher relationship (Misbah, Shabana, and Safia, 2020).

Trust is a major element that promotes positive relationships. Trust in an educational setting is a reciprocal relationship between all stakeholders in a school including the principal, teachers and other staff, students, and the community (McCormick, 2019). Waterford.org (2024) described six tips embedded in trust as a key strategy for fostering good relationships. These are: *building opportunities for open, two-way transparent communication, actively listening to teachers, better understanding their perspectives and supporting them.* Others are to *engage in collaborative decision-making that fosters a culture of mutual respect and trust in leadership, investing in school resources and professional development, acknowledging and celebrating* the accomplishments of teachers, and *provide clear, actionable, and constructive feedback.*

Collaboration: Collaboration means teamwork and sharing ideas. Werang et al, (2023) highlighted the need for a collaborative and empowering approach that involves building relationships, setting high expectations, providing support, and fostering a positive school culture.

Another strategy is *principals modelling*. Principals have to be role model to the teachers both in attitude and in job ethics. This will endear the teachers to want to be better and that is where such statement as "if the principal can be in school by 7:30 am, then what stops me"

Other strategy according to (better leaders better schools.com, 2023) is that *Principals should show genuine interest in teachers' professional growth; be visible and involved in school events; facilitate inclusive and safe working environments; create opportunities for professional learning (Urban et al, 2024*); and *provide emotional support (Hughes et al (2015, as cited in Urban et al, (2024).*

RESEARCH METHOD

Correlational survey was used for this study. The total number of principals of four hundred and eighty-eight (488) and total number of teachers of eleven thousand and ten (11,010) in all the 448 public secondary schools in Delta State, constituted the population of the study. The sample size consisted of 438 made up of 411 teachers selected through multi-stage random sampling technique and the 27 principals of the schools selected for the study. This sample size is adequate (> 370) for this study given the total population (finite population) of the study according to Krejcie & Morgan (1970) (in www.kenpro.org (Jan. 2025).

The research instrument used was a modified standardised questionnaire. The instrument is a four-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 4, where 1 is for "strongly disagree"; 2 is for "disagree"; 3 is for "agree"; and 4 is for "strongly agree". The scale benchmark is 2.50.To establish the face and content validity of the questionnaire, four professor ascertained the relevance, clarity, and adequacy of each item and the relevance to the research questions, research hypothesis and the scope of the study.

The reliability of the research instrument was tested using the test-retest reliability method. The reliability of the instrument was thereafter determined by applying the Pearson Product Moment Correlation to determine the reliability coefficient. The test – retest reliability of the instrument was at r = 0.896, p value = 0.01 and table critical value at 0.4438 at 0.05 level of significance. IBM SPSS Statistics version 27 was used for the analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The benchmark for the four – point Likert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree (1 point) to strongly agree (4 points), was set at 2.5, arrived at as follows (4+3+2+1)/ 4 = 2.5. Any item or variable with mean score of less than 2.50 was considered as disagree/ unfavourable/ineffective/negative and any one 2.50 and above was viewed as agree/favourable/ high. For the purpose of interpretation, the four-point interval scale was structured as follows:

3.25 – 4.00 (Very effective/very favourable/ highly positive/ very high);
2.50 – 3.24 (effective/ favourable/positive/ high);
1.75 – 2.49 (ineffective/ unfavourable);
1.00 – 1.74 (very ineffective/ very favourable/ negative).

For the interpretation of correlation r, the widely accepted general strength guidelines by Rusakov (2023), was adopted as follows:

0.0 - 0.2 (Very weak / none)
0.2 – 0.4 (Weak)
0.4 – 0.6 (Moderate)

0.6 – 0.8 (Strong)
0.8 – 1.0 (Very Strong)

Research Question 1: What is the overall nature/ quality of principal-teachers relationship in public secondary schools in Delta State?

Table 1: The nature of principal-teachers relationship (PTR) in Delta State public secondary schools

S/N	Variables	Urban (N = 195)		Rural (N = 211)		Urban + Rural (N = 406)	
		x̄	SD	x̄	SD	x̄	SD
1	PTR	2.72	0.13	2.75	0.14	2.74	0.12

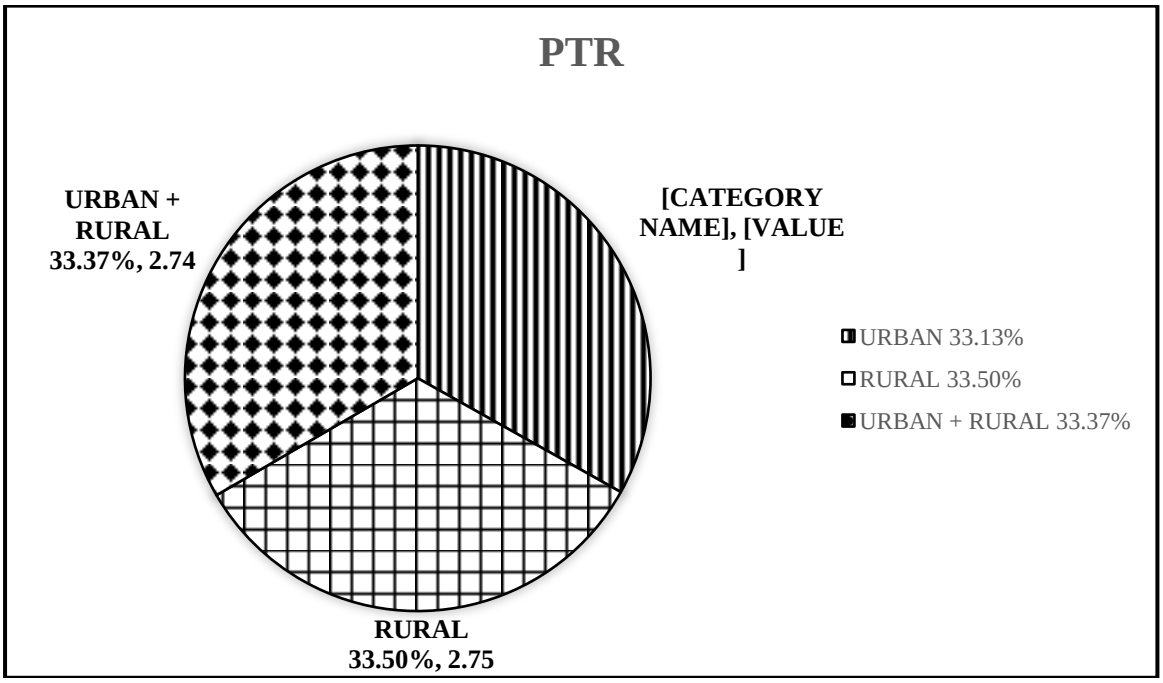


Figure 2: Graphic pie chart representation of the nature of PTR

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics and insights into the principal-teacher relationship (PTR) across urban, rural and combined school settings in Delta State public secondary schools. For PTR, the results show urban schools with mean = 2.72 (SD = 0.13), rural schools with mean = 2.75 (SD = 0.14) and the mean for combined urban and rural schools is 2.74 (SD = 0.12). Given that these mean scores lay between 2.50 – 3.24 interval levels, implies that the principal-teachers relationships are favourable and effective in Delta State's public secondary schools, regardless of location. Notably, rural schools report a marginally higher PTR quality (by 0.03 points) compared to urban schools in Delta State. These findings suggest a strong foundation for effective teaching and learning in Delta State public secondary schools. The weighted mean of PTR is 2.74.

From the above result, ***the overall nature/ quality of*** PTR (2.74) is high in public secondary schools in Delta State.

Research Question 2: What differences exist in principal - teacher relationship (PTR) based on teachers' demographic characteristics (gender, location of school, and teachers' years of experience).

Table 2: Descriptive statistics on differences that exists in PTR based on teachers' demographic characteristics (Gender, school location and teachers' years of teaching experience).

Variable	Group	N	PTR (Mean ± SD)
Gender			
	Male	168	2.75 ± 0.14
	Female	238	2.72 ± 0.12
Location			
	Urban	195	2.72 ± 0.13
	Rural	211	2.75 ± 0.14
Years of experience			
	1 - 5 years	144	2.68 ± 0.150
	6 - 10 years	101	2.78 ± 0.11
	11 - 15 years	94	2.70 ± 0.20
	16 years and above	97	2.78 ± 0.19

Table 2 presents descriptive statistics for principal - teacher relationship (PTR),to determine the differences in PTR based on gender, location and years of teaching experience (YTE) in public secondary schools in Delta State. On gender, for PTR, the results show male teachers with mean = 2.75 (SD = 0.14), and female teachers with mean = 2.72 (SD = 0.12). Given that these means lay between 2.50 – 3.24, PTR is considered as generally high in Delta State's public secondary schools, irrespective of the gender. Nevertheless, male teachers reported a slightly higher mean (2.75)in PTR (by 0.03 points) compared to female teachers (2.72) in Delta State.

On location, for PTR, the results show urban school teachers with mean = 2.72 (SD = 0.13), and rural school teachers with mean = 2.75 (SD = 0.14). Given that these means lay between 2.50 – 3.24, PTR is generally high in Delta State's public secondary schools, irrespective of the location. However, rural school teachers reported a slightly higher PTR (by 0.03 points) compared to urban school teachers in Delta State.

On years of teaching experience, from the table above, there is a minute difference of 0.02 points to 0.08 points in mean level between years of experience (YTE) 1 (1 - 5 years) with mean of 2.68 (SD = 0.15); (YTE) 2 (6 - 10 years) with mean of 2.78 (SD = 0.11);(YTE) 3 (11 - 15 years) with mean of 2.70 (SD = 0.20); and (YTE) 4 (16 years and above) with mean of 2.78 (SD = 0.19) in PTR. YTE 2 (6 - 10 years) and YTE 4 (16 years and above) have the highest PTR mean level in public schools of Delta State.

Hypothesis 1: There will be no significant difference between principal-teachers relationship based on teachers' demographic characteristics: gender (male and female), location of school (urban and rural), and teachers' years of experience.

Table 3a: T-test table of principals-teachers' relationship (PTR) based on gender and location (IDV).

Variables	IDV (2 Groups)	N	Mean	SD	Sig.	F	df	t-cal	t-crit	Sig. (2-tailed)
PTR	Male	168	2.75	0.14	0.996	.000	404	0.610	1.960	0.542
	Female	238	2.72	0.12						
PTR	Urban	195	2.72	0.13	0.929	.008	404	-0.763	1.960	0.446
	Rural	211	2.75	0.14						

Table 3a, shows that there is no significant difference in principal-teacher relationship between male and female teachers in public secondary schools in Delta State with Levene's sig > 0.05 assuming equal or similar variance between groups. Thus, giving the T-test result as $t_{(404)} = 0.610$, $p = 0.542$ at 0.05 level of significance, the Sig. (2-tailed) value is 0.542 which is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. This means that there is no significant difference between the two groups in PTR. There is no significance difference between male and female teachers in PTR, $t_{\mathbf{(404)}} = 0.610$, $p = 0.542$.

The table shows that there is no significant difference in PTR between rural and urban school teachers with Levene's sig > 0.05 assuming equal or similar variance between groups. Thus, giving the T-test result as $t_{(404)} = -0.763$, $p = 0.446$ at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted meaning there is no significant difference between the two groups in PTR.

Table 3b: ANOVA test summary table of principal-teachers relationship (PTR) based on years of teaching experience (YTE).

D V	IDV (4 Groups)	(I) YTE	(J) YTE	Mean Difference (I-J)	F	df	Sig. (p)	Decision
PTR	YTE	YTE 1	2	-1.82	1.250	3, 402	.291	Not Sig
			3	-.23				
			4	-1.83				
		YTE 2	1	1.82				
			3	1.59				
			4	-.00				
		YTE 3	1	.23				
			2	-1.59				
			4	-1.59				
		YTE 4	1	1.83				
			2	.00				
			3	1.59				

Table 3b, shows that there is no significant difference in PTR between and within the different years of teaching experience among teachers in public secondary schools, with F (3,402) = 1.250, Mean = 49.24138, SD = 8.983159, p = 0.291, critical table value of 2.62at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, with p value greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted, meaning there is no significant difference between the four groups in PTR.

Discussion of Findings

From the results presented, the nature/ quality of principal-teachers relationship is effective/ positive/ high in public secondary schools of Delta State. This positive relationship is similar to that of Sawaar et al. (2022) who discovered that principles democratic leadership style has a positive impact on teacher performance, and Cevik and Dogan (2025) who found that empowering leadership behaviours of principals positively correlated with teachers' psychological resilience, especially at a time of teacher work overload, and complains of stress and burnout. It also confirms Prusak's finding that effective leadership behaviours enhance teacher collective efficacy. The finding is also in congruence with that of Ozdogru et al. (2025) that Turkish teachers reported a innovative principal-teacher relationship to increased professional learning, and Wu & Shen (2022) of 12 prior meta - analysis established a significant positive effect size for principal leadership on student achievement.

The finding also conforms to the empirical article detailing how rural principals used positive relationships to achieve academic growth (Wheeler, 2023).

It is obvious that there is only a slight difference between the mean PTR scores of male and female teachers, relative to the variation in the data with the t-value (0.6) which shows the small size of the difference. The p-value (0.542) is greater than 0.05 level of significance, meaning the difference between the mean PTR scores of male and female teachers is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This means that any observed difference could have occurred by chance and not because of gender (male or female), thus, there is no significant difference.

This means that male and female teachers do not significantly differ in how they perceive or experience their relationship with the principal. The observed difference is minor and not strong enough to be statistically meaningful. This suggests that gender does not play a determining role in how teachers relate with their principals. It indicates that effective/ positive principal-teacher relationships are not influenced by gender differences but by other factors such as school culture, professional support, etcetera.

The t-test result for Principal-teachers Relationship (PTR) by geographical location ($t_{(404)} = -0.763$, $p = 0.446$) indicates that there is no statistically significant difference in PTR between teachers in rural and urban schools of Delta State public secondary schools. This means that the quality of PTR as perceived by the teachers is relatively consistent irrespective of locations (urban or rural). The p-value (0.718) is greater than 0.05 level of significance, meaning the difference is not statistically significant.

There is no significant difference in PTR mean between teachers of various experience level in Delta State public secondary schools with the $p > 0.05$ at 0.05 level of significance as p-value = 0.291. Thus, years of teaching experience is not a major factor in PTR; teachers of various years of teaching experience perceive PTR in same viewin Delta State public secondary schools with $p > 0.05$ level of significance at p-value = 0.239 do not differ.

Findings of the Study

From the analysis of the study, the following findings emerged;

1. The teachers in urban and rural public secondary schools in Delta State have a favourable, effective, or high and positive, cordial principal-teachers relationship.
2. There is no significant difference in principal-teachers relationship between male and female teachers in public secondary schools in Delta State.
3. There is no significant difference in PTR between rural and urban school teachers in public secondary schools in Delta State.
4. There is no significant difference in PTR between and within the different years of teaching experience among teachers in public secondary schools in public secondary schools.

Conclusion

The nature/ quality of relationship of the principal and teachers in the school is effective and positive showing a democratically and collaborative relationship based on leadership relationship. Gender is not a major factor or predictor of PTR. Location (urban and rural) is also not a major predictor of factors of PTR. So also, years of teachers' experience is not a major factor or predictor of PTR.

Recommendations

The following are recommendations offered based on the results and findings of the study which could be useful to school principals, teachers, and policy makers in Delta State, Nigeria.

Public secondary schools' principals in Delta State should use the insights of the findings to prioritise building and maintaining favourable relationships between principals and teachers. This can be achieved through regular feedback, open two-way communication channels, and involving teachers in decision – making processes.

Teachers on the other hand, should practice collaboration with their principals in addressing school and professional issues. Achieving the educational goals should be their priority. This can also address the indiscipline of students in schools and promote school-wide improvement.

The Ministry may endeavour to ensure quality assurance compliance to intervene in the quality of PTR in the public secondary schools of Delta State.

Contribution to knowledge

The study has contributed to knowledge in the following ways;

The study also provides an empirical evidence and insight into the quality/ nature of principal-teachers relationship, in public secondary schools in Delta State.

The study contributes to the existing literature on principals' leadership skills and styles in Delta State public secondary schools, in the Nigerian context, as majorly democratic.

References

Bassey, U. O., Agbade, D. O., & Ogunode, N. J. (2023). Impact of coaching leadership style on secondary school administration, teacher's job performance and secondary school students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria. *International Journal of Development and Public Policy*, 3 (11), 2

Cevik, M. S., & Dogan, E. (2025). Is there a significant relationship between the empowering leadership behaviours of school behaviours of school principals and the psychological resilience of teachers? Understanding the moderating effects of gender and length of time spent with the school principal. *BMC Psychology*, 13 (link unavailable).

Feirsen, R. & Weitzman,S. (2021). Constructive conflict. *ASCD Journals*, Vo. 78, (7)

Follet, M. P. (1940). Dynamic administration. The collected papers of Mary Parker Follet, edited by Henry T. Metcalf& L. Urwick. New York: Harper & Brothers

HIBBA, K.(2023). The correlation between the principal's leadership style and the commitment of teachers in Arab Schools in Isreal. *Review of international Comparative Management, 24 (5),* December 23

Ikenga, N. C. & Ogbaga, E. (2021). Influence of working relationship between principals and teachers on students activities in secondary schools in Awgu Education Zone of Enugu State. *Journal of Education and Practice,* Vol. 12 (36), 2021

Littlejohn, h. L. (2021). "A quantitative study of the impact of leadership on School Culture in a small rural school district as measured by stakeholder satisfaction". Doctor of Education Dissertations. 75. https://digitacommons.gardner-web.edu/education dissertations/75

McCormick, C. (2019). Principal actions that foster positive school climate. Thesis, Concordia University, St. Paul. 20/01/2026

Misbah, F., Shabana, A. & Safia, B. (2020). Impact of principal teacher relationship in achieving educational objectives at secondary level in Quetta district. *PJER*, 3 (1), (2020)

Ogbeche, M. M. (2020). Management of school climate as a predictor of educational goals' attainment in public secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Educational Administration, Planning & Research*, 12 (172), 10 – 10 – 19.

Ozdogru, M., Dogus, Y., & Akyurek, M. I. (2025). The mediating role of the principal-teacher relationship in innovative school leadership and teacher professional learning according to Turkish teachers' perceptions. *Behavioural Sciences*, 15 (4): 450 doi

Peek, S. (2024). The management theory of Mary Parker Follet. https://www.business.com/author/sean-peek/

Peretomode, V. F. (2019). *Theories of management: Implications for educational administration.* Ibadan: BWright Integrated Publishers Limited

Prusak, K. J. (2024). Effective leadership behaviours that enhance teacher collective efficacy. *Education Sciences*, 14 (14), 431.

Sarwar, U.; Tariq, R., & Young, Q. Z. (2020). Principals' leadership styles and its impact on teachers' performance at college level. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 919693.

Wheeler, D. K. (2023). When the faculty feels like a family: The role of the principal-teacher relationship in rural school improvement. . West Texas A & M University