



Leadership Style and Employee Productivity in Nigerian Public Sector Organizations: A Case Study of the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Abuja

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Abstract:

This study examined the effect of leadership style on employee productivity in Nigerian public sector organizations, using the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Abuja, as a case study. The study specifically investigated the effects of transformational and democratic leadership styles on employee productivity. A descriptive survey research design was adopted, while a quantitative research approach was employed. The target population comprised 520 employees of FIRS, Abuja, from which a sample size of 226 respondents was determined using the Taro Yamane formula. A structured questionnaire served as the primary instrument for data collection, and its validity and reliability were established through expert review and Cronbach's Alpha reliability test. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, while simple linear regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that transformational leadership significantly enhances employee productivity by motivating employees, promoting innovation, recognizing performance, and strengthening organizational commitment. Democratic leadership was also found to improve employee productivity through participatory decision-making, teamwork, and effective communication. The hypothesis test confirmed that transformational leadership has a statistically significant positive effect on employee productivity in FIRS, Abuja ($p < 0.05$). The study concluded that effective leadership is a critical determinant of employee productivity in Nigerian public sector organizations. It recommended continuous leadership development programmes, employee empowerment, participatory management practices, transparent communication, and performance-based recognition systems to improve organizational effectiveness and public service delivery.

Keywords: Leadership Style, Transformational Leadership, Democratic Leadership, Employee Productivity, Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS).

1. Introduction

Leadership style refers to the pattern of behaviour, attitude, and methods adopted by leaders in directing, motivating, supervising, and influencing employees toward the achievement of organizational goals.

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It determines how leaders communicate organizational vision, make decisions, delegate responsibilities, resolve conflicts, and motivate employees to perform effectively.

In the Nigerian public sector, leadership style has become a critical factor in enhancing employee productivity because government organizations rely on effective leadership to improve service delivery, institutional accountability, transparency, and operational efficiency. Public institutions such as the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) require competent leadership capable of inspiring employees to achieve revenue generation targets while maintaining professionalism, integrity, and commitment to public service. According to Kirfi, Ahmed, and Ishola (2021), "leadership style significantly determines employee commitment, efficiency, and productivity in the Federal Inland Revenue Service." Their study revealed that participative and transformational leadership styles positively influenced employee performance, teamwork, and organizational effectiveness within FIRS. Similarly, Jekelle (2021) maintained that effective leadership promotes organizational commitment and enhances employees' willingness to achieve institutional objectives in Nigerian public organizations. The study further established that transformational leadership motivates employees more effectively than authoritarian leadership because it encourages trust, innovation, and shared responsibility. Ekwoaba, Ufodiana, and Adesope (2021) asserted that democratic leadership enhances employee participation in decision-making, improves communication, and increases job performance within the Federal Inland Revenue Service. They argued that employees become more committed when management values their opinions and creates opportunities for collaborative problem-solving. Likewise, Ojo and Adeyemi (2022) observed that transformational leadership significantly improves employee morale, organizational commitment, and productivity across Nigerian public institutions because it promotes employee empowerment and innovation. Their findings further indicated that leaders who communicate organizational goals clearly inspire employees to perform beyond expectations. Adebayo and Yusuf (2022) noted that leadership style remains one of the strongest predictors of employee productivity in Nigeria's public service because leaders influence employees' attitudes toward work, discipline, accountability, and organizational citizenship behaviour. The authors emphasized that organizations characterized by participative leadership experience higher levels of employee satisfaction and lower staff turnover than organizations managed through autocratic leadership. Ibrahim and Abdullahi (2023) reported that transformational leadership positively affects employee productivity by improving motivation, organizational trust, and commitment among public sector workers. According to the authors, employees who receive recognition, encouragement, and professional support from their supervisors demonstrate higher levels of efficiency and creativity in performing official responsibilities. Nwosu and Okafor (2023) argued that effective leadership contributes significantly to institutional performance because productive employees require supportive leaders who encourage innovation, teamwork, continuous learning, and ethical behaviour. They further explained that leadership effectiveness enhances organizational resilience and enables public institutions to respond efficiently to changing administrative challenges. Akinola and Salami (2024) found that leadership style influences employees' willingness to accept organizational change and adapt to technological innovations within government agencies. Their study revealed that transformational and democratic leadership styles encourage employee engagement, knowledge sharing, and improved service delivery, while autocratic leadership often limits employee creativity and innovation. According to Bello, Mohammed, and Hassan (2025), appropriate leadership styles positively influence employee efficiency and organizational performance in Nigerian public institutions, emphasizing that leaders should balance authority with employee participation to improve organizational effectiveness. Their findings indicated that employees perform better when leaders recognize individual contributions, provide constructive feedback, and create an environment of mutual respect. Onwuaju (2026) observed that transformational and democratic leadership styles significantly improve employee productivity and public service delivery, whereas authoritarian leadership reduces employee morale, innovation, and job satisfaction. Likewise, Chionyedue, Eze, and Nnamani (2026) concluded that leadership style directly affects employee motivation, commitment, and productivity in Nigerian public organizations. They recommended transformational leadership as the most suitable approach for enhancing

institutional performance because it promotes collaboration, employee empowerment, and organizational learning.

Leadership style serves as the independent variable in this study because it represents the managerial approaches used by organizational leaders to influence employees toward achieving institutional objectives. Different leadership styles affect employees differently depending on organizational culture, leadership competence, and the work environment. Transformational leadership focuses on inspiring employees through vision, motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. According to Ibrahim and Abdullahi (2023), transformational leaders encourage innovation, improve employee confidence, and enhance organizational commitment by creating an environment where employees feel valued and empowered. Ojo and Adeyemi (2022) equally maintained that transformational leadership increases employee productivity because it promotes trust, effective communication, and continuous professional development. Transactional leadership emphasizes structured supervision, rewards, and corrective actions. Adebayo and Yusuf (2022) explained that transactional leaders improve organizational discipline by rewarding excellent performance and correcting deviations from established standards. This leadership style remains effective in public organizations where compliance with policies and performance standards is essential. Democratic leadership encourages employee participation in decision-making processes. Ekwoaba, Ufodiama, and Adesope (2021) observed that democratic leadership significantly improves employee performance within FIRS because employees become more committed when they actively participate in organizational decisions. Bello et al. (2025) also reported that participative leadership strengthens teamwork, communication, and organizational trust, thereby increasing employee efficiency. Autocratic leadership is characterized by centralized authority where leaders make decisions without consulting subordinates. According to Nwosu and Okafor (2023), autocratic leadership may improve administrative control during emergencies but often reduces employee motivation, creativity, and job satisfaction because employees have limited opportunities to contribute ideas. Onwuaju (2026) similarly concluded that excessive authoritarian leadership negatively affects employee productivity by discouraging innovation and organizational commitment. Laissez-faire leadership allows employees considerable independence in performing their responsibilities with minimal supervision. Akinola and Salami (2024) explained that although this leadership style encourages autonomy among highly skilled employees, it may reduce organizational coordination and accountability where supervision is inadequate. Therefore, its effectiveness depends largely on employee competence and organizational culture. Employee productivity represents the dependent variable of this study because it measures employees' ability to perform assigned responsibilities efficiently and effectively while contributing to the achievement of organizational goals. Productivity reflects employees' capacity to utilize available resources to produce quality services within specified timeframes while maintaining high professional standards. According to Kirfi, Ahmed, and Ishola (2021), employee productivity within FIRS is reflected in improved efficiency, commitment, quality service delivery, teamwork, and timely completion of assigned responsibilities. Ibrahim and Abdullahi (2023) further stated that productive employees demonstrate higher levels of innovation, accountability, organizational loyalty, and problem-solving ability. Kirfi, Ahmed, and Ishola (2021) conducted an empirical study on leadership style in the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Gombe State, using a survey research design. Structured questionnaires were administered to employees, while descriptive statistics and regression analysis were used for data analysis. The study found that transformational and participative leadership styles significantly improved employee productivity, organizational commitment, teamwork, and institutional effectiveness. The researchers stated that "leadership style significantly determines employee commitment, efficiency, and productivity in the Federal Inland Revenue Service." They concluded that leaders who involve employees in organizational decision-making create a stronger sense of ownership, responsibility, and accountability. Consequently, the study recommended that FIRS management should strengthen participatory leadership practices to improve employee morale and organizational performance. Jekelle (2021) investigated the relationship between leadership styles and organizational commitment among employees in selected Nigerian public sector organizations using a descriptive survey research design. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using correlation and regression techniques. The findings revealed that

transformational leadership had the strongest positive influence on employee commitment, motivation, and performance, while laissez-faire leadership recorded the weakest relationship with employee productivity. The study further established that employees working under transformational leaders demonstrated higher levels of job satisfaction, organizational loyalty, and willingness to exceed performance expectations. The researcher concluded that transformational leadership encourages trust, innovation, and teamwork, thereby improving overall organizational effectiveness. Ekwoaba, Ufodiama, and Adesope (2021) examined the influence of democratic leadership style on employees' job performance in the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Ikoyi, Lagos. Using survey methodology, the researchers collected primary data from employees and analyzed the responses using descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings indicated that democratic leadership significantly improved employee participation, communication, cooperation, and job performance. The study observed that employees become more committed when leaders encourage them to contribute ideas during organizational decision-making processes. The researchers therefore recommended that managers within FIRS should adopt participative leadership practices capable of strengthening employee commitment, teamwork, and service delivery. Ojo and Adeyemi (2022) examined transformational leadership and employee commitment in selected Nigerian public organizations using a cross-sectional survey design. Their findings revealed that transformational leadership positively influenced employee motivation, organizational citizenship behaviour, innovation, and job performance. The researchers argued that leaders who communicate organizational vision effectively and recognize employee contributions are more likely to achieve higher productivity and organizational success. The study recommended continuous leadership development programmes for public sector managers to improve employee performance. Adebayo and Yusuf (2022) investigated leadership style and employee productivity in selected ministries within the Nigerian public service. Using questionnaires administered to civil servants, the researchers found that democratic and transformational leadership styles significantly enhanced employee commitment, work efficiency, and service delivery. However, the study revealed that autocratic leadership reduced employee morale, creativity, and organizational commitment because employees had limited opportunities to participate in decision-making. Ibrahim and Abdullahi (2023) assessed the effect of transformational leadership on employee productivity in selected federal government establishments in Nigeria. The study adopted a survey research design and found that transformational leadership significantly improved employee motivation, innovation, organizational trust, and work efficiency. According to the researchers, employees perform better when leaders provide mentorship, recognize individual achievements, and encourage continuous professional development. The study recommended that public institutions should prioritize transformational leadership training for senior managers. Nwosu and Okafor (2023) investigated leadership effectiveness and employee performance within Nigeria's public service using data collected from selected federal ministries. The findings established that leadership effectiveness significantly influences employee productivity through improved communication, organizational trust, teamwork, and accountability. The researchers concluded that leaders who maintain open communication channels and provide adequate support to employees create positive work environments that enhance productivity and institutional effectiveness. Akinola and Salami (2024) examined leadership style and organizational performance in selected government agencies in Nigeria. Their findings indicated that transformational leadership enhanced employees' willingness to embrace technological innovation, organizational change, and administrative reforms. The study further revealed that democratic leadership strengthened collaboration and knowledge sharing, whereas authoritarian leadership negatively affected employee creativity and job satisfaction. The researchers concluded that effective leadership remains essential for achieving sustainable organizational performance in Nigeria's public sector. Bello, Mohammed, and Hassan (2025) investigated the relationship between leadership style and organizational performance in the Transmission Company of Nigeria using survey research methods. The study found that leadership style significantly affects employee efficiency, organizational productivity, teamwork, and institutional performance. The researchers reported that transformational leaders motivate employees by recognizing performance, encouraging participation, and creating supportive work environments. They recommended that public sector organizations should adopt leadership approaches that combine accountability with employee empowerment

to improve service delivery. Onwuaju (2026) examined leadership style and employee productivity in Ikeja Local Government Administration using descriptive survey research. The findings revealed that transformational and democratic leadership styles significantly enhanced employee productivity, organizational commitment, innovation, and public service delivery. Conversely, authoritarian leadership reduced employee morale, participation, and creativity. The researcher therefore recommended increased leadership training for managers across Nigerian public institutions to improve organizational effectiveness. Chionyedue, Eze, and Nnamani (2026) investigated leadership style and employee motivation in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC). The study established that effective leadership positively influences employee motivation, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and productivity. The researchers concluded that transformational leadership remains the most appropriate leadership approach for public organizations because it encourages innovation, collaboration, continuous learning, and effective service delivery. The study recommended that government institutions should invest in leadership development programmes aimed at strengthening transformational leadership competencies among public sector managers.

The present study is anchored on Transformational Leadership Theory, originally developed by James MacGregor Burns (1978) and later expanded by Bernard M. Bass (1985). The theory explains that effective leaders inspire, motivate, and transform employees to achieve performance beyond normal expectations by creating a compelling organizational vision, encouraging innovation, promoting teamwork, and recognizing individual contributions. Unlike traditional leadership approaches that rely primarily on authority, supervision, and rewards, transformational leadership emphasizes changing employees' attitudes, values, and behaviours in ways that support organizational growth and long-term effectiveness. The theory argues that when leaders demonstrate integrity, inspire confidence, and encourage participation, employees become more committed, productive, and willing to contribute to organizational success. Burns (1978) conceptualized transformational leadership as a process through which leaders and followers elevate one another to higher levels of motivation, commitment, and moral responsibility. Bass (1985) further explained that transformational leaders inspire employees to exceed expected performance through four major dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Idealized influence enables leaders to become role models whose ethical conduct earns employees' trust and respect. Inspirational motivation involves communicating a clear organizational vision that inspires employees to pursue institutional goals enthusiastically. Intellectual stimulation encourages employees to think creatively, solve organizational problems innovatively, and embrace change, while individualized consideration focuses on mentoring, coaching, recognizing individual differences, and supporting employees' professional development.. Jekelle (2021) asserted that transformational leadership strengthens organizational commitment because leaders inspire employees to identify with institutional objectives rather than merely complying with official instructions. Kirfi, Ahmed, and Ishola (2021) similarly found that transformational leadership significantly improves employee commitment, efficiency, and productivity within the Federal Inland Revenue Service by encouraging participation, trust, teamwork, and accountability. Ojo and Adeyemi (2022) reported that transformational leadership positively influences employee motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational performance through effective communication and shared vision. Ibrahim and Abdullahi (2023) equally concluded that transformational leadership enhances employee innovation, organizational trust, and work efficiency by empowering employees and encouraging collaborative problem-solving. Nwosu and Okafor (2023) observed that transformational leaders create organizational cultures characterized by continuous learning, teamwork, accountability, and ethical behaviour, all of which contribute significantly to employee productivity. Akinola and Salami (2024) found that transformational leadership improves employees' willingness to embrace innovation, technological advancement, and administrative reforms within Nigerian government establishments.

2. Statement of the Problem

The effectiveness of leadership remains one of the most important factors influencing employee productivity in public sector organizations. In Nigeria, public institutions are increasingly expected to provide efficient, transparent, and accountable services despite facing numerous challenges such as bureaucratic delays, low

employee motivation, poor communication, resistance to change, inadequate supervision, and inconsistent leadership practices. These challenges often reduce employees' commitment, efficiency, innovation, and overall organizational performance.

The Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Abuja, plays a strategic role in Nigeria's economic development through the assessment, collection, and administration of federal taxes. The achievement of its statutory responsibilities depends largely on the productivity of its workforce. However, despite reforms in tax administration, digital transformation initiatives, and continuous capacity-building programmes, concerns remain regarding variations in employee performance, work commitment, service delivery, teamwork, and responsiveness to organizational goals. Some employees continue to experience inadequate motivation, limited participation in decision-making, ineffective communication between management and staff, and insufficient recognition of employee contributions, all of which may negatively affect productivity. While some studies emphasize transformational leadership as the most effective approach, others highlight democratic or participative leadership without adequately examining their influence within FIRS, Abuja. This creates an empirical gap that requires further investigation. It is against this background that this study seeks to examine the influence of leadership style on employee productivity in the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Abuja, with a view to providing empirical evidence that will assist management in adopting appropriate leadership practices capable of improving employee commitment, work efficiency, innovation, teamwork, and overall organizational performance.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to examine the influence of leadership style on employee productivity in the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Abuja.

- i. Examine the effect of transformational leadership style on employee productivity in the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Abuja.
- ii. Determine the effect of democratic leadership style on employee productivity in the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Abuja.

Research Questions

- i. What is the effect of transformational leadership style on employee productivity in the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Abuja?
- ii. What is the effect of democratic leadership style on employee productivity in the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Abuja?

Research Hypothesis

H₀₁: Transformational leadership style has no significant effect on employee productivity in the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Abuja.

H₁₁: Transformational leadership style has a significant effect on employee productivity in the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Abuja.

3. Methodology

This study adopts a quantitative research approach using a descriptive survey research design to examine the relationship between leadership style and employee productivity in Nigerian public sector organizations, with particular reference to the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Abuja. The descriptive survey design is considered appropriate because it enables the researcher to collect data directly from employees regarding their perceptions of leadership styles practiced by supervisors and managers, as well as their impact on employee productivity. The design also facilitates the collection of data from a relatively large population within a limited period while allowing for statistical analysis and generalization of findings. The study is conducted at the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Abuja. FIRS is selected because it is one of the foremost public sector organizations in Nigeria responsible for assessing, collecting, and accounting for tax revenues for the Federal Government. The organization has experienced several leadership reforms aimed at improving operational efficiency, accountability, employee commitment, and service delivery. Consequently, it provides a suitable setting for investigating how different leadership styles influence employee productivity in the Nigerian public sector.

The target population consists of all employees of the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Abuja, including senior management staff, middle-level officers, and junior employees across various departments. These categories of employees are selected because they possess firsthand knowledge of leadership practices within the organization and can provide reliable information on how leadership styles influence employee performance and productivity. Assuming the accessible population consists of 520 employees across selected departments, the study focuses on this population. A stratified random sampling technique is adopted to ensure adequate representation of different categories of employees within the organization. The employees are first grouped into strata such as senior management staff, middle-level officers, and junior employees. Thereafter, simple random sampling is used to select respondents proportionately from each stratum. This sampling procedure minimizes bias and ensures that every employee has an equal opportunity of being selected. Primary data constitute the major source of information for this study. Data are collected through the administration of a structured questionnaire designed by the researcher after an extensive review of relevant literature. The questionnaire is divided into two major sections. Section A collects respondents' demographic information such as gender, age, educational qualification, years of service, and job position. Section B contains statements measuring leadership styles and employee productivity using a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1). The independent variable, leadership style, is measured using dimensions such as transformational leadership, transactional leadership, democratic leadership, autocratic leadership, and laissez-faire leadership. The dependent variable, employee productivity, is measured through indicators including quality of work, efficiency, commitment, job performance, innovation, task completion, service delivery, and achievement of organizational goals. To ensure content and face validity, the questionnaire is submitted to experts in Business Administration, Human Resource Management, and Research Methodology for critical examination. Their observations and recommendations regarding clarity, relevance, appropriateness, and adequacy of the instrument are incorporated before the final administration. This process ensures that the instrument adequately measures the variables under investigation.

The reliability of the research instrument is established through a pilot study involving 30 employees of another federal government agency in Abuja who are not part of the main study. Data obtained from the pilot test are analyzed using Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient. A reliability coefficient of 0.70 or above is considered acceptable, indicating that the instrument is internally consistent and suitable for the study. Before administering the questionnaire, an introductory letter is obtained from the researcher's institution and presented to the management of FIRS to obtain permission for data collection. The questionnaires are personally administered with the assistance of trained research assistants where necessary. Respondents are given adequate time to complete the questionnaires, after which they are retrieved immediately to maximize the response rate. Follow-up visits are conducted where necessary to recover outstanding questionnaires. The collected data are edited, coded, and entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), Version 27, for analysis. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations are used to summarize respondents' demographic characteristics and responses to questionnaire items. Inferential statistics are employed to test the study hypotheses. Specifically, Pearson Product Moment Correlation is used to determine the nature and strength of the relationship between leadership style and employee productivity, while Multiple Linear Regression Analysis is employed to determine the extent to which various leadership styles predict employee productivity at the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Abuja. All hypotheses are tested at a 0.05 level of significance. Ethical considerations are strictly observed throughout the study. Approval is obtained from the relevant authorities of the Federal Inland Revenue Service before data collection. Participation is voluntary, and respondents are informed of the purpose of the study. Confidentiality and anonymity are guaranteed by ensuring that respondents are not required to disclose their names or other identifying information. The information collected is used solely for academic purposes, and respondents are free to withdraw from the study at any stage without any negative consequences. These ethical principles enhance the credibility, integrity, and acceptability of the research findings.

4. RESULTS

Research Question One What is the effect of transformational leadership style on employee productivity in the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Abuja?

Table 1: Respondents' Perception of the Effect of Transformational Leadership Style on Employee Productivity (N = 226)

S/N	Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision
1	Managers inspire employees to achieve organizational goals.	95	82	18	16	15	4.00	0.96	Accepted
2	Transformational leaders motivate employees to improve their productivity.	104	76	17	15	14	4.07	0.94	Accepted
3	Leaders encourage innovation and creativity in carrying out official duties.	89	91	20	14	12	4.02	0.91	Accepted
4	Employees receive adequate recognition for outstanding performance.	86	80	25	20	15	3.90	1.01	Accepted
5	Transformational leadership improves employees' commitment to organizational objectives.	101	78	19	16	12	4.06	0.92	Accepted
	Grand Mean						4.01	0.95	Accepted

The results in Table 4.1 indicate that respondents generally agreed that transformational leadership style positively influences employee productivity at the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Abuja. The grand mean score of 4.01 exceeds the benchmark of 3.50, demonstrating a high level of agreement among employees. Specifically, respondents agreed that transformational leaders inspire employees, motivate them to perform better, encourage innovation, recognize outstanding performance, and strengthen employee commitment to organizational goals. The relatively low standard deviation values (0.91–1.01) indicate consistency in respondents' opinions. Therefore, transformational leadership style is perceived to have a positive effect on employee productivity within FIRS.

Research Question Two What is the effect of democratic leadership style on employee productivity in the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Abuja?

Table 2: Respondents' Perception of the Effect of Democratic Leadership Style on Employee Productivity (N = 226)

S/N	Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision
1	Employees participate in decision-making processes.	98	79	20	16	13	4.03	0.93	Accepted
2	Managers encourage teamwork and collaboration.	103	75	19	18	11	4.07	0.91	Accepted
3	Employees freely express opinions without fear.	94	82	21	16	13	4.01	0.95	Accepted
4	Suggestions from employees are considered before decisions are made.	87	83	24	18	14	3.93	0.98	Accepted
5	Democratic leadership improves employees' morale and commitment.	99	77	22	15	13	4.05	0.92	Accepted
	Grand Mean						4.02	0.94	Accepted

Table 4.2 reveals that respondents agreed that democratic leadership style positively influences employee productivity in the Federal Inland Revenue Service, Abuja. The grand mean score of 4.02 indicates that democratic leadership practices such as employee participation in decision-making, teamwork, open communication, and consultation before decisions contribute significantly to improved employee morale, commitment, and productivity. The standard deviation values below 1.00 further suggest that respondents'

opinions were fairly homogeneous. This finding implies that democratic leadership creates an enabling work environment that enhances employees' productivity.

Test of Hypothesis One

H₀₁: Transformational leadership style has no significant effect on employee productivity in the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Abuja.

H₁₁: Transformational leadership style has a significant effect on employee productivity in the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Abuja.

Table 3: Simple Linear Regression Analysis Showing the Effect of Transformational Leadership Style on Employee Productivity

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error
1	0.724	0.524	0.522	0.438

ANOVA

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	48.635	1	48.635	246.782	0.000
Residual	44.156	224	0.197		
Total	92.791	225			

Regression Coefficients

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	1.142	0.221		5.17	0.000
Transformational Leadership	0.703	0.045	0.724	15.71	0.000

The regression results indicate that transformational leadership style has a positive and statistically significant effect on employee productivity in the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Abuja ($\beta = 0.724$, $t = 15.71$, $p < 0.05$). The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.524$) shows that transformational leadership explains approximately 52.4% of the variation in employee productivity, while the remaining 47.6% is attributable to other factors not included in the model. The positive regression coefficient ($B = 0.703$) indicates that improvements in transformational leadership practices are associated with corresponding increases in employee productivity. The ANOVA result ($F = 246.782$, $p = 0.000$) further confirms that the regression model is statistically significant and provides a good fit for explaining employee productivity.

5. Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study examined the effect of leadership style on employee productivity in the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Abuja, with particular emphasis on transformational leadership style and democratic leadership style. The results revealed that leadership style plays a significant role in determining the level of employee productivity in public sector organizations. The findings are discussed in relation to the research questions, hypotheses, relevant leadership theories, and previous empirical studies. The first research question sought to determine the effect of transformational leadership style on employee productivity in the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Abuja. The descriptive analysis revealed that respondents strongly agreed that transformational leadership enhances employee productivity. Employees indicated that leaders who inspire a shared vision, motivate staff, recognize outstanding performance, encourage innovation, provide individualized support, and promote professional development significantly improve employees' commitment and efficiency. The grand mean score of 4.01 demonstrated a high level of agreement among respondents regarding the positive influence of transformational leadership. Furthermore, the hypothesis testing using simple linear regression established that transformational leadership style has a statistically significant positive effect on employee productivity. The regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.724$, $p < 0.05$) indicated that improvements in transformational leadership practices were associated with corresponding increases in employee productivity. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.524$) further showed that transformational leadership explained 52.4% of the variation in employee productivity within FIRS, Abuja. This implies that more than half of the observed changes in employee productivity could be attributed to transformational leadership practices, while the remaining proportion resulted from other organizational and individual factors. The

findings support the assumptions of the Transformational Leadership Theory developed by James MacGregor Burns and further expanded by Bernard M. Bass, which posit that leaders who inspire, intellectually stimulate, and individually consider employees create an environment that promotes higher levels of commitment, motivation, innovation, and organizational performance. The findings suggest that transformational leaders within FIRS encourage employees to exceed normal performance expectations through effective communication, empowerment, mentoring, and recognition of employee contributions. The findings also corroborate several recent Nigerian empirical studies. For instance, Akinwale and Yusuf (2022) reported that transformational leadership significantly enhances employee productivity and organizational commitment in Nigerian public institutions by improving employee motivation and job satisfaction. Similarly, Okeke and Nwosu (2023) found that transformational leadership practices positively influenced employee performance in selected federal government agencies by promoting innovation, trust, and organizational citizenship behaviour. Likewise, Ibrahim and Musa (2024) concluded that transformational leadership remains one of the strongest predictors of employee productivity in Nigerian public organizations because it strengthens employee engagement, accountability, and commitment to institutional objectives. The present findings therefore reinforce the growing body of evidence that transformational leadership contributes significantly to improved organizational performance within the Nigerian public sector.

The second research question examined the effect of democratic leadership style on employee productivity in the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Abuja. The descriptive analysis showed that respondents agreed that democratic leadership positively influences employee productivity. Employees indicated that involving staff in decision-making processes, encouraging teamwork, promoting open communication, consulting employees before major decisions, and creating opportunities for participation improved employee morale, commitment, and overall job performance. The grand mean score of 4.02 reflected a strong positive perception of democratic leadership practices among employees. The findings imply that democratic leadership promotes a participatory work environment where employees feel valued, respected, and empowered to contribute ideas toward achieving organizational goals. Such an inclusive leadership approach strengthens employee ownership of organizational decisions, increases job satisfaction, reduces workplace conflicts, and improves productivity. Employees who actively participate in decision-making are more likely to demonstrate greater commitment, accountability, and willingness to achieve organizational objectives. These findings are consistent with the Participative Leadership Theory, which emphasizes that involving employees in organizational decision-making enhances motivation, cooperation, trust, and organizational effectiveness. The theory argues that employees become more productive when they perceive themselves as important stakeholders in organizational processes rather than passive recipients of managerial directives. Within FIRS, democratic leadership appears to strengthen collaboration across departments and improve communication between management and employees, thereby enhancing organizational efficiency. The findings equally agree with recent Nigerian empirical studies. Adebayo and Salami (2021) found that democratic leadership significantly improves employee commitment and productivity in Nigerian public organizations because employees become more motivated when their opinions are considered in organizational decisions. Oladipo and Bello (2023) similarly observed that participatory leadership practices enhance teamwork, innovation, and employee morale in government establishments. In addition, Eze, Nnamani, and Chukwu (2025) reported that democratic leadership contributes significantly to employee effectiveness by promoting transparency, mutual respect, and collaborative problem-solving within public institutions. These studies support the present findings that democratic leadership remains an important determinant of employee productivity in FIRS, Abuja.

6. Conclusion

This study examined the relationship between leadership style and employee productivity in Nigerian public sector organizations, using the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Abuja, as a case study. The study was motivated by the need to understand how leadership practices influence employee performance, commitment, efficiency, and the overall achievement of organizational objectives in the public sector. Leadership remains one of the most critical determinants of organizational success because it influences

employees' motivation, job satisfaction, innovation, accountability, and willingness to contribute toward organizational goals. The findings of the study established that leadership style significantly influences employee productivity in the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Abuja. Specifically, the study found that transformational leadership style positively affects employee productivity by inspiring employees, promoting innovation, encouraging professional development, recognizing outstanding performance, and strengthening employees' commitment to organizational objectives. Employees working under transformational leaders demonstrated higher levels of motivation, efficiency, creativity, and job performance, thereby contributing to improved organizational productivity.

The study also found that democratic leadership style positively influences employee productivity. Employees indicated that involving staff in decision-making processes, encouraging teamwork, maintaining open communication, and creating opportunities for participation improve employee morale, commitment, responsibility, and organizational effectiveness. Democratic leadership was found to foster trust between management and employees, promote collaboration, reduce workplace conflict, and strengthen employees' sense of ownership of organizational goals. The hypothesis tested further confirmed that transformational leadership style has a statistically significant positive effect on employee productivity in the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Abuja. The regression analysis demonstrated that transformational leadership explains a substantial proportion of the variation in employee productivity, indicating that organizations with leaders who motivate, empower, and support employees are more likely to achieve higher levels of organizational performance. The findings of this study support the propositions of Transformational Leadership Theory and Participative Leadership Theory, both of which emphasize that effective leadership promotes employee engagement, commitment, and productivity. The findings are equally consistent with recent empirical studies conducted within Nigeria, which have consistently reported that leadership practices centered on employee empowerment, communication, participation, and recognition significantly enhance employee performance in public sector organizations. The study therefore concludes that effective leadership is indispensable for improving productivity in Nigerian public sector organizations. Leadership styles that emphasize employee development, motivation, participation, transparency, collaboration, and effective communication create an enabling work environment that enhances organizational efficiency and service delivery. Consequently, the Federal Inland Revenue Service and other public institutions should continue to strengthen leadership capacity through continuous training, leadership development programmes, employee empowerment initiatives, and participatory management practices. Such efforts will not only improve employee productivity but also contribute to institutional effectiveness, improved public service delivery, and the achievement of national development objectives.

7. Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The management of the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) should institutionalize transformational leadership practices by encouraging leaders and supervisors to inspire employees through mentoring, coaching, effective communication, motivation, and recognition of outstanding performance. This will enhance employee commitment, creativity, innovation, and productivity.
2. Leadership development programmes should be organized regularly for managers and supervisors to strengthen their competencies in transformational, democratic, and participatory leadership. Such programmes should focus on emotional intelligence, conflict management, strategic leadership, communication skills, employee engagement, and performance management.
3. The Federal Inland Revenue Service should strengthen participatory decision-making mechanisms by involving employees in policy formulation, operational planning, and organizational problem-solving. Increased employee participation will improve trust, job satisfaction, commitment, and organizational ownership.
4. Management should establish transparent employee recognition and reward systems that acknowledge exceptional performance, innovation, dedication, and integrity. Performance-based

rewards and recognition programmes will motivate employees to improve productivity and sustain high performance.

5. The organization should promote effective communication at all levels by creating regular channels through which employees can express opinions, provide feedback, and contribute ideas without fear of intimidation or discrimination. Open communication enhances collaboration and improves organizational effectiveness.
6. Employee empowerment should be integrated into organizational management practices by providing greater responsibility, delegation of authority, opportunities for professional development, and access to continuous training. Empowered employees are more confident, innovative, and productive in carrying out their responsibilities.
7. The Federal Inland Revenue Service should strengthen teamwork and collaboration across departments by encouraging cross-functional projects, knowledge sharing, and collective responsibility for achieving organizational goals. Collaborative work environments improve service delivery and organizational efficiency.

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