Transformational Leadership Style and Teacher Job Satisfaction in Public Primary Schools in Chiakariga Sub-County, Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya.

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ABSTRACT

Teacher job satisfaction remains a persistent concern despite ongoing efforts to improve the quality of education. Leadership exercised by heads of institutions plays a critical role in shaping teachers' commitment, and the overall job satisfaction. Transformational leadership emphasizes on a shared vision, individualized support and professional growth. This style fosters positive teacher attitudes and improves school performance. However, the ineffective application of transformational leadership style has contributed to low teacher morale and diminished commitment to teaching in public primary schools. Thus, the study sought to determine the effects of transformational leadership style on teacher job satisfaction in Public primary schools in Chiakariga Sub-County, Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya. The study was anchored on Job Satisfaction and Path Goal theory. The study adopted the descriptive survey design. Simple random sampling was used to select 215 teachers and purposive sampling was used to select 30 heads of institutions (HoI's) and 3 Curriculum Support Officers (CSO's). Data was collected using structured questionnaires administered to HoI's and teachers, as well as an interview guide for the CSO's. The quantitative data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 30, which produced frequencies and percentages tables. The qualitative data was classified based on themes. The study found that, head of institutions lacked transformational leadership style because they did not have clear and compelling vision for the schools. They also lacked plans recognizing teacher's achievements which affected job satisfaction. The study concluded that, HoI's should cultivate a supportive environment where teachers can freely voice their concerns and have a sense of belonging which will increase instructors' job happiness. The study recommended the need to develop strategies to deal with the needs of those teachers who experience less job satisfaction. It is expected that high levels of satisfaction will exert on student learning and raise academic performance.

Keywords: Transformational leadership, Job Satisfaction, Motivation and Shared Vision

INTRODUCTION

Teacher job satisfaction has become an important concern for education systems worldwide because it influences teacher commitment, instructional effectiveness, learner achievement, and staff retention. Contemporary educational reforms, increasing workloads, changing curricular demands, and growing accountability have heightened the need for school leadership approaches that foster supportive working environments for teachers (Badaruddin et al., 2025). Among the various leadership approaches, transformational leadership has attracted considerable attention due to its emphasis on developing a shared vision, providing individualized support, intellectually stimulating teachers, and recognizing professional achievements. Such leadership practices have been associated with improved teacher motivation, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction across different educational contexts (Panagopolous & Anastasiou, 2024).

Despite growing international evidence on the positive influence of transformational leadership, its application and effectiveness within Kenyan public primary schools remain insufficiently understood. Existing studies

have largely examined school leadership in general, with limited attention given to how transformational leadership practices influence teachers' job satisfaction, particularly in rural public primary schools. The empirical evidence to guide school leadership practice and policy in this context remains limited. This study therefore examined the influence of transformational leadership style on teacher job satisfaction in public primary schools in Chiakariga Sub-County, Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya. The findings contribute to the growing body of knowledge on educational leadership by providing context-specific evidence that can inform leadership development programmes and strategies aimed at enhancing teacher job satisfaction and improving school effectiveness.

Teacher job satisfaction has increasingly become a central concern in educational leadership because of its influence on teacher motivation, organizational commitment, instructional effectiveness, learner achievement, and teacher retention. Among the leadership approaches that have received considerable attention in educational research, transformational leadership has consistently been associated with positive organizational and educational outcomes. Transformational leaders inspire teachers through a shared vision, provide individualized support, stimulate professional growth, encourage innovation, and recognize teachers' contributions. Such leadership practices create a positive school climate that enhances teachers' sense of belonging, professional fulfilment, and overall job satisfaction (Northouse, 2021).

Evidence from developed countries consistently demonstrates that transformational leadership contributes positively to teacher job satisfaction. In the United States, Bramwell (2024) established that although transformational leadership did not directly influence staff turnover or student achievement, it indirectly improved school outcomes by enhancing teacher job satisfaction, which subsequently reduced staff turnover and strengthened school performance. Panagopoulos, Karamanis, and Anastasiou (2024), in a study involving primary school teachers in Greece, reported a strong positive relationship between transformational leadership and teacher job satisfaction ($r = 0.785$, $p < .001$). Their study established that while transactional leadership also contributed positively to teacher satisfaction, transformational leadership exerted the strongest influence. Conversely, passive laissez-faire leadership was negatively associated with all dimensions of teacher job satisfaction. Comparable findings have been reported in Romania (Clipa et al., 2025) and Albania (Haxhihyseni et al., 2023), where school leaders who practiced transformational leadership significantly enhanced teachers' motivation, professional commitment, and overall satisfaction.

Similar trends have been observed across African education systems. In Ghana, Esia-Donkoh (2025) found that both tutors and institutional leaders perceived transformational leadership as the leadership approach that most effectively promoted staff morale, motivation, and professional fulfilment. Likewise, Mekolle (2024) established a strong positive relationship between transformational leadership and teacher commitment in Cameroon, while Adan (2025) identified transformational leadership as the strongest predictor of teacher job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Somalia. In Rwanda, Masengesho and Ndagijimana (2025) demonstrated that leadership practices emphasizing a clear school vision and instructional support significantly enhanced teacher performance, whereas Meney (2024) reported that transformational leadership positively influenced teachers' job satisfaction in Tanzanian secondary schools. Collectively, these studies suggest that school leaders who articulate a clear vision, support professional development, recognize teachers' contributions, and encourage collaborative decision-making are more likely to foster satisfied, motivated, and committed teachers.

Despite the consistency of these findings, several research gaps remain evident. Most existing studies have been conducted outside Kenya in educational systems that differ considerably in policy frameworks, school governance structures, and teacher management practices. The majority of the studies relied predominantly on quantitative cross-sectional survey designs and self-reported questionnaires, limiting a deeper understanding of teachers' lived experiences and restricting causal interpretation. Many studies examined transformational leadership alongside other leadership styles or focused on related constructs such as teacher commitment, motivation, organizational performance, or student achievement rather than teacher job satisfaction itself. Relatively few studies have specifically focused on public primary schools, where leadership practices directly shape teachers' daily working environments and professional experiences.

Although previous studies provide substantial evidence that transformational leadership positively influences teacher job satisfaction, empirical evidence from Kenyan public primary schools remains limited. The unique administrative, socio-economic, and institutional characteristics of public primary schools in Kenya necessitate context-specific evidence to guide educational leadership practice and policy. This study sought to examine the influence of transformational leadership style on teacher job satisfaction. in public primary schools in Chiakariga Sub-County, Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya. The findings are expected to contribute to educational leadership literature while providing evidence that may inform leadership development programmes aimed at improving teacher job satisfaction and strengthening school effectiveness.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Teacher job satisfaction remains a persistent concern despite ongoing efforts to improve the quality of education. Leadership exercised by heads of institutions plays a critical role in shaping teachers' commitment, and the overall job satisfaction. Transformational leadership emphasizes on a shared vision, individualized support and professional growth. This style fosters positive teacher attitudes and improves school performance. However, the ineffective application of transformational leadership style has contributed to low teacher morale and diminished commitment to teaching in public primary schools. Thus, the study sought to determine the effects of transformational leadership style on teacher job satisfaction in Public primary schools in Chiakariga Sub-County, Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya.

1.2 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following question:

i. What is the relationship between heads of institutions' transformational leadership practices and teacher job satisfaction in public primary schools in Chiakariga Sub-County, Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya??

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was guided by two theories, job satisfaction theory and Path-Goal Theory developed by Robert House. Job Satisfaction Theory was proposed by Edwin Locke in 1976. The theory explains job satisfaction as the difference between what employees expect from their jobs and what they actually experience in the workplace (Neuhoff, 2023). This study was guided too by the Path-Goal Theory developed by Robert House (1970) and later refined by House (1996). The theory explains that leaders influence followers' motivation, satisfaction and performance by clarifying goals, removing obstacles to goal attainment and providing the necessary support to help followers achieve desired outcomes.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study encountered the following limitations.

i. It was conducted in public primary schools in Chiakariga Sub-County, Tharaka Nithi County. Therefore, the findings may not be generalized to all public primary schools in Kenya because schools in other regions may operate under different conditions.

ii. The study relied partly on questionnaire responses from teachers and heads of institutions. These responses may have been affected by personal opinions or the desire to provide socially acceptable answers. The inclusion of interviews with Curriculum Support Officers provided additional perspectives on transformational leadership and teacher job satisfaction.

iii. The descriptive survey design identified patterns in the responses but could not establish cause-and-effect relationships between transformational leadership and teacher job satisfaction. The findings should therefore be interpreted in relation to the study context and design.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design to examine the influence of transformational leadership style on teacher job satisfaction in public primary schools in Chiakariga Sub-County, Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya.

4.1 Population of the study

The target population comprised teachers, Heads of Institutions (HoIs), and Curriculum Support Officers (CSOs) from public primary schools within the sub-county. Simple random sampling was used to select 215 teachers, while purposive sampling was employed to select 30 Heads of Institutions and 3 Curriculum Support Officers based on their administrative responsibilities and knowledge of school leadership practices.

4.2 Research Instruments

Data were collected using structured questionnaires administered to teachers and Heads of Institutions, while Curriculum Support Officers participated in semi-structured interviews to provide complementary qualitative information. Prior to the main study, the research instruments were subjected to validity checks through expert review and reliability testing using Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

4.3 Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 30 to generate descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages. Qualitative data obtained from the interviews were transcribed, organized into themes, and integrated with the quantitative findings to enrich interpretation of the results.

4.4 Reliability of Research Instruments

Reliability analysis was conducted to determine the internal consistency of the research instruments. Cronbach's alpha was calculated using SPSS version 30. The analysis produced a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.922 for the heads of institutions' job satisfaction instrument and 0.941 for the teachers' job satisfaction instrument. These values were above the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70, indicating high internal consistency of the instruments. Therefore, the instruments demonstrated high internal consistency and were considered reliable for the study.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study sought to examine the effects of heads of institutions' transformational leadership style on teacher job satisfaction in Public primary schools in Chiakariga Sub-County. The section presents data obtained from teachers' questionnaires and HoI's questionnaires, and interview schedules. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequencies and percentages. Qualitative data obtained from interviews was organized into themes and used to support and triangulate the quantitative findings

5.1 Response Rate

A total of 245 questionnaires were distributed to heads of institutions and teachers in public primary schools. Of these, 205 were completed and returned, giving a questionnaire response rate of 83.67%, approximately 84%. In addition, all three planned interviews with Curriculum Support Officers (CSOs) were conducted, representing a 100% interview participation rate. The questionnaire response rate was considered adequate for data analysis and reporting. According to Bryman (2016), response rates of 50% and above are generally considered adequate for analysis and reporting.

5.2 Findings on the Level of Teacher Job Satisfaction

Teacher's job satisfaction was included to examine the impact of the study dependent valuable. This section sought to examine the extent to which the respondents agreed or disagreed with statements detailing on

teacher job satisfaction in public primary schools in Chiakariga Sub-County. Different sets of questions were anchored on a five-point Likert scale with choices ranging from Scale: Strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). The scale was constructed in such a way that higher scores indicated higher levels of job satisfaction among primary school teachers. The Likert scores obtained are presented in Table 1 and 2.

Table 1: Teachers findings on Job Satisfaction

Teachers Statements on Job Satisfaction	**SD**	**D**	**U**	**A**	**SA**
	F (%)	**F (%)**	**F (%)**	**F (%)**	**F (%)**
My school administrators organize timely access to professional development for teachers.	41(23)	31(17)	9(5)	61(34)	38(21)
There is adequate backing from school administrators in managing learners' discipline and the provision of learning materials.	43(23.9)	33(18.2)	13(7.9)	41(22.5)	50(27.5)
My school administrators monitor our safety in the school environment.	32(17.9)	29(16.3)	8(4.3)	54(29.9)	57(31.6)
Duty supervision by our school administrators creates pressure and tension on us.	54(30)	56(31)	7(4)	27(15)	36(20)
I feel valued and recognized for my professional contributions within the school.	59(32.5)	48(26.4)	12(6.7)	31(17.5)	30(16.9)
There is freedom to organize and design our lessons and teaching methodologies in my school.	35(19.5)	52 (29)	12(6.5)	45(25)	36(20)

The findings presented in Table 1 show varied perceptions among teachers regarding the administrative conditions associated with their job satisfaction. Regarding access to professional development, 34.0% of the respondents agreed and 21.0% strongly agreed that school administrators organized timely access to professional development opportunities. However, 23.0% strongly disagreed and 17.0% disagreed with the statement, while 9.0% were undecided. This indicates that although some teachers had access to professional development opportunities, such opportunities were not consistently available across the schools. Regarding administrative support in managing learner discipline and provision of learning materials 27.5% of the respondents strongly agreed and 22.5% agreed that adequate support was provided, while 23.9% strongly disagreed and 18.2% disagreed. The responses indicate that teachers had varied experiences concerning the adequacy of administrative support in dealing with learner discipline and accessing teaching and learning resources. The findings also agree with Wu (2025), who reported generally low job satisfaction among teachers, while contrasting with Tasnim (2019), who found that teachers were generally satisfied and willing to remain in their schools, partly because of the leadership styles adopted by heads of institutions. The difference may be attributed to variations in school contexts and leadership practices.

The findings show relatively positive perceptions regarding safety in the school environment. A total of 57 (31.6%) of the respondents strongly agreed and 54 (29.9%) agreed that school administrators monitored their safety, compared with 32 (17.9%) who strongly disagreed and 29 (16.3%) who disagreed. This indicates that a majority of teachers perceived their school administrators as making efforts to provide a safe working environment. However, the findings regarding duty supervision show mixed responses. While 56 (31%) of the respondents disagreed and 54 (30%) strongly disagreed that duty supervision created pressure and tension, 36 (20%) strongly agreed and 27 (15%) agreed with the statement. The findings also indicate relatively low perceptions of being valued and recognized for professional contributions. A total of 59 (32.5%) of the respondents strongly disagreed and 48 (26.4%) disagreed that they felt valued and recognized for their professional contributions, while 17.5% agreed and 30 (16.9%) strongly agreed.

The findings show mixed perceptions regarding teachers' freedom to organize and design lessons and teaching methodologies. Although 45 (25%) agreed and 36 (20%) strongly agreed that they had such freedom, 52 (29%) disagreed and 35 (19.5%) strongly disagreed. The findings differ from some studies that reported generally positive levels of teacher satisfaction, suggesting that job satisfaction may vary according to institutional and

contextual conditions. The mixed evidence regarding the influence of teachers' educational characteristics, as reported by Romero, Zullo and Covos (2024) and Ghasemi (2025), suggests that leadership and workplace conditions may interact with individual characteristics in shaping job satisfaction. Table 2 shows the Heads of Institution Findings on Teacher Job Satisfaction

Table 2: Heads of Institution Findings on Teacher Job Satisfaction

Heads of Institution Statements on Teacher Job Satisfaction	SD	D	U	A	SA
	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)
I monitor respectful teacher relationship with local community	8(31)	7(28)	1(5)	4 (16)	5(20)
There is reasonable workload manageability for teachers such as appropriate non-teaching duties.	8(28)	6(24)	2 (7)	4(19)	5(22)
I organize timely rewards and recognition for extra duties for teachers.	8(33)	5(18.5)	8(34.6)	2(7.2)	2(6.7)
I plan adequate strategies to manage learners discipline and provision of learning materials to ensure comfort ability of teachers.	6(23.5)	9(34.0)	3(13.4)	5(19.4)	2(9.7)
I monitor teacher safety in school environment.	10(38.1)	11(44.8)	2 (9.1)	1 (5.3)	1(2.7)

The findings presented in Table 2 show varied responses from Heads of Institutions (HOIs) regarding practices associated with teacher job satisfaction in public primary schools in Chiakariga Sub-County. Regarding monitoring respectful teacher relationships with the local community, 8 (31%) of the respondents strongly disagreed and 7 (28%) disagreed that they monitored such relationships. In contrast, 4 (16%) agreed and 5 (20%) strongly agreed, while 1 (5%) was undecided. The findings indicate that monitoring respectful relationships between teachers and the local community was not consistently reported among the Heads of Institutions. Regarding workload manageability, 8 (28%) HOIs strongly disagreed and 6 (24%) disagreed that there was reasonable workload manageability for teachers, including appropriate non-teaching duties. However, 4 (19%) agreed and 5 (22%) strongly agreed, while 2 (7%) were undecided. The findings agree with Sari (2024) and Shann (2022), who observed that job satisfaction is influenced by teachers' perceptions, personal needs, values and expectations, while Gaziel (2019) established a positive relationship between leadership style and teacher job satisfaction.

A total of 8 (33%) respondents strongly disagreed and 5 (18.5%) disagreed that they organized timely rewards and recognition for extra duties. Additionally, 8 (34.6%) were undecided, while only 2 (7.2%) agreed and 2 (6.7%) strongly agreed. This indicates that timely recognition and rewards for extra duties were not consistently practiced, with a particularly large proportion of HOIs remaining undecided on the issue. Regarding strategies for managing learner discipline and providing learning materials, 6 (23.5%) of the respondents strongly disagreed and 9 (34.0%) disagreed that they planned adequate strategies to ensure teachers' comfort. On the other hand, 5 (19.4%) agreed and 2 (9.7%) strongly agreed, while 3 (13.4%) were undecided. A total of 10 (38.1%) of the respondents strongly disagreed and 11 (44.8%) disagreed that they monitored teacher safety. Only 1 (5.3%) agreed and 1 (2.7%) strongly agreed, while 2 (9.1%) were undecided. The findings indicate that a majority of HOIs did not consider the strategies for managing learner discipline and provision of learning materials to be adequate. Johnson and Holdaway (2024) and Graham and Mesner (2020) associated high work demands, occupational stress and unfavourable working conditions with teacher dissatisfaction and attrition. McCormick and De Nobile (2025) found that leadership style, recognition and positive relationships within the school environment significantly influence teacher job satisfaction. This is consistent with the present study, where teachers reported concerns regarding professional development, administrative support, recognition, workload and freedom in performing their teaching responsibilities.

The interview findings from the three Curriculum Support Officers (CSOs) provided insight into the factors influencing teacher job satisfaction in public primary schools in Chiakariga Sub-County. The CSOs generally

acknowledged that teachers remained committed to their work despite challenging working conditions, but indicated that commitment did not necessarily imply high job satisfaction. CSO 1 observed that:

> *Teachers remain dedicated to teaching despite the difficult working conditions experienced in the area but the teachers continue performing their duties largely because of professional ethics rather than satisfaction with their jobs.*

CSO 2 reported that some schools experienced inadequate staffrooms, overcrowded classrooms and insufficient learning facilities, which affected teacher morale. These observations suggest that the conditions under which teachers perform their duties may influence their morale and satisfaction with their work. CSO 3 indicated that:

> *Teachers express concerns regarding remuneration, allowances and perceived inequities in promotions. Although salary improvements have occurred through Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs), some teachers remain dissatisfied with their remuneration and related benefits.*

The concern about perceived inequalities in promotion suggests that teachers' satisfaction is influenced not only by their immediate school environment but also by broader employment and career-related conditions. The CSOs also identified challenges faced by Heads of Institutions in providing an environment that supports teacher satisfaction. CSO 1 pointed to delayed or insufficient government capitation, rising operational costs and difficulties in maintaining school infrastructure and learning resources. CSO 2 identified teacher shortages, absenteeism and the challenge of balancing workloads among teachers. CSO 3 highlighted difficulties in managing relationships with parents, Boards of Management and community leaders, as well as resolving complaints and conflicts among stakeholders. These challenges may constrain the ability of Heads of Institutions to adequately support teachers and provide favorable working conditions.

5.3 Transformational Leadership Style and Teacher Job Satisfaction

The researcher sought to find out the extent to which the respondents agreed or disagreed with statements on transformational leadership style and teacher job satisfaction **in** public primary schools in Chiakariga Sub-County. Different sets of questions were anchored on a five-point Likert scale with choices ranging from Scale: Strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). The scale was constructed in such a way that higher scores indicated higher levels of transformational leadership style among primary school teachers. The Likert scores obtained are presented in Table 3 and 4 for the teachers and HOI'S respectively.

Table 3: Teachers' findings on transformational leadership style

Teachers' statements on transformational leadership style (N = 180)	**SD**	**D**	**U**	**A**	**SA**
	F (%)	**F (%)**	**F (%)**	**F (%)**	**F (%)**
The HoI has a clear, compelling and shared vision and mission for the school.	31 (17.1)	30 (16.7)	25 (14.0)	51 (28.5)	43 (23.7)
The HoI organizes and demonstrates exemplary conduct that serves as a role model for staff and learners.	53 (29.5)	41 (22.7)	14 (7.9)	44 (24.7)	27 (15.2)
The HoI intellectually supervises staff to critically evaluate existing practices and explore innovative solutions.	41 (22.8)	42 (23.5)	23 (12.6)	44 (24.7)	30 (16.4)
The HoI has plans for supporting and recognizing teachers' achievements.	48 (26.7)	36 (20.1)	6 (3.3)	35 (19.6)	54 (30.3)
The HoI monitors individual teachers' professional growth and development.	23 (12.6)	21 (11.3)	8 (4.8)	68 (37.7)	60 (33.6)

The HoI plans mentorship and constructive guidance to enhance my professional growth.	28 (15.7)	12 (6.8)	4 (2.0)	57 (31.6)	87 (48.2)
The HoI ensures teachers have high morale and feel valued and professionally supported.	33 (18.5)	30 (16.4)	12 (6.6)	47 (26.1)	58 (32.4)

The findings presented in Table 3 indicate **mixed perceptions among respondents regarding the application of transformational leadership style by Heads of Institutions (HoIs)**. Regarding the presence of a clear, compelling and shared vision and mission, 51 (28.5%) of the respondents agreed and 43 (23.7%) strongly agreed, while 31 (17.1%) strongly disagreed, 30 (16.7%) disagreed and 25 (14.0%) were undecided. The positive responses indicate that a considerable proportion of respondents experienced some degree of visionary leadership. This is consistent with **Masengesho and Ndagijimana (2025)**, who found that a clear school vision was strongly associated with teacher performance in primary schools in Rwanda. Regarding exemplary conduct and role modelling, 53 (29.5%) of the respondents strongly disagreed and 41 (22.7%) disagreed that HoIs demonstrated exemplary conduct, while 44 (24.7%) agreed, 27 (15.2%) strongly agreed and 14 (7.9%) were undecided. Similarly, perceptions regarding intellectual supervision were divided, with 41 (22.8%) strongly disagreeing and 42 (23.5%) disagreeing that HoIs encouraged critical evaluation of existing practices and innovative solutions, compared with 44 (24.7%) who agreed, 30 (16.4%) who strongly agreed and 23 (12.6%) who were undecided. The relatively weak perception of role modelling and intellectual stimulation contrasts with the transformational leadership practices reported by **Esia-Donkoh (2025)** in Ghana, where transformational leadership was associated with enhanced morale, motivation and professional fulfilment.

The findings on recognition and professional support were comparatively more positive, although they remained mixed. On support and recognition of teachers' achievements, 54 (30.3%) of the respondents strongly agreed and 35 (19.6%) agreed, while 48 (26.7%) strongly disagreed, 36 (20.1%) disagreed and 6 (3.3%) were undecided. A stronger positive pattern was observed regarding professional growth, where 68 (37.7%) agreed and 60 (33.6%) strongly agreed that HoIs monitored their professional growth and development, while 23 (12.6%) strongly disagreed, 21 (11.3%) disagreed and 8 (4.8%) were undecided. 57 (31.6%) agreed and 87 (48.2%) strongly agreed that HoIs planned mentorship and constructive guidance, compared with 28 (15.7%) who strongly disagreed, 12 (6.8%) who disagreed and 4 (2.0%) who were undecided. The relatively positive perception of mentorship and professional development is consistent with **Clipa, Mâţă and Suhan (2025)** and **Haxhihyseni, Tirana and de Carvalho (2023),** who found positive associations between transformational leadership and teacher job satisfaction.

The findings on morale and professional support were also generally positive, with 47 (26.1%) agreeing and 58 (32.4%) strongly agreeing that HoIs ensured teachers had high morale and felt valued and professionally supported, compared with 33 (18.5%) who strongly disagreed, 30 (16.4%) who disagreed and 12 (6.6%) who were undecided. This pattern is consistent with **Bramwell (2024),** who found that transformational leadership was associated with increased staff job satisfaction, reduced turnover and improved school outcomes through its effect on staff satisfaction.

Table 4: Heads of Institutions' findings on transformational leadership style

Heads of Institutions' statements on transformational leadership style (n = 25)	**SD** **F (%)**	**D** **F (%)**	**U** **F (%)**	**A** **F (%)**	**SA** **F (%)**
I have a clear, compelling and shared vision for the school.	9 (35.3)	7 (31.4)	9 (33.3)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
I organize and demonstrate exemplary conduct that serves as a role model for staff and learners.	12(48.4)	8 (30.1)	5 (21.5)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
I support and supervise staff to critically evaluate their practices and explore innovative solutions.	10 41.0)	9 (35.3)	3 (10.1)	2 (6.3)	2 (7.3)

I support and recognize the achievements of my teachers.	13 (52.2)	3 (13.4)	2 (8.0)	4 (15.1)	3 (11.3)
I empower teachers to be actively involved in professional growth.	10 (44.8)	9 (38.1)	1 (2.7)	2 (5.3)	3 (9.1)
I ensure teachers have high morale and feel valued and professionally supported.	9 (34.0)	6 (23.5)	2 (9.7)	3 (13.4)	5 (19.4)

The findings in Table 4 indicate that respondents who were HoIs reported **limited application of several core transformational leadership practices**. Regarding having a clear, compelling and shared vision for the school, 9 (35.3%) strongly disagreed, 7 (31.4%) disagreed and 9 (33.3%) were undecided, while none agreed or strongly agreed. Similarly, 12 (48.4%) strongly disagreed and 8 (30.1%) disagreed that they demonstrated exemplary conduct that served as a role model, while 5 (21.5%) were undecided and none agreed or strongly agreed. On intellectual stimulation, 10 (41.0%) strongly disagreed and 9 (35.3%) disagreed that they supported and supervised staff to critically evaluate their practices and explore innovative solutions, while 3 (10.1%) were undecided, 2 (6.3%) agreed and 2 (7.3%) strongly agreed. The relatively limited endorsement of these practices differs from **Masengesho and Ndagijimana (2025),** whose findings showed that clear school vision was strongly related to teacher performance, and from **Haxhihyseni et al. (2023),** who found transformational leadership to be the most commonly practiced leadership style among school heads and positively related to teacher job satisfaction and motivation.

A similar pattern was observed in relation to teacher recognition and professional growth. A majority of the respondents, 13 (52.2%), strongly disagreed and 3 (13.4%) disagreed that they supported and recognized teachers' achievements, while 2 (8.0%) were undecided, 4 (15.1%) agreed and 3 (11.3%) strongly agreed. Regarding empowerment of teachers in professional growth, 10 (44.8%) strongly disagreed and 9 (38.1%) disagreed, while 1 (2.7%) was undecided, 2 (5.3%) agreed and 3 (9.1%) strongly agreed. On teacher morale and feeling valued and professionally supported, 9 (34.0%) strongly disagreed and 6 (23.5%) disagreed, compared with 2 (9.7%) who were undecided, 3 (13.4%) who agreed and 5 (19.4%) who strongly agreed. These findings contrast with **Esia-Donkoh (2025),** where transformational leadership was strongly associated with enhanced morale, motivation and professional fulfilment, and with **Adan (2025),** who identified transformational leadership as the strongest predictor of teacher job satisfaction among the leadership styles examined.

The interview findings from the Curriculum Support Officers (CSOs) provided insight into the application of transformational leadership by Heads of Institutions. CSO 1 observed that:

> *Heads who demonstrate transformational and participatory leadership are more likely to create a positive working environment and establish a clear vision for school improvement.*

CSO 3 explained that involving teachers in school planning and decision-making encourages teamwork and shared responsibility. The interview findings therefore provide context to the questionnaire responses, particularly the teachers' mixed perceptions and the HoIs' generally negative responses regarding shared vision and participatory leadership.

The CSOs also emphasized the importance of recognition, professional development, innovation and teacher support in transformational leadership. CSO 2 explained that transformational leadership involves recognizing teachers' efforts and supporting their professional development, while CSO 3 noted that:

> *Transformational leadership supports innovation and continuous improvement and demonstrates empathy and understanding of teachers' challenges.*

CSO 1 identified transformational leadership as a style that can motivate teachers and create a positive working environment, while CSO 2 emphasized communication, fairness, supportiveness and recognition of teachers' efforts.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study demonstrate that transformational leadership style remains an important determinant of teacher job satisfaction in public primary schools in Chiakariga Sub-County. Although Heads of Institutions perceived themselves as practicing transformational leadership, teachers reported shortcomings in several key dimensions, particularly the development of a clear and shared school vision, recognition of teachers' achievements, mentorship, professional support, and opportunities for professional growth. These gaps suggest that the limited application of transformational leadership practices has contributed to reduced teacher morale, diminished professional support, and lower levels of job satisfaction. The study therefore concludes that effective implementation of transformational leadership practices is essential for creating supportive school environments that enhance teachers' commitment, motivation, and overall job satisfaction.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed to strengthen transformational leadership practices and improve teachers' experiences in public primary schools.

i. Heads of institutions should involve teachers in developing and reviewing the school vision and in setting shared instructional priorities.

ii. Schools should establish clear and fair ways of recognizing teachers' professional contributions. Heads of institutions should ensure that recognition is fair, transparent and based on clear criteria.

iii. Heads of institutions should strengthen teacher mentorship and peer-learning opportunities to support the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) and teachers' continuing professional development.

iv. Heads of institutions should communicate expectations clearly, provide constructive feedback and work with teachers to address challenges affecting teaching and learning.

v. Curriculum Support Officers should also provide guidance and follow-up support to help teachers address instructional challenges.

vi. The Sub-County education office should provide professional development opportunities for heads of institutions on transformational leadership. Curriculum Support Officers should reinforce this support through follow-up visits and professional guidance.

vii. The recurring concerns about working conditions and career advancement should be documented and communicated to the relevant education authorities.

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