

Principals' Individualised Consideration and Teacher Job Performance in Public Integrated Secondary Schools in Rabai Sub-County, Kilifi County, Kenya

Felistus Jepkaitany Komen*, Dr. Rose Munene, Mr. Benjamin Mwandoe Mwawasi*

Department of Education, Counselling and Humanities, Kenya Methodist University, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

Individualised consideration is the transformational leadership practice through which a principal attends to teachers as individuals, using mentoring, professional guidance, constructive feedback and attention to personal circumstances. It is also the practice most easily displaced by administrative pressure. This article reports one objective from a larger study of principals' transformational leadership in Rabai Sub-County, Kilifi County: the relationship between principals' individualised consideration and teacher job performance in public integrated secondary schools. Bass and Avolio's transformational leadership theory framed the work. A descriptive cross-sectional survey design guided data collection, and stratified random sampling drew 15 of the 20 public secondary schools in the sub-county. Seventy teachers and fifteen principals took part, giving a response rate of 94.4%. Teachers rated their principals on five individualised consideration items adapted from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire and rated their own performance across task performance, punctuality and attendance, professional development, and student engagement and collegiality. Principals responded to semi-structured interviews analysed thematically. Analysis was correlational, and the coefficients reported are unadjusted for teacher or school characteristics. Teachers placed individualised consideration in the moderate band ($M = 3.75$, $SD = 0.43$). All four correlations with job performance dimensions were positive and statistically significant. The association with professional development was the strongest recorded anywhere in the study ($r = .637$, $t = 6.813$, $p < .001$), ahead of intellectual stimulation ($r = .551$), idealised influence ($r = .503$) and inspirational motivation ($r = .470$) on the same dimension. The association with student engagement was weakest ($r = .269$, $p = .025$). Interviews showed uneven application of the practice: nine of the fifteen principals described learning about individual teachers' backgrounds, the behaviour teachers rated lowest ($M = 3.41$). The study recommends structured one-to-one feedback, delegated departmental mentoring and leadership training focused on individualised support.

Keywords: individualised consideration, transformational leadership, teacher job performance, professional development, mentoring, Kilifi County

INTRODUCTION

Teacher job performance describes how consistently teachers prepare lessons, deliver instruction, assess learners and meet the professional obligations attached to their posts. It is among the few school-level variables closely tied to management action. Thomas et al. (2020) followed teachers through their first year of service and found that the leadership climate they encountered was linked to commitment and job satisfaction more strongly than workload was. Latif et al. (2023) reported a comparable pattern for job satisfaction and retention. Those findings place school leadership at the centre of any serious attempt to raise teaching quality.

Bass (1985) described leaders who move followers beyond narrow self-interest towards collective goals. Bass and Avolio (1994) later organised the approach into four practices: idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualised consideration. Northouse (2021) treats the four as complementary rather than sequential, since a principal may model integrity while neglecting mentoring, or inspire staff without prompting anyone to rethink a lesson. This article concerns the fourth practice. Individualised consideration covers coaching, mentoring, professional guidance, constructive feedback and

attention to the circumstances of the individual teacher. In a school it looks like a conversation about career direction, a nomination for a course, a debrief after a lesson observation, or a timetable adjusted for a teacher returning from maternity leave.

Of the four practices, individualised consideration is the most expensive in a principal's time. Vision statements and staff briefings reach everyone at once. Mentoring must be repeated teacher by teacher, and it competes directly with the administrative load a Kenyan principal carries. Bass and Avolio (1994) note that the practice also calls for delegation aimed at developing the individual rather than at distributing work, which takes longer than simply assigning a task. Northouse (2021) adds that it depends on knowledge the leader must actively gather, since support cannot be tailored to a teacher whose circumstances are unknown. Tafesh and Alsoud (2022) reported that Jordanian government secondary school principals who attended to teachers individually were associated with higher achievement motivation among staff. A behaviour that matters to teachers and is easily crowded out is worth isolating.

Evidence from Asia supports the association between transformational leadership and teacher performance. Firmansyah et al. (2022) synthesised regional studies in a meta-analysis and reported a consistent positive relationship, with effect sizes varying by national context and by the level of organisational support available to staff. Wang et al. (2024) traced one pathway in Chinese schools, showing that teacher innovation behaviour was linked to leadership through the meaningfulness teachers attached to their work. Yu and Jang (2024) proposed a framework in which leadership relates to performance indirectly, through professional motivation rather than through direct supervision. Personalised attention plays an obvious part in both routes.

African studies report the same direction of association under tighter resource conditions. Luyten and Bazo (2019) found in Mozambican primary schools that transformational leadership combined with collaborative professional structures was related to stronger learner-centred teaching, with personalised support central to the mechanism. Metaferia et al. (2023) linked the four practices to organisational commitment among teachers in Addis Ababa government secondary schools. Working in Ugandan public secondary schools, Sengendo and Eduan (2024) found that the four dimensions together explained a meaningful share of variation in national examination performance. Resource constraint appears to condition the strength of the relationship rather than remove it.

Kenyan research points in the same direction across several counties. Miano et al. (2023) reported transformational leadership as a strong positive predictor of teacher job performance in girls' public secondary schools in Tharaka Nithi County. Kihanga et al. (2021) linked the practices to education quality in Kiambu County. Kilonzo et al. (2020) linked the setting of institutional direction to learner achievement in Machakos County. This dimension carries the relationship varies from study to study. Muriuki et al. (2022) reported a modest positive association for idealised influence in Kirinyaga County. Muia (2018) identified intellectual stimulation as the strongest correlate of examination performance in Mbooni West Sub-County. Musyoki et al. (2021) reported mixed results across dimensions in a study of inspirational motivation. Studies that report a single composite leadership score cannot show this variation, which is one reason for examining the dimensions separately.

One finding recurs wherever the dimensions are separated. Kariuki (2019) reported that individualised consideration was the least practised of the four in Nyandarua County. Cherogony (2021) recommended mentoring and coaching precisely because principals were not providing them consistently. The practice appears in Kenyan studies more often as a deficit than as a strength, which is what makes it worth measuring directly.

Two national reforms have raised the stakes. The Competency-Based Curriculum requires learner-centred pedagogy, continuous assessment and responsiveness to varied learner needs (Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development, 2017). The Teacher Performance Appraisal and Development framework requires teachers to document lesson preparation, delivery, assessment and professional conduct against agreed standards (Teachers Service Commission, 2019). Both assume a principal who supports professional growth rather than merely enforcing compliance. Both place individualised consideration close to the centre of the principal's job.

Rabai Sub-County lies on the mainland west of Mombasa Island in Kilifi County and hosts 20 public secondary schools, most of them sub-county institutions serving low-income rural and peri-urban households. School outcomes there have remained uneven under both reforms. Records held by the Sub-County Director of Education show that in the 2025 Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examination the four highest-ranked schools recorded mean scores between 6.0 and 7.1, while the remaining sixteen fell between 1.5 and 3.2. Examination results alone cannot show whether that spread relates to leadership practice, teacher performance or conditions outside the school gate. Earlier studies in the sub-county have examined principals' leadership in relation to information technology adoption, inclusive education and resource management [CITATION NEEDED]. None has isolated individualised consideration and examined it alongside teacher job performance. Findings from other counties transfer poorly, since mentoring practice is shaped by local staffing levels, distance and socio-economic conditions that differ from those on the Kilifi coast.

Theoretical framework

The study was anchored on Bass's (1985) transformational leadership theory, refined by Bass and Avolio (1994) into four practices: idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualised consideration. Individualised consideration treats followers as distinct people with particular needs, abilities and ambitions. The leader coaches, mentors, listens to individual concerns and calibrates support to the person. Northouse (2021) treats knowledge of the follower as the precondition for the rest, since support cannot be tailored to a teacher whose circumstances are unknown. The four practices operate independently, which justifies examining this one alone rather than within a composite score. The theory anticipates that principals who mentor teachers individually will be associated with teachers who prepare better, attend consistently and pursue professional growth.

Purpose and objective of the study

This article addresses one objective: to establish the relationship between principals' individualised consideration and teacher job performance in public integrated secondary schools in Rabai Sub-County, Kilifi County, Kenya. The study answered the research question: what relationship exists between principals' individualised consideration and teacher job performance in those schools. The design supports statements of association only. Findings are reported on that basis throughout, and no causal claim is advanced at any point.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Individualised Consideration as a Leadership Practice

Bass and Avolio (1994) described individualised consideration as leadership that treats followers as distinct people with particular needs, abilities and ambitions, rather than as interchangeable holders of a role. The leader acts as coach and mentor, delegates in order to develop rather than merely to distribute work, and adjusts the level of support to the person. Northouse (2021) notes that the practice depends on knowledge the leader must actively gather, since a principal cannot tailor support to a teacher whose background and circumstances are unknown. Kivunja (2018) and Ravitch and Carl (2021) argue that a theoretical construct of this kind should shape both instrument design and interpretation, which is how the four constructs were used in this study.

Firmansyah et al. (2022) reported in their Asian meta-analysis that the strength of the leadership and performance relationship shifts with organisational support, a conditioning factor that matters more for individualised consideration than for the other practices, since mentoring requires time that only the institution can release. Wang et al. (2024) found teacher innovation behaviour linked to leadership through perceived meaningfulness of work, and personalised recognition is one of the routes through which meaning is conveyed. Yu and Jang (2024) placed professional motivation between leadership and performance in their framework. Tafesh and Alsoud (2022) reported that Jordanian principals who attended to teachers individually were associated with higher achievement motivation among staff.

Luyten and Bazo (2019) associated individualised support with stronger teacher commitment in Mozambican primary schools when it was combined with collaborative professional structures, which suggests the practice works best where peer learning is already organised. Metaferia et al. (2023) reported a positive relationship

between the practice and organisational commitment among teachers in Addis Ababa. Latif et al. (2023) linked personalised leadership attention to job satisfaction and retention. Sengendo and Eduan (2024) found the four practices jointly related to examination performance in Ugandan public secondary schools, though their design did not separate the contribution of individualised consideration from the rest.

Kihanga et al. (2021) linked transformational practices, individualised consideration among them, to education quality in Kiambu County. Miano et al. (2023) reported a strong positive relationship with teacher job performance. Cherogony (2021) concluded that mentoring and coaching, together with greater professional autonomy, were the practices most closely tied to teacher commitment in Kenyan secondary schools. Against these, Kariuki (2019) found individualised consideration to be the least practised of the four dimensions in Nyandarua County. Kenyan work therefore reports a practice that matters and a practice that is missing, often in the same study.

Knowledge gap

Three gaps emerged. Kenyan studies measure leadership against learner examination results rather than against teacher job performance directly, so the intermediate link stays inferred. Coastal sub-counties are largely absent from a literature drawn mainly from the central and Rift Valley regions. Most studies also treat the four practices as a single leadership score, which conceals the uneven pattern this study found, or they report dimension-level coefficients without asking how principals themselves understand the practice. This article addresses all three by isolating individualised consideration, measuring teacher job performance directly in Rabai Sub-County, and setting teacher ratings against principals' own accounts.

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive cross-sectional survey design guided the study, which documents a phenomenon without manipulating conditions (McCombes, 2023). Rabai Sub-County has 20 public secondary schools, categorised by the Ministry of Education as C1 to C4, and stratified random sampling drew 15 of them across the four categories. All 15 principals took part, and questionnaires went to 75 teachers randomly selected from school staff lists. Participants had to be staff engaged by the Teachers Service Commission with at least one year of continuous service in the current school; temporary teachers, acting principals and staff on long leave were excluded. Teachers rated their principals on five individualised consideration items adapted from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, scored from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), within a 20-item instrument covering all four practices, and rated their own performance on 20 further items. Principals answered a semi-structured schedule covering the same practices, each running 30 to 45 minutes. Supervisors and leadership specialists reviewed the instruments for content validity. A pilot in three schools outside the sample, involving seven teachers and three principals, returned means of 4.04 ($SD = 0.36$) for perceived leadership and 4.07 ($SD = 0.34$) for job performance, correlated at $r = .78$, $p = .039$, and Cronbach's alpha met the .70 threshold.

SPSS produced descriptive statistics and Pearson product-moment correlations at $\alpha = .05$, two-tailed, with $df = 68$, while transcripts were coded thematically. The analysis is bivariate throughout. No covariates were entered, so every coefficient reported below is unadjusted for teacher experience, academic qualification, workload, school category or school resource levels. Coefficients therefore describe the strength and direction of association between two measures and carry no claim about independent contribution or causal direction. A NACOSTI permit, Kenya Methodist University ethical clearance and written informed consent preceded data collection. Table 1 reports a 94.4% response rate, above the 70% mark Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) treat as very good.

Table 1: Target and achieved sample

Respondent category	Target	Achieved	Rate (%)	Instrument
Principals	15	15	100.0	Interview schedule
Teachers	75	70	93.3	Questionnaire
Total	90	85	94.4	

Source: Field Data (2026)

RESULTS

Interpretation of mean scores followed a three-band scale. Scores from 4.00 to 5.00 indicated a high level of practice, scores from 3.00 to 3.99 a moderate level, and scores below 3.00 a low level.

Teachers' ratings of principals' individualised consideration

Table 2: Teachers' responses on principals' individualised consideration (n = 70)

Statement: The principal	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %	M	SD
Checks progress through informal follow-up, observation or shared lesson plans	2.9	7.2	5.8	44.8	40.6	4.05	0.47
Offers collegial and professional support	2.9	7.1	20.0	35.7	30.0	3.93	0.45
Learns about each teacher's background and challenges	8.6	18.6	17.1	34.3	21.4	3.41	0.39
Attends to individual needs and ensures teachers are comfortable	4.3	14.3	8.6	30.0	42.9	3.91	0.46
Is sensitive to personal needs and adjusts duties where possible	13.0	5.8	21.7	36.2	23.2	3.46	0.39
Composite						3.75	0.43

Note: SD % = strongly disagree; D % = disagree; N % = neutral; A % = agree; SA % = strongly agree.

Source: Field Data (2026)

Individualised consideration sat in the moderate band overall ($M = 3.75$, $SD = 0.43$). The spread across items was wider than the composite suggests. Regular progress checks through informal conversation, follow-up observation and review of lesson plans was the only item to reach the high band ($M = 4.05$), with 85.4% of teachers agreeing or strongly agreeing. Attending to individual needs followed at 3.91, and collegial and professional support at 3.93.

Two items sat noticeably lower. Learning about each teacher's background and challenges returned the

weakest rating in the whole leadership instrument ($M = 3.41$), with 27.2% of teachers disagreeing or strongly disagreeing and a further 17.1% undecided. Sensitivity to personal needs, including adjustment of duties where circumstances allowed, returned 3.46, and it drew the highest strong disagreement of any item in the scale at 13.0%. Teachers reported that principals monitored their work closely and supported them professionally, while knowing rather less about them as individuals.

Teacher job performance

Table 3: Descriptive statistics for teacher job performance, self-rated (n = 70)

Performance dimension	M	SD	Min	Max	Interpretation
Task performance	3.96	0.46	2.38	4.98	Moderate
Punctuality and attendance	3.93	0.44	2.51	5.00	Moderate

Professional development	3.73	0.46	2.25	4.95	Moderate
Student engagement and collegiality	3.86	0.43	2.51	4.90	Moderate
Composite	3.87	0.35			Moderate

Source: Field Data (2026)

Professional development recorded the lowest of the four performance means ($M = 3.73$, $SD = 0.46$), pulled down by two items. Participation in continuous professional development returned 2.84, the only item across the whole performance instrument to fall below 3.00, with 50.0% of teachers disagreeing or strongly disagreeing. Pursuit of additional qualifications returned 3.21, and attendance at development workshops 3.12. Against these, seeking new teaching methods scored 4.34 and updating subject knowledge 4.29. Teachers reported appetite for growth alongside limited access to formal opportunity, a pattern that matters for the correlation results reported below.

Qualitative findings from principal interviews

All 15 principals took part in the interviews, giving a 100% response rate for the qualitative strand. Coding produced four sub-themes within individualised consideration, reported in Table 4 with representative extracts following.

Table 4: Individualised consideration sub-themes in principal interviews (n = 15)

Sub-theme	Frequency	%
Personalised support and mentoring	13/15	86.7
Collegial and professional support	12/15	80.0
Sensitivity to personal needs	10/15	66.7
Learning about each teacher's background	9/15	60.0

Source: Field Data (2026)

Mentoring was described as needs-based rather than uniform. One principal stated: “I mentor teachers based on their needs,” and went on to describe assessing individual needs, preparing differentiated support plans and matching the level of guidance to each teacher's experience.

Support for professional growth was framed as a problem of appetite rather than provision. As one principal put it: “I encourage teachers' development,” explaining the need to make development experiences short and engaging so that participation becomes something teachers want rather than something they are told to do.

Sensitivity to personal circumstances appeared mainly through timetabling. One principal reported: “I make timetable adjustments for teachers who are pregnant, breastfeeding or on sick leave,” describing reduced loads and cover arrangements that kept classes running.

Knowing individual teachers drew the fewest accounts. One of the nine principals who raised it explained: “I learn about each teacher's background,” describing personal conversations, review of professional histories and classroom visits undertaken to understand the settings teachers work in.

Set against the questionnaire data, the two sources agree closely. The sub-theme principals reported least often, learning about each teacher's background, is the same behaviour teachers rated lowest ($M = 3.41$). Sensitivity to personal needs was described by ten principals and rated 3.46 by teachers, the second weakest item.

Mentoring and professional support, reported by thirteen and twelve principals respectively, drew teacher ratings above 3.90. Principals and teachers describe the same uneven practice: close monitoring and professional backing are in place, while personal knowledge of staff is not.

Association between individualised consideration and teacher job performance

Table 5: Pearson correlations between individualised consideration and teacher job performance (n = 70)

Performance dimension	r	r ²	t (df = 68)	p
Professional development	.637	.406	6.813	< .001
Task performance	.473	.224	4.421	< .001
Punctuality and attendance	.379	.144	3.376	.001
Student engagement and collegiality	.269	.072	2.299	.025

Source: Field Data (2026)

All four correlations were positive and statistically significant. The association with professional development was the strongest ($r = .637$, $t = 6.813$, $p < .001$), corresponding to 40.6% shared variance and exceeding the critical value of 1.995 by a wide margin. Task performance followed ($r = .473$, $p < .001$), then punctuality and attendance ($r = .379$, $p = .001$). Student engagement and collegiality returned the weakest coefficient in the set ($r = .269$, $p = .025$), significant but accounting for only 7.2% of shared variance.

The full correlation matrix

Table 6 sets the individualised consideration coefficients beside those of the other three leadership practices, so that the pattern can be read down the columns and across the rows.

Table 6: Correlation matrix, four leadership practices and four teacher job performance dimensions (N = 70)

Leadership practice	M	Task performance	Punctuality and attendance	Professional development	Student engagement and collegiality
Idealised influence	3.52	.437	.424	.503	.378
Inspirational motivation	3.92	.540	.545	.470	.414
Intellectual stimulation	3.45	.433	.529	.551	.348
Individualised consideration	3.75	.473	.379	.637	.269

Note: all coefficients significant at $p < .05$, two-tailed, $df = 68$. The composite leadership score and the composite performance score correlated at $r = .750$, $p < .001$. Source: Field Data (2026)

Two features stand out. Reading down the professional development column, individualised consideration recorded the highest coefficient of the four practices ($r = .637$), ahead of intellectual stimulation ($r = .551$), idealised influence ($r = .503$) and inspirational motivation ($r = .470$). Reading across the individualised consideration row, the same practice recorded the lowest coefficient of the four with student engagement and

collegiality ($r = .269$, against $.348$, $.378$ and $.414$). The practice that ranks first on one performance dimension ranks last on another. It achieved the $.637$ coefficient while carrying only the second highest mean rating, behind inspirational motivation at 3.92 . The practice teachers reported most often was not the practice most closely associated with their growth.

DISCUSSION

Individualised consideration and professional development are the pairing this study found most tightly linked. The coherence is worth stating plainly. Professional growth is the performance dimension most closely tied to what a principal does for one teacher at a time. A conversation about career direction, a nomination for a course, a debrief after a lesson observation and a word of encouragement to sit a further qualification all belong to the same practice, and none of them can be delivered to a staffroom in bulk. Luyten and Bazo (2019) and Metaferia et al. (2023) reported comparable patterns in Mozambique and Ethiopia, and Kihanga et al. (2021) reached a similar conclusion in Kiambu County.

The comparison in Table 6 sharpens the point. Inspirational motivation drew the highest mean rating from teachers yet the weakest association with professional development of the four practices. Vision and encouragement cost a principal little time and reach every teacher at once, which may explain both their prevalence and their limits. Growth is associated instead with the more expensive practice. Firmansyah et al. (2022) observed that the strength of the leadership and performance relationship shifts with the organisational support available, and individualised consideration is the practice most exposed to that constraint, since it consumes the resource a principal has least of.

A gap runs through the item-level data. Teachers rated close monitoring at 4.05 and professional backing at 3.93 , while knowledge of their backgrounds sat at 3.41 and sensitivity to personal circumstances at 3.46 . Principals described the same shape: thirteen spoke of mentoring, nine of learning about individual teachers. Supervision is being delivered; personal knowledge is not. The distinction matters because Bass and Avolio (1994) treat that knowledge as the precondition for the rest of the practice. A principal cannot differentiate support for a teacher whose circumstances are unknown, and what remains is monitoring wearing the language of mentoring. Kariuki (2019) found the same dimension least practised in Nyandarua County, and Cherogony (2021) recommended mentoring and coaching for the same reason.

Student engagement and collegiality showed the weakest association with the practice ($r = .269$). On reflection this is unsurprising. Classroom relationships and peer collaboration are shaped by subject, class size and personality as much as by anything happening in the principal's office. The pattern is consistent with an indirect link between individualised consideration and learner-facing behaviour, running through teacher capacity and motivation, which matches the pathway Yu and Jang (2024) proposed and the mediated route Wang et al. (2024) traced through work meaningfulness. Tafesh and Alsoud (2022) observed a similar indirect relationship in Jordanian schools.

Interpreting the associations

The design does not permit causal inference, and none is claimed. Three features of the data nonetheless bear on how the associations should be read.

First, the coefficients are dimension-specific. Individualised consideration returned the strongest association with professional development ($r = .637$) and the weakest with student engagement ($r = .269$) of any pairing in Table 6. A response bias operating across the instrument, whether a halo effect in rating the principal or a generous hand in rating oneself, would tend to inflate coefficients fairly evenly. These do not move together. The gradient runs in the direction the theory anticipates, since mentoring and career guidance bear on professional growth more directly than on classroom rapport.

Second, the two data sources were independent of each other. Teachers completed a closed rating scale; principals answered open questions in a separate interview. Both placed the same behaviour last. Nine of fifteen principals described learning about individual teachers, the least frequent of the four sub-themes, and

teachers rated that same item 3.41, the lowest in the leadership instrument. Common-method variance cannot generate agreement between a questionnaire and an unrelated set of interviews.

Third, self-ratings were not uniformly favourable. Participation in continuous professional development returned 2.84, the only performance item to fall below the moderate band, with half of the teachers disagreeing or strongly disagreeing. Respondents inflating their own performance would be unlikely to concede a shortfall of that size on the very dimension most closely associated with the leadership practice under study.

Taken together, these features narrow the range of plausible readings. They do not establish direction. Teachers already invested in their own development may equally attract closer attention from their principals, and that account remains available on this evidence. The findings are therefore presented as associations, and the recommendations that follow are offered on that basis.

Contextual conditions

Leadership operates inside a resource envelope the principal does not set. Schools in Rabai Sub-County are mostly sub-county institutions serving low-income rural and peri-urban households, and sixteen of the twenty recorded 2025 examination means below 3.2. Staffing levels, teaching materials and in-service funding are constrained accordingly, and the reach of any leadership practice is constrained with them.

Two features of that setting bear directly on the findings. Professional development in Kenyan public schools is largely funded and scheduled outside the school, through the Teachers Service Commission, county education offices and sponsoring bodies. A principal identifies a development need but does not commission the provision that meets it. The gap this study recorded between appetite, at 4.34 on seeking new teaching methods, and participation, at 2.84 on continuous professional development, sits precisely at that boundary. The strongest association in the study therefore runs into a ceiling set outside the school gate.

Organisational culture conditions the practice in a second way. The Teacher Performance Appraisal and Development framework already gives every Kenyan principal a scheduled, documented conversation with each teacher about performance. Where a school treats that appraisal as a compliance return, the conversation is consumed by the form. Where a school treats it as a development discussion, the same conversation becomes the natural vehicle for individualised consideration at no additional cost in time. One national instrument can therefore support the practice or crowd it out, depending on how the school reads it. That variation offers one account of why teachers in this sample reported close monitoring at 4.05 and personal knowledge at 3.41. The structure for individual contact exists in every school; what varies is the use made of it.

One further condition deserves mention. Kenyan public secondary schools operate under teacher shortages that raise workload and shrink the discretionary time a principal can spend with any one member of staff. Firmansyah et al. (2022) identified organisational support as the factor that shifts the strength of the leadership and performance relationship, and in the Kenyan coastal context that support is largely a staffing question. Individualised consideration is not simply a leadership choice under these conditions. It is a leadership choice made against a fixed and unforgiving time budget.

Limitations

Four limitations bound these conclusions.

The design is cross-sectional and correlational. It establishes association at a single point in time. It cannot establish direction, and reverse association cannot be ruled out.

Teacher job performance was self-reported, which invites social desirability bias. The three features set out above limit that concern without removing it. Appraisal records, lesson observation schedules, syllabus coverage returns and documented attendance at professional development would provide the external check this study lacks.

The analysis is limited to bivariate correlation. Teacher experience, academic qualification, workload, school category and school resource levels were not entered as covariates, so all coefficients reported here are

unadjusted. Some part of each association may reflect these conditions rather than the leadership practice itself. A multiple regression model carrying those covariates would isolate the independent contribution of individualised consideration and rank the four practices on adjusted terms. The present design and dataset do not support such a model, and constructing one is a task for the successor study described below.

The sample covers fifteen schools in a single coastal sub-county. Findings should be read as specific to that setting. Northouse (2021) cautions that leadership relationships are conditioned by context, so transfer to other counties should be treated as a question rather than an assumption.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

Principals' individualised consideration is significantly associated with teacher job performance in public integrated secondary schools in Rabai Sub-County. All four correlations examined were positive and statistically significant, and the association with professional development ($r = .637, p < .001$) was the strongest recorded in the wider study, ahead of intellectual stimulation, idealised influence and inspirational motivation on the same dimension. Teachers placed the practice in the moderate band ($M = 3.75$), with close monitoring and professional support rated well and personal knowledge of staff rated poorly. Principals' own accounts matched that pattern. The practice most closely associated with teacher growth is therefore also the one applied least evenly, which is where the practical opportunity lies.

Recommendations

The recommendations below follow from an observed association rather than a demonstrated effect. They are offered as reasonable practice consistent with the evidence, not as guaranteed remedies.

Principals should institutionalise one-to-one professional conversations on a scheduled basis rather than leaving them to informal contact, and should record them. Each teacher's professional background, qualifications, development history and current ambitions belong in a working file the principal actually uses, since this is the behaviour teachers rated lowest and principals reported least often. Lesson observation should end in a documented debrief rather than a form.

Heads of department should carry the mentoring load that one principal cannot deliver across a full staff. Departmental observation, collaborative lesson planning and individual professional guidance put individualised consideration within reach at a scale the school can sustain.

Teachers should use appraisal conversations to state their development needs rather than treating the process as paperwork, and should act on the feedback and opportunities that follow.

Boards of management should fund professional development and recognise teachers who pursue it. The gap between teacher willingness and actual participation identified in this study is a resourcing question before it is a leadership question.

The Teachers Service Commission should build individualised consideration explicitly into leadership development for principals, covering needs assessment, mentoring technique and feedback delivery, and should ensure that appraisal identifies professional development needs rather than serving as a compliance exercise.

Further research

A longitudinal design would clarify the direction of the association reported here. Studies combining self-reported performance with classroom observation, appraisal records and documented professional development attendance would strengthen the measurement and address the self-report limitation directly. Replication across other coastal sub-counties would test how far the pattern travels.

A fuller analytical model is the clearer priority. The evidence assembled here points to four components. Individualised consideration enters as the leadership input, measured at dimension level rather than folded into a composite score. Teacher professional motivation and perceived meaningfulness of work enter as mediators, following Yu and Jang (2024) and Wang et al. (2024). School resource availability, in-service funding, staffing adequacy and appraisal culture enter as moderators conditioning how far the practice can operate, following Firmansyah et al. (2022). Teacher job performance enters as the outcome, measured on both self-report and documentary indicators. Teacher experience, qualification, workload and school category enter as controls.

A model of that shape would be testable by hierarchical regression on a single-county sample, or by structural equation modelling on a multi-county sample large enough to support it. It would also accommodate the two patterns this study could describe but not explain: a strong association between individualised consideration and professional growth, a weak one with learner-facing behaviour, and a ceiling on both that is set by resources the school does not control.

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