

GREAT JOURNS



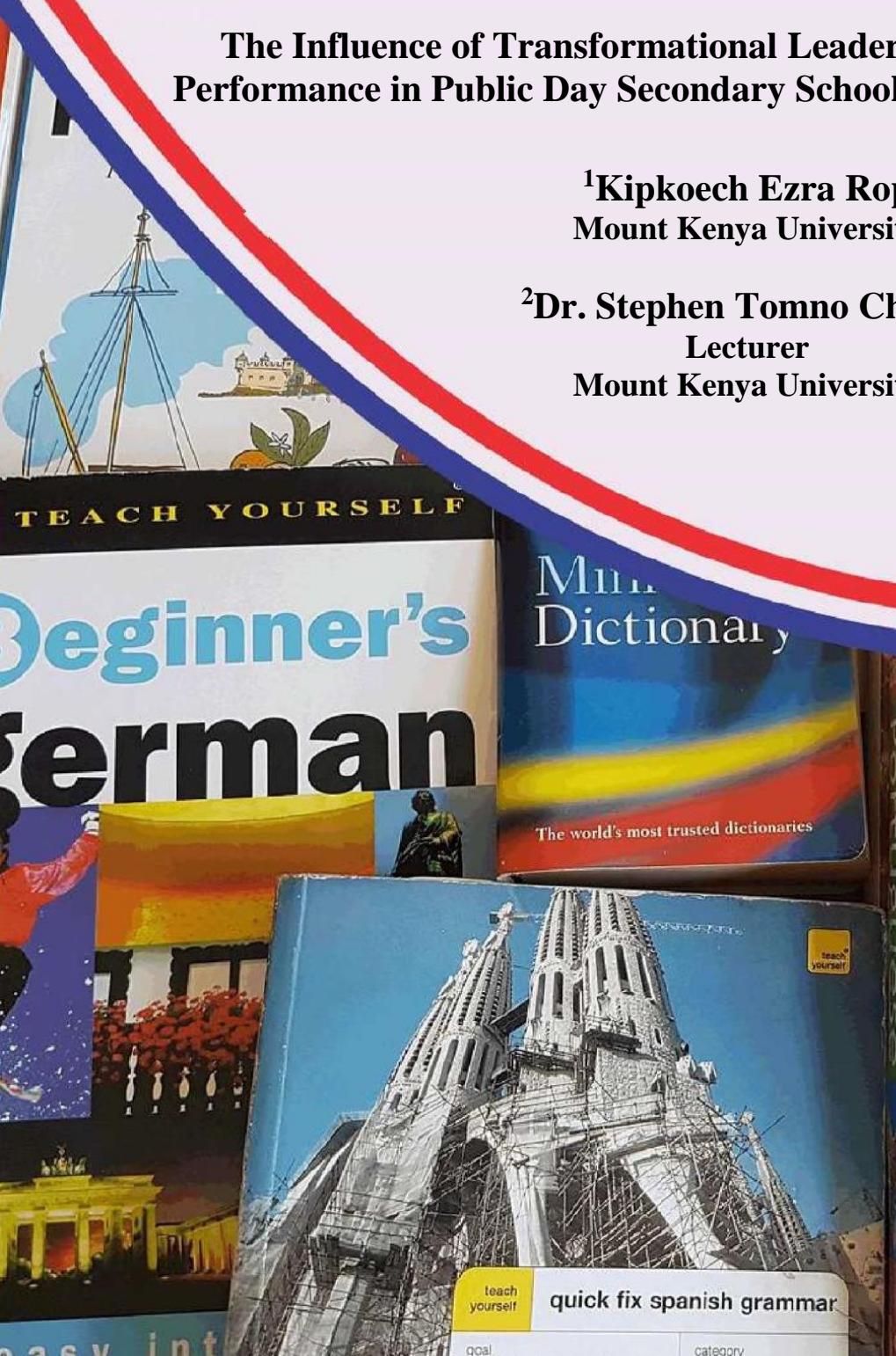
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The Influence of Transformational Leadership Style on Academic Performance in Public Day Secondary Schools in Kapseret Sub County.

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ABSTRACT

Effective educational leadership plays a crucial role in shaping the quality of education and student outcomes. The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of Transformational Leadership Style on Academic Performance in Public Day Secondary Schools in Kapseret Sub County. The study followed quantitative and qualitative research approaches and a descriptive survey design. The target population was 214. The sample size of the study was 143. Structured questionnaire and interview guide schedule were used to collect data. This study used descriptive statistics and inferential statistics as well as narrative analysis for data analysis. The analyzed data were presented by use of tables, figures and charts. The findings were significant as it contributed to filling these gaps and advancing understanding in the field as well as emphasizing the potential impact of the research on policy development or decision-making. The findings of the study indicated that transformational leadership style positively and significantly influenced academic performance ($\beta = 0.391$). The researcher concluded that fundamental role that teachers play in inspiring students and fostering a conducive learning environment. These teachers are seen as not only motivators but also as facilitators of new ideas and adaptability. Moreover, they are recognized for guiding students in making the right decisions and encouraging a vision-oriented approach. Additionally, the respondents acknowledge that school principals provide essential support and mentorship to individual students, and that teachers are readily approachable and responsive to students' concerns. These positive perceptions underscore the critical importance of educators in shaping students' experiences and fostering a productive and supportive educational atmosphere. In terms of the leadership style, the study establishes a statistically significant relationship between the transformational leadership style and academic performance. The beta value of 0.391 indicated that an increase in the transformational leadership style corresponds to a 0.391 unit increase in academic performance. Furthermore, the significance value (Sig.) of 0.003, which is less than the required alpha level of 0.05, supports the conclusion that transformational leadership style significantly influences academic performance. It is recommended that principals should invest in continuous professional development for teachers so as to ensure adaptability to changing educational needs, and leadership skills.

Key Words: *Transformational Leadership Style & Academic Performance*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Effective educational leadership plays a crucial role in shaping the quality of education and student outcomes. The leadership styles employed by educational leaders significantly influence the overall climate, culture, and performance of educational institutions. Understanding the impact of leadership styles on academic performance is of utmost importance for educational policymakers, administrators, teachers, and other stakeholders. The United States has a diverse and complex education system that includes a wide range of schools, colleges, and universities. Academic performance is a key concern for educators, parents, and policymakers as it directly impacts students' educational attainment, future opportunities, and national competitiveness. It is widely acknowledged that effective leadership is essential for improving educational outcomes and enhancing student achievement (Naile, 2014).

Research conducted in the United States and other countries has explored the relationship between leadership styles and academic performance. Various leadership approaches, such as transformational leadership, instructional leadership, distributed leadership, and shared leadership, have been studied to understand their effects on student success, engagement, and learning outcomes. However, further investigation is needed to examine the specific influence of leadership styles on academic performance within the unique context of the United States (Al Khaja, 2018). Therefore, this study aims to provide a comprehensive examination of the influence of leadership styles on academic performance in the United States. By investigating the leadership styles exhibited by educational leaders at different levels, including school principals, district administrators, and higher education administrators, and analysing their impact on academic performance indicators, such as standardized test scores, graduation rates, and college readiness, this research will contribute valuable insights to the education landscape in the United States.

Research conducted within South Africa and in other countries has explored the relationship between leadership styles and academic performance. Different leadership approaches, such as transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and distributed leadership, have been studied to understand their effects on student achievement, engagement, and motivation. However, further investigation is needed to examine the specific influence of leadership styles on academic performance within the unique context of South Africa. South Africa faces its own set of challenges and opportunities in the education landscape, including issues of educational inequality, socio-economic disparities, and cultural diversity. These factors may interact with leadership styles and impact academic performance outcomes. Therefore, it is crucial to examine the influence of leadership styles on academic performance within the specific context of South Africa to develop strategies and interventions that are relevant and effective (Spaull, 2013).

Research conducted within Uganda and in other countries has shed light on the relationship between leadership styles and academic performance. Different leadership approaches, such as transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and participative leadership, have been studied to understand their effects on student achievement, engagement, and motivation. However, further exploration of this relationship within the specific context of Uganda is necessary to account for unique cultural, social, and educational factors that may influence the effectiveness of different leadership styles (Musinguzi, 2018). However, limited research has been conducted specifically on the influence of leadership styles on academic performance within the context of Kapseret Sub County.

While studies conducted in other regions and countries have shed light on the relationship between leadership styles and academic performance, it is important to examine this relationship within the unique context of Kapseret Sub County. Factors such as cultural nuances, socio-economic conditions, and educational policies specific to the county may have distinct implications for the impact of leadership styles on academic performance. Therefore, this study aims to fill the existing gap in the literature by exploring the influence of leadership styles on academic performance in Kapseret Sub County. By investigating the leadership styles exhibited by educational leaders within the county and analysing their effects on academic performance indicators, such as grades, standardized test scores, and student achievements, this research will provide valuable insights into the educational landscape of Kapseret Sub County.

The findings of this study will not only contribute to the existing body of knowledge on leadership and education but will also have practical implications for educational leaders, policymakers, and stakeholders. The results can inform the development of evidence-based leadership development programs, policies, and practices that promote effective leadership and enhance academic performance in Kapseret Sub County. Ultimately, the study aims to contribute to the improvement of educational outcomes and the overall educational experience of students in the county.

Effective leadership in educational institutions is a critical factor in achieving high-quality education and positive student outcomes. The leadership styles employed by educational leaders play a significant role in shaping the overall climate, culture, and performance of schools and universities. Understanding the influence of leadership styles on academic performance is crucial for educational policymakers, administrators, teachers, and stakeholders in Kenya.

Kenya, located in East Africa, has a diverse education system comprising primary schools, secondary schools, and tertiary institutions. The academic performance of students in Kenya is a matter of concern and interest for various stakeholders, as it directly impacts students' future opportunities and the overall development of the nation. It is widely acknowledged that the leadership styles exhibited by school leaders can have a substantial impact on the academic outcomes of students (Ng'ethe, 2012).

Research conducted both within Kenya and in other countries has highlighted the relationship between leadership styles and academic performance. Different leadership approaches, such as transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and democratic leadership, have been studied to understand their effects on student achievement, engagement, and motivation. However, further exploration of this relationship within the specific context of Kenya is necessary to account for unique cultural, social, and educational factors that may influence the effectiveness of different leadership styles.

II: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Transformational Leadership Style and Academic Performance

Transformational leaders in U.S. schools inspire and motivate their staff and students to achieve high levels of performance. They communicate a compelling vision, foster positive relationships, and encourage innovation and creativity. Transformational leaders empower teachers and students, promote professional growth, and create a positive and inclusive school culture. Instructional leaders in U.S. schools prioritize improving teaching and learning. They actively engage in curriculum development, provide guidance and support to teachers, and promote effective instructional strategies. Instructional leaders focus on creating a positive learning environment, monitoring student progress, and facilitating professional development opportunities for teachers. (Sammons, 2016).

Distributed leadership emphasizes shared decision-making and collaborative problem-solving. In U.S. schools, leaders may distribute leadership responsibilities among teachers, staff, and other stakeholders. This style encourages a culture of collective responsibility, fosters a sense of ownership, and promotes collaboration and teamwork. Participative leaders in U.S. schools involve teachers, staff, and sometimes students in the decision-making process. They value and

seek input and feedback from stakeholders, creating a sense of shared ownership and commitment. Participative leaders promote collaboration, encourage diverse perspectives, and empower individuals to contribute to the overall success of the school. Servant leaders in U.S. schools prioritize the needs and well-being of their staff and students. They lead with a focus on serving others and creating a supportive and caring environment. Servant leaders foster positive relationships, promote inclusivity, and prioritize the growth and development of their staff and students (Chemers, 2014).

Transformational leaders in South African schools inspire and motivate their staff and students to achieve high levels of performance. They communicate a compelling vision, foster positive relationships, and encourage innovation and creativity. Transformational leaders empower teachers and students, promote professional growth, and create a positive and inclusive school culture. Instructional leaders in South African schools prioritize improving teaching and learning. They actively engage in curriculum development, provide guidance and support to teachers, and promote effective instructional strategies. Instructional leaders focus on creating a positive learning environment, monitoring student progress, and facilitating professional development opportunities for teachers. Distributed leadership emphasizes shared decision-making and collaborative problem-solving. In South African schools, leaders may distribute leadership responsibilities among teachers, staff, and other stakeholders.

This style encourages a culture of collective responsibility, fosters a sense of ownership, and promotes collaboration and teamwork. Participative leaders in South African schools involve teachers, staff, and sometimes students in the decision-making process. They value and seek input and feedback from stakeholders, creating a sense of shared ownership and commitment. Participative leaders promote collaboration, encourage diverse perspectives, and empower individuals to contribute to the overall success of the school. Servant leaders in South African schools prioritize the needs and well-being of their staff and students. They lead with a focus on serving others and creating a supportive and caring environment. Servant leaders foster positive relationships, promote inclusivity, and prioritize the growth and development of their staff and students (Naidoo, 2019).

In Kenya, Transformational leaders in schools within Kapseret Sub County inspire and motivate their staff and students to excel beyond their own expectations. They communicate a compelling vision for the school, set high standards, and create a supportive and collaborative environment. Transformational leaders often encourage innovation, professional growth, and the development of a shared sense of purpose among staff and students. Transactional leaders in schools within Kapseret Sub County focus on setting clear expectations, establishing goals, and providing rewards or consequences based on performance. They maintain order and ensure that tasks are completed according to established standards. Transactional leaders typically engage in regular monitoring, feedback, and evaluation of teachers and students to ensure accountability and adherence to established guidelines (Iravo, 2012).

III: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1 Research Methodology

A quantitative and qualitative approach researches to research were adopted in the study. This means that quantitative and qualitative research techniques were used in the study. This approaches were suitable because it allowed the researcher to collect quantitative and qualitative by use of standardized instruments and interview guide schedule (Creswell, 2014).

3.2 Research Design

A descriptive survey design was employed since it was found appropriate for this study. For the formulation of knowledge on important principles and problem solution in terms of findings as the relevance of descriptive survey design (Orodho, 2009). The information in the descriptive survey was collected by interviewing the principals and the administration of questionnaire to the sample of the study. The survey enriched the findings making them more comprehensive. Several sources of data including questionnaire and interview schedule were utilized to answer the research questions.

3.3 Location of the Study

The study was conducted in Kapseret Sub County is located in Kapseret Sub County of Kenya.

3.4 Target Population

The population comprises of respondents the researcher wants to make assumptions about (Natalie, 2015). Events or objects of all hypothetical or real sets of human beings in terms of generalising the findings (Borg, Gall & Borg, 2007). The study was conducted in Kapseret Sub County. The target population for the study was 233 principals and teachers. Principals were targeted to provide information on how they ensure that is implemented in their schools. For the teachers, they were targeted to provide information on how leadership style has affected the performance of their schools. The target population of the study was 233 as provided in Table 1

Table 1: Target Population

| Target group | Target population |
|--------------|-------------------|
| Principals | 19 |
| Teachers | 214 |
| Total | 233 |

Source: Sub County Education Office (2023)

3.5 Sample Size

Oso and Onen (2005) posit that any accessible procedurally selected population implies the target population. Considering that the target population for head teachers and teachers was high, sampling used. The study used the Yamane (1967) formulae to determine the sample size. The Yamane's formulae was ideal for the study since it gives a well representative sample size of the target population. Therefore, using the formulae: $n=N/1+N(e)^2$

Where:

n=sample size

N=Target Population

e= significance level

Hence:

$$n=233/1+233(0.05)^2$$

$$=147.31$$

Hence the sample size of the study was 147 teachers and principals

Table 2: Sample Size

| Target group | Sample Population |
|--------------|-------------------|
| Principals | 19 |
| Teachers | 129 |
| Total | 148 |

Source: Sub County Education Office (2023)

3.6 Sampling Technique

The sampling frame refers to the group from which the researchers want to draw a sample. In selecting head teachers and teachers simple random sampling technique was used. This is one of the probability sampling methods that are commonly used in educational research. In selecting 129 teachers out of 214, all the number of teachers were written in pieces of paper, put in a trough and mixed thoroughly. Thereafter the researcher began drawing each piece of paper until the 129th one was selected. The advantage of simple random sampling method is that it guarantees equal chance to every respondent from the target from being selected to be involved in the investigation.

3.7 Piloting of Instruments for Collecting Data

Cooper et al. (2003) stated that pre-testing the data collection instruments through a pilot study helps in detecting ambiguous, awkward, or offensive questions and the use of appropriate techniques. Tools for collecting data were piloted before the start of the study. The percentage between 1% and 10% of sampled size was maintained for consistency (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2019). The instruments were piloted involving teachers and head teachers who were not included in the sample. Questionnaires for the teachers was administered to 20 teachers. The interview schedules for 5 head teachers will also held involving those ones that were not involved in the final sample. The pilot study was done in the neighbouring Kesses Sub-County.

3.7.1. Validity

Validity is noted by Saunders *et al.* (2009) as the representation of any phenomenon as the degree of the result of analysis generated from data. The technique of construct and content validity was adopted for examining whether the questionnaire and interview were valid to be used in collecting information required by the study. The researcher determined the content validity of the research instrument through use of expert judgement. The validity of the tools was verified by research supervisors and experts in research from MKU Eldoret campus. The comments that were given by

the supervisors and experts were used to improve the questionnaire and interview schedule before they were taken to the field.

3.7.2 Reliability

Reliability refers to the degree to which study outcomes are regular overtime and accurately represent the entire population under study (Ogula, 2009). A pilot test-retest technique was conducted to enhance the reliability of the instrument of the quantitative data. This was used to test the degree to which scores were consistent over time. In terms of determining the retest method, the same test is given to the same population that is not part of the study after some time to establish the reliability of empirical measurements. If the questionnaire to be used was reliable, the value of above 0.6 of the Cronbach alpha coefficient was considered (Saunders et al., 2007) to be appropriate.

The consistency of different responses between two tests was examined for the reliability of the test (Gay & Airasian, 2007). Hitherto, the researcher gave out 20 questionnaires and then wait for one week before administering the new questionnaires to the same 20 teachers. The results that were obtained in the first attempt from the respondents were correlated with the results of the second attempt. Coefficient reliability of was obtained via Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated via SPSS. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 28.0) was used to obtain the correlation coefficient. The study obtained an average reliability value of 0.6831 for the four objectives which was above the cut-off point of 0.6 hence making the instrument reliable.

3.8 Instruments for Data Collection and Data Collection Procedures

A questionnaire contains series of simple structured questions for eliciting the response of the participant. This was suitable because all the participants are literate. Questionnaires were used when collecting data from the teachers because they individually interpreted the instruments and record the information. A Coded quantitative questionnaire was used for the sampled population to gather the information. The questionnaire contained closed and open-ended questions to collect in-depth knowledge from the participants as guided by the research questions. Further, the researcher used interview guide schedule to collect qualitative data from the principals by interviewing them. Permission was sought from the Mount Kenya University, through Postgraduate School to enable the researcher to acquire a researcher permit. The researcher applied for research permit to the National Commission for Science Technology and innovations (NACOSTI). Further, the research permits was submitted to the Sub County Director of Education Office to facilitate access of schools to collect data.

The sample respondents was first approached to provide consent to participate in the study. For interview, the head teachers have to be informed first to agree on the date of performing it. Once the teachers consented to being involved in the study, they were given questionnaire to fill after which the researcher picked them. Interview sessions with school heads was arranged and done in their office. The records of interview were recorded via note taking by the researcher. The interview session lasted for between 10-15 minutes. The period of collection of data lasted for one month

3.9 Data Analysis Technique and Procedures

This study used both quantitative and qualitative data methods of data analysis. According to Babbie (2012), quantitative analysis is the numerical representation and manipulation of observations for the purpose of describing and explaining the phenomena that those observations

reflect. The data collected from the questionnaires were checked for completeness and accuracy. The questionnaire were coded according to each variable of the study to ensure the margin of error was minimized and assured accuracy during analysis. The coded data were analyzed quantitatively using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics entailed mean, standard deviation and percentages. Inferential statistics was done using multiple linear regression analysis. The analyzed data were presented by frequency distribution tables, graphs and charts. The qualitative data analysis involved use of narrative analysis and thematic analysis where the researcher narrated the interview responses and presented them in themes and their implication in prose form.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

It refers to an “ethos” or “way of life”, “social norms for conduct that distinguishes between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour” (Shah, 2011, p.205; Akaranga & Ongong’o, 2013, p.8).

3.10.1 Informed consent

It is the ability for self-determination in action according to a personal plan. It is at this moment that a respondent can make a decision to participate in a study if he or she understands the benefit and risks of the study leading to new knowledge. This factor also addressed how to counteract any form of physical harm or discomfort, infringement of dignity and privacy and compensation. The researcher sought an informed consent of the respondents (Appendix III) and also provided them with sufficient initial information about the survey to be able to give their informed consent concerning participation and the use of data.

3.10.2 Voluntary participation

It implies that a person knowingly, voluntarily, intelligently, and in a clear and manifest way, gives his or her consent. The researcher made it known to the respondents that their participation was indeed voluntary.

3.10.3 Confidentiality

Confidentiality means the participant’s identity is known to the researcher but the data is de-identified and the identity is kept confidential. The individuals were free to give and withhold as much information as they wish to the person they choose. Confidentiality was guaranteed and it was the researcher’s ethical responsibility to verify the collected data. Only summarized data were available for public consumption.

3.10.4 Privacy

The researcher protected the respondents from harm, either emotional or physical. During the time of data collection, analysis safeguarded as data were stored in the computer using data protection password in order to ensure confidentiality.

3.10.5 Anonymity

Anonymity refers to keeping secret by not identifying the ethnic or cultural background of respondents, refrain from referring to them by their names or divulging any other sensitive information about a participant (Mugenda, 2003). This was achieved by using Pseudonyms in respect of the participants and the organization that was selected for this study.

3.10.6 Authorization Letters.

The researcher also sought ERC clearance from Mount Kenya University ethics review committee, in addition to this, the researcher obtained an introduction letter from the Mount Kenya University College of Graduate Studies. The researcher further sought research permit from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation, (NACOSTI) so as to be allowed to undertake the study in the said location of the study.

IV: RESULTS

4.1 Influence of Transformational Leadership Style on Academic performance of Day Public Secondary Schools

Table 4:1 Influence of Transformational Leadership Style on Academic performance of Day Public Secondary Schools

| | N | Min | Max | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|--|-----|-----|-----|------|----------------|
| Teachers inspire students and those around them | 104 | 1 | 5 | 3.84 | 1.208 |
| Teachers make students entertain new ideas both in class and in co curricular activities | 104 | 1 | 5 | 3.86 | 1.161 |
| Students have been made by teachers to quickly and easily adapt to arising changes | 104 | 1 | 5 | 3.82 | 1.221 |
| Teachers are able to make the right decisions that guide the students | 104 | 1 | 5 | 3.77 | 1.184 |
| Students are made to be vision oriented at the school | 104 | 1 | 5 | 3.76 | 1.145 |
| Principals provide support and mentorship to individual students when needed | 104 | 1 | 5 | 3.73 | 1.192 |
| Teachers are approachable and responsive to students' concerns | 104 | 1 | 5 | 3.86 | 1.118 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 104 | | | | |

Source: Researcher (2023)

The findings in table 4 indicated that the respondents were in agreement that teachers play a crucial role in inspiring students and those around them (mean = 3.84, std. dev. = 1.208). Additionally, teachers were seen as facilitators of new ideas and adaptability, (mean = 3.86, std. dev. = 1.161) and (mean = 3.82, std. dev. = 1.221) respectively. Moreover, respondents believe that teachers make the right decisions that guide students (mean = 3.77, std. dev. = 1.184), and that they help students become vision-oriented, (mean=3.76, std. dev. = 1.145). Furthermore, the analysis indicated that the respondents were in agreement that principals in the schools provide essential support and mentorship to individual students (mean = 3.73, std. dev. = 1.192), and that teachers are approachable and responsive to students' concerns, (mean=3.86, std. dev. = 1.118). These findings imply that teachers play a crucial role in inspiring students and those around them underscores the significance of educators in shaping students' experiences. This recognition can encourage a continued focus on teacher development and support. This can lead to the encouragement of creative teaching methods and adaptability to the changing educational landscape.

The findings also are in line with the interview with one of the principals as indicated in the excerpt that follows:

Researcher: "How do you take into consideration diverse opinions provided for by teachers?"

Principal: "Well, we strongly believe in fostering a culture of inclusivity and valuing the input of our teachers. To ensure that diverse opinions are heard and considered, we have established regular staff meetings where teachers are encouraged to share their thoughts and ideas on various aspects of school management and teaching methods. These meetings provide a platform for open dialogue. We also maintain an open-door policy, where teachers can approach me or other school leaders with their suggestions, concerns, or innovative ideas. We believe that the experiences and insights of our teaching staff are invaluable in shaping the educational experience for our students. Furthermore, we have implemented suggestion boxes in the staffroom, allowing teachers to submit their opinions anonymously if they prefer. This way, they can express themselves freely without any fear of repercussions. Once we receive these diverse opinions and suggestions, we carefully review and discuss them during leadership meetings. We assess the feasibility and potential benefits of these ideas, and if they align with our school's goals and values, we take steps to implement them. In cases where we cannot immediately act on a suggestion, we communicate the reasons transparently to the staff. In essence, we make a conscious effort to involve our teaching staff in the decision-making process and acknowledge that their diverse perspectives are integral to the success and growth of our school."

V: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Summary

Firstly, respondents expressed strong agreement that teachers play a crucial role in inspiring students and those around them (mean = 3.84). This suggests that teachers are seen as sources of motivation and encouragement, which contributes to a positive learning environment. Additionally, teachers were perceived as facilitators of new ideas and adaptability (mean = 3.86 and 3.82, respectively), indicating that they are open to innovation and flexible in their approach to teaching. This adaptability is likely to have a positive impact on students' learning experiences. Furthermore, the findings suggest that teachers are trusted to make the right decisions that guide students (mean = 3.77). They are also believed to help students become vision-oriented (mean = 3.76), emphasizing the role of teachers in shaping students' future goals and aspirations. Moreover, the analysis reveals that principals in the schools provide essential support and mentorship to individual students (mean = 3.73), highlighting the role of school leaders in nurturing students' development. Additionally, teachers are seen as approachable and responsive to students' concerns (mean = 3.86), further enhancing the student-teacher relationship and creating an environment where students feel heard and valued. In terms of the transformational leadership style's influence on academic performance, the research reveals a positive beta value of 0.391, signifying a positive relationship with academic performance. For every unit increase in the transformational leadership style, there is an expected 0.391 unit increase in academic performance. Furthermore, the significance value is 0.003, which is less than the conventional alpha level of 0.05. This indicates that the relationship between the transformational leadership style and academic performance is statistically significant.

5.2 Conclusion

The findings of the study reveal a positive perception among respondents regarding the fundamental role that teachers play in inspiring students and fostering a conducive learning environment. These teachers are seen as not only motivators but also as facilitators of new ideas and adaptability. Moreover, they are recognized for guiding students in making the right decisions and encouraging a vision-oriented approach. Additionally, the respondents acknowledge that school principals provide essential support and mentorship to individual students, and that teachers are readily approachable and responsive to students' concerns. These positive perceptions underscore the critical importance of educators in shaping students' experiences and fostering a productive and supportive educational atmosphere. In terms of the leadership style, the study establishes a statistically significant relationship between the transformational leadership style and academic performance. The beta value of 0.391 indicated that an increase in the transformational leadership style corresponds to a 0.391 unit increase in academic performance. Furthermore, the significance value (Sig.) of 0.003, which is less than the required alpha level of 0.05, supports the conclusion that transformational leadership style significantly influences academic performance.

5.3 Recommendation

It is recommended that principals should invest in continuous professional development for teachers so as to ensure adaptability to changing educational needs, and leadership skills.

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