Relationship between Principals' Leadership Styles and Secondary School Teachers' Job Satisfaction in Nandi South District, Kenya

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Abstract

It seems that most of our schools' administrative problems tend to arise from fundamental conflicts between teachers' and students' needs and motives, and the requirements of the school organization. This is because teachers as individuals often personalize their roles and needs in an attempt to have them actualized while on the other hand attempting to mould and fit them into prescribed roles in order to achieve organizational goals. Therefore an understanding of relationships existing between principals' leadership styles and the teachers' job satisfaction is critical if these problems are to be overcome. This study was an attempt to contribute in this regard by examining the relationship between leadership styles of principals and teachers' job satisfaction in Kenyan public secondary schools. The study adopted House's Path-Goal theory which suggests that the performance, satisfaction, and motivation of a group can be affected by the leadership style in place. Descriptive survey research design was used to gather data from 138 respondents selected from 501 teachers Nandi district using two questionnaires namely; (i) Teachers Questionnaire (TQ) and (ii) Principals Questionnaire (PQ). The TQ were used to collect information on teachers' perceptions of principals' leadership style and their level of job satisfaction and commitment to work while the PQ was used to uncover the type of leadership adopted by principals' administrative practice. The reliability of the instruments was estimated using Cronbach alpha. TQ yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.78 while the PQ yielded 0.83 which were deemed acceptable for research purposes. The data collected was analyzed using frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviation. The Pearson's correlation coefficient and t-test were used to establish the relationships between principal's leadership styles and teachers' job satisfaction and gender differentials at 0.05 level. This study found that principals' leadership styles have a great impact on the working atmosphere in a school and consequently the teachers' job satisfaction. The study also established that the dominant leadership style in Nandi South District was Democratic leadership style and that most teachers were satisfied with their jobs in relation to the leadership style in place.

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1 Introduction

Several administrative problems of formal organizations are cause by the fundamental conflict between the needs and motives of the mature individual and the requirements of the organization. Hoy and Miskel (1996) assert that there is interplay between individuals' attempt to personalize their roles so that they actualize their personal needs and that of the organization attempting to mould and fit them into the prescribed roles in order to achieve the organizational goals. There is a claim that public schools and school systems are not led in ways that enables them to respond to the current increasing demands that face educational institutions (Elmore, 2000). But if school systems and their leaders are to respond to the emerging demands from stakeholders and contemporary issues, then we must not only redefine the way public schools leaders practice leadership so as to mitigate an attendant loss of public confidence and serious consequences for public education, but we must understand the relationships between leadership practices and the teachers' satisfaction.

Leadership is defined as the ability to get things done with the support and cooperation of other people within the institution, organization, or system (Adesina, 2011). According to Bass (1999) leadership is an interaction between two or more members of a group that often involves a structuring or restructuring of the situation and the perceptions and expectations of members. Leadership occurs when one group member modifies the motivation or competencies of others in the group. Leadership can also be explained as a development of a clear and complete system of expectations in order to identify, evoke and use the potentials of all resources in the organization the most important of which is people (Ololube, 2004).

Therefore leadership is the kind of influence under which followers accept willingly the direction and control of another person. In other words leaders have the task of influencing followers so that they are willing to perform willingly beyond the confines dictated by the formal authority. Therefore, according to these definitions school leadership can be summed up as the principal's ability to influence teachers, students and other stakeholders so that they enthusiastically and willingly make every effort towards the achievement of school goals (Sisungo, 2002). For instance, a principal is recognized to hold leadership position in a school.

However, mere occupancy of the position is no guarantee that the incumbent is an effective leader in the sense that he/she does things, initiates new programmes and actually leads his/her followers or staff. This means that leadership can only be understood in terms of what a leader does and not who the leader is or what kind of a person he/she is (Mbiti, 2007).

Leadership styles are the patterns of behaviour used by leaders in attempting to influence group members and make decision regarding the mission, strategy, and operations of group activities. According to Clark (2000) leadership style is the manner and approach in which a leader provides direction, implements plans, and motivates people so as to achieve organizational goals. This therefore means that leadership style and the effectiveness of interactions between leaders and their subordinates are important determinants of team success in any hierarchical organization .However, leadership styles vary from one institution to another and it is essential to mention that no two leaders can administer and lead their institutions in the same way.

Holdford (2003) has noted leadership styles that exist to include; (1) Autocratic leadership style which uses rewards and punishments to influence behaviour. It is a style of leadership where the leader has a task orientation rather than a follower orientation in his/her way of controlling of others, (2) Democratic leadership style where the leader gives his/her followers a say in decisions that affect their work lives. It generates a sense of ownership by the staff in the pursuit of organizational goals, nurtures the generation of ideas, and helps build trust and respect. Further, it always seek the advice from other subordinates and tries to reach consensus within their teams (Rotemberg and Saloner, 1993), (3) Transactional leadership style with the belief that punishment and reward motivate people (Holdford, 2003).

It also assumes that when people agree to do a particular assignment they must agree to give up that part of agreement and authority to their leader who must take full control and power over the subordinates who must obey his/her orders without question, and (4) Laissez faire leadership style is the kind of leadership where there are practically no rules in the organization. It grants complete freedom to group or individual decision without the leaders' participation or direction (Nzuve, 1999).

The primary role of the leader is to merely supply the materials needed by the group he/she is leading. Instead, he/she remains apart from the group and only participates when the group has asked him/her to do so. According to Alessandro, Castro, Ray and Vereline (2004) the basis of good leadership is honorable character and selfless service to organization. Most teachers view this as that which affects the organization's objectives and their well-being. In most organisations, a respected leader tend to concentrate on what he/she is (beliefs and character), what he/she knows (job, tasks, human nature), and what he/she does (implement, motivate, provide direction). Hoy and Miskel (1996) described an effective school administrator as one who is capable of continuously giving meaningful personal and emotional support to his/her teachers, promoting self-confidence, and holding teachers in high esteem. It is such a relationship that teachers feel satisfied with their job to improve school performance (Syptak et al, 1999).

While job satisfaction is an elusive concept that has been increasingly challenged and refined particularly since the Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman study in 1959, employee job satisfaction is a topic that is receiving considerable attention by researchers and leaders alike. For instance, Roznowski and Hulin (1992) discovered that the most important information regarding an employee in an organization is validated by the measure of his/her level of job satisfaction. It is for the same reason that Bowran and Todd (1999) indicate that job satisfaction and job performance are positively correlated because the factors associated with it helps leaders in their organization to guide their employees' activities in a desired direction to achieve the organizational objectives. Therefore job satisfaction is a deciding factor in the organization's efficiency because it is an affective reaction to an individual's work situation in which the overall feeling about an individual's job or career which can be related to specific outcomes, such as productivity, ownership of school goals and increase in self esteem (Syptak et al, 1999).

In Kenya, schools like all organizations are advancing in complexity with an increasing number of factors that impact on schools management and performance. Consequently, they raise challenges for leadership styles that call for principals as leaders in these schools to create attractive and enabling working environment in order to motivate and retain effective teachers. Therefore an analysis of principals' leadership style and teachers' job satisfaction would reveal how they correlate in the promotion of school goal achievement.

Already studies by Momanyi (1996) and Sisungo (2002) found that teachers with a high job satisfaction will exhibit the following characteristics: (i) highly efficient and effective, (ii) friendly to administration, (iii) have low turnover, and (iv) always present in school. They also found that teachers with low satisfaction lead to (i) Absenteeism, (ii) apathy, (iii) reduced performance, (iv) frequent requests for transfers to other schools, (v) value material rewards, (vi) be hostile to school officials, and (vii) work towards promotion to other positions with better prospects or quitting altogether resulting to high teacher education costs.

However, the latter state of affairs may be among the problems that currently hamper the achievement of school goals and at the same time lead to waste government funds used to train those teachers who quit the profession. Therefore there is a need to uncover the relationships that exist between our teachers' perceptions of leadership styles engaged by their principals and their job satisfaction. This study is an attempt to contribute in this regard. In this study, however, relationships between those leadership styles (autocratic, democratic and transactional) reflected by the Kenyan Ministry of Education and schools board of governors' (BOGs) policy guidelines that school principals are required to use and teachers' job satisfactions were examined.

Conceptual Framework

This study was based on House (1996) Path-Goal Theory of leadership. This theory is based on the premise that an employee's perception of expectancies between his effort and performance is greatly affected by a leader's behaviour. It describes the ways that leaders use to encourage and support their followers to achieve the goal they have set by making the path they should take clear and easy. Leaders can take a strong or limited approach in each case. In clarifying the path, they may be directive or give vague hints. In removing roadblocks, they may scour the path or help the follower move the bigger blocks. In increasing rewards, they may give occasional encouragement or pave the way with a reward.

The thinking behind Path-Goal theory is that motivation is driven primarily by goals or objectives. An individual motivation is enhanced when feedback on performance is available, and job satisfaction increases when goals are made public and when they are set by the individual rather than imposed.

House Path-Goal theory assumes that leaders can change their leadership styles to meet the demands of a particular situation. The relationship between the principals' leadership styles towards teachers' job satisfaction will be assessed.
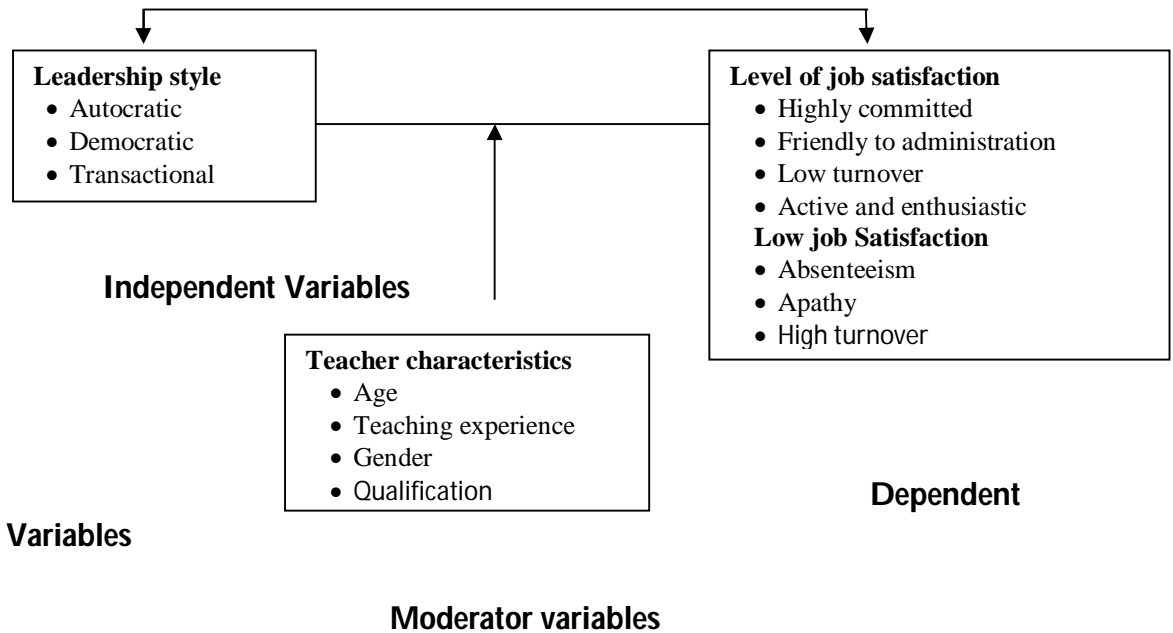
Leadership style
- Autocratic
- Democratic
- Transactional

Level of job satisfaction
- Highly committed
- Friendly to administration
- Low turnover
- Active and enthusiastic

Low job Satisfaction
- Absenteeism
- Apathy
- High turnover

Independent Variables

Teacher characteristics
- Age
- Teaching experience
- Gender
- Qualification

Dependent Variables

Moderator variables

Figure 1: Interactions of the research variables

Figure 1 above shows the interactions of the independent and moderator variable that may directly and indirectly influence the level of job satisfaction. The leadership style in place is said to directly affect the level of job satisfaction of teachers. For instance an Autocratic leadership style may lead to apathy, high turnover and absenteeism and consequently low level of job satisfaction. Democratic and transactional leadership styles may lead to high commitment to duty, good rapport with administrators, low turnover, and high degree of enthusiasm and consequently high level of job satisfaction. Other situational factors that may affect teacher job satisfaction are teachers' personal characteristics i.e. Age, Gender, Teaching experience, and Educational qualification. These situational factors will be treated in this study as moderator variables.

2. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the relationships between selected principals' leadership style and teachers' job satisfaction in selected public secondary schools in Kenya. It attempted to investigate three different leadership styles used by principals' (autocratic, democratic and transactional) and how they relate with the level of job satisfaction among teachers. It also sought to find out if there is any statistically significant difference in job satisfaction between male and female teachers in relation to the principals' leadership styles in public secondary schools in Kenya.

Research Hypotheses

HO1: There is no statistically significant relationship between autocratic leadership style and the level of teacher job satisfaction among teachers in selected public secondary schools Kenya.

HO2: There is no statistically significant relationship between democratic leadership style and teacher job satisfaction among teachers in selected public secondary schools Kenya.

HO3: There is no statistically significant relationship between transactional leadership style and teacher job satisfaction among teachers in selected public secondary schools Kenya.

HO4: There is no statistically significant difference in gender between selected principals leadership styles and teachers job satisfaction in selected public secondary schools Kenya.

3. Method

Research Design

The corelational study design type of ex-post facto research was adopted. This design was chosen because the researcher could not directly control the characteristics that served as independent and dependent variable in the study since their manifestations had already occurred and hence the study was carried out in retrospect (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007).

Study Population and Sample Size

The population for the study constituted all public secondary school principals and teachers in Nandi South District. The district has 6 (six) divisions, 16 Zones and a total of 56 secondary schools. The total number of teachers in all the secondary schools was 501 (District Education [DEO] Office, 2006). The study used stratified random sampling to select its sample. From the 501 teachers, a total of 138 teachers were selected for the study (DEO Office, 2006). All the principals of the sampled school were purposely included in the study.

Instrumentation and Validation of Instruments

Two instruments were used in the study namely; (i) Teachers' Questionnaire (TQ) and (ii) Principals' questionnaire (PTQ). The validation of the instruments was done by subjecting it to experts from the department of Curriculum, Instruction and Educational Management of Egerton University. A pilot testing of the instruments were done one school in Nandi South District that did not participate in the actual study. Using Cronbach's alpha, the piloting yielded a reliability coefficient alpha. In this study of 0.78 for the TQ instrument and 0.83 for the PTQ which were considered high enough to warrant their use in this research.

4. Results and Discussions

The analysis of data was based on the research hypotheses. The data were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative procedures. The researcher categorized instruments into homogenous groups, coded the quantitative information and summarized them into frequencies and percentages which are presented using frequencies, means and percentages in tables and graphical representation and discussed thereafter.

Relationship between Principals' Leadership Styles' and Teachers' Job Satisfaction

The theme of this study was principals' leadership styles and teachers' job satisfaction, it was therefore imperative to correlate principals' leadership style with teachers' job satisfaction. Generally, this section sought to determine whether there was a relationship between the three leadership styles identified and teachers job satisfaction.

Table 1: Correlations between Principals' Leadership Styles and Teachers' Job Satisfaction

	Teachers' job satisfaction
Principals' Leadership Styles Pearson r	0.406(**)
Significance	0.000

Critical value significant at p=0.05

The study found out that there was a positive correlation (r=0.406, *p*<0.05) between principals' leadership styles identified and teachers' job satisfaction as shown in Table 1 above. This positive correlation (r=.406) indicates that there is a statistically significant linear relationship between principals' leadership styles and teachers' job satisfaction. It means that whenever the principal employed a leadership style there was bound to be a direct response in relation to job satisfaction which was either low or high amongst the teachers. This finding supports Rad and Yarmohammadian's (2006) study which found that employee's job satisfaction significantly correlated with and was affected by the leadership style of the school managers. Since this could not give a clear indication of the direct relationships between the various leadership styles and the teachers' job satisfaction, the specific leadership styles were again correlated with teachers' job satisfaction. The findings are presented and discussed in the preceding sections.

Relationship between Autocratic leadership Style and Teachers' Job Satisfaction

The study sought to determine whether there was a statistically significant relationship between autocratic leadership style and teachers job satisfaction. Items that sought views of teachers on leadership style were analyzed, then those that were found to lean to autocratic leadership style were correlated with teachers' job satisfaction and the results were tabulated as shown below.

Table 2: Correlations between Autocratic Leadership Style and Teachers Job Satisfaction

	Teachers' job satisfaction
Autocratic Leadership Style Pearson r	-0.370(**)
Significance	0.008

Critical value significant at p=0.05

The data in Table 2 reveals that there is a statistically significant correlation between autocratic leadership style and teachers job satisfaction(r=-0.37, p<0.05). It is an indication that as the principal uses autocratic leadership style, the teachers become dissatisfied and as the autocratic leadership style increases there is an equal decrease in the level of job satisfaction among teachers. This also reveals that those teachers whose principals practiced autocratic leadership style tended to show less commitment to duty and hence the negative correlation. Therefore the null hypothesis (H01) suggesting that there is no statistical significant relationship between autocratic leadership style and teachers' job satisfaction was therefore rejected. The study notes that perhaps the percentage of principals still dominantly practicing this kind of leadership style have not placed teachers job satisfaction as a top priority because they have failed to understand that satisfied employees tended to be more productive, creative, and committed as noted by Syptak et al (1999).

Relationship between Democratic leadership Style and Teachers' Job Satisfaction

Hypothesis H02 sought to determine whether there was a statistically significant relationship between democratic leadership style and teachers job satisfaction. From a sample of 138 teachers, 77 teachers felt that the principals in the district practiced democratic leadership style. The results presented in Table 3 shows that there is a positive correlation between democratic leadership style and teachers job satisfaction (r= 0.458, p<0.05). This means that there is a statistically significant relationship between democratic leadership style used by the school principals and their teachers' job satisfaction. It is therefore apparent that a more democratic kind of leadership style elicits a higher job satisfaction index and consequently a stronger commitment to duty.

From the foregoing the study therefore rejected the null hypothesis saying that there is no statistically significant relationship between democratic leadership style and teachers job satisfaction because the relationship coefficient highly significant even at p=0.01 level.

Table 3: Correlations of Democratic Leadership Style and Teachers Job Satisfaction

	Teachers' job satisfaction
Democratic Leadership Style Pearson r	0.458(**)
Significance	0.000

** Correlation is significant at p= 0.05.

Cohen et al (2007), note that correlations ranging from 0.35 to 0.65 are statistically significant beyond the one percent level and that when correlations are around 0.40, group perception or behaviour can be predicted. The level of job satisfaction of teachers was therefore found to be high due to the fact that a majority of teachers in Nandi South district felt that their principals practiced democratic leadership style. Evidence from Table 3 agrees with sentiments put forward by Clark (2000) that democratic leadership style generates a sense of ownership by the staff in an organization's goals, nurtures the generation of ideas, and helps build trust and respect.

Relationship between Transactional Leadership Style and Teachers' Job Satisfaction

The study also through Null hypothesis 03 sought to determine if there was any statistically significant relationship between transactional leadership style used by school principals in Nandi South district and their teachers' job satisfaction. The study found that 11 teachers from the sampled 138 teachers felt that principals exhibited transactional leadership style. Data on Transactional leadership style was correlated with teachers' job satisfaction and the results were tabulated as shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Correlations of Transactional Leadership Style and Teachers' Job Satisfaction

	Teachers' job satisfaction
Leadership Style Pearson r	-0.270
Significance	0.421

Critical value not significant at p= 0.05

The information presented in Table 4 shows that there was no statistically significant correlations between transactional leadership style used by some principals in Nandi South district and their teachers' job satisfaction (p>0.05). None of the correlations between overall teachers' job satisfaction and the selected transactional leadership style were significant. This means that transactional leadership style does not improve or lower teachers' job satisfaction. This assertion is supported by Bass (1999) who commented that under transactional leadership, employees can't do much to improve their job satisfaction. Therefore the study's finding is an indication that transactional style of leadership is least effective in changing the work environment because it tends to assume that people are largely motivated by simple rewards, such as management of punishments and rewards.

Comparison of Job Satisfactions among Male and Female Teachers

The study also sought to find out if there was any statistical difference in the level of job satisfaction between male and female teachers. Male and female teachers were asked to rate their perceptions of their job satisfaction in relation to principals leadership style. The average mean for each group was M=47.12 for males and M=45.33 for females. The results revealed that there was some difference between the means of the two groups. However, this difference was found not to be statistically significant at p=0.05. The findings indicated in Table 5 shows that the mean score for job satisfaction of male teachers (M =47.13, SD= 6.32) did not statistically significantly differ from that of female teachers (M=45.33, SD=8.36) because the t-value (t=1.421, df=136, p=0.158) is not statistically significantly different at 0.05 level, therefore the null hypothesis was accepted.

Table 5: Comparison of Job Satisfaction by Gender

Gendern		mean	SD	t-value	df	p-value
Male	89	47.12	6.32	1.421	136	0.158^{ns}
Female	49	45.33	8.36			

ns = not significant at p=0.05

This study showed that the perceptions of both male and female teachers in Nandi South District are the same as regards to the principals' leadership style used and the teachers' job satisfaction. This could infer that since most principals in Nandi South district seem to imply democratic leadership style, their teachers have a positive attitude towards work and consequently a higher commitment to duty. The finding of this study confirms studies carried out by Gosnell (2000) and Sargent and Hannum (2003) whose findings found no relationship between gender and teachers' job satisfaction.

In contrast, Bishay (1996) and Mwamwenda (1997) found that female teachers were less satisfied with their jobs than male teachers. This study's findings are also consistent with other studies by McCaslin and Mwangi (1994) who found out that worker personal characteristic were not as important for motivation as were job satisfaction factors. Therefore, principals could improve teachers' morale and job satisfaction by giving less attention to personal characteristics of their teachers such as gender.

Summary of Findings

There are four significant findings that emerged from this study. For instance, a majority of principals (55.8 %) in Nandi South District practiced democratic leadership style as compared to 36.2% principals that practiced autocratic leadership style and 8.0 % who practiced transactional leadership styles. The study also found out that democratic leadership style has a significant positive correlation with teachers' job satisfaction. This finding suggests that democratic leadership style is the most appealing leadership style that attracted more followers. In addition, it does not only lead to a higher level of job satisfaction but also a teachers' high level of commitment to duty as already demonstrated by the study.

The study also revealed that a higher percentage of teachers in Nandi South District are satisfied with their jobs. For example, 50.7 % of them indicated a high level of job satisfaction as compared to 47.1% of teachers who reported just an average job satisfaction and 2.2% indicating a low job satisfaction. The high job satisfaction amongst teachers was due to the fact that most principals in Nandi South district seem to practice democratic leadership style. A second significant finding was that autocratic leadership style has a significant negative correlation with teachers' job satisfaction. This finding indicates that the more a leader employs autocratic leadership style the less satisfied will be teachers with their job satisfaction. Autocratic leadership style as explained by the literature review is a crude form of leadership style that must be used sparingly and intermittently in order to achieve organizational goals.

The third finding of the study is that transactional leadership style does not seem to have any statistical significance in relation to teachers' job satisfaction simply because most teachers viewed it as a way of managing rather than a true leadership style which focuses only on short-term tasks. Although the literature has noted that this leadership style has serious limitations for knowledge-based or creative work it remains a common style in many organizations. A major finding here is that very few principals in the district practiced this leadership style and this could explain why there is no statistical relationship with teachers' job satisfaction.

A fourth finding in this study was that there was no statistical difference between male and female teachers in their level of job satisfaction in relation to principals' leadership style in place. This finding means that there is a shared perception between male and female teachers on their job satisfaction in relation to principals' leadership style applied. Further, the study revealed that there was no significant difference between job satisfaction levels amongst male and female teachers in Nandi South District in relation to principals' leadership style practiced in their schools. Pearson correlation was calculated to describe the relationships between principals' leadership styles and overall level of job satisfaction. The magnitude of the coefficient was substantial to establish a statistically significant positive correlation between principals' leadership style and teachers' job satisfaction.

When further correlations were calculated to describe the relationship between the selected leadership styles and job satisfaction, the study found out that there was a positive correlation between democratic leadership style and teachers' job satisfaction. There was a negative correlation between autocratic leadership style and teachers' job satisfaction. Therefore hypothesis 2 and 3 were rejected because there was no statistically significant relationship between autocratic and democratic leadership style and teachers' job satisfaction. However there was no statistically significant relationship between transactional leadership style and teachers' job satisfaction. Hence hypothesis H04 was accepted.

5. Conclusions

This study found out that principals' leadership style directly affects teachers' job satisfaction. In effect, the following conclusions were reached:

(1) The research indicates that leaders with the best results in relation to teachers' job satisfaction do not rely on one leadership style, that is, they use two or more –seamlessly and in different measure depending on the prevailing situation. This means that different leadership styles are needed for different conditions, objectives and most importantly for different people,

(2) Teachers in Nandi South District public secondary schools are satisfied with their jobs .This implies that the right selection of leadership style, executed well by the leader, will result in unprecedented high job satisfaction levels by the followers and consequently high performances and productivity.

Recommendations

Based on the research finding the researcher makes the following recommendations as necessary to improve teachers' job satisfaction in relation to principals' leadership style in place:

(i) Principals need to establish a pleasant teaching and learning climate in their schools. This climate can be seen in the light on the faces of the teachers and students. It can be seen in the tolerance with which the school administration receives criticisms during the parents/teachers meetings and academic days.

(ii) Principals should improve their way of public relations and accept constructive criticism.

(iii) Principals should also be always accessible and be ready and willing to attend co-curricular activities so as to whip up support and teamwork from all members of staff because this will go a long way in improving teacher and student motivation.

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