

Leadership Styles and Turnover Intentions of Public Secondary School Teachers in Dodoma, Tanzania: The Mediating Role of Team-Member Exchange

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ABSTRACT

Using a survey study design with 133 public secondary school teachers in Dodoma, this paper explores the relationship between leadership style (both Transformational and Transactional) and teachers' turnover intentions with mediating effect of Team Member Exchange. The study found that teachers' turnover intentions have a negative relation with transformational leadership style, while transactional leadership style has a positive relationship. Also, TMX was observed to have a positive relationship with transformational leadership style, while transactional leadership style has a negative relationship. Despite teachers' turnover intentions and TMX being observed to have a negative relationship, there was no mediating effect of TMX on transformational leadership style and teachers' turnover intentions. At the same time, there was a negatively mediating effect of TMX between transactional leadership style and teacher turnover intentions. The findings of this study provided insight into a leadership style that may be used to motivate and encourage teachers to work even more complex and reduces turnover intention. The findings can help develop strategies and programmes for heads of schools to improve their leadership styles that would enable the retention of public secondary school teachers.

Keywords: *Leadership Styles; Transactional Leadership Style; Transformational Leadership Style; Team Member Exchange; Turnover Intention*

INTRODUCTION

Addressing employee turnover intentions has been a significant concern for scholars and practitioners for decades (Al-Suraihi et al., 2021). Employee turnover intention can be defined as an employee's purposeful desire to leave the organization shortly (Rabbi, Kimiya, & Farrukh, 2015). According to Saiful (2015), the turnover intention is a decision-making process that occurs before a worker leaves their employment. It has been suggested that employee turnover decisions are influenced by their plans to depart the job, which is a precursor to actual employee turnover (Mamun & Hasan, 2017; Wells & Peachey, 2011). In order to reduce turnover intention, the organization needs to adopt a suitable leadership style that will make employees feel good and stay longer in the organization (Almaaitah, 2018). Leaders can provide employees with a clear sense of direction and purpose by discussing career prospects with them. This also helps lower dysfunctional turnover rates by making employees feel valued and integral to the work team (David, 2008).

Organizations invest significant resources in recruiting and training personnel (Rahman & Nas, 2013). Making efforts to reduce employee turnover in an organization is critical because when an employee leaves, the invested resources will be lost, and an organization will need to reinvest in recruiting and training new employees (Alaarj et al., 2017). Voluntary turnovers come with high personal and organizational costs, such as the cost of losing organization-specific human capital, the cost of recruiting and training replacement personnel, diminished service quality, and other related costs (Babalola et al., 2016; Wright & Bonett, 2007). One of the biggest reasons for employee turnover is the leadership style influencing employee feelings and their decision to leave or

stay in the organization (Puni et al., 2016). Leaders, as opposed to followers who have limited power and authority, have the potential to change what needs to be changed, which can impact employee turnover intentions (Alkhawaja, 2017). The favourable exchange between team members in an organization is enhanced by the relationship between a leader and his or her subordinates through motivation and inspiration from the leader (Vermeulen et al., 2020). In this process, the team members' self-concept moves from individualism to collectivism (Zou et al., 2015). Based on role theory and social exchange theory, (Seers, 1989) developed the idea of team-member exchange (TMX), which refers to the process of mutual exchange between team members. Team member exchange (TMX) is related to work results such as job performance, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and intention to leave (Banks *et al.*,2014).

The style of leadership that leaders have adopted in organizations does not only affect the relationships between leaders and followers; it also influences the exchange of relationships between team members through emotional processes (Lai et al., 2019). Transformational and Transactional are said to be leadership styles that are more prevalent than others, particularly in public organizations, and they are required when leaders need to revitalize or change organizations(Jaroliya & Gyanchandani, 2022). In this regard, there is a need to study the existing dynamics between leadership styles and turnover intentions, as well as the mediation role of team-members exchange. Therefore, specifically this study looked at the role of team member exchange (TMX) on the relationship between leadership style (Transformational and Transactional) and intention to leave the teaching profession by

taking the experience of the public secondary school teachers in Dodoma.

Conceptual Framework

It is assumed here that leadership style is among the factors that affect employees' turnover intentions (Yamak & Eyüpoglu, 2018); both transformational and transactional leadership style affect employee's turnover intentions (Odumeru & Ogbonna, 2013). In addition, when employees receive social support from their co-workers' network, they create sentiments of belonging and emotional attachment to the organization, which boosts employee organizational commitment and reduces turnover intentions (Lu et al., 2017). In this regard, both leadership styles and TMX directly affect turnover intention or as intermediate variables. This research was accomplished by running two models whereby we wanted to know if TMX affects the relationship between both leadership styles and teacher turnover intentions.

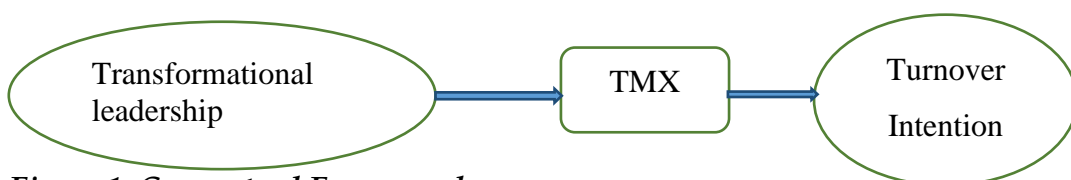


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Research Methodology

Research Design, Participants, Sample and Sampling Procedure

A survey research design was employed to collect data through structured questionnaires which were distributed to public secondary school teachers in ten selected public secondary schools in Dodoma. A convenient sampling technique was used to select teachers who happened to be available at school during the study as respondents. About 189 questionnaires were distributed, and

146 (77.25%) questionnaires were returned. However, 133 (70.37%) questionnaires were used for the analysis, while 13 (6.88%) questionnaires were not used because they had incomplete responses.

Table 1. Variables and Measurements

Variable	Measurement
<i>Transformational leadership style</i>	Transformational leadership was measured using four leadership aspects, namely; (i) Idealized Influence (ii) Inspirational Motivation (iii) Intellectual Stimulation, and (iv) Individual Consideration. A five-point Likert scale was used to measure the outcomes, i.e. 1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3= Neutral; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree
<i>Transactional leadership style</i>	Transactional leadership was measured using two transactional leadership aspects, namely; (i) Contingent reward and (ii) Management by Exception. A five-point Likert scale was used to measure the outcomes, i.e. 1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3= Neutral; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree
<i>Team-Member Exchange</i>	TMX was assessed through the use of 10-items scale adopted from (Bass et al., 2003), using a five-point Likert scale outcomes i.e. 1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3= Neutral; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree
<i>Turnover Intention</i>	The turnover intention was measured by teacher's responses using six items of teacher's turnover intention as stipulated by Bass and Avolio (1996) through the use of five points Likert scale outcomes i.e. 1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3= Neutral; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree

Source: Bass and Avolio (1996)

Data Analysis

To address the relationships between leadership styles (Transformational and Transactional Leadership), turnover intention (TI) and Team Member Exchange (TMX), six hypothesis

were tested. Researchers had two models and hypotheses were stated as indicated hereunder:

Model 1:

- *H1a: Transformational leadership style is positively related to TMX.*
- *H2a: TMX is negatively related to turnover intention (TI).*
- *H3a: The relationship between transformational leadership style and teachers' turnover intentions is mediated by TMX.*

Model 2:

- *H1b: Transactional leadership style is positively related to TMX.*
- *H2b: TMX is negatively related to turnover intention (TI).*
- *H3b: The relationship between transactional leadership style and teacher turnover intentions is mediated by TMX.*

Using a survey approach, descriptive information was gathered. A formal list of direct questions was used in a structured survey administered to the participants. The variables of interest – transformational leadership style, transactional leadership style, Team Member Exchange, and Turnover Intention were measured using five points on the Likert scale. Secondly, the variables were transformed into the mean score. Thirdly, inter-correlation between leadership styles (Transformational and Transactional), TMX, and turnover intention was also established using a correlation matrix (used to track if there is an association between the variables. After that, we regressed using an extension of PROCESS v3.5 macros for SPSS developed by Hayes(Hayes, 2013). Additionally, the bootstrapping techniques (CI=95%) were[H1] also used to establish the significance level instead of using Cronbach alfa (Hayes, 2017). This Bootstrapping technique is preferable because it gives accurate statistics by treating a sample as a population by resampling and replacing the data several times at a confidence interval of 95% (Hayes, 2013). The correlation

matrix followed a standard procedure stipulated by (Wooldridge, 2019).

Results

A reliability test was performed to test the reliability of the research instruments. Cronbach's alphas were generated using a scale test and compared to the standard cut-off point of 0.7. Traditionally, a Cronbach's alpha greater than 0.7 shows that the instrument has internal consistency. For each subscale, Cronbach alphas were generated, and the findings are shown in Table 2. According to the findings, Cronbach's alphas ranged from 0.717 to 0.949. The obtained alpha coefficients were all higher than 0.7 level, indicating that each subscale used in the study had acceptable internal consistency and thus can reliably measure what it was designed to measure.

Table 2: Cronbach’s Alpha Reliability Test

Scale	N	Alpha
TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP		
Idealized Influence (II)	3	0.949
Inspirational Motivation (IM)	3	0.892
Intellectual Simulation (IS)	3	0.792
Individual Consideration (IC)	3	0.854
TRANSACTIONAL LEADERSHIP		
Contingent Reward (CR)	3	0.869
Management by exception (MBE)	3	0.848
TEAM MEMBER EXCHANGE	10	0.903
TURNOVER INTENTION	6	0.717

Source: Field Data, (2020)

Table 3 summarizes the demographic information about the gender, age, academic qualifications and working experience

status of the respondents. Respondents included 53 (39.8%) males and 80 (60.2%) females. The majority of the respondents had Bachelors’ Degree 95 (71.4%), while 25 (18.8%) held Master degrees and 11 (8.3%) were Diploma holders. In addition, the average working experience of the respondents is 6-10 years, while the average age is below 35 years old. This distribution implies that most of the respondents were in a position to give a fair assessment of their turnover intentions concerning the style of leadership adopted by their school heads.

Table 3: Demographics

Category	Classification	Frequencies	Percentages (%)
Gender	Male	53	39.8
	Female	80	60.2
Age	Below 35	79	59.4
	36-48	48	36.1
	Above 48	6	4.5
Academic qualification	Diploma	11	8.3
	Advanced Diploma	2	1.5
	Bachelor Degree	95	71.4
	Masters	25	18.8
	PhD	0	0.0
	Working Experience	Below 5 years	28
	6-10	65	48.9
	Above 10 years	40	30.1

Correlation Results

Table 4 presents correlation results for transformational leadership (TfL), Transactional leadership (TsL), TMX, and Turnover intention (TI). It was observed that, only the mean for TMX (4.05) is a bit higher compared to other variables TfL 3.48, TsL 3.32 and TI 3.52. TI and TfL were observed to have a negative association -.47 (at $p < 5\%$), TI and TMX were also negatively associated -.26 (at $p < 5\%$). Moreover, the association of TI and TsL is positive .33 at $p < 5\%$. Likewise, the association of TMX and TsL is .19 (at $p < 5\%$). All correlation outcomes have a second value, $P < .05$, which indicates that they are statistically significant but also suggests that the results are unconvincingly accidental.

Table 4. Correlation Matrix among TfL, TsL, TMX and Turnover Intension

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
1. Transformational leadership (TfL)	3.48	.94				
2. Transactional leadership (TsL)	3.32	.85	-.01*			
3. Team Member Exchange (TMX)	4.05	.73	.46**	.19**		
4. Turnover intention	3.52	.99	-.47**	.33**	-	
						.26**

N = 133, ** Correlation is significant at $p < .05$ (2- tailed)

Regressions

A simple regression analysis was deployed to establish the relationship between leadership styles (Transformational and Transactional) and employee turnover intention. Table 5 depicts the results of multiple regression analysis between transformational and transactional leadership styles and employee turnover intention. The outcome's R-square value (coefficient of determination) of .316 indicates a significant relationship between both leadership styles (Transformational and Transactional) on employees' turnover intentions. Beta values for transformational

leadership and transactional leadership, respectively, were -.47 and .39. These results indicate that transactional leadership style has a significant positive impact on employee turnover intentions while transformational leadership has a significant negative association with employee turnover intentions. One unit change in a transactional leadership style is predicted to increase employee turnover intention by .39, while one change in a transformational leadership style may result in a drop in employee turnover intentions by -.47.

Table 5. Relationship between Leadership Styles, TMX and Turnover Intention

Model	Team Member Exchange			Turnover intentions		
	B	SE	p	b	SE	P
1						
Transformational leadership	.36	.06	<.01	-.47	.08	<.01
			R²=.21			R²=.21
			F(1, 131) = 34.99 p<0.01			F(1, 131) = 34.41 p<0.01
2						
Transactional leadership	.16	.07	<.01	.39	.10	<.01
			R²=.04			R²=.11
			F(1, 131) = 4.78 p<0.01			F(1, 131) = 16.33 p<0.01
3						
Team member exchange	-	-	-	-.32	.12	<.01
						R²=.06
						F(2, 130) = 07.77p<0.01

Table 6. Indirect effect of TMX on the relationship between leadership style(s) (transformational and transactional) and turnover intention.

Indirect effect of TMX on the relationship between transformational leadership style and Turnover intention:

	B	SE	LLCI 95%	ULCI 95%
Team Member Exchange	-.02	.04	-.0826	.0580

Indirect effect of TMX on the relationship between Transactional leadership style and Turnover intention:

Team Member Exchange	-.07	.04	-.1635	-.0030
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Relationship between Transformational Leadership Style, TMX and Turnover Intention

Model 1 of this study tested the relationship between Transformational leadership style, TMX and employees turnover intention. To test for this relationship, three hypotheses were developed and tested.

Hypothesis H1a predicted that Transformational leadership will be positively related with TMX. Results indicate that transformational leadership style had a significant positive relationship with TMX ($b = .36, p < .001$) and therefore confirms the H1a. This suggests that, transformational leadership causes an employee to change from individual perspective to the broad organizational interests. Transformational leaders have the power to influence higher quality interactions among employees in an organization by encouraging employees to actively support one another in achieving tasks set by the other team members, encouraging team

members to define and engage in team objectives, and to perform work-related duties above expectations.

Hypothesis two H2a predicted that TMX will be negative related with employees turnover intention (TI). Based on the finding above, TMX correlated negatively with employee's turnover intention ($b = -.32, p < .001$) and therefore H2a is endorsed. TMX increases employee organizational commitment and lowers turnover intentions when employees receive social support from their co-workers. Higher quality TMX also reduces turnover intentions in an organization because employees are worried to lose the good working conditions of the working environment because such relationships are not easily replaced at a new employer's. Table 5 presented the analysed data that tested the indirect relationship between leadership styles and turnover intention through TMX. In order to test for an indirect effect of TMX on the relationship between leadership styles (Transformational and Transactional leadership) and Turnover intention, we deployed Hayes (2013) bootstrapping approach through the use of PROCESS v3.5 macros for SPSS. Bootstrapping technique is preferred because it gives accurate statistics through treating a sample as a population by re-sampling and replacing it several times (5000). The bootstrapping techniques reduces the sampling anomaly by computing the confidence interval of 95% (Malingumu et al., 2016, Hayes, 2013).

Hypothesis H3a predicted that, the relationship between transformational leadership style and teachers' turnover intentions will be mediated by TMX. Results of the mediation analysis shows that all the conditions that are required for the existence of mediation do exist. However, when the mediating variable comes

in, results of the relationship was found to be non-significant ($b = -.02$; 95% CI [-0.0814, 0.0589]). Therefore, there is no mediating effect of TMX in the relationship between transformational leadership style and turnover intentions and we rejected H3a. The findings suggest that, TMX does not affect the negative relationship between transformational leadership style and turnover intention.

Relationship between Transactional leadership style, TMX and turnover intention

Model 2 of this study tested the indirect effect of TMX on the relationship between Transactional leadership style and employees turnover intention. To test for this relationship, three (3) Hypotheses were developed and tested.

Hypothesis 1b predicted that, transactional leadership style will be positively related to TMX. Results indicated that transactional leadership style was positively related to TMX ($b = .16$, $p < .001$). These results therefore confirm hypothesis H1b. Transactional leadership style is not looking forward to change the future and revitalize organizations rather to merely keeping things the same. These leaders follow up their subordinates in order to find faults and deviations in their operations. Transactional leader can be a problem with expectations whereby if the expectation of one person is not met, then exchange process among employees in an organization will be interrupted (Ojokuku et al., 2013).

The second hypothesis (H2b) under model two predicted that, TMX will be negatively related with employee's turnover intention. Based on the findings above, TMX correlated negatively with employee's turnover intention ($b = -.32$, $p < .001$); therefore, these results endorsed H2b. When employees receive social

support from their co-workers, they also increase organizational commitment and lowers turnover intentions. Employees are likely to increase higher turnover intentions if they don't receive higher quality working relationship with peers(Lee & Mowday, 1987).

Hypothesis 3b predicted that there will be an indirect relationship between transactional leadership and turnover intention through TMX. Results of the mediation analysis indicated that the relationship between transactional leadership style, and turnover intentions is mediated by Team Member Exchange (TMX) ($b = -.07$; 95% CI [-0.1635,-0.0030]) and, thus confirms H3b.The findings therefore suggest that, the higher degree of team member exchange lowers employees turnover intentions regardless of leadership style adopted.

Discussion

This study explored the relationship between transformational leadership and transactional leadership styles and turnover intentions of Public secondary school teachers in Dodoma. Specifically, the study examined the role of Team Member Exchange (TMX) in mediating the relationships between transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and turnover intention. Findings show that the transformational leadership style has a negative relationship with teacher turnover intentions in the studied public secondary schools. This means that a transformational leadership style is preferable to reduce teacher turnover intention in public secondary schools. The more transformational leadership style is used in managing public secondary schools, the more reduction of teachers' turnover intentions. This finding concurs with Gul et al. (2012), Lim et al.(2017) and Naseer et al.(2018), who found a negative relationship

between transformational leadership style and employee turnover intentions. Transactional leadership style was found to have a positive relationship with teachers' turnover intentions.

This suggests that heads of schools that practice transactional leadership style increase the turnover intentions among public secondary school teachers. Transactional leader focuses on performance and reward, then exchange for a suitable response that motivates employees to enhance their performance (Kim Siew, 2017). To drive employees to perform at their best, transactional leader deploys a variety of incentives and disciplinary power. Incentives and disciplinary power increase tendencies that normally frustrate and demotivate employees. Generally, teachers in public secondary schools rarely receive rewards and appreciation for their teaching job; even if they are rewarded occasionally, the reward is not satisfying. As a result, these teachers do not find leadership as a helpful that tries to get the work done by giving contingent awards. This may be a reason for the positive relationship between transactional leadership and turnover intentions among public secondary school teachers in Dodoma. These findings are consistent with studies by Long et al.(2016) and Naseeret *al.* (2018) who found a positive relationship between transactional leadership style and employees' turnover intentions. Likewise, this study found a non-significant indirect relationship between transformational leadership style, TMX, and teacher turnover intentions in Dodoma. These findings did not support hypothesis three H3a, which predicted that there would be an indirect relationship between Transformational leadership and turnover intention through TMX. Turnover intentions correlate negatively with the Team Member Exchange (TMX) and the transformational leadership style. These results concur with

Gul et al.(2012) and Limet *al.* (2017). Gulet *al.*(2012) studied leadership styles and turnover intentions of public sector employees of Lahore (Pakistan) with the mediating effect of affective commitment.

They discovered that transformational leadership style did not affect turnover through affective commitment as a mediator; instead, there was a direct negative effect of transformational leadership on turnover intentions. Also, Lim et al. (2017) studied the impact of leadership on turnover intentions with the mediating role of organizational commitment and job satisfaction. Their study revealed that organizational commitment did not mediate the relationship between transformation leadership and turnover intentions of employees. Thus, this is a new finding since the previous studies did not use TMX as a mediator. On the other hand, this study discovered an indirect relationship between transactional leadership TMX and turnover intention. This finding supported hypothesis H3b, which predicted that TMX would mediate the relationship between transactional leadership style and turnover intention. Team member exchange had a negative correlation with employee's turnover intention while turnover intention correlated positively with transactional leadership. Therefore, more transactional leadership may result in less team member exchange among public secondary school teachers, which in turn may raise teacher's intentions to quit teaching profession. These findings are consistent with the study by Naseer et al. (2018) who discovered a partial mediation effect between affective commitment and staff nurse turnover intentions. Also, the findings of the present study are consistent with the study by Gul et al. (2012) who discovered an indirect relationship between

transactional leadership style and employee turnover intentions through affective commitment.

Conclusions

The survival and growth of the educational sector depend most on teachers among other resources. Due to high levels of technological advancement, employees have evolved into being smarter, more sensitive, and aware of working environments that will meet both their demands and organizational goals. This research studied the relationship between leadership styles and turnover intention with the mediating effect of team member exchange. Based on the results of this study, we can recommend that school heads should employ a transformational leadership style as an effective tool to decrease the turnover intention and turnover rate in public secondary schools. Additionally, we recommend that the management of public secondary schools should make up the strategies and activities that can promote transformational leadership. This is because transformational leadership creates a higher level of trust and confidence between leaders and subordinates and therefore may reduce turnover intentions. Also, this study's findings have underlined the importance of team member exchange in an organization. Team member exchanges were seen to relate negatively to employees' turnover intention. The higher quality working relationship is beneficial for individual employee performance as well as their job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Working well together is facilitated by the positive relationship that employees have and when individuals work together in an organization decreases any desire and intent of quitting employment. Employees are likely to increase higher turnover intentions if they don't receive higher quality working relationships with peers.

Recommendations

This study noted that formal organizations aspire to have stable human capital so as to thrive and flourish in a competitive environment. In accomplishing the goals of schools, teachers are necessary resources. In this regard, retaining teachers and mitigating turnovers is key to ensuring the survival and sustainability of the school. Thus, it is recommended that school heads should be aware of the leadership style that encourages teachers to work even harder devoid of turnover intentions. School heads should be able to influence higher quality interactions between teachers by encouraging them to actively support one another in achieving tasks set by the other team members, encouraging team members to define and engage in team objectives, and to perform work-related duties above expectations

Limitations and Future Research

Although we found a significant influence between leadership styles and public secondary school teacher's turnover intentions in Dodoma as well as mediating effect of TMX on the relationship between transactional leadership style and turnover intentions, this study had some limitations. For this study, information was gathered from ten selected public secondary schools in Dodoma City. As a result, the findings of this study describe the circumstances of public secondary school teachers in other Tanzanian cities or regions. Also, sampling technique used in this study may have a variety of drawbacks, including the potential for bias and the inability to generalize the findings.

On the other hand, the focus of the present study was only on transactional and transformational leadership, ignoring other styles of leadership such as laissez-faire, charismatic, autocratic,

and servant leadership. The intention of public secondary school teachers to leave their jobs may also be impacted by these leadership styles. The impact of the two studied leadership styles (Transformational and transactional) may be different in other organizational contexts such as higher learning institutions or non-academic institutions. Thus, future research may focus on the impacts of leadership style on private secondary school, higher learning institutions or even non-academic institutions. Researchers may also study other leadership styles such as laissez-faire, charismatic, autocratic, and servant leadership on how they may influence turnover intentions of employees. It is also recommended that future study may expand the sample by adding other regions of Tanzania.

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