



Principals' Leadership Styles and Secondary School Teachers' Organizational Commitment in Ethiopia

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Abstract

This study aimed to examine the perceived relationship between principals' leadership styles and secondary school teachers' organizational commitment in Ethiopia. A descriptive survey research design was employed. A total of 287 sample teachers were selected using a multistage sampling technique. Data were collected using two standardized questionnaires, namely Bass & Avolio's (1997) Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) and Allen & Meyer's (1990) Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ). The data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The results revealed that the transactional leadership style was predominantly practiced in Ethiopian secondary schools. On the other hand, the findings showed that transactional and transformational leadership styles had positive and statistically significant relationships with the organizational commitment dimensions. Nonetheless, the laissez-faire leadership style was found to be negatively related to teachers' normative commitment. Finally, results were discussed, and recommendations were forwarded to improve teachers' commitment.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Organizations all around the world are still up in the air, out of objectives. In accomplishing these objectives, the job of employees couldn't possibly be more significant (Gberevbie, 2017). This is mostly because institutions, regardless of the various resources they have (money, land, innovation, time, and materials), are unable to achieve their specified goals without the involvement of their human resources.

However, it has been demonstrated that a variety of factors, including inventive compensation plans, access to representative benefits, a pleasant workplace, an organization's guiding principles, opportunities for professional success, recognition, and employee commitment, among others, are responsible for enhancing teachers' organizational

responsibility (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014; Popli & Rizvi, 2016). Furthermore, studies have shown that the primary component accountable for instructors' organizational responsibility is leadership, which is linked to the pioneer's approach (Trottier *et al.*, 2008; Yasir *et al.*, 2016).

A school principal's responsibility is to ensure that the environment for learning and teaching is inspiring. The principal of the school works to alter the structures and routines of education compellingly and constructively. Working with teachers and guiding them to improve the educational and learning processes are both aspects of educational leadership. To achieve learning results, high-caliber leadership and instruction are essential.

Gracia-Spirits *et al.* (2008) claim educational leadership has a favorable and intentional impact on the teaching-learning process. The seamless and

efficient operation of the educational framework is a prime example of exceptional leadership on the part of the school administration. The school principal's leadership style shows how they relate to their teachers. Every principal behaves and collaborates with his or her teachers uniquely.

The school authorities have been criticized for adopting an authoritarian style of leadership, which frequently elicits unfavorable reactions from their teachers and impedes amicability between the two (Akinbode & Fagbohunde, 2012). Staff demotivation and the breakdown of teachers' authoritative roles are two consequences of these leadership philosophies. Because of this, teachers are alienated from the organizations and have no quick opportunity to leave them for unknown reasons (Nasurdin *et al.*, 2014).

Significantly perceptive thought has been given to the relationship between teaching responsibilities and leadership philosophies. The majority of studies on school leadership have identified distinct leadership philosophies that leaders use to guide educational institutions (Kelly & MacDonald, 2019; Sudha *et al.*, 2016; Yukl, 2013). The most comprehensive type of leadership style at the moment is Full-Range Leadership (FRL) (transformational, transactional, and *laissez-faire*) (Abasilim, 2014; Rehman *et al.*, 2012; Rukmani *et al.*, 2010). Additionally, representatives in organizations exhibit three important types of commitment (affective, normative, and continuance) (Othman *et al.*, 2013).

Furthermore, regardless of the type of workplace, the majority of studies examining the relationship between various leadership philosophies (transformational, transactional, and *laissez-faire*) and teachers' organizational commitment have found that the former have positive effects on commitment while the latter have negative effects (Abasilim *et al.*, 2018a; Abasilim *et al.*, 2018b; Dariush *et al.*, 2016; Fasola *et al.*, 2013; Garg & Ramjee, 2013; Wiza & Hlanganipai, 2014).

To summarize, the leadership style of school leaders and different partners is the core of authoritative responsibility at any level. School principals might follow different leadership styles, and teachers' authoritative responsibilities vary in like manner. In

this review, due consideration was given to the full range of leadership styles (transactional, transformational, and *laissez-faire*). Focusing on the relationship between principal leadership styles and how they affect Ethiopian secondary school teachers' organizational commitment is manageable in this regard. Henceforth, it is significant for clarifying the issues at schools and tracking down answers for them. The study has also made an effort to look into the link between the principals' leadership styles used in their schools and the organizational commitment of the teachers.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Schools are the main organizations in the instructional framework. A central figure who has a significant degree of inspiration is expected to satisfy the objectives of the learning process. Researchers in organizational commitment show that principals play an extraordinary role in raising the responsibility of teachers (Aydin *et al.*, 2013). Principals perceive teachers' viability and proficiency as their top priorities when it comes to achieving school goals. The principal is responsible for everything that occurs in the school, and the way he or she works with the staff and interacts with them affects how satisfied the teachers are with their work and how they feel about their commitments to the school, to their profession, and teaching.

Moreover, a proficient and talented teacher is expected to accomplish school objectives. Be that as it may, how to use and prepare quality teachers matters. Enlisting, choosing, arranging, and setting representatives are, by all accounts, not the only basic issues for the accomplishment of school objectives. To use such assets, leadership style is the essential and most significant element for the ideal usage of the labor force, which is an impression of organizational responsibility.

As a result of different investigations by researchers, organizational commitment (OC) has crucial consequences for teachers and schools. According to Aydin *et al.* (2013), schools are moving toward structures in which rank denotes responsibility rather than authority, and the supervisor's goal is to convince rather than command. As a result, principals need to persuade their subordinates, col-

leagues, and superiors to support their goals and urge them to follow through with their decisions to be effective. Similarly, the organization must understand what factors have a significant impact on teacher dedication.

Furthermore, for a school to successfully implement plans, establish a competitive edge, and optimize human resources, leadership styles that foster teacher dedication are critical. As a result, if the state of commitment is the functional product of the leadership style in existence, committed teachers are a crucial success factor for schools to reach their targeted goals. Leadership styles are also important for the school's effectiveness since they motivate teachers and communicate the school's strategic goals and policies (Keskes, 2014; Kelly & MacDonald, 2019).

Ethiopian secondary schools put a strong emphasis on delivering top-notch instruction, research, and development. The organizational culture, teacher-motivation strategies, and rules and regulations of these institutions are distinctive. A deeper understanding of the relationship between leadership styles and organizational commitment is required to develop a leadership style that would encourage and strengthen organizational commitment at the school level.

3,739 secondary schools in Ethiopia offer instruction. The main issues that secondary schools in the nation have had to deal with are low student academic achievement, high teacher turnover, a lack of motivation and commitment on the part of teachers, a lack of communication between school principals and the administrative and teaching staff, and high rates of dropout and repetition.

As a result, this article tried to address the following crucial questions:

1. What type of leadership style is most common in Ethiopian secondary schools?
2. How committed are secondary school teachers in Ethiopia?
3. How much do leadership styles influence teachers' commitment in Ethiopian secondary schools?

2 Literature Review

Teachers may be forced to resign as a result of their superiors' ineffective leadership approaches. It was discovered that transformational leadership has a strong and significant impact on teachers' organizational commitment to change and reform. Transformational leadership styles in school principals have a good impact on their instructors and organizational dedication. Linking new educational policies and teacher behavior will require the expertise of a trained and experienced school principal. Every successful school requires a strong principal who can increase teacher dedication and job happiness (Mowday, 1998; FDRE, 1994; Mottoh, 2015).

By highlighting the relationship between teachers' efforts and goal achievement, promoting values that are related to goal achievement, and increasing personal commitment on the part of both followers and leaders to the organization's ultimate common vision, mission, and goals, transformational leaders have a strong ability to influence organizational commitment. They can influence their followers' organizational commitment by encouraging critical thinking through creative approaches, involving them in decision-making processes, and inspiring loyalty. They can also do this by recognizing and appreciating the unique needs of each follower to help them reach their full potential (Keskes, 2014).

Transactional leadership, on the other hand, has no meaningful association with organizational commitment. According to Hayward *et al.* (2004), there is no association between transactional leadership and affective, normative, or continuous commitment. Furthermore, their findings show that transformational leadership styles are more likely to inspire subordinate commitment than transactional and *laissez-faire* leadership styles. Organizational commitment and transformational leadership are closely related in this way. Empirical and meta-analytic studies have shown that those who follow transformational leaders are more likely to be committed to their organizations and exhibit fewer withdrawal tendencies (Yukl, 2013). The commitment of teachers has a positive impact on student learning outcomes and school effectiveness. Researchers in business and other fields have developed a theory of organi-

zational commitment, and they have identified three types of it: affective, normative, and continuance. However, Singh and Billingsley (1998) defined three categories of teacher commitment: teaching commitment, student commitment, and institution commitment. Teachers who are dedicated to the organization’s ideals work tirelessly to achieve them. They are more zealous and enthusiastic at work. Teachers’ tardiness, absenteeism, and turnover are all symptoms of a low level of dedication on their part. The principal’s leadership style has a big impact on how the school is run overall, especially on how committed the teachers are to the group.

Conceptual Framework

The Full Range Leadership (FRL) and Organizational Commitment (OC) models created by Bass and Avolio (1985) and Meyer and Allen (1990), respectively, were synchronized and modified for this study. With the use of the MLQ and OCQ, the FRL and organizational commitment (OC) were researched to assess the effect of principals’ leadership styles on teachers’ commitment in Ethiopian secondary schools. The link between FRLS and OC dimensions is depicted in the diagram.

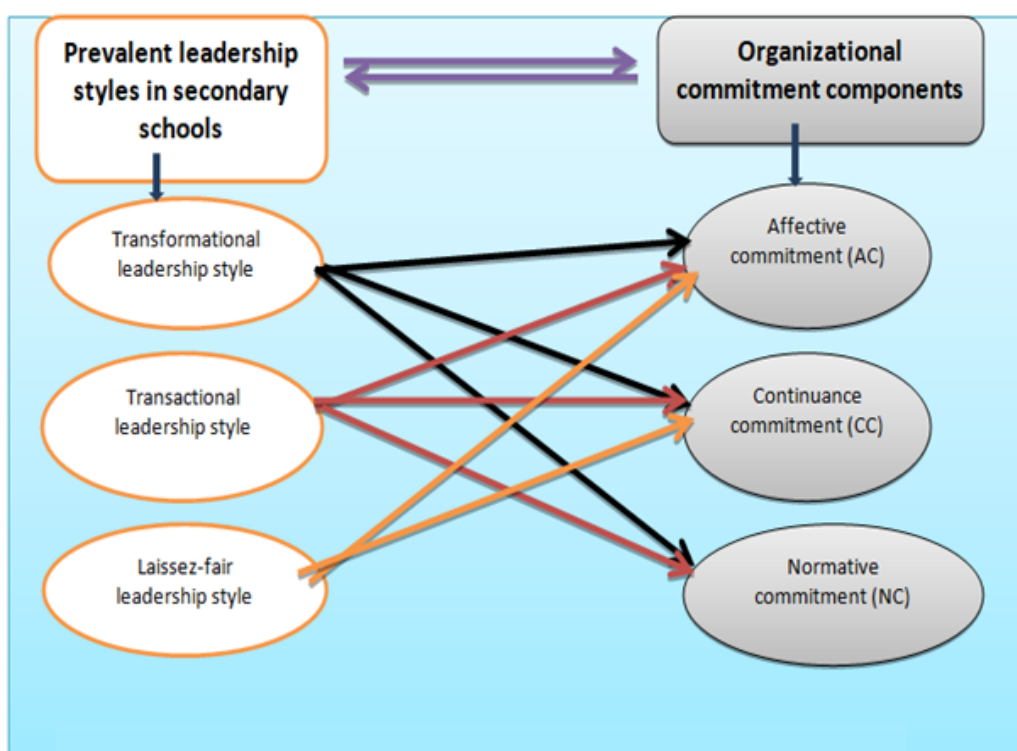


Figure 1: Conceptual framework of the study

3 Research Design and Method

3.1 Research design

This study employed a descriptive survey research design. Descriptive survey research design is concerned with finding what is and is meant to describe a behavior or type of subject rather than looking for specific relationships among two or more variables (Creswell, 2007; Creswell & Plan Clark, 2011). Williams (2007) also defines a descriptive research design as a research strategy that seeks to examine the situation as it exists in its current state. Fur-

thermore, descriptive research design deals with issues related to current phenomena in terms of conditions, practices, beliefs, processes, relationships, or trends (Orodho, 2005; Salaria, 2012). In the context of this study, a survey was used for collecting, recording, and analyzing data obtained through the questionnaires, which sought to describe and determine Ethiopian secondary teachers’ perceptions of the effects of leadership styles on their organizational commitment.

3.2 Target Population

The term "population" refers to all research participants or units of interest who share particular traits (Silverman, 2005). The study comprises five regions (Amhara, Oromia, SNNPR, Gambela, and Somali) out of nine regional states and one city administration (Addis Ababa) out of two city administrations by using a simple random sampling technique. From each region and city administration, one province/*zone* was selected, and from each province/*zone*, one district/*woreda*, and from each district/*woreda*, one high school was selected by using a multistage sampling technique.

Table 1: Sample size of the study

Secondary schools	X1	X2	X3	X4	X5	X6	Total
Number of teachers in each school	109	242	139	156	184	126	956
Sample size of teachers selected from each school	32	73	42	47	55	38	287

3.4 Data Collection

To acquire relevant data for the study, the researcher used two standardized questionnaires. The leadership style was assessed using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) developed by Bass and Avolio (1997) and the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) developed by Allen and Meyer (1990). To determine the validity and reliability of the data-gathering instruments, a pilot study was carried out. The pilot was carried out at Dilla Secondary School in Gedeo province/*zone*, Southern Nations Nationalities and People Regional State (SNNPR) of Ethiopia. Accordingly, the reliability of MLQ was tested to be 0.83 of the Cronbach alpha value, which is considered capable of coming up with valid and reliable results for the study.

On the other hand, the validity of the tool was made valid using experts' opinions and previous research results (Northouse, 2013). Besides, Allen and Meyer's (1990) Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ), which consists of the three major components of commitment, such as affective, continuance, and normative, was used to measure teachers' organizational commitment for this study. In this instance, the pilot study found that each organizational commitment questionnaire (OCQ) subscale's internal reliability was greater

3.3 Sampling Procedure

The process of picking a sample from a specific population to correctly represent that population is known as sampling (Burns, 2010). Stratified random sampling was used to select 287 secondary school teachers in the target schools using a sample size determination formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{e^2(N-1)+1}$$

Where N is the total number of the teacher and e^2 is the probability of adjusting error occurrence when taking the sample.

than 0.70, which is generally regarded as indicating high levels of internal consistency reliability (Griffith, 2015).

3.5 Data analysis techniques

The quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics in the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 21. The mean and standard deviation in descriptive statistics were computed. On the other hand, the Pearson correlation was employed to determine the correlation between teachers' organizational commitment and principals' leadership styles.

4 Results

4.1 Leadership Styles in Secondary Schools

Table 2 shows descriptive data for the five transformational leadership variables, three transactional leadership aspects, and one *laissez-faire* element that respondents stated.

According to Table 2, the mean values for each of the transformational leadership variables ranged from 2.90 to 22.32; meanwhile, the mean values for transactional leadership components ranged from 2.68 to 1.64. However, the mean value for *laissez-faire* leadership was 1.08.

Table 2: Mean scores for the full range components of leadership styles

Full range leadership	Teacher respondents		
	N	Mean	SD
1 Transformational Leadership	287	2.54	1.22
Idealized influence	287	2.33	1.34
Idealized behavior	287	2.32	1.29
Inspirational motivation	287	2.90	1.06
Intellectual stimulation	287	2.62	1.16
Individual consideration	287	2.54	1.26
2 Transactional leadership	287	2.68	1.26
Contingent reward	287	2.68	1.17
Management by exception active	287	2.63	1.17
Management by exception passive	287	1.64	1.44
3 Laissez fair	287	1.08	1.31

4.2 Organizational Commitments in Secondary Schools

Table 3 shows the mean scores of the three dimensions of organizational commitment as perceived by the teachers.

According to the aforementioned findings, affective commitment had the lowest mean score of 2.38 and

normative commitment had the highest mean score of 2.62.

As a result, affective commitment is the least prevalent type of organizational commitment among secondary school teachers in the present study.

Table 3: Mean Scores on the Dimensions of Organizational Commitment

Dimensions	N	Mean	SD
Affective commitment	287	2.38	1.29
Continuance commitment	287	2.47	1.26
Normative commitment	287	2.62	1.15

4.3 The Relationship between Principals’ Leadership Styles and Teachers’ Organizational Commitment

A Pearson correlation was used to examine the relationship between the three leadership philosophies and the three organizational commitment components. The information as evaluated by the teacher respondents is shown in Table 4, which also shows their leadership styles and organizational commitments in the context of the schools.

According to Table 4, transformational leadership has a somewhat positive statistical correlation with the three organizational commitment characteristics. The Pearson correlation coefficients (*r*) for

affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment were 354, 400, and 407, respectively. Similarly, the transactional leadership style and organizational commitment of teachers were positively and significantly related. Accordingly, the Pearson coefficients (*r*) for the affective, continuance, and normative commitments were 454, 472, and 559, respectively. This shows that transactional leadership and organization commitment are moderately related to affective and continuance commitments. The normative commitment of teachers and transactional leadership, however,

was comparatively stronger than affective and continuance commitment.

The findings in Table 4 showed an inverse correlation between the style and teachers' normative commitment, as well as a significant statistical as-

sociation between the *laissez-faire* leadership style and affective commitment with poor strength. On the other hand, there was no correlation between the *laissez-faire* leadership style and teachers' affective or continuance commitments.

Table 4: Pearson correlation matrix between principals' leadership styles and teachers' commitment dimensions

Leadership styles	Organizational Commitment		
	Affective	Continuance	Normative
Transformational	.354**	.400**	.407**
Transactional	.454**	.472**	.559**
<i>Laissez-faire</i>	0.021	-0.049	-.101*

* Correlation is significant at the $p < 0.05$ level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the $p < 0.01$ level (2-tailed)

In sum, the results in Table 4 showed that the three leadership styles had significant relationships with teachers' organizational commitment. Though the strength of the correlation was weak and moderate, the link between *laissez-faire* leadership and normative commitment was also in a reverse direction.

5 Discussion

Concerning the aggregate data scores for transformational components, they were all below what Bass and Avolio (1997) consider "optimal" levels for an effective leadership style, although transactional factors were nearly compatible. Transformational variables should have a mean of 3.0 or higher in the suggested scores for the most effective leaders. The mean transformational scores ranged from 2.90 to 1.08.

Bass and Avolio (1997) suggested a mean score of 2 to 3 for all the elements when it came to the transactional leadership style. As a result, the mean score for the sample data in this study is 2.68, which is close to the suggested number. Management-by-exception-active received a score of 2.68, while contingent reward received a score of 2.63. The stated values for *laissez-faire* and management-by-exception passive are both less than 2.00, while the mean scores for this study vary from 1.64 to 1.08.

Respondents said their principals did not exhibit the "optimal" levels of transformational leadership style, according to the patterns of scores described

above. These behaviors include promoting pride, inspiring a shared purpose, speaking upbeat, fostering inventiveness, and placing a strong emphasis on mentoring.

The average contingent reward score, on the other hand, shows that teachers believed their principals performed a better-than-average job of expressing expectations and recognizing achievements. Management-by-exception-active mean value supports this, demonstrating that teachers believe their principals take prompt corrective action when mistakes are made. Additionally, the mean ratings for management-by-exception (passive) and *laissez-faire* management indicate that several teachers felt their direct district education heads did not take corrective action.

Consequently, teachers felt that transactional leadership ($M = 2.68$) was slightly more practiced than transformational ($M = 2.54$) and *laissez-faire* ($M = 1.08$) leadership styles. This contradicts the finding by Trottier *et al.* (2008) that the general concept of leadership effectiveness favors transformational leadership slightly more.

When describing how to use their Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) measures, Allen and Meyer (1990) make no mention of average, necessary, ideal, or expected means for affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Instead, Brockner *et al.* (1992), Shore and Wayne (1993), Hunt and Morgan (1994), and Meyer *et al.*

(2004) looked into the pattern of those findings, the level of influence they had, and the relationship between the various levels of organizational commitment and the outcomes under study. Many of them argued that the required pattern should be ordered in the following sequence, going from highest to lowest scores: affective, normative, and continuance commitment.

Accordingly, the findings of this study showed that the pattern for mean scores differs from the above-mentioned ones, with normative commitment receiving the greatest score, followed by continuance commitment, and finally affective commitment receiving the lowest score. This suggests that teachers have a low level of affective commitment to their organizations, despite the fact that they perceive themselves to be members of these organizations. The highest mean of normative commitment, on the other hand, indicates that teachers believe principals have devoted most often to mentoring, teaching, and showing the ropes compared to other organizational commitment criteria.

Additionally, the leadership style is related to how teachers perceive their continual commitment to the school and the need to remain there. Continuance commitment is more likely to be linked to transferable skills, education, retirement funds, status, and job security, as well as other career options (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Hunt & Morgan, 1994; Meyer *et al.*, 2004). The results of this study, however, contradict those of Lo *et al.* (2010), who found that transformational leadership was a greater predictor of affective, continuation, and normative commitment than transactional leadership.

In psychological terms, transformational school leaders have strong favorable associations with teacher dedication, according to this study. This is consistent with the findings of Lo *et al.* (2010), who discovered a stronger correlation between organizational commitment traits and a transformational leadership style. Given that transformational leadership is generally related to emotional components, it's no surprise that affective, continuous, and normative teacher commitment are the highest in transformational leadership. As a result, it can be concluded that Ethiopian secondary schools have a substantial association between teacher dedication

and transformative leadership styles. A transformational leader is more likely to win followers' loyalty to the organization when they support them in achieving their full potential and meeting their higher-order expectations (Bass, 1997).

The relationship between transactional leadership style and normative commitment is favorable, demonstrating that awards, identifying issues, and positive reinforcement are related to how teachers feel about the school's need to retain them (Bass & Avolio, 1993). This link also shows that principals have a significant influence on teachers' moral ties to the school and feelings of duty (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Shukla, 2014).

Similar to this, the strong association between transactional leadership style and affective and continuance commitment points to a link between certain styles and how teachers perceive their need for and desire to stay with the organization. These behaviors include bringing issues to attention, exchanging rewards for meeting objectives, and delaying action until problems become serious. These personality traits are more often associated with successful outcomes (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Bass & Avolio, 1993; Shann, 2001).

The results of this study match those of Buciuniene and Kudiene (2008), who discovered a solid and advantageous relationship between a transactional leadership style and affective, continual, and normative commitment. It nevertheless goes against the authors' conclusions regarding affective and normative commitment. Additionally, the results supported those of Ponnu and Tennakoon (2009) and Lo *et al.* (2010), who discovered a favorable relationship between transactional leadership and teachers' organizational commitment.

The finding by Marmaya *et al.* (2011) that transactional leadership style is related to emotional commitment is supported by the strong positive relationship between transactional leadership style and normative commitment. Buciuniene and Kudiene's (2008) findings, which revealed that transactional leadership had a beneficial association with affective and normative commitments based on empirical evidence, are in conflict with the results of the current study.

Finally, it may be concluded that affective and continuance commitments are unaffected by *laissez-faire* leadership style because there is little evidence linking these commitments to it. As a result, in secondary schools, affective teachers' commitment is adversely correlated with attributes including ignoring challenges, showing indifference, and ignoring accomplishments.

Laissez-faire leadership, on the other hand, has a statistically significant association with affective or long-term commitments. These nearly non-existent connections show that leadership characteristics such as disregarding difficulties, seeming uninvolved, displaying indifference, and neglecting accomplishments are unrelated to how teachers feel about the need to stay in secondary schools.

Laissez-faire leadership, which is considered to have a non-intervening nature, had negative implications for normative teachers' commitment but none for others. The findings are in line with previous research, which shows that *laissez-faire* leadership has little effect on emotional or continuation commitments while having a considerable negative impact on normative commitment (Buciuniene & Kudiene, 2008). Similarly, the study revealed a lack of relationships between *laissez-faire* leadership styles and teachers' affective and continuation commitments (Popli & Rizvi, 2016).

6 Conclusion

The outcome of the leadership style and organizational commitment article is explained in this section. Transformational and transactional leadership styles are used to evaluate leaders. This necessitates a change in leadership style to promote teachers' organizational commitment. The results imply that leadership could support organizational commitment through the use of transformational and transactional leadership styles; the first dimension of the independent variable, where the transformational style has a positive relationship with organizational commitment; and the second dimension, where the transactional leadership style has a positive relationship with teacher organizational commitment. Positive relationships exist between teachers' organizational commitment and the independent variable's two aspects.

The effect of leadership style on teachers' organizational commitment is undeniable. As a result, the findings of this study are relevant to educational institutions' leadership training and policymakers. Teachers should be able to openly express and share their thoughts and collaborate on key decisions in an open and welcoming environment, which school administrators should foster. Teachers' tension will be reduced, and their activity will rise. It has been determined that for school principals to function at their best, they must make use of opportunities to strengthen organizational commitment.

Recommendations

The following recommendations for practitioners and researchers were made based on the outcomes of descriptive and correlational analysis. As a result, principals who want to improve organizational commitment should think about the following:

1. Provide teachers with an effective leadership style that will increase the academic achievements of the students and organizational commitment.
2. Encourage their teachers to be more satisfied to improve organizational commitment.
3. Make principals aware of the full range of leadership styles to boost levels of organizational commitment among teachers by creating an information exchange system that allows them to improve their knowledge and skills for competence and organizational commitment. In this context, theoretical and practical seminars should be provided in partnership with MOE, the Regional Education Bureau, universities, and principals on the issue.
4. It is hoped that the findings will spur future research into other equally essential factors that influence leadership style. The influence of leadership style on organizational commitment was the main area of interest in this study, which focused on one particular form of work-related behavior. As a result, future studies in this area could expand to include other dimensions related to teacher dedication.

5. In educational institutions, much more research is required. It could be repeated in a variety of secondary education settings. Additional research might be done with private secondary schools from a wider range of backgrounds, as well as a comparison of all employees. Another aspect that has to be addressed is leadership and teacher commitment.

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Ethical Approval

Consent was sought from the research participants. Confidentiality was maintained in reporting information.

Declaration of Competing Interest

This research was exclusively funded by Dilla University. The university will not take any responsibility for the results beyond reporting purposes. The researcher is affiliated with Dilla University as a teaching and research staff. I also confirm that intellectual property rights (IPR) and other ethical principles were adhered to.

Availability of the Data

I would like to inform the journal managers that a set of field data is available and will be shared whenever requested.

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