

THE EFFECT OF ETHICAL LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOURS ON TEACHERS' MOTIVATION IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KARAGWE DISTRICT, TANZANIA

ABSTRACT

This study was grounded on social exchange theory to determine the effect of ethical leadership behaviors on teachers' motivation in primary schools in Karagwe District Council. It was also guided by three research hypotheses which were tested using structural equation modeling (SEM) techniques. It employed constructivism as research paradigm; quantitative research approach and descriptive research design with 95 respondents. Data were collected through questionnaires. The results revealed that ethical leadership behaviors positively affect teachers' motivation. It was also learned that leaders exhibited ethical behaviors based on honesty, justice, integrity and transparency in performing their managerial roles. Leaders' practices (e.g. care, value and fairness) indicated the degree to which teachers are motivated. The results call for managerial attention especially ensuring that teachers are well motivated through ethical leadership and human resource management practices.

Keywords: Ethical Leadership, Ethical Leadership Behaviors, Teachers' Motivation

INTRODUCTION

The main objective of establishing the School Quality Assurance Department under the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) by the Tanzania government, was to render effective provision of quality education. This has to be conducted under School Quality Assurance Officers (SQAOs) and through involving the community members within the given society. Despite the power that was given to school quality assurance department under the

Ministry of Education, still the department has not fulfilled its duties successfully. For instance, one of the roles of SQAOs is to supervise and control school budget and other activities related to fund such as supervision of school projects including building classes, library, dormitories and laboratories. However, the fund which had been allocated by the government and other education stakeholders had been misused by the unethical school administrators and sometimes directed by the members of school committee. This had resulted into poor infrastructure within the public primary school, hence hinder provision of quality education (Machumu&Agaptus, 2012). Moreover, there have been teachers` malpractices in academic endeavours and in handling students in schools (Kiluvia&Ngirwa, 2017).

Hence, ethical leadership behavior cannot be underestimated as it presupposes teachers` success; outcomes like perceived leaders` effectiveness, employees` job satisfaction as well as their willingness to give information on the setbacks hinder the management system. Motivational factors have a significant effect to both teachers` job performance and organization outcomes in educational institutions (Mkumbo, 2012). According to a survey 157000 men and women are leaving the teaching field every year looking for other green pastures in sub-Saharan African countries of which Tanzania is included (Issue, 2008). Leaders-School Quality Assurance Officers have to become a role model to followers by giving equal rights to workers-teachers as they fulfill their duties (Okendo, 2018). In relation to this case, quality education cannot be attained in a situation where schools lack enough, competent, efficient and motivated teachers who should be retrained and retained in schools. Due to turning over of competent teachers and incoming of ineffective ones, students are unnecessarily disturbed so much. Basically, it is well known that the main purpose of every school is to provide quality education to every student and this purpose cannot be fulfilled in the absence of active school quality assurance officers. Such leaders should have good codes of conduct, qualified, competent and motivated teachers.

In Tanzania it had been observed that less attention is paid by School Quality Assurance Officers in fulfilling teachers' obligations, incentives and other rights (Laddunuri, 2012) despite the fact that there is high mobility of teachers teaching to other fields. Resultantly, such case has led retardation to the organizational development. The reintroduction of fee free education policy and other contributions on November 27, 2015 in Tanzania had also deteriorated the ability of public primary school leaders to motivate teachers. This led to motivational crisis among teachers and heads of schools. Consequently, that resulted into difficulty in running of public primary schools immediately after introduction of fee free education and stoppage of other contributions as there is no other room of accumulating income (Eutimi, 2017). This study therefore, investigated the effect of ethical leadership behavior on teachers' motivation in public primary schools in Karagwe District Council.

This study aimed at getting information on ethical leadership behaviors on teachers' motivation which seemed to be used by public school's leaders, policy makers and other educational stakeholders to make effective decisions in planning for leadership, training and motivational strategies. The study also gave information for educational managers for example school quality assurance officers on the significance of ethical leadership in enhancing levels of motivation to teachers. The findings of this study added values to the theory of social exchange theory which explains that if the costs of relationship are higher than rewards in such a way that efforts or money were put into relationship and not reciprocated, then the relationship may either be terminated or abandoned (Homans, 1959). With such theory the emphasis is put on mutual relationship between leaders and teachers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ethical Leadership

Ethical leadership is defined as the behavior consistent with prevailing codes of conduct through personal and interpersonal relationship between leaders and followers (Brown, Trevino & Harrison, 2005). Ethical leadership implements ethical behavior incentives to anyone performing duties ethically and imposes sanctions (Rost, 1993). In ethical leadership, people behave due to a set of principles and values that are realized by the majority as a strong foundation for the common good (Hitt, 1990). As the matter of the fact, ethical leaders should be honest, caring and trustworthy, make fair decisions and believe morally in personal life and at work place (Brown & Trevino, 2006). Ethical leaders are expected to communicate ethical standards, become role model and ensuring that subordinates are reinforced either by rewards or punishment. With ethical leadership individuals behave due to a set of principles and values that are recognized by the majority as a sound basis for the common goal (Ouma, 2017).

Ethical Leadership Behaviors

Ethical leadership behaviours refer to the individuals acting based on a set of principles and values that are recognized by the majority as a sound basis for the common good. Ethical leaders should be honest, caring, respecting, consideration and trustworthy, make fair decisions and believe morally in personal life and at work place (Brown & Trevino, 2006; Ngirwa, 2013). Ethical leadership behavior is significantly and strongly related to idealized influence as well as affective trust and consideration (Brown, *et al.*, 2005). It has been contended that in working environment where leaders develop strong relational attachments by means of their ethical behaviours tend to demonstrate personal powers that engender influence to employees' engagement to organizational tasks (Ngirwa, 2013). Leaders particularly School Quality Assurance Officers

should behave ethically so as to influence teachers' positive feelings and acceptance of their SQA reports and job-advice.

Teachers` Motivation

According to Prasad, motivation is the complex forces starting and keeping a person at work in an organization (Prasad, 2005). Hence, teachers` motivation refers to as the attitude teachers have towards their work. In other way round, motivation is described as invisible forces that push workers to behave in a particular way (Pinder, 2008). It is the energy and desire that makes teacher continually interested and committed to a given work. Motivation is the forces that energizes, direct and sustain behavior (Uddin, 2012). It can be either intrinsic where behavior is affected by factors that may arise from work itself and are self-generated or extrinsic, which occurs when things are done by teachers to motivate themselves (Armstrong, 2012). Normally, teachers draw their motivation from unfulfilled wants that they need to satisfy (Latham, 2011). It is said that the spirit of teachers` performance relies on rate of motivation provided, the level of enthusiasm and creativity that a teacher brings to his/her role daily. Hence, teachers like any other human being take motivation as part of their basic needs, have to be motivated to build them a sense of encouragement, sincerity, willingness to work, support and help one another, hence continually working for personal and organizational achievement (Maslow, 1943). Teachers` perception of being valued and cared about by their leaders enhances their trust that the organization recognizes or reward desired subordinates` attitudes and behavior as the exchange obligations.

Social Exchange Theory (SET)

The theory states that if the cost of the relationship is higher than rewards in such a way that efforts or money were put into relationship and not reciprocated, then the relationship may either

be terminated or abandoned (Homans, 1959). According to Social Exchange Theory (SET), a person will weigh the cost of social interaction against the reward of that social interaction. Ethical leaders shape the behavior of their teachers through social exchange processes. When teachers experience ethical behavior from their supervisors, there is an increased inclination to reciprocate such treatment of fairness, justice, being cared and valued to other colleagues, clients and managers. Hence, ethical behavior exhibited by the teachers translates as a reward for the ethical leader in the form of positive organizational behavior (Benevene, Dal Corso, De Carlo, Falco, Carluccio & Vecina, 2018).

SET was relevant to the study being carried out as it explored whether and how teachers were motivated to engage in taking responsibilities under the influence of ethical leadership. In this study, such key theoretical process was critical antecedents for behavioral outcomes obtained through interpersonal relationship. SET posits that parties with the expectation of some future return would be involved in and sustain the exchange relationship with others (Blau, 1964). Thus there should be mutual relationship between leaders and subordinates. The theory assumed that self-interested parties with exchange with other parties so as to achieve some outcomes that could not be achieved by themselves once the two parties find the exchange was not reciprocal; the exchange relationship would be terminated (Emerson, 1976).

This theory is also helpful to this study since it was used to explain the development and management of interpersonal relationship, social interactions involved two parties each exchanging reward needed by another person and teachers seek to maximize rewards and minimize cost in pursuit of the greatest profit. This study utilized SET which had been validated in many contexts as also the theoretical foundation to understand the mechanism of effect of ethical leadership behaviors on teachers' motivation through mediating role of positive reciprocity. Teachers should form relationship that satisfy their expectations and abandon that

fail to fulfill their wants; hence the theory encouraged teachers to end relationship that had no benefit.

Conceptual Framework

The figure below shows the relationship between independent and dependent variables as well as intervening variables of the research problem. The independent variable is ethical leadership behaviors. The dependent variable is teachers` motivation. The intervening variable shows how teachers feel when they are motivated. Generally speaking, ethical leaders reveal honesty, justice, integrity, transparency and others alike. These attributes escalate feelings of being cared, excited, honored, relaxed, and fairness in management. Teachers holding this feeling would be encouraged and revealed willingness in performing their duties, sincerity, support and help each other in teaching endeavors.

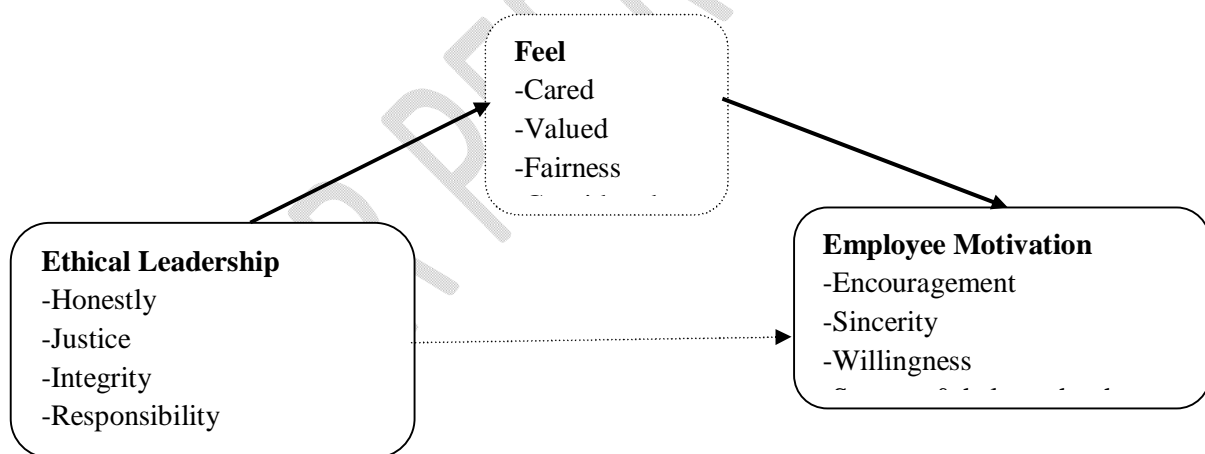


Figure 1 The Conceptual Framework Adapted from (Brown et al., 2005).

Hypothesis of the Study

This study was also guided by one hypothesis. The one relevant to this paper generated from empirical literature review was:

Ha: Ethical leadership behavior has a significance association with teachers' motivation (honesty, justice, integrity, fairness and transparency).

Based on the two components of ethical leadership i.e. moral person and moral manager. The component of moral person is built on fairness, honesty, care, trust and solid ethical principles (Brown & Trevino, 2006). These leaders (SQAOs) are within the reach of teachers, and they actively listen to raised concerns and identified problems in the organization (Brown & Mitchell, 2010).

METHODOLOGY

It was a quantitative study of descriptive research designed to examine the effect of ethical leadership on teacher motivation in elementary schools in Karagwe district, Tanzania. A survey method, using questionnaires, was employed to collect numerical data for statistical analysis. The target population was teachers in primary schools in Karagwe District Council. A simple random technique was used to obtain 78 primary school teachers, while stratified random sampling was used to obtain 5 school quality assurance officers (SQAOs) and 12 head teachers. Hence the study had 95 respondents. An adopted (Brown *et al.*, 2005; Yukl, 2013) questionnaire comprising 5 items on a Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree was used for the data collection. Surveys were distributed to respondents after a written permission from District Executive Director (DED).

The structural equation modeling (SEM) was to study the relationship between constructs (ethical leader behavior and teachers' motivation). SPSS software version 22 was used to conduct descriptive analysis while the free R package SEMinR version 2.3.2 was used to conduct reliability/validity and to fit the SEM.

The qualitative interpretation of the construct composite scores is given in Table 3 (Abu-Baker, Abu-Baker, Abu-Zaid, Alsawalqah, Al-Shamayleh& Al-Shboul, 2019).

Table 1: Composite Score Rating Scale

| SN | Weighted Mean | Level of Agreement |
|----|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 | 1.00 - 1.80 | Very Low |
| 2 | 1.81 - 2.60 | Low |
| 3 | 2.61 - 3.40 | Average |
| 4 | 3.41 - 4.20 | High |
| 5 | 4.21 - 5.00 | Very High |

Source: Abu-Baker *et al.* (2019)

RESULTS

The aim of study was to determine the effect of ethical leadership behaviors on teachers` motivation in primary schools. In this section we present the both descriptive and inferential statistics of this study.

Descriptive Statistics

Here, we provide descriptive statistics of the two constructs of the study. After reliability test, each construct remained with five (5) Likert scale items. Overall summary statistics of Likert scales of these constructs are depicted in Table 2. As can be seen from this table the instruments have reasonable reliability composite reliability (standard threshold is 0.70). It has been contended that in social sciences studies for construct that assesses subjective experiences or multifaceted construct like may be rarely to gain high reliabilities due to variability in responses (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

Overall, the means for most statements are moderately high (4.66, 4.589; on a 5-point scale) for ethical leadership behavior and teachers' motivation respectively. This implies respondent have high perception, on average, to the statements constituting these scales.

Table 2 Showing Scales` Descriptive Statistics

| Scale | Number of items | Mean | Std.Deviation | Composite Reliability rho _c | Average Variance Extracted (AVE) |
|----------------------|-----------------|-------|---------------|--|----------------------------------|
| Ethical Leadership | 5 | 4.660 | 0.060 | 0.55 | 0.04 |
| Teachers` Motivation | 5 | 4.589 | 0.07 | 0.62 | 0.34 |

Source: Field Data (2024).

Table 3 and Table 4 present descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) of items for ethical leadership behaviour and teachers' motivation respectively. As can be seen from Table 3, relative to the overall mean of the scale, majority of the respondents, on one hand, had high perception above the mean on three (3) statements which are: "Leaders give teachers freedom to choose their own course of action in ethical terms", "Leaders acknowledge ethically valued behavior of teachers" and "Leaders lash out at teachers who show ethically flawed behavior immediately". This implies leaders are performing very well in these perspectives. On the other, majority of the respondents had perception below the mean on two (2) statements which are: "Leaders provide rewards to teachers for ethically good behavior" and "Leaders when making decision ask the right thing to do". Such findings indicate that leaders do not, relatively, perform very well on these areas. Additionally, this can also be interpreted that sometimes leaders do not involve/ask subordinates when making some decisions.

Table 3 Ethical Leadership Behaviours Scale Statistics

| S/N | ITEM | SD (%) | D (%) | N (%) | A (%) | SA (%) | Mean | STD Deviation | Remarks |
|-----|---|--------|-------|-------|----------|----------|------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1. | Leaders give teachers freedom to choose their | 1(1.1) | 0(0) | 0(0) | 25(26.3) | 69(72.6) | 4.69 | .58 | Very High perception |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--------|--------|--------|----------|----------|------|-----|--|----------------------|
| | own course of action in ethical terms. | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. | Leaders provide rewards to teachers for ethically good behavior. | 3(3.2) | 0(0) | 0(0) | 24(25.3) | 65(68.4) | 4.57 | .82 | | Low perception |
| 3. | Leaders acknowledge ethically valued behavior of teachers. | 1(1.1) | 0(0) | 1(1.1) | 21(22.1) | 72(75.8) | 4.72 | .60 | | Very High perception |
| 4. | Leaders when making decision ask the right thing to do. | 2(2.1) | 1(1.1) | 0(0) | 25(26.3) | 67(70.5) | 4.62 | .75 | | Low perception |
| 5. | Leaders lash out at teachers who show ethically flawed behavior immediately. | 0(0) | 0(0) | 2(2.1) | 26(27.4) | 67(70.5) | 4.68 | .51 | | Very High perception |
| Scale grand mean = 4.660 , STDDeviation= .060 | | | | | | | | | | |

Source: Field Data, (2024).

Table 4: Teachers` Motivation, Scale Statistics

| S/N | ITEM | SD (%) | D (%) | N (%) | A (%) | SA (%) | Mean | SD | Remarks | |
|---|--|--------|--------|--------|----------|----------|-------|-----|----------------------|--|
| 1. | Leaders facilitate access to loans. | 0(0) | 2(2.1) | 4(4.2) | 33(34.7) | 56(58.9) | 4.51 | .68 | Lowperception | |
| 2. | Leaders provide fringe benefits to teachers. | 1(1.1) | 1(1.1) | 1(1.1) | 25(26.3) | 67(70.5) | 4.64 | .67 | Very High perception | |
| 3. | Leaders pay salary on time. | 4(4.2) | 1(1.1) | 2(2.1) | 24(25.3) | 64(67.4) | 4.51 | .93 | Very High perception | |
| 4. | Leaders prepare good working condition. | 2(2.1) | 1(1.1) | 0(0) | 24(25.3) | 68(71.6) | 4.63 | .74 | Lowperception | |
| 5. | Leaders provide acting allowance. | 1(1.1) | 1(1.1) | 2(2.1) | 20(21.1) | 71(74.7) | 4.653 | .68 | Very High perception | |
| Scale grand mean= 4.589 ,SD= .007 | | | | | | | | | | |

Source: Field Data, (2024).

The general results of the data analysis based on the behaviors is taking place at a very high mean (M=4.660, SD=.60). Likewise, this falls in range agree interval which implies that the majority of respondents responded that there was positive relationship between ethical leadership and teachers` motivation. Relative to this overall mean of the scale, majority of the respondents, on

one hand, had very high perception on three (3) statements which are: “Leaders give teachers freedom to choose their own course of action in ethical terms”, “Leaders acknowledge ethically valued behavior of teachers” and “Leaders lash out at teachers who show ethically flawed behavior”. This implies that both variables under analysis i.e. ethical leadership behaviors and teachers` motivation were positively related. On the other, majority of the respondents had relatively high but not very high perception on two (2) statements which are: “Leaders provide rewards to teachers for ethically good behavior” and “Leaders when making decision ask the right thing to do”. Such findings indicate that leaders do not reward every good behavior shown by subordinates. Additionally, this can also be interpreted that sometimes leaders do not involve/ask subordinates when making some decisions.

Research Inferential Statistics (Hypotheses)

The following was one of the hypothesis of study:

H_a: Ethical leadership behavior has a significance association with teachers` motivation (honesty, justice, integrity, fairness and transparency).

This hypothesis was tested using SEM technique. Application of SEM involves assessment of the measurement and structural models. Measurement model models the construct and associated indicators while the structural model models the linkages among constructs. Therefore, the hypotheses were tested in structural model part of SEM. The measurement models for all constructs (Ethical Leadership, Feel (Behavior) and Employee Motivation) were assessed and part of the report is included in Table 5a. The coefficient of determination (R-square) of the endogenous constructs is shown in Table 5. The R-squared of *Employee Motivation* construct is 0.721 implying that 72.2% of variation in this construct can be explained by *Ethical Leadership* directly and indirectly.

Table 5 Assessment the Fitted Model

| | Employee Motivation | Feel |
|--------------------|---------------------|-------|
| R-square | 0.721 | 0.057 |
| Adjusted R-square | 0.715 | 0.047 |
| Ethical Leadership | 0.440 | 0.239 |
| Feel | 0.629 | NA |

Source: Field Data (2024).

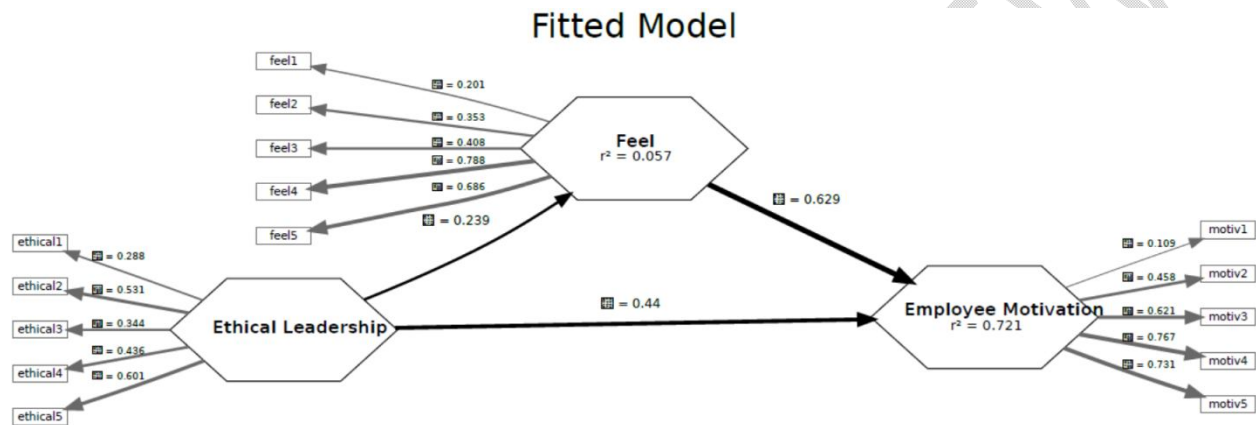


Figure 2: Fitted Structural Model using R Package SEMinR.

The total effect of ethical leadership behavior to teachers’ motivation is positive and significant (0.590, [0.479, 0.742]) as depicted in Table 5b or calculated ($0.239 \times 0.629 + 0.44 = 0.590$) from Figure 1. This implies the ethical leadership has positive influence on the teachers’ motivation. Hence hypothesis **Ha** is supported.

Table 5a Assessment of Structural Loading (Links/Effects)

| Links | Original Est. | Bootstra p Mean | Bootstra p SD | T Stat. | 2.5% CI | 97.5% CI |
|---|---------------|-----------------|---------------|---------|---------|----------|
| Ethical Leadership to Feel | 0.239 | 0.350 | 0.099 | 2.410 | 0.161 | 0.551 |
| Ethical Leadership to Employee Motivation | 0.440 | 0.415 | 0.086 | 5.106 | 0.225 | 0.574 |
| Feel to Employee Motivation | 0.629 | 0.602 | 0.085 | 7.398 | 0.385 | 0.729 |

Source: Field Data (2024).

Table 5b Assessment of Total Effect

| Link | Original Est. | Bootstrap Mean | Bootstrap SD | T Stat. | 2.5% CI | 97.5% CI |
|---|---------------|----------------|--------------|---------|---------|----------|
| Ethical Leadership to Employee Motivation | 0.590 | 0.623 | 0.068 | 8.691 | 0.479 | 0.742 |

Source: Field Data (2024).

In evaluating the research hypothesis, it is noted that all links as depicted in Table 5a are positive and significant as qualified in Table 5b. Generally speaking, based on the findings under this subsection; ethical leadership has a significance association with teachers' motivation. Hence, ethical leadership behaviors relate with teachers' motivation.

Discussion

This study examined the effect of ethical leadership behaviors on the teachers' motivation in public primary schools. Results from descriptive analysis revealed that the overall score on the ethical leadership behaviors is high ($M=4.660$, $SD=.60$) implying that majority of respondents feel that leaders perform their managerial roles in good manner. Similarly, the overall score on the teachers' motivation is also high ($M=4.589$, $SD=0.07$) implying that majority of respondents feel that the good leaders' ethical leadership behaviors motivate them. This is also conformed through hypothesis testing (H_a) through structural model path (Ethical Leadership to Employee Motivation) with a significant positive (0.590 , $[0.479, 0.742]$ 95% CI) coefficient (total effect). This was realized in school leaders who give teachers freedom to choose their own course of action in ethical manner; Leaders provide rewards to teachers for ethically good behaviour (e.g. facilitate access to loans, provide acting allowance); Leaders acknowledge ethically behaviour of teachers; Leaders when making decision ask the right thing to do and, Leaders deal with teachers who show ethically flawed behaviours. This matches with other studies carried out in Bharti Airtel India Ltd Shimla head office and Arusha city public secondary school by (Kumar, 2014;

Okendo, 2018) respectively. Both studies found that there was a positive relationship between organizational climate and employee satisfaction.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Based on the research findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations for action were made. First, through the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MOEST) deliberate efforts should be put into strengthening the school quality assurance department in ensuring provision of quality education. This is done through by providing leadership training programs to teachers and providing incentives and other fringe benefits to them. Special care and attention of teachers' rights and needs should also be paid attention e.g.increasing teachers' salaries. The increase of teachers' salary may elevate their working morale.On top of that, Regional Administration Local Government Authority should be strengthened to ensure that teachers receive their salaries on time.Additionally, teachers who perform welltheir teaching and learning process should be provided with incentives that would motivate them as well as increase their working morale.

Basically, the findings of this study did not explore all areas related to ethical leadership behaviors and motivation. The study explored only effect of ethical leadership behaviors on teachers' motivation in twelve public primary schools. Therefore, the study suggests the following areas for further study.

- ❖ The study involved few primary school teachers and school quality assurance officers. The study recommends further research to include many primary school teachers and other educational stakeholders like students, parents and in line with MOEST in order to examine their views on the similar topic.

- ❖ The study focused only Karagwe District Council. The study recommends further research based on a national study on the effect of ethical leadership behaviours on teachers' motivation in Tanzania and other developing countries with different human resource policies of motivating teachers.
- ❖ The study recommends further research to be conducted in this area or related areas to involve large sample sizes. This would justify the need for making generalisation and drawing inferences of population on the effect of ethical leadership behaviours on teachers' motivation.

Conclusions

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that ethical leadership behaviours contribute significantly to teachers' motivation in public primary schools. Hence, when teachers experience ethical behaviour (e.g. fairness, honesty, justice, transparency) from their supervisors (e.g. SQAOs), there is an increased inclination to reciprocate treatment to other colleagues, clients and managers. These attributes escalate feelings of being cared, honored, relaxed and valued. Teachers holding this feeling would be encouraged and reveal willingness in performing their duties, sincerity, and help each other in teaching endeavours. Therefore, our findings suggest ethical leadership behaviours and teachers' motivation are important factors that would strengthen academic endeavours of public primary schools as educational institutions.

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