

**INFLUENCE OF AUTOCRATIC AND DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP SYLES ON TEACHER
MORALE IN PRIVATE PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KAYOLE, EMBAKASI CENTRAL SUB-
COUNTY**

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DECLARATION

I declare that this research work is my original work and that it has not been presented in any other university for academic work.

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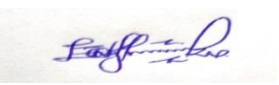
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DEDICATION

This Thesis is dedicated to my family for their unwavering support and love that has continued to inspire me, especially my mum for her constant prayers and believing in my potential. It is also dedicated to my close friend Ruth who walked with me from onset to the very end.

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ABSTRACT

This study was intended to examine the influence of autocratic and democratic leadership styles on teacher morale in selected private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-county. The study was guided by Path –Goal leadership theory and focused on determining the influence of autocratic and participative leadership approach on teacher morale and commitment. A descriptive mixed-methods research design was adopted to collect both quantitative and qualitative data on the influence of participative and directive leadership approach on teacher morale. The target population was made up of 57 private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-county, from which a sample of size of 53 respondents were obtained. This comprised of 36 classroom teachers who were selected through stratified and simple random sampling technique and 17 school administrators. A sample of 17 headteachers was drawn from the 17 private primary schools that were selected through census sampling. Data for the study was collected using structured questionnaires that were given to teachers and interview schedules that were administered to the head teachers. A pilot exercise was undertaken in order to find checks that ensured validity and reliability of the study. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics including frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations while qualitative data was analyzed thematically and presented through narrative descriptions, so as to enrich and also compliment the quantitative findings. The study was aimed to establish how school leadership approaches influence teacher morale, motivation, professional commitment and job satisfaction in private primary schools within Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-county. The findings revealed that directive leadership approach had a negative influence on educators moral as it limited participation, reduced professional autonomy and lowered motivation. In contrast, participative leadership style had a positive influence on educators’ morale by promoting collaboration, participation, work satisfaction and professional commitment. The findings indicated that administration approaches influenced the educators’ morale differently. Participative approach were associated with higher levels of teacher motivation, job satisfaction and commitment while autocratic leadership practices were associated with lower levels of educators’ participation and morale. Qualitative data indicated that though directive approach caused workstation stress, but it was often used for quick operational execution. The study concluded that leadership approaches significantly influenced educators’ morale in private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-County. Participative leadership practices enhanced commitment, teacher motivation and job satisfaction, while excessive reliance on autocratic leadership practices negatively affected educators’ morale. By addressing these gaps in the existing literature, the study recommends that school administrators adopt participatory leadership approaches that encourage educator involvement in decision-making, promote collaborative school management practices and strengthen communication channels. It calls for the administrators to reduce reliance on authoritarian approach by avoiding the use of excess control, coercing and making decisions on their own in private primary schools within Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-County. Although the study doesn’t aim to develop national education policies, its findings may inform localized discussions on school leadership practices and the welfare of educators within Embakasi Central Sub-County.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Democratic Leadership Style: - For the purposes of this study, democratic leadership style is a leadership approach in which headteachers involve teachers in decision making, open communication within the school, encourage consultation; promote shared ownership and collaboration in achieving the school goals.

Autocratic Leadership Style: - For the purpose of this study, autocratic leadership style is an approach in which headteachers make decisions independently, exercise close supervision and provide limited opportunities for the educators to participate in decision-making processes.

Private Primary School:- Operationally defined, these are privately owned schools and managed educational institution that offering primary education within Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-County, and are registered by the relevant education authorities

Teacher: For the purpose of this study this is a classroom instructor employed within the selected private primary school in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-county who is and directly influenced by the leadership practices of the headteacher.

Headteacher: For the purpose of this study, these are individuals responsible for the administration management and leadership of a private primary school in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub- County.

Leadership: In this study, It is the process through which a headteacher or administrator influences, guides and motivates teachers and other staff members towards the achievement of institutional objectives within the selected private primary schools

Leadership style: This is a manner in which headteachers' within the selected private primary schools communicated with, directed, supervised and involved teachers in decision making process in private primary schools.

School leadership styles: - For the purpose of this study, these are approaches, behaviors and methods school leaders use to manage and motivate teachers towards achieving institutional goals.

Teacher Motivation: - operationally defined, these are internal and external factors that stimulate educators commitment, enthusiasm and willingness to perform their professional duties effectively within the school setting

Teacher morale: -for the purpose of this study, this is an Educators level of motivation, job satisfaction commitment, overall attitude and emotional state towards their job and school environment.

Job satisfaction: - operationally defined, this is a positive emotional state, attitude and contentment that and educators experience with their job.

Teacher commitment: operationally defined, this refers to the extent which teachers in private primary schools in Kayole , Embakasi Central Sub-County are devoted to their work, remain loyal to the institution, participate in school activities and strive to achieve educational goals under different leadership styles.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the background to the study and provides an overview of the research problem; it outlines the statement of the problem and the objectives of the study. The chapter also highlights the research questions, significance and justification of the study, scope and delimitations of the study, limitation of the study, assumptions of the study, conceptual and theoretical framework are presented. In addition the key terms in the study are operationally defined to enhance clarity and understanding.

1.2 Background of the Study

The influence of school leadership approaches is a key determinant of effectiveness and the achievement of educational goals in an institution. High levels of teacher performance are reflected through effective instructional delivery, commitment to professional duties, positive learner outcomes, and improved overall school productivity (Darling-Hammond, 2017). Conversely, low teacher performance is often associated with reduced morale, absenteeism, poor instructional practices, and declining academic outcomes among learners (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2018).

Globally, research has established that school leadership plays a critical role in shaping teacher performance and motivation. School leaders influence the organizational climate, guide instructional practices, and determine how teachers engage with their work (Bush, 2020). Effective leadership fosters supportive working environments that enhance teacher commitment and job satisfaction, while ineffective leadership contributes to stress, dissatisfaction, and reduced performance among teachers (Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2020).

School leadership styles, particularly democratic and autocratic leadership styles, have received considerable attention in educational research. Democratic leadership style emphasizes shared decision-making, open communication, collaboration, and teacher participation in school management. Studies indicate that democratic leadership enhances teacher motivation, job satisfaction, and professional commitment, thereby positively influencing teacher performance (Northouse, 2022; Somech, 2019). In contrast, autocratic leadership style is characterized by centralized authority, strict control, and limited teacher involvement in decision-making. While this style may promote short-term compliance, it has often been associated with low teacher morale, reduced motivation, and negative attitudes toward work (Bush & Glover, 2016; Saleem, Aslam, Yin, & Rao, 2020).

Participatory leadership has been proven to increase teacher morale while autocratic leadership leads to increased stress for the teachers, lack of job satisfaction and increased intentions to leave the work (Young, 2020). Studies show that this kind of leadership has led to teacher motivation in the United States while other leadership styles such as autocratic lead to the teachers are getting demotivated as a result of stress hence leads to some educators wanting to leave the profession. (Meeks 2020) stated that supportive and participatory leaders improved teachers' morale while reducing teachers' exhaustions and burnouts. Also, in the US, authoritative leadership was proven to decrease teachers' morale and dissatisfaction with the job (Young, 2020). It is therefore important that school leaders in the US stick to the transformational leadership style as it is evident that it helps to increase and improve teacher motivation and satisfaction.

In the United Kingdom, well-being is important in the workplace. A study by Skinner et. al., (2021), illustrate that the teacher's commitment to their work is greatly affected by leadership. This means that the leadership styles used by the school principals play a great role in the well-being of the teacher which either leads to motivation or demotivation. The study showed that in the UK, democratic leadership style was effective in promoting teacher morale. This is because it ensured that teachers could provide their own ideas as well as contribute to the decision-making process hence promoting the well-being of the teachers. Harris et. al. (2022), explains that increased administrative control over the teachers leads to a decline in teacher morale. This means that leadership styles that lead to total control over the teachers and give the head of institution the autonomy to make decisions only lead to a demoralized workforce. In the United Kingdom as well, democratic leadership proved to increase teacher morale and emotional well-being while rigid leadership styles led to demotivation and burn outs of teachers (Skinner et. al., 2021). Leadership is a critical factor that influences employees' effectiveness. In educational institutions, leadership styles adopted by school heads significantly shape teachers motivation, professional commitment and morale. Globally , studies have shown that democratic leadership enhances employee engagement while authoritarian leadership tends to suppress initiative and reduce job satisfaction.

Within the African context, school leadership continues to be a significant factor influencing teacher performance amid challenges such as inadequate resources, high teacher workloads, and increased accountability demands. Empirical studies conducted in sub-Saharan Africa reveal that leadership styles adopted by school principals significantly affect teachers' motivation, job satisfaction, and instructional effectiveness (Okoth, 2018; Oduro, Dachi, & Fertig, 2019). Democratic leadership practices have been linked to improved teacher commitment and collaboration, whereas excessive reliance on autocratic leadership has been associated with teacher dissatisfaction and diminished performance.

According to Mbua (2023), there is a great effect that leadership styles have on teacher morale. A study done in Cameroon showed that leadership styles in which the leader centered themselves as the decision-makers without consulting teachers, led to poor teacher performance. The study further explains that democratic leadership style was seen as favorable as it allowed the teachers to be part of the decision-making process. The study also illustrated that democratic leadership was a great leadership style as it allowed innovation and creativity as the leader could share views with the teachers hence boosting their morale.

According to Goktas, (2021), democratic leadership serves as a great motivator to the leaders' followers. They do this by creating challenges for their followers which they solve with the aim of learning something new. East African schools have been seen to use different leadership styles, this one included. This is evident from the different studies carried out. According to Metaferia (2023), in Ethiopia, democratic leadership helps teachers to be more satisfied with their jobs. This method of leading helped to ensure that the followers achieved a greater standard of performance in employees hence promoted efficiency. This is because this leadership style does not rely on giving orders but guiding the employees as well and playing a great role in improving their behaviors and performance. Nyaibuli & Mwila, (2025), in Tanzania, stated that participative leadership style played an important role in motivating educators. This is because this leadership style promoted trust, open communication among educators as well as a culture of team work. Additionally, the study showed that collaborative leadership style was the most used style in Tanzania. This is because it was seen to motivate teachers through providing them with a platform to share their views. This motivates educators as they feel their views are valued. In Africa, research supports that ineffective leadership leads to demoralization of teachers and reduced teacher confidence in the profession as they are always getting scolded for errors (Mbua, 2023). In East Africa, democratic leadership has been popular with increasing job satisfaction, and improving job performance (Metaferia, 2023). Additionally in East Africa, studies indicate that leadership styles significantly influence teacher motivation and job commitment. Autocratic leadership style is associated with reduced teacher morale, while democratic and participative approaches are linked to high levels of teacher satisfaction and engagement. Akinyi, J.J.(2012) in the Kenyan context, private primary schools operate in highly competitive environments where the performance of teachers directly influences school outcomes. Regardless of this, concerns such as teacher burnout, low motivation and high turnover persists and this suggest possible leadership related challenges

In Kenya, concerns regarding teacher performance persist despite continuous educational reforms and policy interventions. Issues such as teacher absenteeism, low morale, and declining instructional effectiveness have been reported in some schools (Republic of Kenya, 2019). Democratic leadership

emphasizes collaboration, inclusivity and participatory decision making while autocratic leadership is characterized by centralized decision making which limits teacher participation (Saddique & Raja, 2023).

School heads, as instructional leaders, play a central role in influencing teachers' professional behavior through the leadership styles they employ. However, leadership practices vary widely across schools, with some headteachers adopting democratic approaches while others rely on autocratic methods to manage teachers (Nguni, Slegers, & Denessen, 2018). Additionally, headteachers who used democratic leadership style often motivated the teachers while the autocratic leadership style demotivated the teachers and often led to poor student performance. According to studies, in schools where participative leadership is used, teacher morale was reported to be high and their job satisfaction as well compared to authoritarian leadership style which only led to stress and dissatisfaction of teachers. School principals in private primary schools exercise significant influence over teachers through the leadership styles they adopt. Research indicates that democratic leadership is positively associated with teacher morale and motivation while autocratic leadership negatively impacts teacher satisfaction and performance in education settings. (Critical review of Social Sciences, 2025).

Democratic leadership practices may enhance teacher motivation and commitment through participation and shared decision-making, while autocratic leadership practices may emphasize control and compliance, potentially affecting teacher morale and performance. Despite all this, the effects of different leadership styles in schools on teacher morale in private primary schools remain unexplored particularly in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-county in Nairobi County.

In Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-County, limited empirical evidence exists on how specific leadership styles affect teacher morale in private primary schools. The study therefore sought to bridge this gap by examining the influence of autocratic and democratic leadership styles on teacher morale, using the perspectives of both headteachers and teachers. .

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Despite widespread recognition that leadership significantly affects school effectiveness, teacher morale in many educational settings remains a persistent concern. Teacher morale is a great determinant of teaching effectiveness, learner's outcomes and the overall success of educational institutions. Effective institutional leadership is a key determiner of teacher morale. Studies show that leadership styles such as democratic leadership styles affect the teacher morale positively while autocratic leadership style lead to increased stress, and low morale among the employees. In private primary schools, educators are expected to work under demanding conditions that call for high levels of commitment and motivation in order to achieve

institutional goals. In contrast, reports from many private schools within Kayole indicate a number of concerns that are related to reduced job satisfaction, low educator motivation and limited participation in decision making. These challenges may negatively affect instructional effectiveness and overall performance of the institution. This gap is more pronounced in developing education systems, where leadership practices vary widely and teachers face increasing professional demands.

School leadership plays a central role in shaping the working environment in which teachers operate, the leadership approaches employed by head of institutions influence teacher involvement, decision-making processes, communication and professional relationships within the institution. While participative leadership is often associated with teacher collaboration and involvement autocratic leadership tends to emphasize centralized decision making and strict supervision. The extent to which these leadership styles influence teacher morale in private primary schools remains unclear, particularly within specific local contexts.

Research shows that leadership styles adopted by school head teachers have varied impacts on teacher motivation and job dissatisfaction among teachers. Teacher morale is a key determinant of instructional quality and learners outcomes. However, in many private primary schools, teachers experience high workload pressure, low motivation and limited participation in the decision making process. These conditions may be linked to the leadership styles that are practiced by the headteachers. In private primary schools in Kayole , Embakasi Central Sub-County, reports suggest that teachers often experience low motivation and dissatisfaction with leadership practices. While some schools adopt democratic leadership, others rely on an autocratic leadership approach. However, empirical studies focusing specifically on how school leadership styles influence teacher morale in private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-County remain scarce. The lack of localized evidence limits school heads' ability to adopt leadership practices that effectively support and motivate teachers. Although studies have examined leadership approaches in educational institution, most have focused on public schools leaving a gap in understanding the leadership dynamics within private primary schools. What's more, little empirical evidence exists on how autocratic and participative leadership styles influence teacher morale in private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-County. Subsequently, school administrators lack sufficient context-specific evidence to guide leadership approaches that can effectively enhance teacher morale.

Therefore, this study sought to investigate the influence of autocratic and democratic administrative approaches on teacher morale in private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-County with a view of generating some evidence that may inform leadership practices aimed at improving teacher commitment, motivation and job satisfaction.

1.4 Objectives of the Study.

1.4.1 Specific Objectives of the Study

- i. To determine the influence of autocratic leadership style on teacher morale among teachers in selected private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-county.
- ii. To establish the influence of democratic leadership style on teacher morale among teachers in selected private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-county.

1.5. Research Questions

To achieve the objectives outlined above, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. How does autocratic leadership style influence teacher morale in Private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-county?
2. How does democratic leadership style influence teacher morale in private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-county?

1.6 Significance of the Study

Significance of the study is a description of the contribution of the study to the broad literature or set of broad educational problems upon completion (Best & Kahn, 2016). This was significant for several reasons to multiple stakeholders in the Education sector within Embakasi Central Sub- County.

For School Administrators and head teachers in private primary schools within Kayole Central ward, the study was expected to provide insights into how different leadership styles such as autocratic and democratic relate to teacher morale. Such insights may assist school leaders in reflecting on leadership practices that support teacher motivation, job satisfaction and commitment during leadership transitions and school management. For teachers in private primary school within Embakasi Central Sub-County, the study may enhance understanding of how leadership practices shape their professional morale and environment. This understanding may contribute to improved engagement between the school leadership and teachers which fosters a more supportive school environment. For education stakeholders operating within Embaksai Central Sub-County, the findings of this study may provide context –specific evidence that can inform localized discussions on school leadership practices and teacher welfare in private primary schools.

For Teachers in different schools within the Embakasi Central sub-county, the research may help them understand how leadership transitions influence their professional environment and provide recommendations for effectively adapting to new leadership models. The teachers may also benefit from

leadership approaches that support engagement, participation and job satisfaction. For Researchers and Academicians: This study may add to the existing and new body of knowledge on educational leadership, serving as a foundation for future research on leadership trials and their effects on teacher morale.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The scope of a study helps to narrow the research problem by clearly defining the parameters within which the study will be conducted. (Creswell, 2014). The study was conducted in private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-County in Nairobi City County. The study focused on the influence of autocratic and democratic leadership approaches on teacher moral in private primary learning institutions. The educators moral was examined in terms of motivation, commitment to work and job satisfaction.

The study targeted educators and headteachers in selected private primary schools within Kayole. The study did not include public primary schools, secondary schools, or institutions outside Embakasi Central Sub-County.

The study focused on data collected during the period of the research and examined changes in leadership styles or teacher morale over time. The primary respondents to this research were teachers working in the selected private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-county. Their experiences, ideas, perceptions as well as their attitudes formed a basis on better understanding how leadership styles used by headteachers affect teacher morale in the private primary schools. The headteachers were included in the study because they are the implementers of leadership styles within the schools. These styles are practiced through decision making, communication, supervision and management of teachers and therefore increasing credibility of the study.

1.8 Delimitation of the Study

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), delimitations are boundaries of the study deliberately set by the researcher to narrow the study.

This study was delimited to private primary schools located in Kayole wards within Embakasi Central Sub-County. The delimitation was intentional and based on several considerations.

First, Kayole wards have a high concentration of private primary schools, providing a suitable context for examining leadership styles and teacher morale within private school settings. This concentration allowed the researcher to obtain adequate data relevant to the objectives of the study.

Second, delimiting the study to Kayole wards ensured geographical accessibility and manageability of the research process. Given the time and financial constraints associated with postgraduate research, focusing on a defined area enables efficient data collection and closer supervision of the research activities.

Third, the delimitation allowed for contextual depth and consistency. Schools within the same wards operate under similar a socio-economic and administrative environment, which helps in controlling contextual variations that could influence teacher morale, thereby strengthening the interpretation of the findings.

Lastly, the study was delimited to autocratic and democratic leadership styles and teacher morale among teachers and head teachers only. Other leadership styles, education levels, and categories of schools are outside the scope of this study.

1.9 Limitation of the Study

Limitations are some aspects of the study that the researcher is aware might negatively impact on the research but, he or she has no control over them (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

This study encountered several limitations that could affect the interpretation of the findings.

First, the study relied on self-reported data collected through questionnaires and interviews. Respondents provided socially desirable responses or withheld honest opinions, which may affect the accuracy of the data. To minimize this limitation, respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity to encourage honest responses.

Second, the study was limited to private primary schools in Kayole wards within Embakasi Central Sub-County. As a result, the findings were not generalizable to public schools, secondary schools, or private schools in other regions. However, the study aimed to provide context-specific insights rather than broad generalizations.

Third, the study adopted a descriptive mixed-methods design and did not test hypotheses or establish cause-and-effect relationships. Therefore, the findings described and explored associations between leadership styles and teacher morale but do not determine causality.

Fourth, time constraints associated with academic research limited prolonged engagement with participants, particularly during interviews with head teachers. This limitation was mitigated by scheduling interviews at convenient times and using a structured interview guide to ensure consistency.

Lastly, intervening variables such as school policies and working conditions were not measured directly. Although these factors may influence teacher morale, they were controlled through study design and acknowledged during data interpretation.

1.10 Assumptions of the Study

In the course of undertaking the study, there are several issues that were presumed by the researcher. That the teachers will respond accurately and honestly to the questionnaire items, that the head teachers in the selected private primary schools practice autocratic and democratic leadership styles. It is also assumed that the research instruments will be valid and reliable for measuring leadership styles and teacher moral. The selected sample will be a representative of the private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-County.

1.11 Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on the Path–Goal Leadership Theory, which was developed by Robert J. House in 1971 and later refined in 1996. The theory explains how leaders influence the motivation, satisfaction, and performance of followers by clarifying goals, providing direction, offering support, and removing obstacles that may hinder goal achievement. The core assumption of the Path–Goal Leadership Theory is that leaders are effective when they adapt their leadership behaviours to suit the needs of followers and the work environment. The theory assumes that followers are motivated when they perceive that leadership behaviours help them achieve personal and organizational goals. It further assumes that different situations require different leadership behaviours and that no single leadership style is universally effective.

The theory was relevant to the current study because it explains the relationship between leadership styles and teacher morale in school settings. In private primary schools, head teachers play a critical role in shaping teachers' motivation, job satisfaction, and commitment. The Path–Goal Leadership Theory provides a framework for understanding how leadership behaviours adopted by head teachers can either enhance or diminish teacher morale. In this study, autocratic leadership style is linked to the directive leadership behaviour described in the Path–Goal Leadership Theory. Directive leadership involves giving clear instructions, closely supervising tasks, setting rules, and maintaining control over decision-making. While such behaviour may be effective in ensuring task completion, it may limit teacher autonomy and reduce morale if applied rigidly. Similarly, democratic leadership style is linked to the participative and supportive leadership behaviours in the Path–Goal Leadership Theory. Participative leadership involves consulting teachers, encouraging involvement in decision-making, and valuing their input, while supportive leadership focuses on addressing teachers' needs and creating a positive work environment. These

behaviours are expected to enhance teacher morale by increasing motivation, job satisfaction, and professional commitment.

The key variables linked to the theory in this study include leadership styles (autocratic and democratic) as the independent variables and teacher morale, measured through job satisfaction, motivation, and commitment, as the dependent variable.

Despite its relevance, the Path–Goal Leadership Theory has been critiqued for being complex and difficult to apply consistently across different organizational contexts. Critics argue that the theory does not clearly specify how leaders should determine the most appropriate leadership behaviour in dynamic environments such as schools. Additionally, the theory has been criticized for placing excessive responsibility on leaders while giving limited attention to organizational and contextual constraints. Nevertheless, the theory remained relevant to this study because it provided a strong explanatory framework for examining how leadership behaviours influence teacher morale in private primary schools

1.12 CONCEPTUAL FRAME WORK

The conceptual framework shows the relationship between leadership styles used in schools by the headteachers and teacher morale in private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Sub-county. The independent variable in this study is the autocratic and democratic leadership styles while teacher morale is the dependent variable. The relationship between this variable may be influenced by intervening variables related to the school environment and teacher characteristics

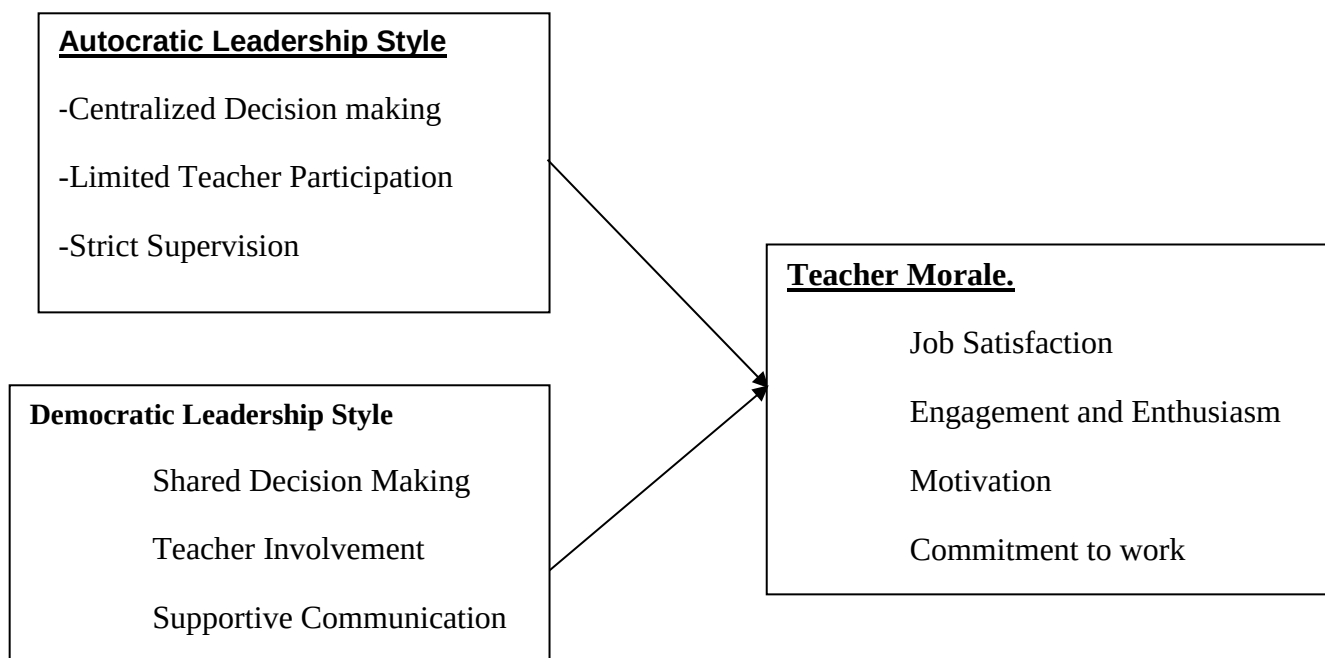


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework for autocratic and democratic Leadership Styles and Morale.

This framework means that the leadership styles used in the schools by the headteachers directly influence teacher morale. A positive leadership style such as democratic leadership leads to positive influence on teacher morale promoting participation, job satisfaction and motivation. A rigid leadership style such as autocratic which sometimes is effective in ensuring compliance may lead to a demotivating working environment due to pressure hence reduced teacher morale.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter critically analyzes scholarly literature which discusses school leadership styles and their effects on teacher morale in educational institutions. It focuses on both theoretical and empirical studies conducted previously focusing on autocratic and democratic leadership styles in the education setting and their effects on teacher morale. The chapter also presents empirical literature and key objective focused on identifying the gaps in the existing research with a major focus on private primary schools in Kenya to support the current study.

2.2 Review of Literature

2.2.1 Concept of Leadership styles in Educational Institutions

School leadership is defined as the practice and the ability of an individual or a group of people to influence and guide the school community including teachers, students and other staff members towards a common or shared goal. Leadership styles refers to approach and manner, through which school administrators provide direction, motivate teachers and implement plans. In any school settings leadership styles influence motivation, morale, commitment and job satisfaction.

Modern school leadership styles promote shared decision-making where teachers are allowed to take part in the decision making process hence they feel as part of the school. The common leadership styles practiced in schools included autocratic and democratic leadership styles. In private primary schools, leadership plays a pivotal role due accountability, competitive academic expectations and performance pressure. Effective leadership plays an essential role in ensuring improving instructional outcomes and high teacher morale

2.2.2 Concept of Teacher Morale

Teachers are the greatest members in the education system and therefore they must remain motivated (Mboweni & Taole, 2022). Teacher morale refers to the overall interests and desires in one's work with the aim of achieving the organization's goals. Another definition of teacher morale is the overall satisfaction that comes from the combination of personal needs as well as organizational needs. This means that teacher morale is achieved when one's needs as well as the organization's needs are met collaboratively. High morale is associated with productivity, positive attitude toward teaching and commitment. For instance,

when a teacher is struggling with personal issues like lack of finances, they tend to affect the work of the teacher. This is because this leads to their stress levels increasing hence lack of motivation to work.

Teacher morale is important as it leads to job satisfaction (Owusu, 2024). This means that when teacher morale is high, they are more satisfied with their work while on the other hand when their morale is low, they are dissatisfied with their work. Teacher morale leads to teachers focusing on their desires and interests that can cause them to feel satisfied with their work (Owusu, 2024). High teacher morale can cause the teachers to feel more desire for their work and fulfill hence increased job satisfaction. On the other hand, when teacher morale is low, the teacher feels low desire to work and unfulfilled with their job hence reduced job satisfaction.

Teacher morale is important as it also influences the emotional well-being of the teacher (Mboweni & Taole, 2022). When a teacher's morale is high, they have greater emotional well-being. This is because the teacher has pride in their job hence they work better. Additionally, with great emotional well-being, the teacher is able to build and maintain positive relationships with their colleagues and learners hence improve emotional well-being as they are able to build associations with others hence better social interactions. On the other hand, when there is low teacher morale, the emotional well-being of the teachers is also low. This is because the teachers lack pride in their job and feel demotivated. Also, they have poor relationships with others as they are unable to form social connections. This is because they feel like everyone is burdening them even when they are sharing their opinions and emotions. This causes them to feel emotionally unfulfilled hence they lack desire for their work.

Additionally, research shows that teacher morale influences commitment and job retention (Mboweni & Taole, 2022). This means that when the teacher morale is high at the work place, the teacher becomes more committed to their work and they have a high chance of remaining in the job. This is because they feel motivated to work hence they are able to set their goals and align them with the school's goals. This causes the teacher to love their job more hence the need to remain in their work place more hence increased job retention. On the other hand, when teacher morale is low, the commitment and job retention is low (Owusu, 2024). This means that one has reduced commitment to their job and they seek to leave their work place. The teachers feel they do not have the desire to align their personal goals with those of the organization. This makes them not have the willingness to remain at their current work places hence reduced job retention.

Literature indicates that teacher morale influences teacher motivation. This means that when the teacher's desire to work is high, they are greatly motivated but when their desire to work is low, they are

demotivated to work (Mboweni & Taole, 2022). When one has the desire to achieve organizational goals, they feel motivated to work hence they can drive themselves to work to achieve them. This is because their motivation to work has increased. On the other hand, when one has little or no desire to achieve an organization's goals, they become demotivated. This means that they do not push themselves towards the direction of achieving the goals (Owusu, 2024). This is because they lack either external or internal motivators such as the school leadership being too rigid and not allowing them to make decisions hence they feel there is too much pressure hence leads to demotivation. High teacher moral can be influenced by recognition, working conditions, leadership practices and also professional development opportunities

2.2.3 Empirical Review Based on Study Objectives

This section reviews empirical studies related to the influence of leadership styles on teacher morale. The review is organized according to the study objectives

2.2.4 Influence of Autocratic Leadership Styles on Teacher Morale

Autocratic leadership style is the kind of leadership style that does not consider the needs of its employees, collective decision making and it requires rigid following of stated rules hence follows a given system (Sadhan & Shinde, 2025). Similarly, autocratic leadership style refers to a leadership approach where the leader makes decisions alone with little or no participation from subordinates. In schools, autocratic headteachers exercise strict control over teachers and communication mainly flows from top to bottom. According to Educational Leadership, autocratic leadership emphasizes authority, supervision and obedience.

Studies have shown that autocratic leadership negatively affects teacher morale because teachers feel excluded from decision-making processes. Teachers working under strict supervision often experience stress, low motivation and dissatisfaction in the workplace. A study by Nsubuga found that excessive control by school administrators reduced teachers' commitment and lowered job satisfaction. Additionally, research conducted in Kenya indicated that teachers perform better when they are trusted and allowed to contribute ideas in school management. When headteachers use autocratic leadership excessively, teachers may feel undervalued and emotionally exhausted. This may result in absenteeism, poor performance and high staff turnover in schools. Autocratic leadership may however be useful in situations where quick decisions are required, especially during emergencies. Nevertheless, continued use of this leadership style in schools may weaken teacher morale and reduce teamwork among staff members.

In Kenya, the fast growth of private primary schools in urban areas such as Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-County has been caused by congestion in public schools and increased demand for affordable education.

Despite these changes, evidence indicates that many private schools work under high administration pressure, and centralized decision-making, which may negatively affect teachers' satisfaction and morale (Amani, 2024; Rezky et al., 2024). There is evidence of leadership practices that do not adequately support teachers' emotional and professional needs, contributing to low morale. For example, ineffective leadership behaviours, such as limited teacher involvement in decision making or lack of supportive supervision, have been shown to correlate with stress burnout and reduced job commitment among teachers. Teacher morale is characterized by job satisfaction, motivation and emotional well-being which plays a crucial role in the overall school environment. Leadership within a school setting involves more than just administrative tasks; it profoundly shapes motivation, experiences and performance of teachers, (Leithwood, Harris & Hopkins, 2020). Leadership styles adopted by school head teachers and administrators can significantly impact teacher morale, an essential component of effective teaching and learning environments, (Hallinger & Heck, 2019).

Several empirical studies have examined the influence of autocratic leadership on teacher motivation, morale and job satisfaction. Owusu (2024) investigated the relationship between autocratic leadership practices and teacher motivation in public secondary schools using a correlational research design and self-administered questionnaires. The study found that rigid decision making, limited teacher participation and strict supervision negatively affected teacher morale. However the study focused on public secondary schools only limiting the generalizability of the findings to private primary school contexts. Additionally, Mwangi and Karanja (2022) examined leadership styles and teacher job satisfaction in Kenyan public primary schools using a quantitative survey design. While their findings indicated that autocratic leadership reduced teacher commitment and morale, the study relied solely on closed-ended questionnaires, which restricted deeper understanding of teachers' lived experiences under autocratic leadership.

In a study conducted outside Kenya, Hassan and Noor (2021) explored leadership styles and employee morale in private educational institutions using a mixed-methods approach. Although the study acknowledged that autocratic leadership may be effective in crisis situations, it did not specifically isolate teacher morale as a key outcome variable, instead focusing broadly on organizational performance. Recent studies indicate that autocratic leadership is associated with reduced employee morale due to lack of participation and increased control (Ali & Anwar, 2022). Employees under such leadership often report low motivation, limited job satisfaction and also stress.

In Kenya, the fast growth of private primary schools in urban areas such as Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-County has been caused by congestion in public schools and increased demand for affordable education. Despite these changes, evidence indicates that many private schools work under high administration

pressure, and centralized decision-making, which may negatively affect teachers' satisfaction and morale (Amani, 2024; Rezky et al., 2024). There is evidence of leadership practices that do not adequately support teachers' emotional and professional needs, contributing to low morale. For example, ineffective leadership behaviours, such as limited teacher involvement in decision making or lack of supportive supervision, have been shown to correlate with stress burnout and reduced job commitment among teachers. Teacher morale is characterized by job satisfaction, motivation and emotional well-being which plays a crucial role in the overall school environment. Leadership within a school setting involves more than just administrative tasks; it profoundly shapes motivation, experiences and performance of teachers. (Leithwood, Harris & Hopkins, 2020). According to Hallinger and Heck (2019), Leadership styles adopted by school head teachers and administrators can significantly impact teacher morale, an essential component of effective teaching and learning environments.

Critically, most of the reviewed studies adopted correlational or purely quantitative designs, focused on public institutions, or examined education levels other than private primary schools. Additionally, limited attention was given to leadership transitions and contextual factors within urban informal settings such as Kayole ward in Embakasi Central Sub-County. From the reviewed studies, there is limited empirical evidence on how autocratic leadership styles influence teacher morale in private primary schools, particularly within Kayole ward, Embakasi Central Sub-County. Furthermore, few studies have employed a descriptive mixed-methods approach that integrates teachers' perceptions with head teachers' perspectives. This study seeks to address these gaps by examining autocratic leadership practices and their influence on teacher morale in private primary schools using both quantitative and qualitative methods.

2.2.5 Empirical Evidence on Autocratic Leadership styles and Teacher Morale

In the United States Blasé and Blasé (2000) found that autocratic school leadership reduced teacher motivation and increased stress and reduced job satisfaction. National educational researchers such as Kenneth Leithwood have consistently cited that leadership is second only to classroom instruction in its impact on student learning, with strong implications for teacher motivation and over school effectiveness.

In the United Kingdom, autocratic leadership has been associated with poor school atmosphere and low teacher motivation. Bush (2011) noted that excessive control by head teachers or other school leaders reduced professional autonomy leading to reduced teacher morale.

Empirical studies have been carried out vastly in Africa regarding leadership styles indicate that autocratic leadership style is generally associated with negative teacher morale. This type of leadership is

characterized by centralized limited teacher participation, centralized decision making and strict control by head teachers.

Teachers are a great entity in the education sector and they must remain in high morale so as to achieve maximum job performance and satisfaction (Agustin et. al., 2022). In Lusaka Province , Zambia, a study showed that autocratic leadership style had a negative effect on teacher morale and performance (Elina & Felix, 2025). This means that the leadership style only demotivated the teachers and led to poor performance.

African studies also report that autocratic leadership style makes the teacher feel undervalued. In Nigeria, Adeyemi (2010) reported that autocratic leadership resulted in low teacher commitment and morale. This is because the teachers were not satisfied with the work and limited commitment due to exclusion from decision making processes. Similarly, Agustin et al. (2022) cited that rigid leadership practices weakened professional relationships, reduced teachers job satisfaction which ultimately affected instructional effectiveness. These findings suggested that autocratic leadership style undermines teacher morale by restricting self-autonomy and also professional engagement.. Also, evidence shows that some head teachers prefer using the autocratic leadership styles. Studies conducted in Africa indicate that autocratic leadership remains prevalent in many private schools and this is due to pressure to maintain discipline and achieve high academic performance (Okoth, 2021).

Narrowing the scope to Kenya, particularly in private primary schools, head teachers may adopt autocratic leadership to ensure curriculum coverage, assessment performance, and adherence to the institution's policies. However, research has shown that excessive use of this leadership style can negatively affect teacher morale by reducing motivation, limiting professional autonomy and increasing stress (Kiprono & Chelimo, 2020). Despite many Kenyan studies focusing on the effects of different leadership styles on students' performance, leadership practices still show effects on teacher motivation and engagement.

Studies conducted in Kenyan private primary schools indicate that autocratic leadership style negatively affects teacher morale. In most of the private schools in Kenya, the school owners or head teachers exercise centralized authority; they often make decisions without involving teachers. This type of leadership practice limits teacher autonomy and professional participation which eventually leads to job dissatisfaction, low morale, and high staff turnover. Empirical evidence from Kiambu and Nairobi counties shows that teachers in private primary schools under autocratic leadership often experience reduced motivation and weak commitment to their institutions (Kiplangat & Gakure, 2014; Muli, 2016). These

findings therefore suggest that lack of consultation and excessive control undermine teacher morale in private primary school settings.

According to Muthoni (2018) teachers in privately owned primary schools experience a lot of dissatisfaction due to authoritarian decision making by school administration. Wambugu (2014) also reported that autocratic leadership styles in private primary schools limited professional growth and also lowered the teacher morale. This kind of leadership can cause a rift between the teachers and the school administrator. This is because the school administrator focuses on having the teachers following rules they have set without really asking for their opinions regarding the rules. This causes the teachers to have to incorporate rules that do not suit them hence they begin to dislike their work as well as the school administrator hence creating a rift. This causes work to feel like a burden hence reduced job satisfaction from employees as they are governed by rigid rules where decisions are made for them.

Despite existing studies on autocratic leadership in public schools, there is limited empirical evidence focusing on private primary schools in Kenya, especially regarding how this leadership style influences teacher morale. It is noted that both international and Kenyan studies indicate that autocratic leadership style in private primary schools had a negative influence on teacher morale.

This study therefore sought to address this gap by examining the extent to which autocratic leadership affects teacher morale in private primary schools. Most studies focused on public schools, leaving a gap in understanding the effects of autocratic leadership on teacher morale in private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-County.

2.2.6 Influence Democratic Leadership Style on Teacher Morale

Empirical studies consistently associate democratic leadership with positive teacher outcomes such as motivation, job satisfaction, and professional commitment. For example, Leithwood, Harris, and Hopkins (2020) examined participatory leadership practices in schools using a longitudinal design and found that democratic leadership enhanced teacher morale through shared decision-making and supportive supervision.

Democratic leadership has been widely linked to improved morale since it promotes communication, participation and shared decision making (Hassan et al.,2023). In educational settings teachers that work under democratic leadership tend to exhibit job satisfaction and higher commitment. Despite the robustness of the design, the study was conducted in developed country contexts, limiting its applicability to Kenyan private primary schools.

In Kenya, Njoroge (2023) studied the influence of democratic leadership on teacher job satisfaction in public secondary schools using a descriptive survey design. The findings indicated that inclusive leadership practices improved teacher morale and engagement. However, the study focused on public secondary schools and did not include private primary schools, which operate under different governance and employment conditions.

A study by Otieno and Were (2021) employed qualitative interviews to examine headteachers' leadership practices and teacher motivation in urban schools. While the study provided rich insights into democratic leadership behaviours, it did not triangulate findings with quantitative data, thereby limiting the measurement of the magnitude of influence on teacher morale.

Overall, existing studies emphasize the positive role of democratic leadership but are constrained by context, level of education, or methodological limitations such as reliance on a single data collection method.

Although democratic leadership has been widely studied, there is insufficient empirical evidence on its influence on teacher morale in private primary schools within Kayole, Embakasi Sub-County. Moreover, few studies have integrated teachers' questionnaire responses with head teachers' interview data to provide a comprehensive understanding of democratic leadership practices. This study addresses these gaps by employing a descriptive mixed-methods design to examine democratic leadership and teacher morale in private primary schools.

2.2.7. Empirical Evidence on Democratic Leadership Style and Teacher Morale

Research in international settings indicates that in the United Kingdom and found out that participative leadership in primary schools enhanced retention and teacher morale Bush and Glover (2014). According to Somech (2005) his research in the USA shows that participative leadership increases job satisfaction and teacher morale. He noted that teachers involved in decision making demonstrated stronger organizational skills and demonstrated higher morale. Democratic leadership style refers to a leadership approach where employees or subordinates are involved in decision-making processes. In schools, democratic headteachers encourage participation, teamwork and consultation among teachers. This style promotes open communication and mutual respect between school administrators and teachers.

Democratic leadership style has been associated with positive teacher morale, job satisfaction and commitment. In Israel, Bogler (2001) examined the influence of headteacher styles of leadership and decision making strategies on teacher job satisfaction and established that supportive leadership practices positively influenced teacher morale and job satisfaction. Research has consistently shown that democratic

leadership positively influences teacher morale. Teachers who participate in decision-making feel appreciated, motivated and committed to their work. According to studies in educational management, participatory leadership increases job satisfaction and promotes positive working relationships in schools. A study conducted in secondary schools revealed that teachers working under democratic leaders demonstrated higher morale, improved teamwork and greater commitment to school activities. Democratic leadership also creates a supportive working environment where teachers are free to express opinions and contribute ideas toward school development.

Additionally, democratic leadership encourages collaboration and professional growth among teachers. Teachers become more confident and motivated because they feel recognized as important stakeholders in the school. As a result, schools experience improved productivity, better teacher retention and enhanced learner outcomes.

However, democratic leadership may consume more time because consultation and consensus building are required before decisions are made. Despite this limitation, many scholars consider democratic leadership to be one of the most effective leadership styles in educational institutions.

Within Africa, democratic leadership style has similarly been associated with promotion of inclusivity and shared decision-making among teachers as well as providing problem-solving solutions (Uy, 2024). This means that the teachers get included in the decision-making process and their opinions are valued. In this type of leadership, the school administrator seeks the opinions and perspectives of the teachers. The school administrator does not just impose rules on the teachers but allows them to make decisions regarding the rules they need to put in place (Salvador & Manuel, 2024). In other words, this type of leadership is not rigid in nature. This type of leadership promotes collaboration between the employees and the administrators. They work together as a team as they get to share ideas without making either of the parties feel undervalued. This type of leadership style also causes great unity among employees as they feel as part of the organization as they get to take part in making decisions. With this type of leadership, the employees often appreciate their work and they feel their school administrators value their needs hence they gain respect for their leaders instead of dislike (Salvador & Manuel, 2024). This promotes peaceful co-existence as the teachers are able to remain positive towards the school administrator and organization hence this leads to improved performance hence peaceful living. Democratic leadership therefore provides employees with freedom to express opinion and take part in the decision-making process where they get to have a say in making the rules as well as other important decisions.

According to Nguni et al. (2006) in South Africa, it is recorded that democratic leadership in privately managed schools significantly improved teacher morale and job satisfaction. As a way of addressing the above, Noor and Dola (2011), in Malaysia found out that teacher participation in decision making greatly increased morale in the private primary schools.

In schools, this type of leadership allows teachers to participate in curriculum planning, policy formulation and school management decisions. This kind of approach promotes mutual respect, trust and teamwork.

Democratic leadership style has been reported widely to have positive effects on teacher morale in African schools. This type of leadership style allows teachers to participate in decision making processes and collaboration has been found to have positive effects on teacher morale and performance. This was evident in Copper belt province, Zambia where teachers expressed great satisfaction in their work, great morale and high levels of motivation to work (Elina & Felix, 2025). Teachers felt empowered to contribute to school decisions and values, which enhanced their sense of professional commitment and responsibility. Similar findings have been reported in other African contexts where democratic leadership style is associated with stronger teamwork, improved teacher morale and better school performance. Empirical study from Tanzania indicates that democratic leadership style was the most commonly used leadership style by most head teachers (Mpangala & Urrio, 2024). The school heads expressed that they chose this leadership style as it not only motivated teachers but also it led to improved students' performance

Within the Kenyan context several researchers locally have examined the influence of democratic leadership on teacher- related outcomes. Kosgei and Edabu (2023) carried out research on the influence of headteachers' leadership styles on teacher job satisfaction in public primary schools in Baringo Sub-county. His findings revealed that democratic leadership positively influenced teacher participation, consultation and job satisfaction. However the study focuses only on public primary schools and did not examine teacher morale in private primary schools.

Similarly, Muga (2022) examined the headteachers' leadership styles and their relationship with teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Siaya, Kisumu and Kajiado Counties. The study established that leadership styles that promoted collaboration and participation were positively associated with teachers' job satisfaction. The study nevertheless concentrated on public secondary schools and not private primary schools. Democratic leadership style has been found to positively influence teacher morale in Kenyan private primary schools. This leadership approach often encourages teacher participation in open communication, decision-making, and collaborative problem-solving. Studies indicate that teachers involved in school leadership and instruction decisions feel valued and respected, leading to higher morale

and job satisfaction (Mutai & Rotich, 2018). In private primary schools, democratic leadership practices have been associated with reduced teacher turnover, improved teamwork, and enhanced commitment to school goals (Muli, 2016). These findings cite the importance of inclusive leadership in promoting positive teacher attitudes in private primary education. A research conducted in African school contexts indicates that democratic leadership positively influences teacher morale by fostering a sense of professional respect and ownership (Njoroge & Orodho, 2018). In Kenya, this type of leadership has been found to enhance job satisfaction, teacher motivation and commitment, particularly in environments where teachers feel valued and respected. Shikokoti, Okoth and Chepkonga (2023) on another Kenyan study, investigated the influence of principals' involvement of teachers in decision making on teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Kakamega County. The findings showed that teachers who were involved in decision making reported higher levels of commitment to school goals and job satisfaction.

According to Kiboss and Jemiryott (2014), democratic leadership positively influences teacher morale in private primary schools in Kenya. Additionally Mwangi (2019) reported that participatory leadership reduces teacher turnover in most of the private primary schools in urban areas.

2.3 Summary of Literature Review and Research Gaps

The literature Review has presented research on leadership styles used in schools and teacher morale including empirical evidence from recent research carried out. It put emphasis on democratic and autocratic leadership styles and their effects on teacher morale. The literature also explores what teacher morale is and its importance which is important information to support this research as it focuses mainly on teacher morale as a dependent variable and leadership styles as an independent variable. A particular emphasis on democratic leadership styles had positive effects on teacher morale and job satisfaction while autocratic leadership style led to negative effects on teacher morale and job satisfaction. The study provided empirical evidence from other regions of Africa as this was closely related to the Kenyan context as these countries are in the same region as Kenya. The empirical data provided was proof that leadership styles have an effect on teachers' satisfaction and morale. The literature review concluded by providing the research gaps that the research sought to fill which included the effects of leadership styles on teacher morale in private primary schools in urban areas putting a focus on Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-county. Another gap was a comparative analysis of the different leadership styles focusing precisely on autocratic and democratic leadership. The current study sought to address and bridge the gap by examining the influence of leadership styles on teacher morale in private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-county.

While there is a growing literature review on how leadership styles affect teacher performance and morale in public primary schools, there is a limited literature on the effects of leadership styles on teacher morale

in private primary schools especially in urban settings such as Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-county. Most of the research carried out focuses on public primary schools as well as secondary schools on the effect of leadership on the academic performance of the students. There is limited empirical evidence on private primary schools particularly within Embakasi Central Sub-County, this study sought to address this gap. There is also a need for a comparative analysis of the different leadership styles including autocratic and democratic leadership. This study differed by focusing on private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-County. While previous studies have explored leadership styles in education, few have focused on private primary schools in urban informal settings such as Kayole within Embakasi Sub-county, additionally; limited studies have combined perspectives from both teachers and headteachers, creating a gap that this study addressed.

This study therefore worked towards filling these gaps through providing empirical data from private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-county, which will contribute greatly to the leadership styles and theories implemented within the Sub-county.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explored the research methodologies that were used to get the data required for the study. The chapter outlines research design, research site, target population, sampling techniques, data collection instruments, validity and reliability of instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis methods and ethical considerations. The methodology to be used has been designed so that it addresses the study objectives which sought to examine the influence of autocratic leadership styles on teacher morale in private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-County.

3.2 Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive research design. The design was appropriate because it enabled the researcher to collect data on the existing leadership approaches and levels of teacher morale without manipulating the study variables. This design was appropriate for describing respondent's perceptions and experiences regarding directive management practices and participative leadership approach and their influence on teacher morale in private primary schools within Kayole wards, Embakasi Central Sub-County.

Quantitative data was collected using structured questionnaires administered to teachers, providing measurable information on leadership styles and teacher morale. Qualitative data was collected through interview schedules administered to head teachers to provide deeper insights into leadership practices and their perceived impact on teacher morale. The qualitative and quantitative data was collected at the same time during the research phase but they were analyzed separately, interpreted and merged. The quantitative approach was used to collect numerical data from teachers using questionnaires while the qualitative approach was used to collect in-depth information from the headteachers through interviews

Descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarize the data. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically to identify patterns and explanations regarding leadership practices. The study also explored the extent to which different leadership styles are associated with teacher morale, without making causal claims, as this is a descriptive study. This provided a comprehensive better understanding on how leadership styles affect teacher morale in private primary schools in urban settings of Kayole, Embakasi Sub-county.

3.3 Research Site

This research was carried out in Kayole, in Embakasi Central Sub-county which is one of the sub-counties in Nairobi County. The area contains several private primary schools which are run using a variety of leadership styles. Given the high demand for primary education, there have been many established private primary schools as there is a high population of learners which surpass the available public primary schools in the area. The private primary schools have been established to offer basic education to the growing number of learners seeking basic public education. Many parents therefore opt to take their children to the private primary schools in the Kayole area. The leadership styles used in public primary schools may differ from those used in private primary schools and how they affect teacher morale. Furthermore, limited empirical studies had been conducted on the influence of leadership approaches on teacher morale in private primary schools within the area, thereby presenting a contextual research gap. Data on leadership has been provided previously on public primary schools in different parts of Kenya. The researcher therefore found the gap on lack of data on leadership styles used in private primary schools and their effects on teacher morale. This area was suitable given the availability of a research audience, the location of the area and its accessibility by public and private means of transport and this made collection of data practical and cost-effective.

3.4 Target Population

The target population refers to the entire group of individuals from which the study sought to obtain information (Kathari, 2004). The study was made up of 57 private primary schools which were well established, however not all schools participated in the study. From these schools, the study targeted 120 teachers who provided quantitative data through structured questionnaires. Additionally 17 headteachers that were selected private primary schools within Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-county participated in the qualitative component of the study through interviews. The total target population was therefore 137 respondents. The teachers carried out the questionnaires independently by not indicating their names to avoid the head of institutions or colleagues from coercing them into writing information that is not true. This encouraged the teachers to express themselves freely without fear of victimization or even being alienated by their colleagues. This was because they might provide biased information given that they are in charge of the leadership styles they implement as they are afraid of being seen as the ones who serve as destructors of the institutions they are in charge of. This was therefore to help to prevent biasness hence provision of trusted and true information. Teachers were selected because they are directly influenced by leadership styles, while headteachers were included as key informants responsible for implementing leadership practices within schools.

Table 3: 1 shows the distribution of the target population

Table 3.1: Target Population Distribution

Category	Population
Private Primary Schools	57
Teachers	120
Headteachers	17
Total Respondents	137

3.5 Study Sample

3.5.1 Study Sample Size

A sample size refers to the number of participants selected from the target population to participate in a study. Determining an appropriate sample size is important because it enhances the representativeness of the population and improves the accuracy and reliability of research findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). According to Kothari and Garg (2023), a sample should be sufficiently large to provide adequate information for addressing the study objectives while remaining manageable in terms of time and resources. In this study, a sample size was determined as 30% which falls within the acceptable range of 10% -30% (Mugenda&Mugenda, 2003). For this study a sample size of 30% of private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-county was used. This was because the area has many private primary schools and they could not all be exhausted in a short period of time and their data could not be analyzed and interpreted in time for the study. The sample size for this study was drawn from the target population of 120 teachers. The study adopted 30% of the teacher population which resulted to 36 teachers from the total population additionally all 17 head teachers were included in the study in private primary schools located in Kayole ward within Embakasi Central Sub-County. Since the number of head teachers (17) was small and manageable, the study adopted a census approach, where all head teachers were included in the study to provide qualitative data through interviews. Therefore, the total sample size for the study was 53 respondents.

Table 3.2 Distribution of Sample Size

Category	Population	Sample Sampling Technique Size
Head teachers	17	17 Census sampling
Teachers	120	36 Sample random sampling
Total	137	53

3.5.2 Sampling Procedure

Sampling techniques are the procedures used in selecting the group of people that will be used in a study to represent the larger group. A census sampling technique was used to include all the 17 head teachers since the number was manageable and each plays a key role in leadership. A stratified sampling was used to ensure representation from each of the 17 private primary schools. Simple random sampling was then applied to select 36 teachers from the target population this ensured equal chances of participation minimizing bias. Purposive sampling was used to select all 17 head teachers. The headteachers are the key informants with specific knowledge about leadership styles and their influence on teacher morale and therefore this technique was appropriate.

3.6 Data Collection

3.6.1 Data Collection Instruments

The study used two main data collection instruments which were structured questionnaires for the teachers and interviews for the headteachers. The data collection methods used helped to provide multiple pieces of credible information which contributed greatly to the study in helping to understand how different leadership styles influenced teacher morale in private primary schools in urban areas in relation to Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-county.

3.6.1.1 Questionnaire

This is a structured set of questions arranged in different sections each covering different interrelated aspects. Questionnaires filled by the teachers were used to acquire information from the sample size selected for the study. The teachers who were the main respondents were required to read and answer each of the questions from the questionnaires. The questionnaire came in handy as they helped to collect information from a large group of people within a short period of time. This also ensured that time was not wasted and all the respondents responded to the questions freely without being coerced to answer in a given way that would suit others hence providing biased information. The questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data from teachers and this consisted of structured open –ended items organized into sections covering demographic information, autocratic leadership practices, democratic leadership practices and teacher morale. The responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

3.6.1.2 Interviews

The interview schedule was used to collect qualitative data from head teachers. This consisted of open-ended questions designed to explore leadership practices, communication decision making and perceptions

of teacher morale. The interview allowed for an in-depth exploration of issues that may not be well captured through questionnaires.

3.6.2 Pilot Testing of Research Instruments

Pilot testing of the research instruments was conducted prior to the main data collection to assess the clarity, relevance, and adequacy of the questionnaire and interview schedule. The pilot study helped identify ambiguous items, unclear instructions, and any weaknesses in the instruments that may affect data quality. The process involved administering the questionnaire and interview guide to a small group of people.

The pilot test was conducted in private primary schools outside Kayole ward but within Embakasi Central Sub-County to avoid contamination of the main study sample. A sample of approximately 10% of the target population was used for the pilot study. Teachers completed the questionnaires, while the headteachers participated in the interviews.

Data obtained from the pilot study was not included in the final analysis. Feedback from the pilot respondents was used to revise and refine the instruments by rephrasing unclear items, adjusting the length of the questionnaire, and improving the interview guide. The pilot study also assisted in estimating the time required to complete the questionnaire and interviews, thereby enhancing the efficiency of the main data collection process.

3.6.3 Instruments Reliability

Reliability refers to the consistency and dependability of research instruments in providing stable results. The reliability of the research instruments used in this study was carried out through the pilot testing phase. This pilot study was carried out in selected private primary schools outside the area of study.. The data collected from the pilot study was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to compute Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, to test the internal consistency of the questionnaire items. A reliability coefficient of 0.7 or above was considered acceptable for the study. Where there is low reliability score, the questions were revised or removed completely from the main data collection to ensure reliability is maintained at all cost. The process ensured the final research instruments used in the study were reliable and capable of producing consistent results

3.6.4 Instrument Validity

This is the ability of the research instruments to measure the information needed for the study. Validity refers to the extent to which a research instrument accurately measures what it is intended to measure (Repke et al., 2024; Karnia, 2024; Andersson & Boateng, 2024). Validity of the research instruments is

carried out by experts. To ensure content validity, the research instruments were developed in line with the study objectives. Validity should be confirmed by expert judgment. The expert advice actually came from my able supervisors and the feedback received was used to revise and improve the clarity and relevance of the instruments before main study. Additionally, the pilot test that was carried out in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-county was quite pertinent in discovering the validity of the research instruments. Areas in the questionnaire that present elements of ambiguity and overlaps were corrected in order to finally fashion the instrument for this research.

3.6.5 Data Collection Procedures

In this study, the researcher followed several steps. The researcher sought a research approval letter from the School of Post Graduate studies to facilitate acquisition of research permits. The researcher sought a research permit from the National Commission of Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). The permit was obtained and was used to obtain permission from the Sub-County Education Officer to carry out the study in the area. The teachers who were involved in research were informed in advance. Different tools and methods were used to gather data for use in this research. Prior to data collection exercise the researcher made a survey to Schools in the Kayole area. During the survey visit in the study area the researcher made appointments with the persons identified to participate in the study. On appointment day, the questionnaires were distributed by the researcher in the morning and collected in the afternoon. The researcher availed herself during this period for any question and clarification. Personal interviews were conducted to head teachers only. These interviews were scheduled at convenient times to allow the respondents to express their views freely. The researcher ensured that ethical considerations were observed during the data collection period and that participation was voluntary. The researcher also assured the participants of confidentiality and anonymity of the data provided.

3.7 Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data. It is important to analyse data so that the researcher can obtain usable and useful information. Thematic analysis involved coding qualitative responses, identifying recurring patterns and grouping them into themes aligned with study objectives. This approach provided deeper insights into leadership practices from the perspective of the headteachers. According to Bengtsson, (2016), data is set out in such way that it describes, discusses, evaluates and explains the content and characteristics of collected information so as to be able to answer the research questions. Once data collection was complete, the researcher did the editing to identify incomplete or inaccurate responses in the tools to obtain clean data. Editing is done to be sure that the data are accurate and consistent with other facts gathered. In this study, both quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques were employed

Quantitative data obtained from questionnaires were coded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences. (SPSS). To summarize the data obtained, descriptive statistics such as mean, percentages, standards deviations and frequencies were used. Inferential statistics such as correlation analysis was used to summarize the data that used to examine the relationship between leadership styles such as autocratic and democratic on teacher morale which aligned with the study objectives. The results were presented in tables, to make it easy to interpret the findings and promote information clarity.

Qualitative data obtained from interviews was analyzed thematically. The researcher transcribed the interview responses, coded the data and identified the similar and frequently occurring themes in relation to leadership styles and teacher morale. The identified themes were then arranged according to the objectives of the study and were used in reinforcing the quantitative findings. Direct quotations were used to support the key themes in the study. This helped to ensure the data provided enough evidence to support the facts. Also, the anonymity of the participants was maintained to ensure they provide information without fear of being alienated for speaking the truth and also avoiding information biasness.

3.8 Legal and Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations refer to the standards of conduct that provide a distinction between what is considered right and what is considered wrong. They help to distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behaviors. It is important for any researcher to have ethical considerations as they act as a guiding light in their study. Ethical considerations were strictly observed in the study. In connection to this, the researcher sought permission to carry out the study from Africa Nazarene University in regard to data collection. Permission to carry out the research was also obtained from NACOSTI offices and the concerned government ministry. Also, the researcher sought permission from other relevant bodies and parties to ensure that she gets the necessary permission to carry out the study.

The participants were informed of the need to be interviewed. The researcher explained the aim of the study to the participants, who willingly agreed to the interview. The participation of respondents was voluntary without coercion or enticed with a promised benefit. This is referred to as informed consent. The researcher assured the respondents of feedback in case they request for it. Assuring them feedback after the study encouraged respondents to cooperate. The researcher ensured that questionnaire sets and interviews were carried out in an environment that allows privacy of the information and the respondent's confidentiality. The researcher also ensured that the identity of the respondents remained unidentified.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents, analysis and interpretation of data collected from respondents, it presents findings from both headteachers and teachers integrating quantitative and qualitative data to provide comprehensive analysis of the influence of leadership styles on teacher morale in private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-county. The findings from the collected data were presented in line with the study objectives and the research questions presented in the beginning of the study, which sought to determine the effects of democratic and autocratic leadership styles on teacher morale in private primary schools in Kayole Embakasi Central Sub- County.

4.2 Response Rate

The study sampled 53 respondents selected in the 17 private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-county, comprising of 36 teachers and 17 head teachers. The 17 schools represented a total of 30% of the total number of private primary schools in Kayole. Cumulatively 36 questionnaires were distributed to the participants in the selected private schools and out of 36 questionnaires provided, 32 questionnaires were correctly completed and returned hence the completion rate was 89%. Additionally the study targeted 17 head teachers for interviews, out of these only 15 head teachers participated. This led the response rate to stand at 88% for the interviews. The response rates for both interviews and questionnaires were considered adequate. This is because it exceeded the recommended minimum of 70% for educational research and analysis. This ensured that the analysis was done well and it met the required qualifications hence it was credible. This return rate is considered very good to enable the determination of the phenomenon that exists as it is in line with Mugenda and Mugenda (2008) assertion. They state that a response rate of above 70% is recommended for the generalization of the study findings. This is also in line with Cooper and Schindler (2006) arguing that the research whose response rate is above 70% is adequate for a study of a social science nature.

Table 4.1 Response Rate

Category	Sample size	Response	Percentage
Teachers	36	32	89%
Headteachers	17	15	88%
Total	53	47	89%

The findings on table 4:1 show the overall response rate based on the sampled respondents, the findings indicated that 32 out of 36 teachers responded to the questionnaires and returned them while 15 out of 17 headteachers participated in the study. This resulted in an overall score of 89% which was considered adequate for the data analysis and generalization of the study findings. The response obtained was sufficient to provide reliable qualitative insights for the study despite the fact that two headteachers were not available during the data collection period. According to Creswell and Creswell (2023), a response rate above 70% is sufficient for educational research because it minimizes non-response bias and enhances the reliability of findings.

4.2.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Demographic data was used to determine the background information of the respondents. They included gender, age, teaching experience, and academic qualifications.

4.2.2 Gender Distribution

The gender of the respondents was sought as it helped in determining the dominant gender of teachers in the private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-county. This shows the national trend in private primary education.

Table 4.2 Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	18	56%
Male	14	44%
Total	32	100%

Table 4:2 shows the gender distribution of the respondents. The findings from the study indicate that the majority of the respondents were female while the male teachers account for 44%. This is an indication that female teachers formed a larger population of the teaching staff in the sampled schools

4.2.3. Age Bracket of Respondents

The age of the respondents was important as it would help in determining the dominant age bracket of private primary school teachers in Kayole. This was helpful in categorizing the respondents based on age.

Table 4.3 *Age bracket of Respondents*

Age Bracket	Frequency	Percentage
25-30	13	41%
31-40	12	38%
40+	7	21%
Total	32	100%

Table 4.3 From this study, it was clear that majority of the teachers who seek employment in private primary schools in Kayole Embakasi Central sub-county are aged 25 to 30 years indicating a relatively young workforce and those aged 40 and above years, were the smallest group of teachers employed in private primary schools in Kayole. The results are an indication that the majority of ECDE teachers have a substantial mature age which means they were competent enough as noted by Mutoro (2012) who noted that teachers' maturity determines the competence and efficiency.

4.2.4 Teaching Experience

This is the total number of years teachers have been in the teaching service and have practiced teaching in different education institutions. This information was important in the study as it helped in identifying how long the teachers had been working in the institution or in the private primary schools and the experience they had with the leadership styles that were used in the institutions. This was essential in helping to determine how the leadership styles used had affected their morale over the years they had been working.

Table 4.4 Teacher Experience

Year of Experience	Frequency	Percentage
1-5 years	12	38%
6-15 years	13	41%
10 years and above	7	21%
Total	32	100%

Table 4.4, illustrates the different years of experience different respondents had. Respondents who had 1-5 years of experience were made up 38% of the total population which was 12 educators. Meanwhile those possessing a career span of 6 to 15 years accounted for 41% of the entire sample. The findings indicated that the majority of the respondents had 6-15 years of experience. This was the largest group which showed that most of the educators that worked in private primary schools in Kayole, had been working for six and above years in the sector. The last group of participants possessed a decade or more of instructional experience were made up 21.% of the total population. They were 7 teachers and this showed that teachers who had taught for ten plus years made up the smallest share of teachers in private primary schools in Kayole. This suggest that most teachers had moderate experience in teaching which is adequate in providing reliable responses regarding leadership styles and teacher's morale

4.2.5 Academic Qualifications

These are the professional qualifications that one possesses. These findings were important in ensuring that the respondents could understand the questionnaires and interviews easily. This was helpful as it helped in knowing the group of respondents who completed the questionnaires.

Table 4.5 Academic Qualification of respondents

Academic Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Certificate	18	56%
Diploma	10	31%
Degree	4	13%
Total	32	100%

Table 4.5 indicates that the academic qualification of the respondents, the study findings indicate that the greater part of teachers had certificate qualification at 56% while 3% had diploma qualifications. 13% of the teachers held degree qualification which was the smallest proportion of the respondents. This suggest

that a large of the educators in private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-County have basic professional training

4.3 Analysis Based on Research Objectives.

4.3.1 Influence of Autocratic Leadership Style on Teacher Morale

These are the findings on how autocratic leadership influences teacher morale. The primary aim of this study was to determine the influence of authoritarian management on educator motivation private primary school teachers that were selected in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-County. Quantitative data was collected in order to achieve this objective quantitative data was collected using questionnaires that were administered to the teachers and qualitative data collected through interviews with the headteachers

4.3.1.1 Quantitative Findings on Autocratic leadership

. Teachers were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed to given statements relating to autocratic leadership that was practiced in their schools. Under these findings, the teachers were requested to rate various aspects regarding autocratic leadership on a Likert scale of five points where 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree and 5= Strongly agree

Table 4.6*Autocratic Leadership and Teacher Morale*

Aspect	Mean
Headteachers make decisions alone	3.0
Strict supervision is engaged	3.2
Autocratic leaders make and implement decisions on their own without consulting	2.9
The headteacher controls all activities	3.1
Overall mean	3.05

Table 4.6, the moderate mean score indicated that autocratic leadership was present but less preferred. The findings indicated that strict supervision recorded a mean of 3.2 while control of activities by headteachers recorded a mean of 3.1. Decision making by headteachers alone recorded 3.0 while implementation of decision without consulting the teachers score 2.9. The overall mean score from the table above was 3.05. The above findings suggested that autocratic leadership practices were evident in the sampled schools and remain less preferred style among the teachers.

4.3.1.2 Qualitative Findings on Autocratic leadership

The headteachers were interviewed to establish how autocratic leadership style influences teacher morale in private primary schools. The findings revealed that autocratic leadership facilitated quick decision making and ensured adherence to school policies and procedures. However, most of the headteachers acknowledged that excessive control and limited teacher participation could negatively affect teacher motivation and commitment.

The findings therefore suggest that autocratic leadership negatively influences teacher moral. The teachers reported limited participation in decision making processes and this reduced their motivation.

To ensure confidentiality and protect the identity of the participants, pseudonyms in the form of codes were also used during data presentation. The interviewed headteachers were assigned codes ranging from HT1 to HT16. These codes were used when reporting verbatim quotations from the interviews.

Interview data were analyzed thematically. Three themes emerged: centralized decision-making, limited teacher participation, and reduced teacher motivation and commitment.

Theme 1: Centralized Decision-Making

The findings revealed that autocratic leadership was characterized by centralized decision-making, where major decisions were made by headteachers with minimal consultation of teachers. Respondents indicated that this approach was often adopted when quick decisions were required or when maintaining discipline within the school.

One headteacher stated:

"There are situations where I make decisions on my own, especially when urgent action is required to address school matters" (HT2).

Another respondent observed:

"Sometimes consultation takes too much time, so decisions are made at the administrative level and communicated to teachers for implementation" (HT16).

The findings suggest that while centralized decision-making may facilitate quick responses to school challenges, it limits teachers' opportunities to contribute ideas and participate in school governance.

Theme 2: Limited Teacher Participation

The study further established that autocratic leadership reduced teachers' participation in decision-making processes. Most respondents acknowledged that teachers were often informed about decisions after they had already been made rather than being involved in the decision-making process.

One participant explained:

"Teachers are expected to implement decisions made by the administration even when they have not been consulted" (HT6).

Another respondent stated:

"When teachers are not involved in decisions, some feel that their opinions are not valued" (HT14).

These findings indicate that limited participation may create feelings of exclusion among teachers, thereby negatively affecting their morale and commitment to school programmes.

Theme 3: Reduced Teacher Motivation and Commitment

The findings revealed that excessive reliance on autocratic leadership practices may negatively affect teacher motivation and commitment. Respondents reported that teachers were less enthusiastic and less willing to take initiative when they had little input in school affairs.

One headteacher remarked:

"Some teachers become less motivated when they feel they have no voice in matters affecting their work" (HT5).

Another respondent noted:

"Teachers tend to perform better when they are consulted. When decisions are imposed, their commitment may decline" (HT13).

The findings suggest that autocratic leadership may lower teacher morale by reducing motivation, job satisfaction, and commitment. Teachers who perceive leadership as overly controlling are less likely to develop a strong sense of ownership and responsibility towards school goals.

Theme 4: Compliance and Discipline

Some respondents indicated that autocratic leadership contributed to order, discipline, and compliance with school policies. Headteachers reported that strict supervision sometimes ensured that tasks were completed on time and school regulations were followed.

One respondent stated:

"A certain level of firmness is necessary to maintain discipline and ensure that school programmes are implemented effectively" (HT9).

Although autocratic leadership may promote compliance and discipline, the findings suggest that overreliance on this leadership style can negatively affect teacher morale by limiting participation and reducing motivation.

4.3.2 Influence of Democratic leadership on Teacher Morale

They also aligned with the study objectives as they provided information on how democratic leadership styles influenced teacher morale among teachers in selected private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-County. The following indicates both quantitative and qualitative findings on the same.

4.3.2.1 Quantitative Findings on Democratic leadership style

These were the numerical findings on the effects of participative governance on educator's motivation. The respondents were asked to respond to various statements on a Likert scale of five points regarding democratic leadership and teacher morale. The results helped to come up with actual findings on democratic leadership and how it influences teacher morale and how the respondents view it.

Table 4.7 Democratic Leadership and its Influence on Teacher Morale

Statements	Mean
Democratic leadership encourages Collaboration	4.2
School heads encourages participation	4.3
Team work is promoted	4.4
Teachers opinion is valued in decision making	4.1
Overall mean	4.25

Table 4.7, illustrates that democratic leadership led to increased teacher morale. This is because the respondents indicated that the democratic leadership styles used allowed collective decision making, increased motivation, increased job satisfaction and improved team work as teachers embraced team work. The high mean scores indicated that teachers had more morale with democratic leadership style hence it affected teacher morale positively. The teachers showed more liking towards this type of leadership styles over autocratic leadership style, which further suggest that democratic leadership positively influenced teachers' morale promoting participation, teamwork and inclusiveness

4.3.2.2 Qualitative Findings on Democratic Leadership Style on Teacher Morale

The findings from the study revealed that participative approach promoted teacher participation in decision making. Majority of the headteachers indicated that teachers consulted before making major decisions that concerned the school activities, discipline issues or curriculum implementation. This enhances teacher's commitment and ownership of school goals. The findings are consistent with Kosgei and Edabu(2023) who found participative leadership highly influenced teacher job satisfaction through participation in decision making. To ensure confidentiality and protect identity of the participants, pseudonyms in form of codes were used during data presentation. The interviewed headteachers were assigned codes ranging from HT1 to HT15. These codes were used when reporting verbatim quotations from the interviews. The findings revealed that democratic encouraged teachers to participate in decision making processes within the institution.

Theme 1: Teacher Participation in Decision-Making

The findings revealed that democratic leadership encouraged teachers to participate in decision-making processes within their schools. Most headteachers reported that teachers were consulted before important decisions were made concerning academic programs, school activities, and discipline matters. Such involvement enhanced teachers' sense of ownership and responsibility towards school goals.

One headteacher stated:

"Before making major decisions, I involve teachers through meetings because they are directly involved in implementation" (HT4).

Another respondent observed:

"Teachers become more cooperative when they feel their views have been considered" (HT11).

The findings suggest that participation in decision-making enhances teacher morale by promoting a sense of belonging and commitment to school objectives.

Theme 2: Open Communication and Consultation

The study established that democratic leadership promotes open communication and consultation between headteachers and teachers. Respondents indicated that teachers were free to express their concerns and contribute ideas during staff meetings.

One participant noted:

"Teachers can approach me at any time to discuss issues affecting their work" (HT7).

Another respondent explained:

"Regular staff meetings help teachers share opinions and contribute solutions to school challenges"
(HT15).

The findings indicate that open communication fosters trust and strengthens working relationships, thereby improving teacher morale.

Theme 3: Teacher Motivation and Commitment

The findings further revealed that democratic leadership contributes to teacher motivation and commitment. Headteachers reported that teachers became more enthusiastic and dedicated when they were recognized and involved in school leadership processes.

One respondent remarked:

"Teachers work harder when they know their contributions are recognized and appreciated" (HT3).

Another headteacher stated:

"Allowing teachers to participate in planning activities increases their commitment to school programmes"
(HT12).

The findings suggest that democratic leadership positively influences teacher morale by enhancing motivation, commitment, and job satisfaction

The findings suggest that participation in decision-making enhances teacher moral by promoting a sense of belonging and commitment to school objectives. According to the interviews carried out, democratic leadership significantly contributes to teacher commitment and motivation. The headteachers indicated that involving teachers in leadership processes and appreciating their contribution increases their dedication to work and morale. These findings concur with those of Shikokoti, Okoth and Chepkonga(2023) , who found that teacher involvement in decision making influences positively their commitment to school goals and job satisfaction The respondents noted that regular feedback and consultation mechanism created mutual respect and trust within the school. This kind of communication enables teachers to freely express their concerns and contributes to their morale. Muga (2022) reported that leadership styles that are characterized by collaboration and consultation enhanced teacher commitment and satisfaction.

The findings further revealed that democratic approach contributes to teacher motivation and commitment; headteachers reported that teachers became more enthusiastic when they were recognized and involved in leadership processes. A respondent remarked that; ‘Teachers work harder when they know their contributions are recognized and appreciated’ (HT6). Another stated that; “Allowing teachers to participate in planning activities increases their commitment to school programmes” (HT9). These findings suggest that democratic leadership positively influences teacher morale by enhancing motivation, commitment and job satisfaction

4.4 Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study demonstrated that different leadership styles affect teacher morale differently, the study indicated that autocratic leadership led to low teacher morale, this kind of leadership was found to negatively affect the teacher’s motivation due to strict supervision and lack of involvement in decision-making. This in turn led to low job satisfaction, teachers also reported reduced motivation and a tendency to disengage from their work with some expressing intentions to seek employment elsewhere or even change teaching as a profession to pursue other alternatives that give satisfaction. Additionally, autocratic leadership contributed to increased stress levels in the workplace, and this negatively affected the teacher’s emotional well-being. The teachers lacked the desire to engage in work which led to increased stress in the work place. The teachers felt they were under a lot of pressure and this increased stress hence poor emotional well-being and low teacher morale. This supports findings from previous studies that indicate that controlling leadership styles negatively impact employee morale and performance. These findings are consistent with recent studies, Ali and Anwar (2022) found that autocratic leadership significantly reduces employee morale and job satisfaction due to limited participation and excessive control. Similarly, Nguyen et al.(2021) reported that authoritarian leadership increases workplace stress and negatively impacts employee well-being.

The study further established that autocratic leadership reduced team work and collaboration among teachers. Respondents indicated that teachers were less willing to share ideas or engage in school activities because they felt excluded from important decisions. This affected their morale and reduced their sense of belonging within the school environment. However some of the headteachers argued that autocratic leadership may help in urgent situations where a decision needs to be made without consulting or involving the teachers especially during emergencies. These findings are similar to those of Khan et al. (2020) who argue, autocratic leadership may be effective in situations requiring quick decision-making and this does not necessarily improve employee morale. This indicates that while autocratic leadership may have situational benefits, it’s generally detrimental to morale in educational settings. Regarding democratic leadership style, the findings revealed that democratic leadership led to increased teacher morale. This is

because it gave teachers the opportunity to participate in the decision making process and this fostered their sense of inclusion and ownership. Democratic leadership style enhanced team work, motivation and job satisfaction among teachers. Teachers reported improved emotional well-being due to reduced pressure and increased support from school leadership. The educators also noted that this governance approach promoted work satisfaction because they were given opportunities to contribute ideas concerning academic activities and school management. Teachers under democratic leadership style reported to experience less stress levels and this promotes positive interpersonal relationships between them and the headteachers.

The findings further revealed that democratic leadership created a supportive working environment where teachers freely expressed their opinions without fear of intimidation. This improves communication between the teachers and the school administrators and eventually enhanced mutual trust within the schools

Recent empirical studies support these findings, Hassan et al.(2023) found that participative leadership significantly improves employee morale by enhancing engagement and collaboration. Similarly, Kim and Park (2020) established that democratic leadership positively influences job satisfaction through employee's participation in decision making. However, Choi et al. (2021) cited that excessive consultation in democratic leadership may slow decision-making processes, although it still contributes positively to morale.

For democratic leadership, it led to increased teacher morale, evidence from the respondents showed that they were allowed to take part in making the decisions. Participative leadership fosters motivation, teamwork and job satisfaction among teachers. It also promoted emotional well-being as teachers did not experience stress. The study revealed that they had no pressure from their leaders, additionally; they were able to make positive relationships with others. These findings are consistent with existing research highlight the importance of inclusive leadership in promoting teacher morale.

The outcome from of this study demonstrates that inclusive participatory leadership approach is more effective in enhancing teacher morale compared to controlling approaches. It is therefore evidence that a highly dictatorial supervisory style led to low teacher morale while democratic and transformational leadership style led to increased teacher morale.

Qualitative findings demonstrated that democratic leadership positively influences teacher morale through participation in effective communication, enhanced motivation and decision making. Educators tend to exhibit higher levels of professional engagement and enthusiasm towards work when consulted and involved in school affairs. These finding align with Path-Goal Leadership Theory (House, 1971), which suggest that participative and supportive leadership behaviours enhances follower satisfaction and motivation.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a thorough summary of the study conclusions made from the findings that were drawn from the study, and recommendations based on the results at the same time highlighting suggestions for further study.

5.2 Discussion of the findings

The study examined the influence of leadership styles on teacher morale in private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-County. The study specifically investigated the influence of autocratic and democratic leadership styles on teacher morale among teachers in selected private primary schools within Kayole. The study was guided by two main objectives

5.2.1. The influence of autocratic leadership style on teacher morale

To determine the influence of autocratic leadership style on teacher morale among teachers in selected private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-county. The findings revealed that autocratic leadership style was evident in some of the schools especially where headteachers made decisions independently, maintained control of school activities and exercised strict supervision. The quantitative findings indicated that presence of autocratic leadership practices while qualitative responses from the headteachers indicated that the strict practices were mainly to have a good flow in school activities. This however did not register well with the teachers where they felt excessive control limited participation in decision making which in turn affected their motivation, sense of belonging, commitment and job satisfaction. These findings therefore concluded that autocratic leadership style negatively influenced teacher morale.

5.2.2. The influence of democratic leadership style on teacher morale

This was to establish the influence of democratic leadership style on teacher morale among teachers in selected private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-county. The findings established that democratic leadership was mostly practiced in the sampled school. Teachers indicated in the questionnaires that they were frequently consulted by the headteachers before making decisions and this encouraged open communication, team work and delegated responsibilities. The quantitative findings recorded high mean scores on democratic leadership while qualitative findings demonstrated that participative leadership enhanced cooperation between teachers and the head teachers. The teachers further reported that

involvement in school activities and decision making increased commitment, job satisfaction and motivation. The study established that democratic leadership style positively influenced teacher morale. The findings from this study demonstrated that leadership styles play a huge role in shaping teacher morale in private primary schools within Kayole while autocratic leadership practices were associated with lower levels of teacher morale due to increased pressure and restricted participation. Democratic leadership style was found to contribute to collaboration, motivation, high levels of teacher morale and job satisfaction.

The study concluded that private schools that embraced democratic leadership style are more likely to experience improved teacher morale and a positive working environment.

5.3 Summary of Key Findings

The study examined the influence of leadership styles on teacher morale in private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-County. The findings demonstrated that leadership styles significantly influence teacher morale and workplace experiences. The findings on democratic leadership indicated that it affects teacher morale positively. This leads to teachers being motivated and even satisfied with their work. On the other hand, autocratic leadership leads to low teacher morale. This is because it comprises of strict rules which are rigid. This causes stress for the teachers hence increased pressure

The key findings of the study have been summarized in alignment with the study objectives and leadership styles investigated were autocratic and democratic leadership.

5.3.1 Autocratic Leadership Style and Teacher Morale

The study found out that autocratic leadership style has negatively influenced teachers' morale. This is because the respondents stated that the leaders who used autocratic leadership style led to increased stress on the teachers. Teachers experienced lower motivation and job satisfaction when excluded from decision making and at the same time subjected to strict supervision. Additionally, teachers are put under a lot of pressure due to the rigid rules set by the leaders. The teachers are not given the chance to take part in decision making processes, hence the leaders get to make all the decisions on their own without consulting the teachers. This led to the teachers feeling unfulfilled in the work place hence leading to low teacher morale. The increased stress leads to poor emotional well-being of the teachers. This leadership style therefore proved to have negative effects on teacher morale.

5.3.2 Democratic Leadership Style and Teacher Morale

The study findings indicated that democratic leadership style has positively influenced teacher's morale. Teachers reported higher motivation, commitment and job satisfaction when involved in decision making. This is because it gives the teachers the platform to take part in the decision making process. The teachers

responded by saying that being given the chance to make decisions increased their confidence and this made them feel as part of the institution. The other reason for this leadership style leading to positive teacher morale was that it allowed team work. The teachers are able to collaborate and work together on different matters hence promoting cohesion in the institution. Additionally, it led to increased job satisfaction. This is because teachers felt fulfilled with their work. They get the desire to work more hence increase their commitment. Also, it led to motivation from the teachers. This is because the leadership style was not tied to rigid rules. The teachers feel fulfilled and they feel motivated. This leads to increased teacher morale hence democratic leadership style proved to be efficient.

5.4 Conclusions of the Study

The study found out that leadership style plays a significant role in influencing teacher morale in private primary schools, based on the findings, the study concluded that democratic leadership was preferred by most teachers, it was noted that it creates a supportive and participatory working environment therefore enhancing teacher motivation, job satisfaction and team work. On the other hand, autocratic leadership style negatively influences teacher morale due to excessive control, increased stress and lack of the opportunity to participate in decision making processes.

The study also concluded that leadership styles are a key determinant of teacher morale in private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Sub-county. This shapes the teacher's motivation, commitment and retention hence, increased job satisfaction by the teacher hence increased teacher morale. Democratic leadership enhances teacher's morale by promoting participation, teamwork and inclusiveness while autocratic leadership negatively affects teacher's morale due to strict control and limited involvement.

The study further concluded that schools that adopt democratic leadership practices lead to positive working environments hence increase teacher morale, improved teacher commitment and organizational effectiveness. This means that supportive leadership styles are important in ensuring that teachers feel motivated and have job satisfaction as they are contented with their work.

5.5 Recommendations of the Study

The study recommends the following:

1. School administrators in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub- County should reduce reliance on authoritarian leadership styles such as autocratic leadership. This means they should avoid using excess control, coercing and making decisions on their own.

2. School administrators within Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-County should be open to integrate supportive leadership styles such as democratic This means they should embrace being open to letting teachers take part in making decisions , and allowing professional development.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Research

This study was valuable but it was only limited to private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Sub-county. Future research can carry out the same study but in secondary schools and public primary schools to provide a basis for comparison. It will ensure that data is not limited to one party. Also, further research can be carried out in other regions to enhance generalization of the findings. This will ensure that more information and literature is realized hence more information will be provided to ensure comparison and hence better information.

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APPENDIX I: COVER LETTER

Glaudia Kamene Njuguna,

P.O. box 00516-564

Nairobi

Dear Teacher,

You are invited to participate in a research study about school leadership styles and their effects on teacher morale in private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Central Sub-county. The survey study is being conducted by Madam Glaudia Kamene Njuguna a Master's Degree student at Africa Nazarene University. Your participation involves completing survey questionnaire which will not take long to complete. The questionnaire will be based on your experience or opinion and your response will help in improving school leadership styles in private primary schools not only in Kayole but also in Nairobi and Kenya as a whole.

Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary and the responses are confidential, do not write your name or any identifying information. The data collected will be stored securely and there will be no attempt of identifying you in the results. Please note that there are no direct benefits to you but your input will help in adopting suitable leadership styles in our schools.

Please sign these forms if you choose to participate and retain a copy of the same, so proceed to respond to the questions truthfully.

Yours Faithfully,

Glaudia Kamene Njuguna

I have read this form, I'm well informed and I voluntarily agree to participate in this survey

Name

Signature.....

APPENDIX II: Teachers' Questionnaire

Title: Questionnaire for Teachers on School Leadership Styles and Teacher Morale

Instructions:

This questionnaire is designed to collect information on school leadership styles and teacher morale. There are no right or wrong answers. Please answer honestly. All information provided will be treated with confidentiality and used for academic purposes only.

Tick (✓) the option that best represents your opinion.

Section A: Demographic Information

1. Gender
 - ☐ Male
 - ☐ Female
2. Teaching experience
 - ☐ 1–5 years
 - ☐ 6–10 years
 - ☐ Above 10 years
3. Academic qualification
 - ☐ Diploma
 - ☐ Degree
 - ☐ Postgraduate

Section B: Autocratic Leadership Style

Indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
School management makes decisions without consulting teachers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teachers are closely supervised at all times	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Leadership uses threats or punishment to enforce rules	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Autocratic leadership increases work-related stress	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Statement**SD D N A SA**

Autocratic leadership lowers my job satisfaction

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐**Section C: Democratic Leadership Style****Statement****SD D N A SA**Teachers are consulted before major academic or administrative decisions are made ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐The head teachers encourages staff to express differing opinions during meetings ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐Teachers feel comfortable raising concerns without fear or negative consequences ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐Staff meetings provide opportunities for meaningful discussions ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐Suggestions from teachers are considered when school policies are reviewed ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐Feedback from teachers is used to improve school practices ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐The headteacher promotes teamwork among staff members ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐**Section E: Teacher Morale Questionnaire Items****SD=Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, N= Neutral SA= Strongly Agree**

Statement		SD	D	N	SA
1	Motivation and Enthusiasm				
	I'm willing to participate beyond my classroom duties				
	I feel motivated to give my best in teaching everyday				
	Do you look forward to coming to work daily				
2	Job Satisfaction				
	I am satisfied with the recognition I receive for my work				
	My work as a teacher gives me personal fulfilment				
	I am satisfied to be a teacher in this institution				

3	Feeling Valued and Supported				
	The leadership values my input and opinion				
	I receive support from the school administration				
	I feel respected by the school leadership				
4.	Commitment and Loyalty				
	I intend to continue working in this institution				
	I am always willing to go an extra mile for the success of the school				
	I feel home and emotionally attached to this institution				
5	Professional Growth				
	Leadership practices in this school inspire me to improve my teaching skills				
	I am encouraged to pursue professional growth				

Appendix III: Head teachers' Interview Guide

Title: Interview on School Leadership Styles and Teacher Morale

Instructions:

The interview aims to gather in-depth information on teachers' experiences with school leadership and how it affects their morale. All responses will be kept confidential.

Section A: Background Information

How long have you served as a headteacher in this school?

How many teachers are currently employed in your school?

Section B: Autocratic Leadership Style and Teacher Morale

How are major decisions made in your school?

To what extent are teachers consulted before important decisions are implemented?

How does close supervision of teachers affect their performance and morale?

In your experience, how do teachers respond when decisions are made without their involvement?

What challenges have you observed when using a more directive or autocratic leadership approach?

Section C: Democratic Leadership Style and Teacher Morale

How do you involve teachers in decision-making processes within the school?

How does teacher participation influence their motivation and commitment?

What role does communication play in enhancing teacher morale?

How does teamwork between teachers and school administration affect school performance?

What benefits have you observed from using a democratic leadership style?

Section D: Teacher Morale

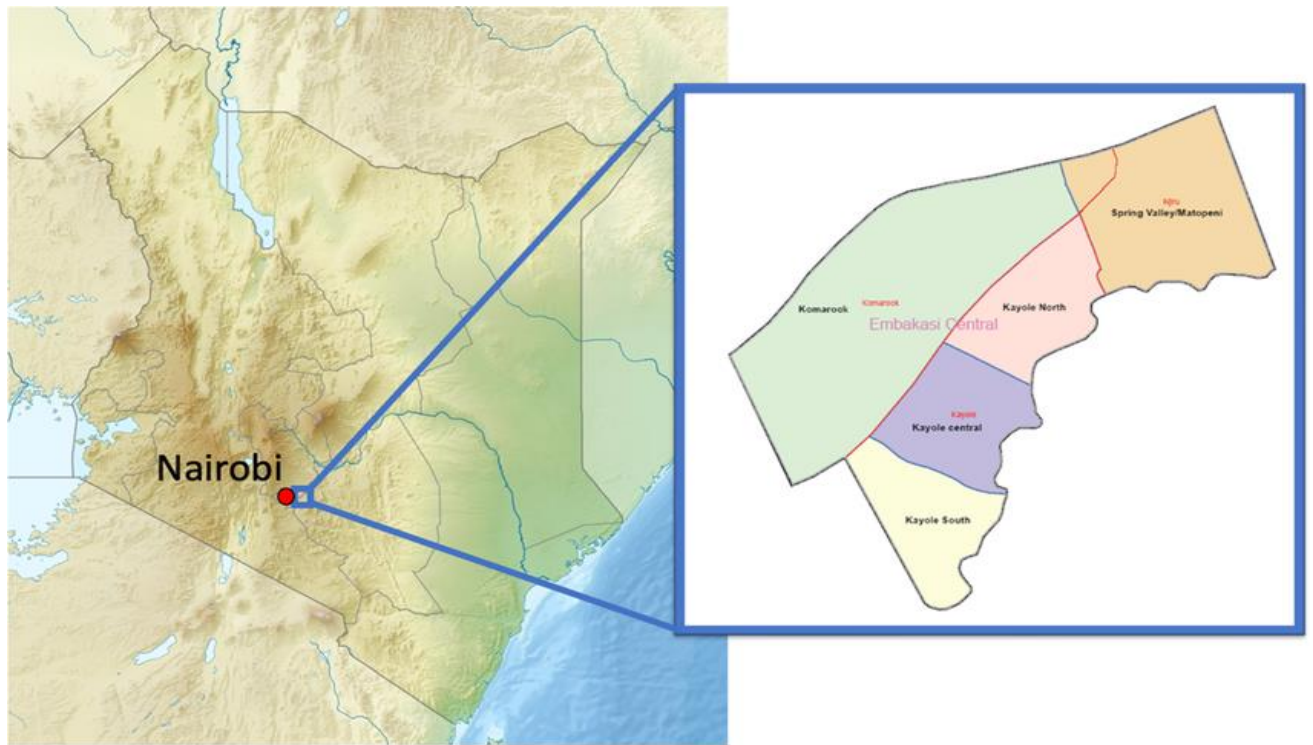
In your opinion, what factors contribute most to teacher morale in your school?

How do leadership practices influence teacher job satisfaction?

How do leadership practices influence teacher commitment to school activities?

How do leadership practices influence teacher motivation?

What leadership practices would you recommend for improving teacher morale in private primary schools?

APPENDIX IV. MAP OF THE STUDY AREA: EMBAKASI CENTRAL SUBCOUNTY

APPENDIX V : INTRODUCTORY LETTER FROM ANU



P.O.Box: 53067 – 00200
Nairobi, Kenya.
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Email: vc@anu.ac.ke
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5th February, 2026

Dr. David Ngigi
Ag. Director General /CEO
National Commission for Science & Technology
And Innovation (NACOSTI)
Off Waiyaki Way, Upper Kabete
P. O. Box 30623 -00100
Nairobi, KENYA

Dear Sir,

RE: RESEARCH PERMIT: Glaudia Kamene Njuguna (Student ID# 17S01DMED002)

This letter confirms that Glaudia Kamene Njuguna (Student ID# 17S01DMED002) is a genuine Master of Education (MED) student at Africa Nazarene University (ANU), School of Humanities and Social Sciences (SHSS). The Master of Education programme includes both coursework and a research thesis.

Claudia has successfully completed her coursework and defended her thesis proposal titled:

Influence of school leadership styles on teacher morale in private primary schools in Kayole, Embakasi Central sub-county.

We kindly request that she be granted the necessary research permit to enable data collection and the successful completion of her thesis. Any assistance provided to her in this regard would be greatly appreciated.

Faithfully,

Prof. Orpha K. Ongiti

Dean, Postgraduate Studies & Director, Institute of Research

APPENDIX VI: NACOSTI PERMIT

 REPUBLIC OF KENYA	 NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
Ref No: 712824	Date of Issue: 27/February/2026
RESEARCH LICENSE	
	
This is to Certify that Ms.. GLAUDIA KAMENE NJUGUNA of Africa Nazarene University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Nairobi on the topic: INFLUENCE OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP STYLES ON TEACHER MORALE IN PRIVATE PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KAYOLE, EMBAKASI CENTRAL SUB-COUNTY for the period ending : 27/February/2027.	
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