

The Impact of Transformational Leadership on Employee Performance of Public Organisations in Tanzania: The Case of Mvomero District Council

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Cite this article in APA

Ndossy, J. N. (2025). The impact of transformational leadership on employee performance of public organisations in Tanzania: The case of Mvomero District Council. *Journal of policy and development studies*, 4(1), 16-26. <https://doi.org/10.51317/jpds.v4i1.702>



A publication of Editon Consortium Publishing (online)

Article history

Received: 04.02.2025
Accepted: 10.03.2025
Published: 04.04.2025

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance in public organisations in Tanzania. Mvomero District Council was used as a case study. Transformational leadership antecedents included idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individual consideration. On the other hand, three dimensions of employee performance were considered: task performance, adaptive performance, and contextual performance. The study utilised a quantitative approach to establish a cause-and-effect relationship through which data was collected using questionnaires from a total of 114 respondents who were sampled using a simple random technique. Questionnaires were used to enable data collection from a relatively large sample size. Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed in data analysis. The study found that all the dimensions of transformational leadership were perceived to be moderately positive. This was also the case with the dimensions of employee performance. Further, the study found that all the dimensions of transformational leadership have a significant positive influence on employee performance, hence making transformational leadership an important determinant of employee performance. This study presents new insights in the Tanzanian context with regard to the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance hence contributing to the existing body of knowledge significantly. The findings add value not only to scholars but also to practitioners and policymakers who can use the findings to align with their day-to-day practices and policies.

Key terms: Idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individual consideration, Transformational leadership.

INTRODUCTION

Employee performance is an area of concern in both public and private organisations across the globe. Different stakeholders (such as investors, community members, customers, government agencies and regulatory authorities, among others) are concerned with how these organisations perform (Diamantidis & Chatzoglou, 2019).

How public organisations perform in developing countries, including Tanzania, has been a topic of growing interest in the fields of organisational behaviour, human resource management and leadership (Putu et al., 2007). Researchers have been interested to find out determinants of employee and organisational performance. While there are so many variables that affect employee performance, it largely depends on the leadership styles that leaders decide to use (Ibrahim & Daniel, 2019). Among these styles is transformational leadership, which has emerged to be one of the most influential styles in enhancing motivation, commitment, job satisfaction and performance as well (Katou, 2015).

Transformational leadership style is characterised by the ability of a leader to inspire, motivate as well as stimulate his followers (Kotamena et al., 2020). Globally, the transformational style has been playing a significant role in shaping various organisational outcomes, particularly in public organisations where results, mainly public service delivery, are expected in a situation where resources are often limited, and the need for innovative behaviours and practices are considerably high (Al-Shibami, 2019). Employee performance entails the value of a series of employee behaviours that contribute positively to the achievement of organisational goals (Virgiawan et al., 2021).

Mvomero District Council is one of the public organisations in Tanzania that provides a unique context for exploring how transformational leadership is capable of enhancing employee performance. As one of the local government authorities in Tanzania, the council offers varied public services, which require effective leadership styles for delivering excellent services to the citizens. Like any other local government authority in Tanzania, the district has been facing numerous challenges, such as

bureaucratic inefficiencies and insufficient resources, which hinder the achievement of organisational goals (Pasape & Godson, 2022).

This paper aims to investigate the impact of transformational leadership on employee performance in Tanzania public organisations using the Mvomero district council as a case study. By investigating the relationship between leadership behaviours and employee outcomes, the study aims to provide valuable insights into how transformational leadership practices can help enhance the performance of employees in public organisations. Furthermore, this study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on leadership in public sector organisations and, therefore, offers practical implications for leaders, policymakers and scholars.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The relationship between leadership and employee performance is an area that has been widely studied in different organisational contexts. Among other styles, transformational leadership has received significant attention as it is considered to have the potential to influence employee behaviours, motivation and performance as well. This section explores the concept of transformational leadership, its antecedents, and how it impacts employee performance.

The Concept of Transformational Leadership

The concept of transformational leadership was first introduced by Burns (1978) and further shaped by Bass (1985), who described the style as an approach that creates significant changes in followers and organisations by aligning the values, needs and expectations of the followers with those of the respective leaders (Ladkin & Patrick, 2022). Generally, transformational leaders are characterised by their ability to inspire and motivate employees while promoting innovation and a sense of commitment and belonging among employees (Bass & Avolio, 1994).

According to Bass (1990), transformational leadership has four main dimensions which are idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individual consideration. In individualised influence, leaders are considered role models, and they earn the trust and respect of their

followers. In inspirational motivation, leaders are considered the source of motivation to motivate employees through articulating a clear vision for the future of an organisation. In intellectual stimulation, leaders play a significant role in encouraging creativity and innovation through challenging assumptions as well as encouraging followers to think critically. Last but not least, individualised consideration has to do with how leaders provide personalised support and mentorship to their followers and address their individual needs.

These dimensions are considered crucial in enhancing employee performance as they are capable of directly influencing different factors such as job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and motivation, among others.

The Concept of Employee Performance

Employee performance is one of the critical determinants of overall organisational effectiveness and success (Diamantidis & Chatzoglou, 2019). In both private and public organisations, a high level of employee performance is desirable as it contributes to the achievement of organisational goals, mainly improving service delivery in an effective and efficient manner. Employee performance entails the extent to which an individual employee accomplishes his/her tasks and responsibilities with expected standards and contribute towards achievement of organisational goals (Katabalo & Mwita, 2024).

Employee performance has different dimensions. This study considered four dimensions, as recommended by Pradhan and Jena (2017). These dimensions include task performance, contextual performance, and adaptive performance. Task performance has to do with the accomplishment of core duties and responsibilities of a job that an employee holds. Contextual performance is related to executing activities that contribute towards the social and psychological environment in the workplace, such as helping others and volunteering for extra tasks, as well as showing a positive attitude in the workplace. Adaptive performance has to do with the ability to adapt to changes that take place in the organisation.

Employee Performance in Tanzania Public Organisations

Employee performance in Tanzanian public organisations is influenced by a number of factors, such as leadership, motivation, resources and organisational culture, among others. Different reports, such as those prepared by the Controller and Auditor General (CAG), indicate that employee performance and the performance of public organisations in general are not satisfactory. Employee performance in Tanzania has been facing varied challenges. This includes insufficient organisational resources, unpleasant leadership styles and insufficient skills and knowledge among employees. Training has been considered one of the effective methods of enhancing the performance of employees in public organisations. The study by Mnasi et al. (2022) reported that mentoring practices such as acceptance, sponsorship, delegation and relationship had positive and economic contributions to the model of employee performance in local government authorities.

Impact of Transformational Leadership and Employee Performance

Different research has consistently shown a positive link between transformational leadership and different aspects of employee performance. For instance, the study of Shafi et al. (2020) examined the effects of transformational leadership on employee creativity in China. The study found that idealised influence, intellectual stimulation, and inspiration had an effect on employee creativity. However, individual consideration was not found to have a significant effect on employee creativity. Another study by Qalati et al. (2022) was conducted in Pakistan among 405 employees from small and medium enterprises (SMEs). The study found that transformational leadership is capable of influencing employee performance positively. Similarly, the study of Top et al. (2020) examined the influence of transformational leadership on employee performance in Iraq. The study found that transformational leaders positively related to employee performance. Further, inspirational motivation and individual consideration have a significant impact on employee performance. It is suggested that managers in the region should motivate and individually care with their employees to increase their performance.

Abubakar and Ahmed (2017) examined the effect of a transformational leadership style on the performance of universities in Nigeria. The study's findings confirm previous results that transformational leadership has a significant positive effect on employee performance. Further, the study calls for management of universities to adopt the principles and assumptions of a transformational leadership theory for better performance.

In the Tanzanian context, the literature has insufficient data on the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance. The study by Magasi (2021) was done in the banking sector with a sample of 325 employees. The study considered two dimensions of transformational leadership which are individualised consideration and intellectual stimulation. The study revealed that individualised consideration and intellectual stimulation had a positive relationship with the performance of banking sector employees. This relationship was enhanced by fostering an environment that encourages learning, creativity and innovation among employees. Mwombeki (2017) studied the influence of leadership styles on employees' performance in Tanzania using the University of DSM Computing Centre as a case study. The study involved different leadership styles. Interestingly, transformational leadership style was found to be the most influential style when linked to employee performance.

The reviewed literature shows that the transformational leadership style and its dimensions are capable of influencing the performance of employees in organisations. However, it is noticed that the literature in Tanzania does not present findings related to transformational leadership and employee performance in the context of Tanzania public organisations. For instance, the study which was done by Magasi (2021) in Tanzania did not focus on public organisations but rather the banking sector, and it focused on two aspects of transformational theory

only, which are individualised consideration and intellectual stimulation.

This justifies the need to conduct this study.

H1: Idealised influence positively influences employee performance

H2: Inspirational motivation positively influences employee performance

H3: Intellectual stimulation positively influences employee performance

H4: Individual consideration positively influences employee performance

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a quantitative approach, which is suitable for studies that examine causal relationships between variables (Mwita, 2022). Mvomero District Council was used as a case whose population at the head office was 142. The research included the entire population in the study since the number of employees was manageable for data collection. A total of 132 respondents were reached and supplied with a questionnaire used for data collection. A total of 114 questionnaires were properly filled and included in the data analysis. This means the study achieved an 86.36 per cent return rate. Data analysis involved descriptive and inferential statistics. In descriptive statistics, the interest was to determine the mean and standard deviation for each construct and variable. Moreover, inferential statistics involved correlation and regression analysis that enabled testing of the study's hypotheses.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Reliability

The study checked for reliability of the variables that were used in the study. Cronbach's alpha test was used to assess reliability. Since all the variables had Cronbach's alpha values of more than 0.7, it indicates that all the variables were reliable for inclusion in the study.

Table 1: Cronbach Alpha Values for the Variables

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of items
Idealised Influence	.843	3
Inspirational motivation	.776	3
Intellectual stimulation	.879	3

Individual consideration	.923	3
Employee performance	.906	23

Source: Researchers' computation, 2025

Descriptive Findings

The study conducted descriptive analysis of the variables involved in the study. The results are presented below with summary provided in each table.

Idealised Influence

The study found that the overall mean for idealised influence is 3.01. The mean indicates that the

respondents generally perceive their supervisor positively. However, there is a room for improvement since the mean score is close to the middle of the scale considering the fact that the five-point scale (1-5) was used. The overall standard deviation indicates presence of moderate variability in the perceptions of the respondents on how their supervisors perform in leadership qualities specifically idealised influence.

Table 2: Descriptive Results for Idealised Influence

Statements	M	SD
II1: My supervisor makes others feel good to be around him/her	3.20	.854
II2: I have complete faith in my supervisor	2.96	.921
II3: I am proud to be associated with my supervisor	2.87	.917
Overall mean and SD	3.1	0.897

Source: Researchers' computation, 2025

Inspirational Motivation

The overall mean inspirational motivation was found to be 3.05. This indicates that on average, the respondents view their supervisors' ability to communicate and inspire as moderately positive. This entails that still there is a room for improvement.

Further, the overall standard deviation of 1.339 indicates that there is moderate variation in opinions provided by the respondents regarding the level of inspirational motivation of their respective supervisors.

Table3: Descriptive Results for Inspirational Motivation

Statements	M	SD
IM1: My supervisor expresses in a few simple words what we could and should do	2.95	.871
IM2: My supervisor provides appealing images about what we can do	3.20	2.121
IM3: My supervisor helps me find meaning in my work	2.99	1.026
Overall mean	3.05	1.339

Source: Researchers' computation, 2025

Intellectual Stimulation

With regard to intellectual stimulation, the overall mean was 3.26, which indicates that the respondents have a moderately positive perception towards their supervisor. This score seems not to be impressive as well since there is room for improvement as it is close

to the middle of the scale. Moreover, the overall standard deviation of 1.978 indicates the presence of substantial variability in responses across the three statements in this sub-variable. It suggests that while others seem to feel intellectually stimulated by their supervisors, others have different experiences.

Table 4: Descriptive Results for Intellectual Stimulation

Statements	M	SD
IS1: My supervisor enables others to think about old problems in new ways	3.04	1.013
IS2: My supervisor provides others with new ways of looking at puzzling things.	3.21	.964
IS3: My supervisor gets others to rethink ideas that they had never questioned before.	3.54	3.958
Overall mean	3.26	1.978

Source: Researchers' computation, 2025

Individual Consideration

In this sub-variable, the overall mean score was 3.28 while the overall standard deviation was 1.108.

The overall mean indicates the presence of positive moderate perception with regard to individual consideration. Like the previous sub-variables, there is

also room for improvement as the score seems not to be impressive. The overall standard deviation indicates a moderate spread in responses across the three statements, therefore suggesting that the respondents had varied opinions on the level of individual consideration of their supervisors.

Table 5: Descriptive Results for Individual Consideration

Statements	M	SD
IC1: My supervisor helps others develop themselves	3.45	1.040
IC2: My supervisor lets others know how he /she thinks we are doing	3.20	1.130
IC3: My supervisor gives personal attention to others who seem rejected.	3.20	1.154
Overall mean	3.28	1.108

Source: Researchers' computation, 2025

Employee Performance

Respondents were asked to self-evaluate their performance based on the three dimensions of employee performance. With regard to task performance, the overall mean was 3.30. This indicates that, generally, they perceive themselves as performing at moderately high levels. This score is above the neutral midpoint scale, which indicates positive but not exceptional task performance. With regard to standard deviation, the overall score was 1.1443, which indicates moderate variability in responses. This entails that although most of the respondents consider themselves competent in task performance, there are still different opinions from some of the respondents.

Another aspect of employee performance is adaptive performance; it was found that the overall mean for this dimension is 2.95, which indicates that the respondents have a somewhat neutral to slightly

positive perception of their level of adaptive performance. The score is close to the midpoint, which indicates a balanced view of their ability to adapt in various situations. This score is not impressive; hence, there is a gap that needs to be filled in terms of adaptive performance. The overall standard deviation is 1.194 shows a moderate variability, which indicates that while there is a general tendency toward moderate adaptive performance, there are wide differences in individual perceptions.

On contextual performance, the overall mean was 3.05 which suggests that respondents view their contextual performance as moderately positive. This score is above the midpoint (in scale of 1 to 5) yet it is not impressive. Moreover, the overall standard deviation is 1.473 which indicates presences of substantial variability across the items and therefore implies that the respondents had varied views on contextual performance.

Table 6: Descriptive Results for Employee Performance

Statements (constructs)	Mean	S. D
TP1: I used to maintain a high standard of work	3.30	1.096
TP2: I am capable of handling my assignments without much supervision	3.27	1.107
TP3: I am very passionate about my work	3.24	1.091
TP4: I know I can handle multiple assignments for achieving organisational goals	3.22	1.095
TP5: I used to complete my assignments on time	3.21	1.171
TP6: My colleagues believe I am a high performer in my organisation	3.57	3.103
Weighted mean and standard deviation	3.30	1.443
AP1: I used to perform well to mobilise collective intelligence for active teamwork	2.96	1.159
AP2: I could manage change in my job very well whenever the situation demands	2.82	1.162
AP3: I can handle effectively my work team in the face of change	2.91	1.133
AP4: I always believe that mutual understanding can lead to a viable solution in my organisation	3.00	1.152
AP5: I used to lose my temper when faced with criticisms from my team members	3.12	1.409
AP6: I am very comfortable with job flexibility	2.92	1.176
AP7: I used to cope well with organisational changes from time to time	2.94	1.170
Weighted mean & standard deviation	2.95	1.194
CP1: Used to extend help to my co-workers when asked or needed	2.99	1.179
CP2: I love to handle extra responsibilities	3.25	.985
CP3: I extend my sympathy and empathy to my co-workers when they are in trouble	3.18	1.935
CP4: I actively participate in group discussions and work meetings	2.82	1.077
CP5: I used to praise my co-workers for their good work	2.98	1.013
CP6: I deliver a lot of satisfaction in nurturing others in the organisation	3.04	1.326
CP7: I used to share knowledge and ideas among my team members	3.29	3.903
CP8: I used to maintain good coordination among fellow workers	2.93	1.045
CP9: I used to guide new colleagues beyond my job purview	3.07	1.095
CP10: I communicate effectively with my colleagues for problem-solving and decision-making	2.99	1.179
Weighted mean & standard deviation	3.05	1.473

Source: Researchers' computation, 2025

Correlations

The study tested for correlations among the variables involved in the study. The study was interested in the four main correlations which are idealised influence and employee performance, inspirational motivation and employee performance, intellectual inspiration and employee performance as well as individual consideration and employee performance.

Based on the results presented in Table 7, there is a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.789$, $p < 0.001$) between idealised influence and employee performance. This implies that leaders who successfully exhibit idealised influence by serving as

role models and leading by example have a high chance of increasing the performance of employees.

The study found a moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.609$, $p < 0.001$) between inspirational motivation and employee performance. This indicates that leaders who are capable of inspiring and motivating employees through share vision and encouragement can potentially increase the performance of their employees. While this correlation is not as strong as that of idealised influence, it still indicates that motivation and inspiration are key determinants of employee performance.

Similarly, the study found a moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.552, p < 0.001$) between intellectual stimulation and employee performance. This entails that leaders who encourage and promote creativity and challenge their employees to think critically have a higher probability of improving their performance.

A very strong correlation ($r = 0.852, p < 0.001$) between individual consideration and employee

performance was detected between individual consideration and employee performance. This implies that leaders who take the initiative to demonstrate personal care, support, guidance and attention to employees while addressing the individual needs of the employees have a higher chance of improving their performance.

Table 7: Correlation Matrix

Indicator		II	IM	IS	IC	EP
II	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
IM	Pearson Correlation	.609**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001				
IS	Pearson Correlation	.509**	.427**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001			
IC	Pearson Correlation	.722**	.611**	.410**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001		
EP	Pearson Correlation	.789**	.609**	.522**	.852**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001

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

Hypothesis Testing Results

The study tested the four hypotheses of this study. With regard to idealised influence and employee performance, $R = 0.789$ confirms a strong correlation between the variables. The R^2 was found to be 0.623, indicating that 62.3% of the variance in employee performance can be explained by individual influence. This presence has strong explanatory power. The standardised coefficient (β) was found to be 0.997, indicating a very high value suggesting that individualised influence has a strong positive effect on employee performance. The p-value of 0.001 indicates that the result is statistically significant; hence, the alternative hypothesis is accepted and concludes that individualised influence has a significant positive influence on employee performance.

In hypothesis 2: Inspirational motivation influences employee performance, R was 0.609, confirming a moderate positive correlation existing between inspirational motivation and employee performance. The R^2 of 0.370 indicates that 37 per cent of the variation in employee performance can be explained

by inspiration motivation. The standardised coefficient of 0.572 shows that inspirational motivation has a positive effect on employee performance. The p-value of < 0.001 entails that the result is statistically significant; hence, we accept the hypothesis that inspirational motivation significantly influences employee performance.

In Hypothesis 3 (intellectual stimulation influences employee performance), R was found to be 0.522, indicating a moderate positive correlation between intellectual stimulation and employee performance. Moreover, R^2 was 0.273, which shows that intellectual stimulation is capable of explaining the variation in employee performance by 27.3%. The standardised coefficient of 0.318 confirms that intellectual stimulation has an influence on employee performance, although it is not as strong as idealised influence or inspirational motivation. The p-value < 0.001 indicates that the result is statistically significant, as we accept the hypothesis that intellectual stimulation significantly influences employee performance.

In the last hypothesis (individual consideration influences employee performance), R was 0.852, indicating a very strong positive correlation between individual consideration and employee performance. The R² of 0.727 implies that employee performance variance of 72.7% can be explained by individual consideration. The standardised coefficient of 0.818

indicates a strong positive effect of individual consideration of employee performance. The p-value < 0.001 signifies that the result is statistically significant as the value is below 0/05; hence, we accept the hypothesis that individual consideration significantly influences employee performance.

Table 8: Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	R	R ²	β	p-value	Decision
Individualised influence influences employee performance (H ₁)	.789	.623	.997	<.001	accept
Inspirational motivation influences employee performance (H ₂)	.609	.370	.572	<.001	accept
Intellectual influences employee performance (H ₃)	.522	.273	.318	<.001	accept
Individual consideration influences employee performance (H ₄)	.852	.727	.818	<.001	accept

Source: Researchers' computation, 2025

The study's findings show that all the dimensions of transformational leadership have a positive influence on employee performance. This gives an indication that for Tanzanian public organisations to enhance employee performance it is important to consider using transformational leadership style. It should be noted that the use of transformational leadership style should not be applied in isolation from other styles since leadership is situational. There are circumstances that may necessitate the use of other leadership styles. However, the transformational leadership style has been empirically proven by this study that it is capable of enhancing the performance of employees in the context of public organisations. These findings are consistent with previous studies findings, such as Qalati et al. (2022), Top et al. (2020), Abubakar and Ahmed (2017), and Mwombeki (2017), just to mention a few. This study presents new insights in the Tanzanian context with regard to the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance hence contributing to the existing body of knowledge significantly.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion: This study focused on examining the impact of transformational leadership on employee performance. Four dimensions of transformational leadership, namely individual influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual influence and individual

consideration, were tested to see their role in employee performance. All four dimensions were found to have an influence on employee performance, making transformational leadership one of the important determinants of transformational leadership in the context of public organisations. The fact that public organisations in Tanzania have been struggling with employee performance, it is important to ensure that leaders have sufficient knowledge and skills on how to put transformational leadership in action for improved employee performance. While transformation leadership has been proven to be a significant predictor of employee performance, it is important to note that there are other important determinants of employee performance that organisations have to consider. They include resources, training for employees, working conditions, compensation and employee engagement, among others.

Recommendations: This study recommends the following: People holding leadership positions in public organisations should be regularly trained on the relevance of transformational leadership and how they can effectively use the study to enhance employee performance. Employees who demonstrate elements of transformational leadership should be given higher priority when it comes to promoting employees to take leadership roles. This could make public organisations supplied with people who are capable of

inspiring and empowering others to perform excellently. Public organisations should consider formulating policies that are consistent with postulations of transformational leadership in order to instil transformational leadership practices in organisational cultures. This may potentially enhance employee performance.

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