

**Influence of Idealized Influence on Institutional Performance of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges in Nairobi Metropolis, Kenya**

Benson Kamau Ngwiri<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Patrick Wambua Mule<sup>2</sup> and Dr. Ciriaka Gitonga<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup>Department of Leadership Studies, Pan Africa Christian University

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**ABSTRACT**

*Leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping institutional performance and productivity. The leadership style adopted by Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions considerably influences culture, personnel, and learners' morale, and overall outcomes. The core mission of TVET institutes in Kenya aligns with the 4th Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) of striving to develop a skilled workforce. However, challenges such as malpractice, inadequate strategic planning, and low personnel and learners' morale necessitate an examination of the Influence of Idealized Influence, a key component of transformational leadership, on institutional performance. Guided by the Transformational Leadership Theory, Balanced Scorecard Theory, and Leader-Member Exchange Theory, this study adopted a pragmatist research philosophy and employed a convergent parallel mixed-method design. From a population of 5,496 leaders across 687 TVET institutions, a sample of 50 student leaders, 45 principals, 267 heads of department (HODs), and 5 county education directors was selected using a multi-stage sampling technique. Data collection involved questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions. Instrument reliability was confirmed with a Cronbach's alpha of .932. Quantitative analysis included descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative data were analyzed thematically. Findings revealed a significant positive correlation between idealized influence and institutional performance ( $r = .399, p = 0.000 < 0.01$ ). Leaders who instill confidence ( $M = 4.17$ ), uphold ethical values ( $M = 4.27$ ), and prioritize institutional goals over personal interests ( $M = 4.17$ ) foster strong ethical foundations and improved performance. Leaders who practice Idealized influence articulate the institute's vision and mission successfully and in a motivating way ( $M = 4.2$ ). These insights provide a basis for policymakers to develop frameworks that enhance institutional performance through transformational leadership practices in TVET colleges in Nairobi Metropolis, Kenya.*

**Keywords:** Idealized Influence, Leadership, institutional performance, Transformational Leadership, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

## **Introduction**

Leadership plays a crucial role in driving performance of an institution, with the leadership approach steadfastly impacting overall efficiency (Akpaprep et al., 2019). Education leadership significantly influences institutional achievement, generally in the context of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). Transformational leadership is characterized by four interrelated behavioral dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Khan et al., 2020, p. 3). Idealized influence designates leaders who earn approval, trust, and respect, often serving as ethical role models and exemplars of professional excellence (Busari et al., 2019). This study explored the extent to which idealized influence impacts the institutional performance of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges within the Nairobi Metropolis, Kenya.

Institutional performance signifies an institution's capacity to realize its objectives competently, professionally, and efficiently while upholding high standards of quality and stakeholder satisfaction (Aguilera et al., 2024). It reflects how well an institute meets the expectations of its stakeholders and remains relevant through the outcomes of its endeavors (Demeke & Tao, 2020). In the context of TVET colleges, institutional performance comprises significant dimensions such as academic achievement, graduate employability, resource utilization, and the ability to embrace innovation and change, along with stakeholder engagement (Osawa et al., 2023). Therefore, key indicators of institutional performance in TVETs include graduation rates, the relevance and quality of curricula, employment rates in relevant industries, and the satisfaction levels of students, workforce, and employers (Maina & Muathe, 2023; UNESCO, 2023). Effective performance management in TVETs guarantees alignment with national development goals and responsiveness to the dynamic needs of the labor market (Kigen & Ng'eno, 2024; Maina & Muathe, 2023).

The TVET sector is internationally recognized as a key driver of economic development by providing individuals with industry-relevant skills (Beatrice & Peter, 2023; Maina & Muathe, 2023). Industries and institutions depend on TVETs to deliver a competent and skilled workforce (Muriuki & Dominic, 2022). TVET includes formal and informal training to enhance practical abilities (Okelo & Syonhi, 2021) and plays a vital role in addressing challenges such as youth unemployment, social exclusion, and poverty (Nundkumar & Subban, 2018). In Kenya, TVET is a sub-sector of education focused on preparing youth for employment by developing technical skills, foundational knowledge, and entrepreneurship capacity (Government of Kenya, 2022; Malechwanzi, 2020). The system includes Vocational Training Centers (VTCs), Technical and

Vocational Colleges, and National Polytechnics (Koros, 2021). TVET institutions are essential to achieving Kenya Vision 2030, empowering citizens with skills and knowledge for productive engagement and informed decision-making (Awiti et al., 2019).

### **Statement of the Problem**

The performance of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions is pivotal to tackling skills enhancement, unemployment, and economic development in Kenya. Despite the increasing acknowledgment of the role of leadership in educational results, several Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges in the Nairobi Metropolis continue to experience challenges linked to low institutional performance, comprising inadequate student success, reduced personnel enthusiasm, and ineffective organizational procedures (Maina & Muathe, 2023). While transformational leadership—principally the component of idealized influence—has been connected to enhanced institutional efficacy in other educational settings, there is inadequate empirical evidence on its specific impact within TVET colleges in the Nairobi Metropolis, Kenya. The deficiency of localized research presents a gap in comprehending how leaders who act as ethical role models influence the performance of these colleges. This study sought to fill this gap by examining the Influence of Idealized Influence on institutional performance in TVET colleges within the Nairobi Metropolis.

### **General Objective and Hypothesis of the Study**

The general objective of this study was to establish the Influence of Idealized Influence on the institutional performance of TVET colleges in the Nairobi Metropolis, Kenya. The study was guided by the following hypothesis  $H_0$ : Idealized influence has no statistically significant influence on the institutional performance of TVET colleges in the Nairobi Metropolis, Kenya.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Theoretical Framework**

This study was underpinned by the following theories: Leader-Member Exchange (LMX), Transformational Leadership Theory (TLT), and the Balanced Scorecard Theory (BST).

#### ***Leader-Member Exchange (LMX)***

The Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Theory was introduced by Dansereau, Graen, and Haga (Northouse, 2019), highlighting leadership as a dyadic relationship founded on trust and mutual respect. It posits that leaders form quality relationships with subordinates, ranging from high to low exchanges (Inanc, 2018; Volmer et al., 2022). High-quality LMX interactions are characterized by trust, commitment, open communication, and mutual support, leading to

enhanced job satisfaction, role clarity, and organizational efficacy (Aggarwal et al., 2020; Robert & Vandenberghe, 2020; Tziner & Fein, 2021). In this study, LMX Theory offered a lens to understand how leader-follower relationships influence institutional performance (IP) in TVET colleges. Effective LMX relationships enhance worker motivation and satisfaction, which are directly interconnected to enriched institutional results (Eli et al., 2020; Omobude & Umemezia, 2019; Nantunda, 2021). The theory also complements Transformational Leadership (TL), as transformational leaders often foster high-quality team connections (Estel et al., 2019; Volmer et al., 2022), impacting organizational culture and performance. Thus, LMX Theory was relevant to this study for its illuminating power in connecting leadership behaviors with worker outcomes and institutional performance in the context of TVET colleges in Nairobi Metropolis, Kenya.

### ***Transformational Leadership Theory (TLT)***

The development of the Transformational Leadership (TL) Theory is credited to Burns (1978), who defined transformational leaders as those who address followers' needs while fostering change at individual, group, and institutional levels. Burns (1978) emphasized the mutual influence between leaders and followers, leading to higher levels of motivation and morality (Bradley, 2020; Northouse, 2019). Bass (1985) later expanded the theory by highlighting its impact on followers' performance and inspiration. One of its main dimensions is Idealized Influence, where leaders act as role models, build trust, and exhibit high ethical standards, thus inspiring admiration and emulation. TL Theory aligns with the Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Theory, as both emphasize trust, respect, and going beyond contractual expectations (Lai et al., 2020; Thompson et al., 2021). Previous research grounded in TLT demonstrates that Idealized Influence improves follower trust and loyalty leading to enhanced alignment between organizational mission and staff actions (Lee, et al., 2024; Liu et al., 2024). In the context of TVET colleges in Nairobi Metropolis, principals or senior managers demonstrating idealized influence can motivate staff, faculty, and students to commit to institutional goals, integrity, and excellence. By exemplifying high ethical conduct, vision, and consistency, such leaders stimulate others to espouse a performance-driven, values-based work culture. TLT provided theoretical support to comprehend how Idealized Influence shapes behavior, enthusiasm, and ultimately, the performance of TVET institutes.

### ***The Balanced Scorecard Theory (BSCT)***

The Balanced Scorecard (BSC) Theory, developed by Kaplan and Norton in the early 1990s (Kaplan, 2009), emerged in response to the limitations of traditional accounting-based performance metrics, which often overlooked the strategic and non-financial goals of institutions (Osewe, 2019; Fijalkowska & Oliviera, 2018). BSC was designed to align institutional activities with mission and strategy, enhance communication, and track performance against strategic

objectives (Yusof, 2020). BSCT is mainly pertinent for not-for-profit institutes like TVETs, where qualitative indicators are similarly significant as financial ones (Sharaf-Addin & Fazel, 2021). It supports a balanced evaluation of performance by integrating monetary and non-financial metrics (Mutai & Sitienei, 2019), permitting establishments to focus on continuous enhancement and stakeholder satisfaction. In the education sector, BSC has been successfully applied to assess institutional performance (IP), including in TVET settings (Chimtengo et al., 2017; Osei-Kuffour, 2021). The Balanced Scorecard Theory complements the study of Idealized Influence by affording a strategic, measurable lens to assess leadership's general impact on institutional performance. In TVET colleges, integrating BSCT allows leaders and policymakers to evaluate how character-driven leadership boosts not only output (graduation rates, finances) but also intangible assets (workers' and students' morale, innovation, and institutional image).

## **Conceptual and Empirical Literature Review**

### ***Conceptualization of Idealized Influence***

Idealized influence refers to the notion that transformative leaders serve as mentors for their subordinates by embodying high ethical standards and demonstrating honor and trustworthiness (Virgiawan et al., 2021). Leaders who display idealized influence mentor their followers by consistently demonstrating noticeable values of honesty and ethical conduct. Idealized influence is a critical constituent of transformational leadership (TL), where leaders serve as role models, demonstrating high moral standards, integrity, and inspiring actions. Respected leaders foster a positive institutional culture, boosting employee enthusiasm, student discipline, and overall institutional success (Islam et al., 2019). When leaders act with honesty and earn respect, TVET colleges benefit from better collaboration, stronger commitment from staff, and a solid institutional reputation, leading to enhanced performance. On the other hand, if leaders in TVET institutions are perceived as lacking integrity, credibility, or fairness, it can lead to lower morale, dissatisfaction with leadership, and a decline in institutional success. Employees and students are likely to model their behavior after leaders they respect and admire. Idealized influence strengthens morale, trust, commitment, and performance. Principals who embody this trait promote excellence and innovation, keeping institutions vibrant, dynamic, and forward-looking (Stronge & Xu, 2021). Through engaging and inspiring behaviors, these leaders create a vision that resonates with their teams, fostering a sense of trust, approval, and respect (Deemie, 2024).

Idealized influence, as a leadership behavior, accentuates the leader's engagement, steered by a sense of vision, ethics, and values (Mathende & Karim, 2022). Likewise, Virgiawan et al. (2021) contend that leaders with idealized influence mentor others through resilient values of trustworthiness and ethics. To boost institutional performance, TVET colleges should focus on

strengthening ethical leadership, promoting transparency, including stakeholders in decision-making, and addressing emerging leadership challenges (AI-Youbi et al., 2020). Ethical, credible, and motivating leadership cultivates a positive learning environment and contributes to student success (Sheng et al., 2024). Respected leaders build strong partnerships, secure funding opportunities, and attract high-quality professionals, thus improving institutional productivity (Turnbull et al., 2021). Ethical leadership goes beyond adhering to moral standards; it involves a deep awareness of the ethical landscape within an institution. Principled leaders possess a heightened sense of moral responsibility, allowing them to proactively identify and address potential ethical issues and challenges (Sheng et al., 2024). Ethical leaders constantly assess their institutions to integrate ethics into decision-making, prevent misconduct, and reinforce ethical commitment (Oladimeji & Abdulkareem, 2023).

### ***Conceptualizing Institutional Performance***

Institutional Performance (IP) is generally understood as a publicly defined concept that reflects the effectiveness, expertise, and overall achievement of an institute (Modell, 2019). It incorporates both financial and non-financial facets, including institutional image, worker and student outcomes, aptitudes, and quality of services (Brown et al., 2018; Dim & Nzube, 2020). IP is significant for institutional existence and is shaped by several organizational aspects, such as leadership approaches, worker commitment, enablement, job fulfillment, and organizational culture (Araby & Ayaad, 2020; Dim & Nzube, 2020). Traditionally, IP has been evaluated through financial metrics like return on investment (ROI), profitability, and return on assets (Modell, 2019). However, this shareholder-centric approach has been critiqued for neglecting non-financial performance indicators essential for a comprehensive understanding of institutional success (Ali et al., 2022). To address this limitation, the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) has emerged as a multidimensional framework that integrates both financial and non-financial indicators (Lim et al., 2024; Zizlavsky, 2014). BSC is a multidimensional approach that includes both financial and non-financial performance aspects. Four main dimensions are associated with the balanced scorecard: financial measures, customer orientation, organizational effectiveness, and learning and growth (Demeke & Tao, 2020). These dimensions are linked to the quality of lecturers and students, as well as administrative policies, all of which influence the quality of learning outcomes (Malechwani, 2020). In this study, institutional performance (IP) was measured using four primary metrics: financial trends, customer satisfaction, internal processes, and learning and growth.

### **Empirical Literature Review**

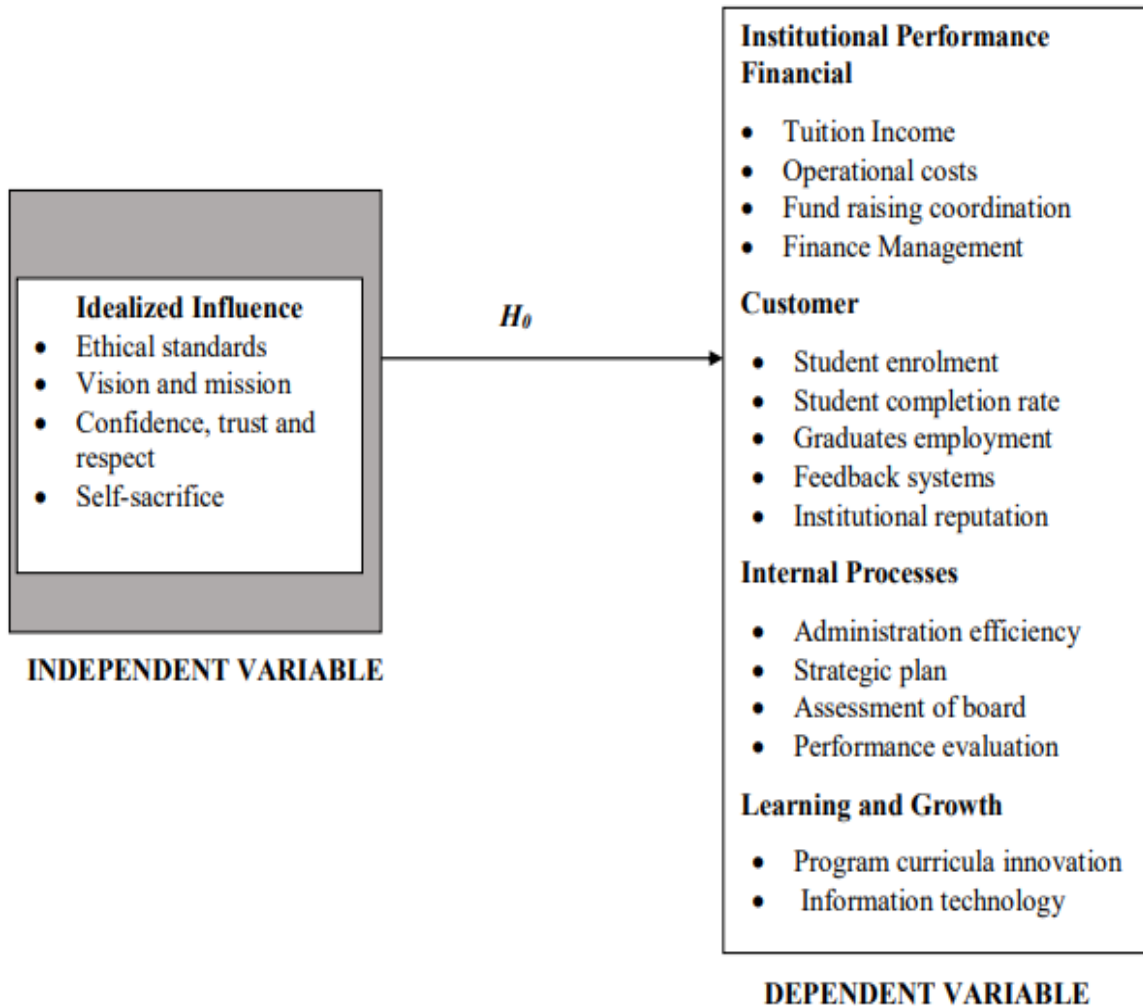
Several studies have established a positive relationship between idealized influence and organizational performance (OP) across varied contexts. Nevertheless, remarkable

methodological, contextual, geographical, and empirical gaps remain, particularly in the Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) sector. Afshari (2022) investigated idealized influence and organizational commitment in manufacturing firms in Australia and Iran, using a quantitative design and structural equation modeling. While the study confirmed a significant relationship between idealized influence and commitment, it was not done in an educational context. The current study addressed these limitations through a mixed-method approach and broader institutional focus. Similarly, Le and Le (2021) examined idealized influence and individualized consideration about knowledge sharing and innovation performance in Vietnamese SMEs. Their survey-based study lacked qualitative depth and was confined to the corporate sector. In contrast, the current research employed both qualitative and quantitative methods, enhancing understanding of interactions of the study variables in a TVET context.

In the African context, Kumlachew (2022) employed a mixed-method approach in an Ethiopian TVET agency, confirming the positive role of TL on employee performance. Results showed that idealized influence, together with other TL dimensions, positively and significantly influenced employee performance. The study presents a geographical gap since it was done in Ethiopia. The current study filled this knowledge gap by conducting a study in TVET institutions in the Nairobi Metropolis, Kenya. In the East African region, Aden and Koshal (2023) found that idealized influence significantly impacted intra-regional trade. While methodologically sound, the study focused on economic outcomes and not educational institutions, highlighting a contextual and conceptual gap addressed by the current research through focus on TVET performance metrics.

Within Kenya, Nyakomitta (2021) demonstrated that all TL components positively influenced commercial bank performance. The study's conclusions showed that idealized influence and performance of profit-making banks are certainly and considerably interrelated. The study was conducted in commercial banks, presenting a contextual gap that the current study addressed by adopting a sector-specific lens focused on TVET institutes in the Nairobi Metropolis, Kenya. Similarly, Cheruse (2021) and Musyoki et al. (2021) examined the effects of TL on student performance in primary and secondary schools, respectively. Both found TL dimension of idealized influence to be influential. However, they focused on learner outcomes rather than institutional metrics, which the current study responded to by considering institutional-level outcomes.

**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**



**Research Methodology**

This study selected pragmatism as the paradigm of choice. The basic premise of pragmatism is that, whereas there may be an objective reality in existence, that objective reality can only be understood from the vantage point of those who have experienced it (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019; Okesina, 2020). The convergent parallel mixed-method approach applied in this study proved effective. This approach integrated parallel quantitative and qualitative research designs throughout data collection and analysis, merging insights in the interpretation phase.

The study targeted key stakeholders in TVET colleges within the Nairobi Metropolis-specifically in Nairobi, Kiambu, Machakos, Kajiado, and Murang’a counties. Institutions domiciled within

universities were excluded, as they fall under university leadership. Out of 687 registered TVET institutions in these counties (TVETA, 2023), the target population comprised 8,249 individuals: 3,435 student leaders, 687 principals, 4,122 Heads of Departments (HODs), and 5 County Directors of Education. These groups were selected due to their leadership roles and direct involvement in institutional operations, making them well-positioned to assess institutional performance concerning Idealized influence. Student leaders were included as they represent the immediate beneficiaries of TVET services, offering insight into performance from a customer satisfaction perspective. The units of observation were the student leaders, principals, and HODs, while the units of analysis were the TVET institutions. County Directors of Education served as key informants due to their expert oversight of TVET management.

A multi-stage sampling technique was employed to enhance data collection and analysis. The study focused on five counties within the Nairobi Metropolis. Key stakeholders-TVET principals, HODs, student leaders, and County Directors of Education-were grouped through cluster sampling. Institutions were stratified by ownership (public and private) based on TVETA registration, and stratified random sampling was applied to ensure representation across these categories and counties. Proportionate sampling determined the number of participants per stratum, while simple random sampling was used within each stratum.

To determine sample size, Cochran's (1977) sample size formula, as noted by Mugenda and Mugenda (2019) with a meticulousness or precision error of 0.05, was applied as follows:

$$n = \frac{z^2(p)(q)}{d^2}$$

$= (384 * 8249) / (384 + (8249 - 1)) = 367$ . Thus, the final sample consisted of 367 stakeholders from TVET institutions.

In light of these considerations, the current research utilized questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions. The multiple tools helped in data triangulation, resulting to a broad and in-depth comprehension of how study variables interrelate. In the current research, descriptive statistics in SPSS (Version 29) were used for quantitative data analysis and summarized as standard deviations, means, percentages, and frequencies.

Qualitative data analysis was carried out using thematic technique. This entailed data transcription and subjection of the transcribed data to a process of identification of categorization across codes, identification of patterns and themes within the categories, and finally deriving implications and interpretations. Diagnostic tests were performed on the dataset to test for normality assumptions, linearity, heteroscedasticity, and multicollinearity before carrying out inferential analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Wondola et al., 2020).

Data presentation in the research involves the organization and display of the gathered data in a clear and meaningful manner (Patel & Patel, 2019). In this study, tabular presentation was used to present numerical data, such as correlation coefficients, standard deviations, means, and other descriptive statistics. Tables provide a structured format that allows for easy comparison and reference (Sileyew, 2019). Figures, such as charts and diagrams, was employed to visually represent data relationships or patterns. Figures enhance understanding, facilitate comparisons, and highlight trends or relationships between variables (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2019). Thematic data was supported with illustrative quotes to capture the richness and nuances of participants' perspectives and experiences (Greening, 2019).

Research ethics encompasses inquiries into how research topics are developed, the design of research, the acquisition of access to respondents, the collection, processing, and storage of data, as well as the analysis and reporting of data (Okesina, 2020) Accordingly, the researcher first obtained clearance from the PAC University Ethics Review Committee before embarking on field work. This went along with an introduction letter from the graduate school indicating that the scholar is a student undertaking the study for academic purposes only. These two documents were used to apply for research permission at the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI), the government agency in charge of regulating the conduct of all research in Kenya. Various authorities managing the TVET institutions where participants were drawn were approached for approval. Participants were required to complete a consent form that provided detailed information about the study's objectives and how their data would be used. This form was presented to respondents, allowing them the chance to address any concerns before providing their consent. The researcher observed the "do no harm" principle. At no time did the researcher mentally, psychosomatically, or physically expose the respondents or participants to harm. Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained by using code names instead of the participants' actual names or names of their institutions. The study participants were assured that they would not be involved in any situation that could cause them harm. The confidentiality of participants was protected by ensuring that no identifying information was included in the report. Further, only aggregated data was reported to ensure non-traceability to the individual respondents. For verbatim quotes, codes were used instead of the participants' actual names or names of their institutions.

A lock and key system was maintained for all physical data, while electronic data files were password protected. No information that might have been sensibly anticipated to identify an individual or an institution was available to other research participants/non-participants. The data was destroyed by incinerating physical data and deleting electronic data within two years after completion of the study.

## **Research Findings and Discussions**

### **Summary of Findings on Idealized Influence across Demographics in TVET Colleges**

The study revealed that Idealized Influence was widely recognized and appreciated in TVET institutions within the Nairobi Metropolis, with 85.6% of respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing that their leaders exhibit such qualities. This suggests a strong foundation of ethical and visionary leadership contributing to institutional performance. Gender differences indicate that male respondents perceive Idealized Influence more strongly than females, though both groups affirm its importance. This calls for greater gender inclusivity in leadership roles to bridge perception gaps and reinforce representation. In terms of designation, Heads of Departments (HODs) show higher levels of agreement than Principals/Directors, likely due to their direct interaction with staff and students. This suggests that mid-level leaders play a crucial role in shaping the institution. Strengthening collaboration between HODs and top administrators could enhance leadership impact across all levels. Years in current role and institutional tenure follow a U-shaped pattern, with newer staff (1–3 years) displaying the highest agreement, while longer-serving leaders (7+ years) show signs of reduced enthusiasm—possibly due to stagnation or burnout. This highlights the need for ongoing professional development and leadership revitalization to sustain influence and innovation. By educational level, Bachelor's and Diploma holders expressed the strongest recognition of Idealized Influence, indicating their active role in practical leadership. Master's and PhD holders showed lower agreement, possibly reflecting a shift toward strategic roles or more critical views. Staff with lower educational backgrounds had minimal engagement, suggesting limited exposure to leadership. TVETs should create inclusive leadership pathways through upskilling and mentorship across all education levels. Institution type and approval status also influence perceptions. Public TVET institutions exhibit greater Idealized Influence (Agree: 22.1%, strongly Agree: 26.1% compared to private TVET institutions (Agree: 17.7%, Strongly Agree: 19.7%). Public and approved institutions showed significantly higher agreement with Idealized Influence, underscoring the connection between ethical leadership and institutional credibility.

### **Descriptive Statistics on Idealized Influence and Institutional Performance**

The objective of the study was to establish the Influence of Idealized Influence on the institutional performance of TVET colleges in the Nairobi Metropolis, Kenya. Data was collected through questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions. The questionnaire on this theme was designed in a nested table for rating the level of agreement with each statement. The statements were measured on a 5-point Likert scale: 1=strongly disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4=Agree; and 5=strongly agree. The collected data were analyzed and presented.

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on Idealized Influence and Institutional Performance**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The Leadership instills confidence in the Staff and makes them feel honored to be associated with the institution.	299	1.00	5.00	4.1739	.95002
I admire the character and actions of my Leader.	299	1.00	5.00	4.1639	1.00497
The Leader clearly and inspiringly articulates the vision and mission of the institution	299	1.00	5.00	4.2809	.86389
The Leader prioritizes the interests of others and the institution above personal interests.	299	1.00	5.00	4.1706	.92740
The Leader implements initiatives that promote high standards within the institution	299	1.00	5.00	4.2776	.85914
The Leader believes in and upholds moral values and convictions.	299	1.00	5.00	4.2742	.94747
The Leadership of this institute guarantees ethical and credible decisions.	299	1.00	5.00	4.3110	.85936
The Leader is dependable and consistent and functions as my role model.	299	1.00	5.00	4.1940	.95318

The mean scores for all leadership attributes range from 4.1639 to 4.3110, signifying that most respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that their leaders display idealized influence. The highest mean was for "Leadership guarantees ethical and credible decisions" (4.3110, SD = 0.85936), exhibiting that leaders are broadly viewed as ethical and credible decision-makers. The lowest mean was for "I admire the character and actions of my leader" (4.1639, SD = 1.00497), nevertheless, this also mirrors a largely constructive sentiment. The standard deviations (ranging between 0.85914 and 1.00497) signify moderately low variability in responses, signifying agreement among respondents concerning the constructive Influence of Idealized Influence in these institutes. The findings indicate that the leadership of TVET colleges in the Nairobi Metropolis has a clear focus on vision and ethics. The results signify that TVET college leaders excel in expressing the vision and mission of the institutes (Mean = 4.2809) and in executing high standards (Mean = 4.2776).

The highest-rated item, "The leadership guarantees ethical and credible decisions" (M = 4.31, SD = 0.86), indicates that leaders are widely trusted for their ethical judgment—a key factor in building institutional trust and legitimacy (Kim & Lee, 2024; Ciulla, 2020). Similarly, high ratings for articulating vision clearly (M = 4.28) and promoting high standards (M = 4.28) confirm that leaders are perceived as strategic and inspirational, effectively guiding institutional direction and quality (Balakrishnan et al., 2024; UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2024). Other items, such

as upholding moral values (M = 4.27) and being dependable role models (M = 4.19), reinforce the perception of leaders as ethical and consistent. The item “Leadership instills confidence and pride” (M = 4.17, SD = 0.95) highlights leaders’ influence on staff morale and institutional pride—key components of Idealized Influence (Afshari, 2022). However, standard deviations (ranging from 0.86 to 1.00) indicate moderate variability, suggesting differences in leadership experience across institutions. For example, the item “I admire the character and actions of my leader” (M = 4.16, SD = 1.00) shows slightly more diverse responses, implying that while many view their leaders favorably, others may perceive inconsistencies in character or conduct.

The findings were reinforced by qualitative interviews with TVET principals, who emphasized fairness, transparency, ethical behavior, and strategic alignment as pillars of effective leadership. This supports literature that links idealized leadership with improved engagement, morale, and institutional performance (Stronge & Xu, 2021; Shafique et al., 2020).

***Correlation Analysis between Idealized Influence and Institutional Performance***

A correlation analysis was conducted to assess the relationship between Idealized Influence and Institutional Performance in Nairobi Metropolis TVET Colleges.

**Table 2: Correlation Analysis between Idealized Influence and Institutional Performance**

		The average score in Idealized Influence	Average performance score
The average score in Idealized Influence	Pearson Correlation	1	.399**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	299	299
Average performance score	Pearson Correlation	.399**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	299	299

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

The Pearson correlation coefficient between Idealized Influence and Institutional Performance of TVET colleges in the Nairobi Metropolis was .399, with a *p*-value of 0.000. This suggests a moderate constructive correlation between the two variables, denoting that Institutional Performance also tends to intensify as Idealized Influence rises. Since the *p*-value is less than 0.01, the correlation is statistically significant at the 99% confidence level, approving a substantial relationship. The constructive correlation signifies that leaders show Idealized Influence qualities, including role modeling and stimulating confidence (Afshari, 2022), fostering enhanced institutional performance. TVET colleges with robust leadership may benefit from enhanced productivity, morale, and efficiency, eventually improving educational results. Whereas the correlation is significant, it is not very robust, signifying that other dynamics

beyond leadership impact the institutional performance of TVET institutes. Thus, TVET institutes should consider other contributing aspects including resources, infrastructure, and personnel improvement to advance general performance (Maina & Muathe, 2023; Ngulu, 2023). Nevertheless, Idealized Influence remains a key driver of institutional success. Principals who demonstrate this trait foster a culture of trust, excellence, and motivation, setting high standards and promoting continuous improvement (Chepkoech, 2021; Gachunga et al., 2020). Their visionary leadership helps institutions adapt to change and remain competitive, ultimately enhancing institutional relevance and student preparedness for the future.

### **Summary of Findings, Implications, Conclusions, and Recommendations**

#### **Summary and Implications of Findings**

The study investigated four core dimensions of institutional performance: financial indicators, customer satisfaction, internal processes, and innovation and learning. The study revealed robust performance in payment efficiency and budget proficiency, but a weaker performance in fundraising and tuition income. This suggests that most TVET colleges within the Nairobi Metropolis, Kenya, practice proficient financial operations but inadequate resource mobilization and external revenue generation. Further, effective leadership is key in influencing financial discipline and inspiring stakeholder confidence. Additionally, a results-oriented organizational culture advances stewardship, whereas trust and common vision influence resource generation and prudent spending. The customer satisfaction Indicators had a mean range of between 3.83 and 3.92. Student demand and enrollment had the highest mean, while the graduate employment rate had the lowest mean. This indicates that there exists a positive public perception on TVET colleges within the Nairobi Metropolis, Kenya, but there is a likely gap in aligning skills with labor market demands.

The study further revealed the highest ratings in terms of quality of faculty, adherence to calendar, and teaching expertise under internal processes. This indicates effective functioning leadership and robust academic processes in TVET colleges within the Nairobi Metropolis. Additionally, the study revealed that institutions that emphasize continuous improvement, accountability, and shared purpose enhance internal efficiency. Under innovation and learning, teaching enhancement (3.9799) and faculty professional development (3.9766) had the highest mean, while research involvement had a slightly lower mean (3.8930). This indicates a moderately high commitment to innovation and capacity-building by most TVET colleges within the Nairobi Metropolis.

The study results exhibited that leadership is perceived constructively, with all mean scores above 4.16 on a 5-point scale, suggesting that leaders largely reveal the robust impact and ethical

leadership. The results demonstrate that leadership practices “ethical and credible decision-making” (M = 4.3110, SD = 0.85936) and “articulate the vision and mission of the institution” (M = 4.2809, SD = 0.86389). Further, the leadership of TVET colleges “implement high standards” (M = 4.2776, SD = 0.85914) and “uphold moral values” (M = 4.2742, SD = 0.94747). Furthermore, the leaders position themselves “as role models” (M = 4.1940, SD = 0.95318), “instilling confidence in staff” (M = 4.1739, SD = 0.95002), and “prioritizing institutional interests over personal ones” (M = 4.1706, SD = 0.92740). Thus, the findings establish that leaders in TVET institutes are well-respected, principled, ethical, and mission-driven, consequently fostering enhanced institutional performance. The high scores in moral decision-making and upholding values signify that personnel members trust their leaders, supporting institutions’ stability and productivity.

The study findings revealed that principals of TVET colleges in the Nairobi Metropolis play a crucial role in influencing the ethical setting and driving institutional objectives. Their ethical decision-making guarantees fairness, transparency, and integrity while aligning actions with the institute’s objectives to provide quality education that meets market needs. The findings establish that leaders who display Idealized Influence serve as role models, nurturing trust, admiration, and alignment with institutional ideals. This leadership approach positively influences institutional productivity, as it inspires personnel and learners to embrace high ethical values and collaborate toward realizing the institution’s goals.

## **Conclusion**

The study established a positive correlation between Idealized Influence and Institutional Performance of TVET colleges in the Nairobi Metropolis ( $r=.399$ , with a p-value of 0.000). This signifies a moderate positive correlation between the two variables, denoting that Institutional Performance also tends to intensify as Idealized Influence increases. Since the p-value was less than 0.01, the correlation was statistically significant at the 99% confidence level, supporting a substantial association. The constructive correlation shows that leaders demonstrate Idealized Influence qualities, including role modeling and inspiring confidence. The results expose that leadership in TVET colleges at the Nairobi Metropolis is highly viewed, with all leadership aspects scoring above 4.16 on a 5-point scale. Leaders display robust ethical standards, credible decision-making, and a clear institutional vision and mission articulation. They uphold high standards, maintain moral values, and function as role models. Furthermore, they cultivate workers' confidence and prioritize institutional welfare over personal gain. This ethical and mission-driven leadership promotes institutional performance, solidity, and productivity.

Leadership behaviors associated with idealized influence contribute meaningfully to performance outcomes, highlighting the need to reinforce ethical, visionary, and trust-building

practices among institutional leaders. The study established that idealized influence statistically significantly influences the institutional performance of TVET colleges in the Nairobi Metropolis, Kenya. Therefore, the study drops the null hypothesis and upholds the alternative hypothesis.

### **Recommendations**

Study results have suggested further deep academic dialogue, establishing a foundation for the recommendations to fortify policy, management, and leadership practice in the TVET subsector, the entire education sector, industries partnering with TVETs, and larger structural leadership. The empirical results of this study afford vigorous support for and expand knowledge of Transformational Leadership Theory, Leader-Member Exchange Theory, and Balanced Scorecard Theory. Additionally, this study advocates for practical leadership approaches that promote teamwork, innovation, and institutional competitiveness. Moreover, future studies may contemplate adopting longitudinal study designs as well as larger sampling across different geographical and institutional settings, improving the generalizability of results. Future studies could explore how both external elements-such as government funding, regulatory frameworks, and economic conditions-and internal elements-like institutional culture, infrastructure, strategies, policies, staff qualifications, attitudes, and the engagement of both personnel and learners-impact performance outcomes.

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