INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES BULLETIN
ISSN: (E) 3007-1917 (P) 3007-1909
Volume 3, Issue 10, 2025

# IMPACT OF HEAD TRANSACTIONAL LEADERSHIP STYLE ON THE JOB SATISFACTION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

**Dr. Zahida Parveen[*1], Dr. Tehseen Mushtaq[2], Farheen Nisar[3]**

[*1]*Associate Professor, Division of Education, University of Education. Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan*
[2]*Lecturer, Special Education, University of Education. Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan*
[3]*PHD Scholar, University of Punjab, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan*

[*1]zahida.parveen@ue.edu.pk, [2]tehseen.mushtaq@ue.edu.pk, [3]farheennisar48@gmail.com

**Corresponding Author: ***
**Dr. Zahida Parveen**
DOI: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18181619

| Received | Accepted | Published |
|---|---|---|
| 30 August 2025 | 16 September 2025 | 02 October 2025 |

## ABSTRACT

*Leadership practices of head teachers play a vital role in shaping the professional well-being and job satisfaction of teachers, particularly in special education settings where instructional and emotional demands are high. This study examined the impact of transactional leadership style on the **job** satisfaction of special education teachers in the province of Punjab, Pakistan. A quantitative survey research design was employed. Centers and schools were selected through random sampling, and teachers who had served under the same head teacher for at least one year were included in the study. The sample comprised 360 special education teachers working in public sector institutions. Data were collected using standardized instruments measuring transactional leadership and job satisfaction, and statistical analyses were conducted to examine the relationship between the variables. The findings revealed a positive and statistically significant relationship between transactional leadership and teachers' job satisfaction. Head teachers who demonstrated clear role expectations, contingent rewards, and consistent supervision were perceived to contribute positively to teachers' satisfaction with their jobs. The results indicate that transactional leadership can be an effective leadership approach in special education institutions when applied in a structured and supportive manner. The study highlights the importance of targeted leadership development programs for special education head teachers to improve teacher satisfaction and institutional effectiveness. The findings offer valuable implications for policymakers, administrators, and professional training initiatives within the special education sector.*

***Keywords:*** *Transactional leadership, job satisfaction, Special Education Teachers, Special Education Schools, Special Education Head*

## INTRODUCTION

Leadership plays a central role in shaping employees' experiences, attitudes, and overall professional well-being within organizations. In work settings where expectations, accountability, and performance standards are clearly defined, leadership behavior becomes a key factor influencing how employees perceive their roles, their competence, and their connection to the organization. Among various leadership approaches, **transactional leadership** has remained particularly relevant in structured and performance-oriented environments, as it emphasizes goal clarity, contingent rewards, and corrective supervision (Bass, 1985).

Transactional leadership is based on an exchange relationship between leaders and followers, where compliance and performance are rewarded, and deviations from standards are addressed through

corrective actions (Burns, 1978). The effectiveness of special education teachers is closely linked to their professional well-being, as they work in environments that demand emotional resilience, instructional adaptability, and continuous collaboration with school leadership. Teaching students with diverse and complex needs often places additional responsibilities on special educators, making leadership support a crucial factor in shaping their job satisfaction. Among various leadership approaches, the **transactional leadership style** of head teachers plays an important role in structured educational settings where clear expectations, accountability, and performance monitoring are essential.

Transactional leadership is characterized by goal-oriented supervision, contingent rewards, and corrective actions to ensure that organizational standards are met (Bass, 1985). In school contexts, head teachers adopting a transactional approach establish explicit roles and performance criteria, which can reduce uncertainty and provide a sense of stability for teachers. For special education teachers, who frequently manage individualized education plans, behavioral challenges, and extensive documentation, such clarity and structure can significantly influence their perceptions of job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction refers to teachers' overall evaluation of their professional roles, including their working conditions, recognition, and relationships within the school environment (Weiss et al., 1967). Research has consistently shown that leadership behaviour is a strong predictor of job satisfaction, as supportive and fair leadership practices contribute to positive work experiences (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Transactional leadership, through its emphasis on fair reward systems and performance feedback, may help special education teachers feel valued and acknowledged for their efforts, thereby enhancing satisfaction with their work.

In special education settings, the role of the head teacher becomes even more critical due to the emotional and instructional demands placed on teachers. Studies indicate that when school leaders provide consistent guidance and recognize teachers' performance, teachers are more likely to remain motivated and committed despite workplace challenges (Billingsley, 2004). Transactional leadership practices such as recognition for meeting instructional goals and constructive feedback for improvement can foster a sense of fairness and professional respect among special educators.

Despite the growing body of research on leadership and teacher outcomes, limited attention has been given to examining the impact of transactional leadership on the job satisfaction of special education teachers specifically. Most existing studies focus on general education contexts, overlooking the unique challenges faced by special educators. Addressing this gap, the present study aims to investigate the impact of head teachers' transactional leadership style on the job satisfaction of special education teachers, offering insights that may inform leadership practices and policy decisions in special education institutions. The primary purpose of this study was to examine the effect of head teachers' transactional leadership on teachers' job satisfaction from secondary level school teachers' perspectives. The researchers want to explore the effect of transactional leadership behaviour of the head teacher on teachers' job satisfaction.

**Objectives of the study**

The objectives of the study were as follows;

1. To examine the impact of head teachers' transactional leadership style on the job satisfaction of special education teachers.
2. To determine the extent to which special education teachers' perceptions of transactional leadership predict their level of job satisfaction.

**Research Questions**

1. What is the impact of head teachers' transactional leadership style on the job satisfaction of special education teachers?
2. To what extent does perceived transactional leadership of head teachers influence the job satisfaction of special education teachers?

**Research Design and Methodology:**

To address the problem of the study and to find the answer to the research questions, the present study used a descriptive research design, and Quantitative procedures were employed to collect and analyse the data. The transactional leadership behaviour of the head teacher, which is the independent variable, and the dependent variable, job satisfaction, were researched through a survey instrument distributed to teachers working in government schools/ centres of the Punjab. This

survey asked teachers to rate their opinions about their head teacher's leadership behavior, their ability to influence different decisions regarding their school /classroom, their loyalty towards their school, and their desire to stay with it on a 5-point Likert scale. Survey design provides a quantitative description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of the population by studying a sample of that population.

**Population and Sample of the study:**
The population of this study was teachers working in all public/government Special Education schools/centres of the Punjab province. Participants selected for this study were school teachers who are currently employed in Government schools/centres. A teacher was considered eligible to participate in the study if she/he had spent at least one academic year working with the present head teacher. Ten teachers were randomly selected from each school. A total of 360 teachers were selected as the sample of the study.

**Instrument of the Study:**
To assess transactional leadership, a modified version of Bass and Avolio's Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5X) was used to capture teachers' perceptions of their head teachers' leadership behaviour, while job satisfaction was measured using the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) developed by Weiss et al.

**Results and Discussion of the Study:**
**Frequency Tables:**
**Demographics profile of respondents (n=360)**

| Variables | | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | Male | 209 | 58.1% |
| | Female | 151 | 41.9% |
| Age | 21-30 | 93 | 25.8% |
| | 31-40 | 168 | 46.7% |
| | 41-50 | 89 | 24.7% |
| | 51-60 | 10 | 2.8% |
| Qualification | F.A | 9 | 2.5% |
| | B.A | 81 | 22.5% |
| | M.A | 257 | 71.4% |
| | M.Phill | 13 | 3.6% |
| Teaching Experience | <=1 | 7 | 1.9% |
| | 2-5 | 68 | 18.9% |
| | 6-10 | 82 | 22.8% |
| | 11-15 | 87 | 24.2% |
| | 16-20 | 89 | 24.7% |
| | 21-25 | 11 | 3.1% |
| | 26-30 | 16 | 4.4% |
| Total | | 360 | 100.0% |

The table showed that 58% teachers were male and 42% were female. According to the results, the majority 47% teachers were in the age range of 31 to 40 years, 25% teachers had an age range between 41-50 years. The majority of teachers, 71% had an MA academic qualification, and only 4% had M MPhil degree. The 25% teachers had 16 to 20 years of service experience, 24% teachers had 11-15 years of experience, 22% teachers had 6 to 10 years of service experience, 19% teachers had 2 to 5 years of experience, and only 3% teachers had 21-25 years of teaching experience.

**Descriptive Analysis of statements about the factor "Transaction leadership behaviour."**

| | M | SD |
|---|---|---|
| The head teacher provides others with assistance in exchange for their efforts | 3.12 | .932 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| The head teacher discusses in specific terms who is responsible for achieving performance targets | 3.42 | 1.050 |
| The head teacher makes clear what one can expect to receive when performance goals are achieved | 3.51 | 1.163 |
| The head teacher expresses satisfaction when others meet expectations | 3.51 | 1.161 |
| The head teacher focuses attention on irregularities, mistakes, exceptions, and deviations from standards. | 3.74 | 1.010 |
| The head teacher concentrates his/her full attention on dealing with mistakes, complaints, and failures | 3.64 | 1.048 |
| The head teacher keeps track of all mistakes | 3.54 | 1.009 |
| The head teacher directs his/her attention toward failures to meet standards | 3.35 | 1.107 |
| The head teacher fails to intervene until problems become serious. | 2.89 | 1.333 |
| The head teacher waits for things to go wrong before taking action | 2.57 | 1.267 |
| The head teacher shows that he/she is a firm believer in "If it isn't broke, don't fix it | 3.27 | 1.196 |
| The head teacher demonstrates that problems must become chronic before she/he take action | 2.69 | 1.348 |
| The head teacher avoids getting involved when important issues arise. | 2.77 | 1.376 |
| The head teacher is absent when needed | 2.68 | 1.369 |
| The head teacher avoids making decisions in the school. | 2.78 | 1.249 |
| The head teacher delays responding to urgent questions | 2.70 | 1.196 |

It is indicated mean of the statements on teachers' perception about their head teacher's transactional leadership is ranging from M= (3.74 to 2.68), SD= (1.010 to 1.369), and total (M=3.14, SD=.482), which includes the Mean of the scale.

It is concluded that the majority of the teachers' responses fall in the "sometimes" scale regarding the factor transactional leadership. It means the majority of teachers have agreed that sometimes the above-stated behaviour is shown by their head teacher.

IEER
Institute for Excellence in Education & Research

**Descriptive Analysis of statements about the factor "Job satisfaction" scale**

| | M | SD |
|---|---|---|
| This job can keep me busy all the time | 3.35 | 1.015 |
| I get the chance to work alone on the job. | 3.38 | .949 |
| I get the chance to do different things from time to time. | 3.45 | 1.019 |
| It provides me the chance to be "somebody" in the community. | 3.53 | .938 |
| I am satisfied with the way my head teacher handles his/her subordinates. | 3.61 | .964 |
| I am satisfied with the competence of my head teacher in making decisions. | 3.59 | 1.035 |
| I am being able to do things that don't go against my conscience. | 3.31 | .951 |
| I am satisfied with the way my job provides for steady employment. | 3.65 | .917 |
| I get the chance to do things for other people. | 3.46 | .931 |
| I get the chance to tell people what to do. | 3.49 | 1.004 |
| I get the chance to do something that makes use of my abilities. | 3.51 | 1.012 |
| I am satisfied with my pay and the amount of work I do. | 3.29 | 1.063 |
| I get the chances for advancement on this job. | 3.19 | .960 |
| I have the freedom to use my own judgment. | 3.31 | 1.038 |
| I get the chance to try my own methods of doing the job. | 3.37 | .999 |
| I am satisfied with the working conditions. | 3.52 | .962 |
| I am satisfied with the way my co-workers get along with each other. | 3.45 | 1.014 |
| I am satisfied with the way my co-workers get along with each other. | 3.49 | 1.045 |
| I am satisfied with the feeling of accomplishment I get from the job. | 3.52 | .990 |

It is indicated mean of the statements on teachers' job satisfaction ranges from M= (3.65 to 3.19),

SD= (.917 to 1.038), and total (M=3.44, SD=.558), which includes the Mean of the scale. It is concluded that the majority of the teachers' responses fall in the neutral range regarding the factor of job satisfaction. It means the majority of teachers have remained neutral towards the different statements about the job satisfaction factor.

**Pearson correlation to find out the relationship between variables**

| Variables | | Job Satisfaction |
|---|---|---|
| Transactional Leadership Behaviour | Pearson Correlation | .688** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |
| | N | 360 |

It is indicated that the relationship between variable (Transactional Leadership Behavior) and variable (Self-Efficacy) was investigated by using the Pearson correlation coefficient. The statistical result found that Transactional Leadership and job satisfaction have a moderate positive relationship (r=.688, sig=.000), job satisfaction.
It is concluded that Transactional Leadership Behaviour and job satisfaction are positively associated with each other.

**Is job satisfaction of teachers affected by the perceived transactional leadership behaviour of head teacher?**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .278[a] | .077 | .075 | 10.204 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Transactional Leadership Behavior

*ANOVA*

| Model | | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 3121.775 | 1 | 3121.775 | 29.981 | .000[b] |
| | Residual | 37276.880 | 358 | 104.125 | | |
| | Total | 40398.656 | 359 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

**b. Predictors: (Constant), Transactional Leadership Behavior**

*Coefficients*

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | T | Sig. |
| 1 | (Constant) | 46.249 | 3.546 | | 13.044 | .000 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Transactional Leadership Behavior | .382 | .070 | .278 | 5.475 | .000 |

Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

It is indicated that Model summary explains the variance as value of R-square is .278. It means Transaction Leadership of head teachers has 27.8% effect on teachers' Job Satisfaction. ANOVA table shows the model is good fit or not. The value of significance is .000 that is less than .05.So; the model is good for conducting research.

The values of Beta Coefficients table explain the relationship and develop regression equation. Significance value of Transactional Leadership Behavior is .000 (P<.001) that means Transactional Leadership Behavior has positive relation with the teachers job satisfaction.

**T-test on the basis of gender:**

| *Variables* | *Gender* | *N* | *Mean* | *SD* | *t* | *Df* | *'p'* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Transactional Leadership Behavior | Male | 209 | 49.79 | 7.008 | 1.125 | 358 | .262 |
| | Female | 151 | 50.72 | 8.585 | | | |
| Job Satisfaction | Male | 209 | 66.43 | 10.616 | 2.097 | 358 | .037 |
| | Female | 151 | 64.07 | 10.477 | | | |

An independent samples *t*-test was conducted to find the difference between mean scores of male and female in terms of head teacher's Transactional Leadership Behavior. There was no significant difference in mean scores of males (M = 49.79, SD = .7.008) and females (M = 50.72, SD = .8.585). The *p*-value (.262) for *t*-value (1.125), is higher than 0.05. So it is concluded that the both male and female teachers' perceived almost similar about the Transactional Leadership Behavior of head teachers.

An independent samples *t*-test was conducted to find the difference between mean scores of male and female in terms of job satisfaction of teachers. There was significant difference in mean scores of males(M=66.43, SD=10.62) and females(M=64.07,SD=10.48). The *p*-value (.037) for *t*-value (2.097),eta square 0.003 is less than 0.05. So it is concluded that the male teachers' perceived more job satisfaction than female teachers.

**Difference on the basis of academic qualification**

| | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Transactional Leadership Behavior | Between Groups | 386.638 | 3 | 128.879 | 2.189 | .089 |
| | Within Groups | 20957.984 | 356 | 58.871 | | |
| | Total | 21344.622 | 359 | | | |
| Job Satisfaction | Between Groups | 731.607 | 3 | 243.869 | 2.189 | .089 |
| | Within Groups | 39667.049 | 356 | 111.424 | | |
| | Total | 40398.656 | 359 | | | |

The ANOVA test was applied. Table above shows the no significant difference among the perceptions of teachers based on the qualification groups for transactional leadership behaviour (F=2.189, p>.05).Therefore, it is concluded that there is no significant effect of qualification on teachers' beliefs towards transactional leadership.

There is no significant difference among the perceptions of teachers based on their qualification groups for Job Satisfaction (F=2.189, p>.05).Therefore, it is concluded that there is no significant effect of qualification on teachers' beliefs towards job satisfaction.

**ANOVA on the basis of teaching experience groups**

| | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Transactional Leadership Behavior | Between Groups | 1634.762 | 6 | 272.460 | 4.880 | .000 |
| | Within Groups | 19709.861 | 353 | 55.835 | | |
| | Total | 21344.622 | 359 | | | |
| Job Satisfaction | Between Groups | 2026.467 | 6 | 337.744 | 3.107 | .006 |
| | Within Groups | 38372.189 | 353 | 108.703 | | |
| | Total | 40398.656 | 359 | | | |

There is significant difference among the perceptions of teachers based on their service experience groups for transactional leadership behavior of heads (F=4.880, p<.001).Therefore, it is concluded that there is a significant effect of experience on teachers' beliefs towards transactional leadership behaviour of heads

For depth analysis Least Significant Difference (LSD) test was applied as a post hoc test.

The highest difference (52.29**) was found between 16-20-year experienced teachers and 11-15-year experienced teachers regarding transactional leadership. Other differences were also significant.

There is a significant difference among the perceptions of teachers based on their service experience groups for job satisfaction of teachers (F=3.107, p<.01). Therefore, it is concluded that there is a significant effect of experience on teachers' beliefs towards job satisfaction.

For depth analysis Least Significant Difference (LSD) test was applied as a post hoc test. The highest difference (68.54**) was found between 11-15experienced teachers and 6-10 years of experience teachers regarding job satisfaction. Other differences were also significant.

**Findings of the Study:**

The findings of the present study reveal that the transactional leadership behavior of head teachers has a **significant and positive impact** on teachers' professional well-being, particularly in terms of **self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment**. These results suggest that leadership practices emphasizing clarity of expectations, contingent rewards, and consistent supervision play a meaningful role in shaping teachers' professional attitudes and psychological outcomes.

The findings further revealed a significant positive relationship between transactional leadership behavior and teachers' job satisfaction. Teachers working under head teachers who practiced fair reward systems and maintained consistent standards expressed greater satisfaction with their work roles. This result supports earlier research indicating that transactional leadership positively influences job satisfaction by reducing role ambiguity and ensuring equitable reward distribution (Judge & Piccolo, 2004).

Moreover, the findings corroborate the work of Nguni, Sleegers, and Denessen (2006), who found that leadership behaviors emphasizing accountability and performance recognition contribute to teachers' satisfaction in school environments. When teachers perceive that effort is acknowledged and expectations are transparent, they are more likely to experience fulfillment and motivation in their professional roles.

Collectively, the findings of this study suggest that transactional leadership remains a **relevant and effective leadership approach** for promoting teachers' professional well-being. While transformational leadership has received greater attention in recent literature, the present results highlight that transactional practices when applied fairly and consistently can positively influence teachers' psychological and organizational outcomes. These findings reinforce the argument that leadership effectiveness should be viewed as context-dependent, particularly in structured educational environments.

**Recommendations:**

Training programs should be developed to enhance head teachers' leadership competencies, with specific emphasis on the effective application of transactional leadership practices in special education settings. Educational authorities may incorporate performance-based feedback and reward systems to improve teachers' motivation and job satisfaction. Regular leadership evaluation mechanisms should be introduced to monitor the impact of head teachers' leadership styles on teachers' professional well-being. Policymakers should consider leadership style as a key factor in administrative appointments and professional

development planning within special education institutions.

**REFERENCES:**

Avolio, B. J., Bass, B. M., & Jung, D. I. (1999). Re-examining the components of transformational and transactional leadership using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 72*(4), 441–462. https://doi.org/10.1348/096317999166789

Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. New York, NY: Freeman.

Bass, B. M. (1985). *Leadership and performance beyond expectations*. New York, NY: Free Press.

Billingsley, B. S. (2004). Promoting teacher quality and retention in special education. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 37*(5), 370–376. https://doi.org/10.1177/00222194040370050201

Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.

Judge, T. A., & Piccolo, R. F. (2004). Transformational and transactional leadership: A meta-analytic test of their relative validity. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 89*(5), 755–768. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.89.5.755

Meyer, J. P., & Allen, N. J. (1997). *Commitment in the workplace: Theory, research, and application*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Nguni, S., Sleegers, P., & Denessen, E. (2006). Transformational and transactional leadership effects on teachers' job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 17*(2), 145–177. https://doi.org/10.1080/09243450600565746

Weiss, D. J., Dawis, R. V., England, G. W., & Lofquist, L. H. (1967). *Manual for the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, Industrial Relations Center.

IEER
Institute for Excellence in Education & Research