



# The Impact of Teachers' Perceptions on Female Head Teachers' Leadership Efficacy in Public Primary Schools in Morogoro Region, Tanzania

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**Abstract:** *This study focused on the impact of teachers' perceptions on female head teachers' leadership efficacy in public primary schools in the Morogoro region. The study was guided by feminist leadership theory. A mixed research approach embedded in convergent research design was used under pragmatism philosophy. Data collection was done by questionnaires with 378 respondents and semi-structured interviews with 15 respondents. A simple random sampling technique was used to obtain 378 respondents for questionnaires, while a purposive sampling technique was used to obtain 15 respondents for interviews. A descriptive statistical method through SPSS version 27.0 was used on quantitative data and thematic analysis method was used for qualitative data. The study discovered the impacts of teachers' perceptions on female head teachers' leadership efficacy are; unsupportive of working context, emotional state, position giving up and behavioural transformation. However, the study concluded that despite the impact of teachers' perceptions on female head teachers' leadership efficacy, most female head teachers are trying to stand firm in leadership efficacy. Therefore, the study recommended that educational practitioners use mass-media to broadcast about gender awareness to teachers. Again, educational practitioners conduct gender related workshops for teachers in schools even once or twice per year. Also, educational practitioners continue making sure that female head teachers get various workshops for boosting their strength in leadership. Further, the study recommended that educational stakeholders continue making implementation of gender related policies. Moreover, researchers who are interested to this study, are invited to perform the related study at other educational levels.*

**Keywords:** Teachers, Perceptions, Female head teachers, Leadership, Efficacy, Public primary schools

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## 1. Introduction

The impacts of societal perceptions on female leaders have been an issue of discussion universally (Grabrinet, 2024; Harris, 2024). These impacts of societal perceptions on female leaders have mostly been in a negative way, harming them psychologically and in their leadership efficacy (Mbalilaki, 2022; Naqbi, 2023). These impacts

like unconducive school working environment, prevails in schools just because of teachers' perceptions on female head teachers' leadership efficacy (Harvey & Jones, 2022; Toropova & Johnson, 2021). In some schools, female leaders reach the decision to quit their leadership positions or seek to quit their leadership positions so as to be a mere teacher, due to the acute impacts of teachers' perceptions on them (Dube, 2025; Mogoai, 2024; Shemahonge, 2022).

Historically, female leaders have been victims of the impacts of teachers' perceptions on their leadership efficacy more than male head teachers. This is because females are considered as not fit for leadership positions. Schools' leadership responsibilities were generally correlated with masculinity, which most of the people think that masculinity and power are in men (Mathetha, 2025; Xu, 2025). Actually, female leaders suffer in leadership efficiency because of societal perceptions which basically disturb and turn their minds in un-settled situations.

Some efforts have been taken to address the impacts of societal perceptions on female leadership efficacy in Tanzania and international perspectives in general (Kandemiri, 2022; Teles et al., 2020). These efforts include community sensitization on women' leadership capabilities, gender sensitive training for educators and administrators, police charges like affirmative actions for appointments, empowerment programs for female teachers, and development of new leadership models teachers that value diversity (Rutebeka, 2023) However, this implicate that, despite all these efforts, female head teachers are still facing some harming troubles due to impacts of teachers perceptions on them.

Empirical studies explicate numerous impacts of teachers' perceptions on female leadership efficacy, among them are job dissatisfaction, stress, frustrations, unconducive school environment, quitting leadership positions, lowering leadership morale, changing behaviour, and being isolated (Galganjigmed, 2023; Toropova & Johnson, 2023). Scholars from various countries have written related studies on the impact of teachers' perceptions on female head teachers' leadership efficacy. For example, in the United States of America, some female leaders are victims of the impact of teachers' perceptions (MicKinsey & Company, 2025 and De Paola et al., 2022). Similarly, female leaders may get angry easily when they realise that they are perceived in a negative way and not respected (Hopkins, 2024; Tremmel, 2023). In this society female leaders may be affected psychologically, being demotivated to effectiveness and school can turn into unconducive environment.

Further, in European countries, leadership is traditionally often tied to male traits like competitiveness and aggressiveness creating some kind of contempt and disrespect to female leaders who do not fit this mould (European Commission, 2025; Magnanell, 2024; Mlerzwa, 2025). In the same line female school leaders are perceived as less authoritative; as a result, they face rejection and isolation while male leaders are favoured and valued (Cabral, 2021; Lore, 2025; Tremmel, 2023). This implies that, female leaders suffer from being victims of societal perceptions, which harms their leadership performance. In Asian countries like China, Arabia, Japan and India, due to

employees' perceptions towards female leaders, some of these leaders may be demoralised to the extent of being discouraged even making efforts for career advancement (Galganjigmed, 2023; Ghalia, 2023; Jayasinghe, 2020; Pullen & Vachhani, 2020; Sabarwal, 2023). Also, job dissatisfaction to the subordinates increases when they are under female leaders and job dissatisfaction to the female head teachers may also increase because of being led by a female head teacher hence an inconducive school environment which contributes to difficulties in leading peaceful (Clutsay, 2024). This means that female leaders are affected by societal negative perceptions, which may even make some of the female leaders decide to step back from leadership efficacy.

In the African context, teachers' perceptions on female head teachers have come up with several impacts on female head teachers' leadership efficacy. For instance, in Nigeria, female leaders are undervalued and disrespected, hence they can lose self-confidence, and a higher likelihood of leaving their leadership positions (Ajemba 2023; Nnandi, 2025; Olodane, 2021). In South Africa, the impact of teachers' perceptions on female heads teachers are such as lack of support, leading to limited opportunities and public scrutiny that can undermine their authority and progress (Dyantyi, 2025; Gılc & Inandi, 2021; Mathebulas, 2024). In addition, studies in Ethiopia show that female head teachers find themselves changing their good behavior of treating subordinates well, just due to the way they are perceived negatively by teachers as figures who cannot lead well (Alemu, 2024; Taye, 2025; Wolle, 2024). This means that teachers holding negative perceptions in relation to female gender may question a female authority and ability to make decisions, leading to a lack of respect and cooperation.

In East African countries, Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda, for example, female leaders get opposition from teachers just because are seen as not capable and fit for leadership positions, hence female leaders find themselves losing interest in leading (Carter, et al., 2021). Tanzania, as part of East African countries, studies of (Shemahonge 2022; Mbalilaki 2022; Tarimo and Dominico 2024) show that teachers' perceptions are based on historic cultural gender stereotypes, which make female head teachers in a room of stress and frustrations. In Morogoro as a study area, female leaders are also affected by negative perceptions from society. Effects of societal negative perceptions on female leaders are such as unconducive work place environment and stress (Tenga, 2024). Female leaders find themselves in a situation of seeing being in a leadership position as being in a certain kind of cold war. Therefore, regarding previous studies there is a dearth of literature about the impact of teachers' perceptions on female head teachers' leadership efficacy in public primary schools in the Morogoro region. In due regard, this study sought to bridge

the gap by examining the impact of teachers' perceptions on female head teachers' leadership efficacy in public primary schools in the Morogoro region.

## 2. Literature Review

There are some impacts of teachers' perceptions on female head teachers' leadership efficacy, unveiled by various scholars from various parts of the world. In America for example Hopkins (2021); Tremmel (2023) pointed out that lack of motivation is an impact of teachers' perceptions on female head teachers. Stereotype perceptions of subordinates to female head teachers may lead the later to lose interest, seriousness and intention to implement leadership roles. In similar case, Manzi (2024); Stewart (2021) in America added that intention for female head teachers to quit from leadership position, also prevails. In most cases female head teachers write official letters to change the leadership position to normal teachers. The result of study further indicated that burnout and job dissatisfaction are the impacts of teachers' perceptions on female head teachers' leadership efficacy and causing them to intend quitting their leadership positions. Additionally, Correa (2025) in America pinpointed that some of female head teachers' frustrations are caused by teachers' negative perceptions against them. The results of the study proclaimed that female leaders become frustrated when are undervalued and disrespected. However, this means that female head teachers fall under psychological pain due to negative teachers' perceptions on them.

Toropova & Johnson, (2021) in Europe-Sweden elucidated that job dissatisfaction is one among the impacts of teachers' perceptions on female head teachers' leadership efficacy. The result of the study indicated that there was a strong relationship between school working conditions and female head teachers' job satisfaction. Negative teachers' perceptions on female head teachers always provide bad condition at school. As a result, female head teachers can start feeling displeasure on implementations of their leadership roles. Like that situation, Reis (2022); Teles et al., (2020) in Portugal had mentioned stress as an impact of teachers' perceptions on female head teachers' leadership efficacy. The results of the study indicated that stress is the impact of uncondusive working conditions which initially is sourced from teachers' negative perceptions on female head teachers.

In the same line, Saloviita and Pakarinen (2021) in Finland unveiled that burnout is part of stress which is also strongly affecting female head teachers' leadership efficacy due to stereotype perceptions from their fellow teachers. Additionally, burnout has been recognized as a psychological danger, especially in fields which encompass working with many people of different behavior and so the female head teacher can find her-self

in problems when performing her leadership roles. In a similar case, Babaroglu (2020); Basfirinci et al., (2025) in Turkey observed that when females are perceived negatively, they automatically lose confidence and develop feeling of being isolated, that they have bad characters and have no value in the communities. Similarly, Galganjigmed & Sekiguchi (2023) in Kyoto-Japana found that gender bias and stereotype perceptions form unfair treatment and discrimination to female leaders may lower their leadership morale. Further, Harvey and Jones (2022) in Oceania observed that traditionally the society undervalue females' contributions in playing leadership roles. This means that if female head teacher note unfair treatment from teachers, may find her-self demoralized. Galganjigmed and Sekiguchi (2023) adds that those teachers' stereotype perceptions of undermining females' performance in leadership, lowers her interest and beliefs that she is fit and qualified for leadership.

Further, female head teachers changing behavior is another impact of teachers' perceptions on female head teachers' leadership efficacy. Ajemba (2023); Degu (2024); Gilic & Inandi (2021); Rutebeka (2023); Shemahonge (2022) in Nigeria, South Africa, Ethiopia, Uganda and Tanzania had mentioned the changing of behavior of female head teachers as an aspect in association with teachers' perceptions. Results of the study indicated that most of female head teachers start their leadership positions by treating well their subordinates but immediately after realizing that teachers are undervaluing them, they change their behavior to harsh, arrogant, egoistical, self-centered, and other associated behavior. However, previous studies showed that there is little literature about impacts of teachers' perceptions on female head teachers' leadership efficacy in public primary schools in the Morogoro region. In due regard this study sought to bridge the gap by examining the impact of teachers' perceptions on female head teachers' leadership efficacy in public primary schools in the Morogoro region.

## 3. Methodology

This study used the research design called convergent, which helped the researcher to collect, analyze and present both quantitative and qualitative data at the same time (Tashakkori & Burke, 2020). Further, this design is powerful for getting a comprehensive understanding of a topic. Since the study intended to get detailed experiences, a convergent research design helped the researcher to get deep insight into respondents' views and live experiences about the impact of teachers' perceptions on female head teachers' leadership efficacy (Katz-Buonnocontro, 2024; Shrestha, 2021). A mixed research approach was used in this study, the approach enabled the researcher to collect, analyze and present quantitative and qualitative data

through questionnaires and interviews. This approach helped in getting a complete picture by combining numerical statistical trends and respondents' insights and experiences for richer, detailed results (Gamage, 2025).

The sample size determination for this study was done by using Kothari's table of sample size by identifying the range of the targeted population (N) and then choosing the related sample size (n) (Kothari & Garg, 2019). The number of the targeted population was 6,047, comprising 2,976 teachers, 228 female head teachers, 10 educational officers, 97 educational quality assurance officers and 2,736 school committee members (NBS, 2022). Therefore, by using Kothari's published table, the sample size was 378. However, this study used a simple random sampling technique, which was used for questionnaires to 378 respondents, including 150 teachers, 100 female head teachers, 5 educational officers, 23 educational quality assurance officers, and 100 school committee members. A Lottery box was used. The researcher wrote numbers on pieces of paper from the main list, the researcher folded them separately, mixed them very well and then picked a sample respondent's number. The researcher used this technique since it is an unbiased and efficient representation of the sample from the targeted population and gave every participant a fair chance of being selected (Kothari & Garg, 2023). Also, the study used a purposive sampling technique, which was used to select 15 respondents for interview, including 5 teachers, 5 female head teachers, 1 educational officer, 2 quality assurance officers, and 2 school committee members. Participants were purposely selected based on their relevance to the study objective. The researcher used technical intelligence and intention to get proper interview respondents. In the same line, the researcher used this technique so as to get a deep understanding of the issue under discussion (Memon et al., 2025).

However, the data collection instruments which were used in this study are questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaires in the form of three-level Likert scale closed-ended questions were used to collect responses regarding the topic (Ferrando et al., 2025; Koo, 2025). The researcher told respondents the purpose of the study, then distributed the questionnaires to them and thereafter the researcher collected the filled questionnaires. At the same pace, the researcher used it because it is good for a large sample size, facilitates quick data collection and is good for perception studies (Tashakkori & Tiddlie, 2020). Furthermore, semi-structured interviews were done using open-ended and probing questions to get rich details and understanding of the topic (Patton, 2015; Poedjastutie, 2021). However, the researcher used a tape recorder to record interviews.

The data collected was analysed through a descriptive statistics method by using the Statistical Package for Social

Sciences (SPSS) version 27.0. This data analysis method was used because it is good for presenting data in easy-to-understandable formats, and also, large data can be condensed into manageable summaries like percentages and frequencies (Mendez, 2025; Zhang, 2022). On the qualitative side, the thematic data analysis method was used by adopting six-thematic stages, which are familiarisation, coding, grouping codes, reviewing themes, naming themes, and reporting. The researcher used the thematic analysis method because it has the capacity of managing large data by grouping similar ideas into manageable themes (Braun, 2022; Merriam & Tisdell, 2025).

Validity of the questionnaires on the quantitative side was ensured by consulting two experts in the field for content validation, making sure that the questionnaires measure what they were intended to measure (Dane & Carhart, 2023). Also, the researcher conducted a pilot study to check content validity to ensure the questionnaires are clear, free from errors, free from repetitions, free from ambiguities and really asking what the researcher intended to ask. Then, the researcher administered the sample questionnaires to the respondents and told them that while filling they were allowed to ask if there were any misunderstandings (Muhammad, 2024; Zhang, 2022). Besides, a member checking technique was used on the qualitative aspect, where the semi-structured interview guide was given to the expert for content validation (Kullman, 2025; McKim, 2023). However, in case of reliability, the internal consistency of the three-point Likert scale questionnaires of nine variables was assessed by the Cronbach Alpha Test using SPSS. The variables were reliable at .912, which is excellent internal consistency. In the same line, the reliability of the interview was also checked, the researcher re-interviewed the respondents by asking them the same questions at different times (Kothari & Garg, 2019; Taherdoost, 2022).

However, the researcher followed research ethics standards and the requirements of Tanzania research authorities and obtained data collection permit letters from both regional and district administrative secretaries. Furthermore, during data collection, the researcher made sure that force was not used and the respondents were openly educated about the nature and purpose of the study. Also, the estimated amount of time which was to be consumed was transparently told to the respondents. Further, respondents' participation in giving data was voluntary, and they were free to refuse or disengage at any time. Moreover, confidentiality was maintained by protecting respondents' anonymity; the researcher made sure that the names of respondents were not used during data collection, data analysis and presentation.

## 4. Results and Discussion

This part presents results and discussion. The study aimed to examine the impact of teachers' perceptions on female head teachers' leadership efficacy in public primary

schools in the Morogoro region, Tanzania. The results showed that there are several impacts of teachers' perceptions on female head teachers' leadership efficacy in public primary schools in the Morogoro region, as illustrated in Table 1 as follows:

**Table 1: Impacts of Teachers' Perceptions on Female Head Teachers' Leadership Efficacy in Public Primary Schools in the Morogoro Region.**

		Responses in the Frequency (F) & Percentage (%)					
S/n	Statement	A		UD		D	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Job dissatisfaction is an impact of teachers' perceptions	124	32.8	62	16.4	192	50.8
2	Female head teachers behavioral change is an impact of teachers perceptions	143	38.0	56	15.0	178	47.0
3	Stress is an impact of teachers' perceptions	97	25.6	91	24.1	190	50.3
4	Un-conducive working area is an impact of teachers' perceptions	136	36.0	60	16.0	182	48.0
5	Worries and tension are impact of teachers' perceptions	131	34.6	69	18.3	178	47.1
6	Female head teachers quit leadership positions is an impact of teachers' perceptions	113	30.1	70	18.5	194	51.4
7	Losing interest of leading is an impact of teachers' perceptions	81	21.5	67	17.7	230	60.8
8	Frustrations of female head teachers is an impact of teachers' perceptions	102	27.0	60	15.9	216	57.1
9	Female head teachers feeling isolated is an impact of teachers' perceptions	109	28.8	62	16.4	207	54.8

**Key:** A=Agree UN=Undecided D=Disagree **Source:** Field Data (2025)

Data from Table 1 shows that 50.8% of the respondents disagreed that job dissatisfaction with female head teachers' leadership efficacy is an impact of teachers' perceptions. This implies that job dissatisfaction to female head teachers is among impacts of teachers' perceptions in the Morogoro region public primary schools because 32.8% of the respondents who agreed cannot be ignored. The result from the questionnaires relates to the reply of face-to-face interview with a participant who stated that:

*On my side, at first negative perceptions from teachers discomfoted me, I entered a room of job dissatisfaction, and I saw the workplace as a police station, but as when it went on, I gradually didn't care about their perceptions on me. On top*

*of that, when the government started to give us leadership allowance then I became more comfortable and didn't care anymore about their negative perceptions on me. All of at the sudden my brain changed and started to think about how to remain strong in my leadership position.*

However, Ahmed and Al-Dhuwauhi (2021): Toropova and Johanson (2021) agrees with the current study that job dissatisfaction is one of the impact of teachers' perceptions on female head teachers' leadership efficacy. This means that job dissatisfaction is still the impact of teachers' perceptions on some female head teachers, and in that case,

they can find them-self not performing well in their leadership roles.

Further, figures from Table 1 convey that 47.0% of the respondents disagreed that changing the behaviour of female head teachers is an impact of teachers' perceptions in the Morogoro region public primary schools though 38.0% of the respondents who agreed cannot be escaped. The result from the quantitative data connotes to the face-to-face interview with a respondent who had this to say:

*You know, at first, when I was appointed for this leadership position, I was threatened by the actions which were done by teachers due to their negative perceptions. What I did in return was to change my gentle character to a very cruel and arrogant person, but as years went on, I realised it is better to use other means, so as to handle the situation. So no more teachers' perceptions made me change my behaviour.*

However, in the same vein, the study of Tjahjana (2024); Longobardi et al., (2021) and Vasasova et al., (2021) revealed that changing behaviour of female head teachers, is an aspect associated with teachers' perceptions. The results relate to feminist leadership theory that women have to be valued like the other gender, so if there are some elements of being devalued, they can change. This implies that female head teachers can have good leadership behaviours but when they face negative perceptions from teachers, they can find themselves changing their good leadership behaviours into bad behaviours like arrogance and self-centered.

Also, statistics from Table 1 display that 50.3% of the respondents disagreed that stress is an impact of teachers' perceptions on female head teachers in the Morogoro region public primary schools, though 25.6% of the respondents who agreed cannot be left behind. The quantitative result resembles to an interview respondent who had this to say:

*Not now on my side, but at the first school to lead, I was really stressed to the extent of thinking of declaring quitting the leadership position. Currently, even the schools nearby are standing as witnesses that at first they saw me very stressed, but now they are saying I am strong and firm in leadership,*

*and so even others can take me as an example.*

However, Saloviita and Pakarinen (2021) supported that stress is one of the impacts of teachers' perceptions on female head teachers' leadership efficacy. This means that due to a lot of stress that a female head teacher can get from teachers' perceptions can put her into psychological danger, and this danger can interfere with her leadership efficacy.

Withal, figures in Table 1 exhibit that 48.0% of the respondents disagreed that an un-conducive working environment is an impact of teachers' perceptions to the female head teachers' leadership efficacy. This implies that teachers' perceptions on female head teachers can cause un-conducive working environment. However, 36.0% of the respondents agreed that un-conducive working environment is an impact of teachers' perceptions on female head teachers. Moreover, this result resembles the information given by a participant from a face-to-face interview, who contended that:

*I have experience with about two female head teachers, who were badly suffocated by teachers, both at different times, and asked for transfer so that they could run away from the un-conducive environment that prevailed at school. Thereafter, the government brought male head teachers, and now we have this another female head teacher who is doing wonders in her leadership regime.*

In addition, based on the result from Table 1 was also cemented by another interviewee that:

*When I reported to the head office about all that teachers were doing to me, I was isolated by all the teachers, and I felt lonely like a parrot in a cage. They highly continued to use different kinds of viles to me. For example, when we were in staff meetings, they stopped contributing to the agenda placed in front of them; they were just sitting there silently. On top of that, anywhere we met, we crossed each other like billy goats; it was like there was*

*a very serious and severe cold war.*

However, Teles et al., (2020) agree with the recent study that an un-conducive environment is an impact of teachers' perceptions on female head teachers' leadership efficacy. In the same vein, Klutsay, (2020) supports that school un-conducive environment can be caused by teachers' negative perceptions against them. The results align with the feminist leadership theory that female leaders have to be well viewed and treated in a similar manner as male leaders. This implies that some of the female head teachers may encounter an un-conducive school environment, which may cause them fall under great pain just because of rejection and mistreatment actions from teachers, which arise due to the way teachers perceive them.

In addition, statistics in Table 1 show that 47.1% of the respondents disagreed that worries and tension are impacts of teachers' perceptions on female head teachers' leadership efficacy. However, 34.6% of the respondents agreed that worries and tension are impacts of teachers' perceptions on female head teachers' leadership efficacy. This means that in the study area, some female head teachers are still suffering from worries and tension because of teachers' perceptions on them. The number is not high, may be because even some teachers' negative perceptions on female head teachers have also decreased. However, this finding is not far from the information given by a respondent from a face-to-face interview, who had this to say:

*It is the truth of without doubt that some of female head teachers experience increased tension and worries due to negative perceptions from other teachers. I can sometimes see openly from some female head teachers that they force themselves to look normal and strong, but reality they are disturbed with worries and tension in their minds. One of the female head teachers who was very close to me cried and said she was in great tension and worried about the security of her position. She thought that by being negatively perceived, some of the teachers could go to the head office and report negatively about her leadership efficacy.*

However, the result is supported by Koburtary and Sidan (2023) that worries and tension for female head teachers are impacts of teachers' perceptions on female head teachers' leadership efficacy. This implies that when some female head teachers notice that they are negatively perceived by teachers, they can develop worries and tension about the whole issue of their security and therefore their leadership efficacy can also be at risk.

Additionally, data in Table 1 unveil that 51.4% of the respondents disagreed that the intention of female head teachers to quit leadership positions is an impact of teachers' perceptions. However, 30.1% of the respondents agreed that intension of female head teachers to quit leadership positions is an impact of teachers' perceptions. This implies that some female head teachers are still in need of quitting leadership positions due to teachers' perceptions on them. The number is not too big, may be because some female head teachers have known how to use some leadership techniques in tolerating and punching teachers' perceptions on them. However in an in-depth interview, a respondent commented that:

*I have to be so frank, some years back, I was facing several challenges in my leadership efficacy. Teachers, together with the society around the school, perceived me negatively, and they showed openly that they don't trust me in any way. This situation stressed me to the extent of planning to quit the position in order to get peace of mind. Later on, I got used to the situation and thank God I got some female mentors who encouraged me what to do in order to overcome such situations.*

Also, another respondent had this to say:

*Yes, it happens, a female head teacher needing a demotion or transfer to another school just because of negative perceptions on her. She came here crying like a baby, telling me that she is tired of what she is facing in her leadership. She told me that she is ready to be a normal teacher rather than continue to be a head teacher who is far from peace of mind.*

However, in the same line of this data, the result from Bett (2023); Fuller (2021); Mogoai (2024), revealed that the intension of female leaders to quit leadership positions prevails. The results are supported by the feminist leadership theory that female leaders have to be respected and treated equally as male leaders. This implies that female head teachers may first have a very good intension of working so hard in performing leadership-roles, but when they notice acute negative perceptions from teachers, they can start thinking of quitting the leadership position.

Also, statistics in Table 1 present that 60.8% of the respondents disagreed that female head teachers losing interest in leading is an impact of teachers' perceptions. However, 21.5% of the respondents agreed that female head teachers losing interest to lead is an impact of teachers' perceptions. This implies that, there are some female heads teachers who lose interest in leading due to teachers' perceptions. The number is not too high may be because some of the female head teachers know how to use some leadership techniques in tolerating and addressing teachers' perceptions on them.

Similary, the study of Olubunmi (2024) and Sabarwal (2023), observed that gender bias and stereotype perceptions form unfair treatment and discrimination against female leaders, which may lower females' interest in leading. These results conform with the feminist leadership theory that gender bias and gender stereotypes should be thrown away, as female leaders who are victims may lose interest in performing well leadership roles. This means that female head teachers who are negatively perceived by teachers under them, may find themselves losing the interest of leading.

Furthermore, data in Table 1 unveil that 57.1% of the respondents disagreed that frustrations of female head teachers are some of the impacts of teachers' perceptions. However, 27.0% of the respondents agreed that stress and frustrations of female head teachers is an impact of teachers' perceptions; this percentage cannot be ignored. This implies that female head teachers are suffering from frustrations because of teachers' perceptions. The number is not too big, may be because some of the female head teachers have learned to use the "ignore technique" and go on with implementations of leadership roles. In an in-depth interview, a respondent cemented:

*I have been a teacher for more than twenty years now, and I have seen a lot of ups and downs in this profession. Up to this age, I have been under six different head teachers, two of them being females. Female head teachers may experience*

*frustrations sourced from negative perceptions from teachers, whereby teachers hate the head teachers and establish a kind of cold war in the school environment. Such a situation has made most female head teachers experiencing acute frustrations and see the workplace as a police station. To my surprise, some of them give themselves heart strength and continue to lead as if nothing bad is going on.*

However, Lwamba (2022) and Akinola (2024) agree with the recent study results and concludes that some of the female head teachers' frustrations are caused by teachers' negative perceptions. The feminist leadership theory aligns with the results that gender stereotypes, which may lead to female head teachers' frustrations, should be washed away. This means that if female head teachers experience negative perceptions from teachers, there is a strong possibility of them being frustrated, hence their leadership efficacy may be weak.

Moreover, figures in Table 1 show that 54.8% of the respondents disagreed that female head teachers feeling isolated is an impact of teachers' perceptions. However, 28.8% of the respondents agreed that female head teachers feeling isolated is an impact of teachers' perceptions. This means that some of the female head teachers feel isolated due to teachers' perceptions. It seems some of the female head teachers may be deprived of collaboration from the teachers, hence feeling isolated. In an in-depth interview, one respondent said:

*Both male and female teachers isolated me, and I remained like a parrot in a cage. They had negative perceptions on me, which manifested to me openly when I came closer to them; they also didn't want to talk with me. On top of that, I remember I had a certain family problem, and I didn't see even a single teacher who came to my home to see me.*

However, the study Galganjigmed and Sekuguchi (2023); Tabassum (2023) came up with the same results, when women are perceived negatively, they automatically lose confidence and develop feelings of being isolated. The results are in line with the feminist theory that female head teachers may feel isolated due to negative perceptions of teachers, which are rooted in patriarchal, outdated

structures that prevail in the society. This means that some of the female head teachers may feel like being isolated due to discriminatory treatments, which arise from teachers believing that males are better leadership performers.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

### 5.1 Conclusion

Considering the results, the study concluded that despite the impact of teachers' perceptions on female head teachers' leadership efficacy in public primary schools in the Morogoro region, most female head teachers are trying their best to stand firm in their leadership efficacy.

### 5.2 Recommendations

From the findings, the study recommends that:

1. Educational practitioners use mass-media to habitually broadcast about gender awareness to teachers, because the prevailing impacts of teachers' perceptions on female head teachers' leadership efficacy in public primary schools in the Morogoro region can unconsciously be transmitted to students and other teachers.
2. Educational practitioners conduct gender related workshops for teachers in schools even once or twice per year. This is because if the uncovered prevailing impacts of teachers' perceptions on female head teachers' leadership efficacy in public primary schools in the Morogoro region is ignored, there is a high possibility of acceleration and that being the case can harm female head teachers in their leadership efficacy.
3. Educational practitioners continue making sure that female head teachers get various workshops for boosting their strength in leadership, because without doing that they can feel un-recognized and start to step back.
4. Educational stakeholders continue making implementation of gender related policies because if they step back, the matter can be spread to students and other teachers.
5. Researchers and academicians who will be interested in performing the related study, it is recommended that they perform the same study at other educational levels like secondary schools, teachers' training colleges and universities.

#### Disclaimer (Artificial Intelligence)

We Nestoria Kabula Mtenga, Daniel Mkude and Eugenia Wandela hereby declare that NO generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT,

COPILOT, etc) and text-to-image generators have been used during the writing or editing of this manuscript.

#### Competing Interests

The authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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