

Exploration Headteacher's Management Styles in Selected Schools of Kalomo District

Rosah Siabweka

Dmi St.Eugene University

Abstract

This study examined the influence of head teachers' management styles on teachers' performance in selected secondary schools in Kalomo District. The research focused on key leadership styles, including democratic, authoritarian, and laissez-faire, and how these affect teachers' effectiveness and overall school performance. A qualitative approach using a phenomenological design was adopted to explore participants' experiences and perceptions. Data were collected through interviews and focus group discussions from a sample of teachers, school administrators, and learners. The findings indicate that management style plays a significant role in shaping teachers' performance. Democratic and transformational leadership styles were found to enhance motivation, participation, and productivity among teachers, while authoritarian styles tended to negatively affect performance. Laissez-faire leadership showed mixed results depending on the level of teacher independence. The study concludes that effective school leadership requires flexibility in the application of management styles and recommends continuous professional development for head teachers to improve school performance and educational outcomes.

Keywords: Head Teachers, Management Styles, Educational Leadership, Democratic Leadership, Authoritarian Leadership, Laissez-Faire Leadership, Teachers' Performance, School Management, Academic Performance.

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores the Head teacher's management styles in selected schools of Kalomo District of Southern Province. This chapter discusses the background information to the study on the management styles following the various leadership styles used in daily discourse of management. It also highlights the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives, research questions, and significance of the study, study site/delimitation of the study, theoretical framework, operational definitions and ethical consideration.

Background of the Study

School management is quite a complex matter for Zambian schools. This is compounded by the fact that for a number of years there has not been training programs tailored to develop knowledge, skills, abilities and values that specifically resonates with the running of schools for Head teachers. In most cases, school managers have been appointed on the basis of their performance in class performance or co-curricular activities display that were portrayed by an individual teacher. That yard stick used entails choosing administrators appointed to a position of their highest level of in competencies some times.

However, the Head teacher's manual (2004) states that the tasks that a Head teacher and the school will be measured in terms of the following broad areas of standards indicators which include issues of Policy framework, Institutional framework, The Curriculum, School infrastructure and surroundings, School organization, management and administration, Staff

development and appraisal, Discipline in the school, Pupils' affairs, Learning and teaching, Financial generation and management.

Maximizing subordinates' role performance requires the application of suitable management styles by the manager or leader of an organization. Management styles refer to the characteristic ways of making decisions and relating to subordinates, which the manager employs to assign obligations and energize contributions from the employees in an organization (Ch, Ahmad, Malik, & Batool, 2017; Putnam, 2014). Several scholars (e.g., Sirbu, Tonea, Pet, & Popa, 2015) observe that management styles differ from one manager to another due to differences in personality, knowledge, and peculiar organizational contexts, even if the managers had the same professional and educational training. As such, different management styles have been described over the years. Blake and Mouton (1964) identified apathetic (or laissez-faire), task-oriented (or authoritarian), group-oriented (or democratic), moderate (undetermined or balance-oriented), and staff-oriented (or affiliative) styles as the basic management styles associated with most managers during the course of their supervision of subordinates (see Figure 1). These are grouped into two: people-oriented (moving from laissez-faire through moderate to affiliative) and production-oriented (moving from laissez-faire through moderate to task-oriented) management styles. Scholars (e.g., Mircea & Delia, 2008; Okon & Isong, 2016; Putman, 2014) have generally contested the existence of one best management style, arguing that an effective management style depends on the situation at hand. Headteachers as school managers also display different management styles in different situations so as to influence the core workers—teachers—of the school to perform their duties effectively (Mohammed, 2016). Whereas the extent to which various management styles are employed by headteachers in some contexts is known, there is no such data on headteachers of secondary schools in Kalomo District. Given that the performance of teachers, learners, and other stakeholders in any school is directly linked to the managerial behavior of the school head (Mbon, 2017), the authors purposed to garner data on management styles of the headteachers of the secondary schools in Kalomo District so as to determine any possible linkages.

Statement of the Problem

In recent times, the performance of students over the years in mathematics has remained an issue of concern to parents, educationists and stakeholders. Researchers have shown that the behavior of students especially in relation to sciences generally and mathematics in particular is greatly influenced by certain psychological factors. Thus, the need for this study. The problem of this study is posed in form of a question. Does head teacher leadership style relates to student's academic performance in the local government area?

Significance of the Study

This study may be of great help to all educational stakeholders such as policy makers for effective leadership and management of schools. It will also enable the head teachers to always use more than one leadership style in the administration of their school. It will further encourage government to have in-service training for head teachers for effective leadership style.

Purpose of the Study

This study examines the relationship between head teacher leadership style and teachers performance. Specifically, the study determined the relationship between

1. Democratic leadership style and teachers performance
2. Authoritarian leadership style and student's teachers performance

3. Laissez-faire leadership style and student's teachers' performance.

Delimitation of study

The study will be undertaken in three public secondary schools in kalomo district of southern province.

Theoretical Framework

Different theories have been used by different scholars to explain teachers' performance. These include Victor Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory, Fredrick Herzberg's two-factor theory (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959), Abraham Maslow's (1943) needs hierarchy theory, and Douglas McGregor's (1960) Theory X and Y.

Each of these theories has been evaluated for strengths and weaknesses. For instance, the expectancy theory has been criticized for discontinuity of hierarchy; disordering physiological, safety, social, and esteem needs; lack of direct cause-effect relationship between needs and behavior; and subjectivity of level of satisfaction of needs. Khalid (2013) criticized Herzberg's two-factor theory for overlap between hygiene and motivating factors. Abraham Maslow's needs hierarchy theory has been criticized for

(a) Scanty empirical data to support conclusion,

(b) Assumption that employee are basically alike, and

(c) Not being a theory of motivation but rather a theory of job satisfaction.

McGregor's (1960) Theory X and Y has been preferred to explain the teachers' role performance in the secondary schools in kalomo District in light of the head teachers' management styles despite its questionable rigidity. Theory X assumes that teachers are lazy and wish to work as little as possible, they lack ambition, dislike responsibility, and prefer to be led by the head teacher (Dharejo, Baloch, Jariko, & Jhatial, 2017). It further postulates that teachers are resistant to change and indifferent to the needs of the school. This implies that because of their dislike of work, they must be coerced, controlled, directed, and punished to achieve organizational goals (Aina, 2014). A head teacher who inclines to Theory X most likely adopts an authoritarian or autocratic task-oriented management style with little regard for the humanity of the teachers. Such a tendency is likely to impart resistance in the teachers and their role performance is likely to be wanting. On the contrary, a head teacher who uses Theory Y in managing the school operates on the basic assumption that his or her teachers like to work, are inherently ambitious, like to volunteer in responsibilities, and prefer a working environment with less tracking or interference by the headteacher (Dharejo et al., 2017). Such a school will likely get high performance from the teachers because they perceive that management allows them to grow and develop. Therefore, application of either Theory X or Y by headteachers will influence the teachers' role performance in achieving the school objectives.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature review is an account of work which has been published on a topic by accredited scholars and researchers (Kombe & Tromp, 2006). It critically looks at the existing research that is significant to the work that the researcher will be carrying out. This chapter reviews the types of management styles used by head teachers and teacher performance as a result of the style of management used.

Head teachers' Management Styles and Teachers' Performance in Schools

Various scholars (e.g., Awan & Asghar, 2014; Bizuneh, 2016; Kakooza, 2017) have shown that teachers' role performance depends on head teachers' management styles, which is

critical to the survival of quality education. However, different styles produce different outcomes; some styles are effective and enhance performance, whereas others are ineffective and derail performance. For instance, Wanjiru and Njagi (2016) observed that democratic management style of the head teacher is strongly related to the teachers' role performance. It therefore implies that headteachers ought to employ effective management styles if teachers are to effectively perform their roles. Effective management is key in ensuring that teachers recruited within the school exhibit and maintain high levels of aptitude, attitude, subject mastery, teaching methodology, personal characteristics in the classroom environment, general mental ability, personality, relation with students, preparation and planning, effectiveness in presenting subject matter, relation with other staffs, self-improvement, relation with parents and community, poise, intellect, teaching techniques, interaction with students, teaching competence demonstrated, and motivational skills. Hornby (2000) further described teachers' role performance as inside duties and outside duties. Inside duties include preparation for classes, guiding the learning of students, checking students' progress, and setting good example for students, whereas outside duties include involving students in co-curricular activities such as HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns, religious and environmental clubs, fieldwork, and games and sports.

There is a general contest for the existence of related teachers' performance to their availability and ability to provide guidance and counseling to the students so as to form the students holistically and help them in problems concerning their academic and social life. The teacher roles examined in this study included drawing of teaching plans, setting objectives, drawing schemes of work and lesson plans, level of participation in extra duties, and extra-curricular activities, among others. The trickle-down effect of effective management by the headteacher is effective role performance by the teacher and reciprocally good academic performance of the learners (Akram, 2014). However, the pass rate of learners in Uganda in general and Tororo District in particular in 2016 was very poor (Ministry of Education and Sports [MoES], 2017). Kakooza (2017) attributed the poor learner performance to teachers' absenteeism estimated at 17%. He further observed that considering teachers who were present in school but not teaching, the rate of absenteeism was even higher. All these served as warning signs of a management gap in secondary schools in Uganda that needed to be bridged if teachers' role performance was to improve.

Therefore, this study was a step in the direction of filling the identified management gap. However, it must be acknowledged that teachers' role performance is a function of several other factors including government policies, education facilities, work environment, finances, and disposition and attitudinal orientation (MoES, 2014, 2017; Mobegi, Ondigi, & Oburu, 2010). These factors, other than head teachers' management styles, can hinder teachers' role performance if deficient in quality and quantity.

Democratic Leadership Style

According to Lewin and Lippitt (1939), democratic leader is the type of leader who involves subordinates or employees in decision making process (determining what to do and how to do it). However, the final decision rests with the leader. It should be pointed out that, democratic style is not a sign of weakness on the part of the leader but a sign of strength that your subordinates will respect. In a democratic style, morale is high; cooperation exists between the leader and followers. According to Bass, (1990), Hackman and Johnson (1996), democratic leadership style increases subordinates' output and satisfaction and ensures that there is total commitment to the organisation. Luthar (1996) asserts that in democratic style, participation is a core feature. It means that every member of the organisation is a player in the process leading to the final decision made by the organisation. Democratic style promotes

freedom and creativity in an organisation (Lewin&Lippit, 1939). Finally, the most common feature of leadership is vision (Bass, 1990; Northouse, 1997; Yukl, 2002). This means that a leader has to see beyond the present. On the other hand, democratic leadership style may lead subordinates to be lazy and take things for granted. Decision making may take too much time since the leader has to seek the consent of the whole group (Lewin&Lippit, 1939).

Transformational leadership/ Democratic

The transformational leadership is said to occur when leaders and followers unite in pursuit of higher order common goals, when “one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to a higher levels of motivation and morality” (Burns, 1978, p. 20). This therefore implies that the leader-follower relationship is one in which the purpose of both become fused, creating unity and collective purpose (Barker, 1990). The leader motivates followers to “work for transcendental goals instead of immediate self-interest, for achievement and self-actualisation rather than safety and security” (Murray &Feitler, 1989, p. 3), and creates within followers a capacity to develop higher level commitment to organisational goals (Leithwood&Jantzi, 2000). Transformational leadership model emphasise that “transformational leaders are able to alter their environments” to meet their desired goal (Kirby, King & Paradise, 1992 p. 303). It is said that transformational leaders use communication as the basis for goal attainment focusing on the final desirable result. Expressing the importance of communication, Newcomb and Ashkanasy (2002) indicates that how a leader delivers a message can be more important than the content of the message. In a school setting, transformational school leaders do the right thing by promoting educational restructuring and innovation, focusing on building vision, encouraging collaborative participation and raising the role of followers to that of leaders (Silins, 1994).

Inspirational Leadership Style.

The inspirational leader (Cobbold, 2012) is the leader who raises people’s motivation in order that they achieve more by aligning their goals and values with that of the organization. Inspirational leaders also encourage people to carry out the task at hand because they want to and not because of reward from the leader. Distributed Leadership Style Distributed leadership is explained as a form of leadership that includes all the different forms of collaboration experienced by the principal, teachers, and members of the school’s improvement team in leading the school’s development (Heck, &Hallinger, 2009). On his part, Fullan (2001) explains that for sustainable change to take place in schools, it is dependent upon distributed leadership among the school staff. Other researchers have also admitted that distributed leadership must result in changes that are embraced and owned by the teachers who are in charge of implementing those changes in classroom (Fullan, 2006; Hall, &Hord, 2001; Heck &Hallinger, 2009). On their part, Harris (2004) and Muijs (2005) assert that distributed leadership focuses on employing expertise within the organization rather than searching through formal position or role. This implies that members of the organization contribute their ideas, knowledge, skills and in any heroic and charismatic figure who leads while others follow dutifully. Due to the current wave of leadership which demands that there be collaboration among the players in the school enterprise, the approaches to leadership should not be exclusive to principals alone, instead it should be shared among all (Donaldson, 2001) since in their opinion (Hall &Hord, 2001) principals alone cannot do it. Obviously, distributed leadership certainly contributes to school improvement and creates an internal capacity for school development (Harris, 2004).

This was supported empirically by Firas, Jinan and Paiman (2011) who found out that teachers perceived the distributed leadership style as improving school performance even

though others thought otherwise experience towards running of the organisation. Believing this, Cobbold (2012) stated that distributed leadership is not concentrated.

Effects of Leadership Styles

In order to contribute to filling the gap in the leadership field, Nsubuga (2008) conducted a research in some selected senior secondary schools in Uganda. The study was aimed to find out how leadership styles adopted by school head teachers influence the school overall performance in secondary schools in Uganda. Correlation survey design was used. In all 625 respondents were selected using the Krejcie's and Morgan's (1970) table. From the population, the following samples were chosen; 24 head teachers, 200 teachers, 351 students, 49 parents and 10 officers were selected. It was difficult to determine the appropriateness or otherwise of the sample since it was not mentioned. The researcher used purposive and random sampling techniques to select head teachers, teachers, parents and official from Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) while systematic sampling was used to select students. In using the purposive sampling method, Cohen, et al (2007) pointed out that while the method may satisfy the researcher's needs to use it, it does not represent the wider population, saying that it is deliberately and unashamedly selective and biased. The data collection instruments were questionnaire, observation, interview and documentary analysis.

This in no doubt made the study very holistic since it used a lot of instruments in collecting data from respondents. According to Cohen, Mannion and Morrison (2007), the use of more than one instrument is good because the researcher has the opportunity to assess many aspects of the respondents. Again, the analysis and the computation of the figures if not properly done could affect the findings. The study established that there is a significant perceived leadership effect not only on the students' learning, but also an array of school conditions for that matter. This finding was also supported by Allan (1981), and Darko (2008), when they stated that principal has great impact on the administration and performance of a school. Contrarily, some earlier researchers found no perceived influence of a leader in an organisation (Brown, 1982; Meindl&Ehrlick, 1987; Salancik&Pfeffer, 1977). The study established the pivotal role of leadership in education. Other findings were that, there is a strong positive relationship between the leadership style and school performance; the autocratic style of school head teachers has a negative effect on school performance; there was no relationship between the head teachers' number of years in service and school performance and finally, there is strong positive relationship between democratic leadership style and school performance. These findings are important to the current study due to the fact that it will seek to determine whether leadership of head teachers have some influence on teachers' performance.

3. METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the methodology that was used in data collection, analysis and interpretation. The key areas in this chapter are the research design, sampling procedure, sample size, inclusion criteria, data collection and analysis method and ethical consideration.

Research Design

This study used a qualitative method in data collection and analysis. A qualitative design helps reveal the nature of the multiple perspectives of management dynamics in any given area of study. In such an exploration of institutional' dynamics arising from phenomena a qualitative study is ideal. In qualitative studies, past knowledge and prejudices are bracketed

in order to seek a deeper, detailed and complete understanding of the phenomena under study as it provides for both a natural setting and complexities of the phenomena under study (Leedy&Ormrod 2001). Collaizi, (1978) and Creswell (2007) indicate that a researcher temporarily put aside their beliefs, feelings, and perceptions so as to objectively collect meaningful responses from the research participants. A phenomenological design is ideal for this exploration of dynamics of leadership styles in management as the respondents are the best-informed authorities to explore and describe their lived experiences of the post diagnostic coping and adjustment in management styles. (McLeod, 2001). The rationale of using phenomenology in this study is that such an explorative enquiry enables the researcher to collect information about participants' perceptions, perspectives and feelings of teaching and learning calculus and then analyze them within the confines of the subjective realities of experiencing learning of calculus.

Study Population

The target population was four schools kalomo district of southern province. These include both sex schools and single sex school. The other target will be professionals who offer professional, intellectual support to the school management systems such as Heads of departments, senior education standards officers. According to Kruger (1988), participants who are suitable for participation in phenomenological based research in psychology are those that have had experiences relating to the phenomenon being researched. They should possess verbal fluency or spatial knowledge, skill and ability and be able to communicate their experiences, thoughts and perceptions in relation to the phenomenon of learning and teaching calculus. They should be able to communicate in a language clear to the understanding of the researcher and also show clear interest and willingness to be indisputably open to the researcher.

Study Sample

The study comprised forty (40) participants with an age range of (twenty) 20 to (forty 40 with mixed gender. Key respondents were Twenty (20) teachers, and Ten (10) professional like head teachers, deputy heads and senior teachers, 10 were learners.

Sampling Procedure

The study used purposive recruitment method. This method is based on the assumption that, in order to gain insight into an experience, one has to select participants from whom they can gain the most relevant information (Leary, 1995). The participants to the study were to be identified through institutional records. The other participants were obtained from the survey done by Ministry of education statistical bulletin. Other participants were obtained through snowballing. Permission was got from the district education board secretaries who are the gate keepers to their education sector. .

Inclusion Criteria

The study considered the inclusion criteria as stated here in so as to reduce on bias from participants that may not be ideal for the exploration of care giving by siblings

1. Person that have been in management for three or more years.
2. Persons that have been holding administrative for at least five years
3. Persons that have worked in education and involved in the school management for at least more than 6 years.
4. S/he is willing to give consent to being interviewed and to the interviews being audio-taped; and

5. S/he is able to communicate in either English or any other Zambian language fluently.

Data Collection Methods

For the purpose of achieving results in this study, the researcher will utilise semi-structured, in-depth, face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions as methods of data collection. According to De Vos (1998), the face-to-face interview assists researchers to understand the closed worlds of individuals, families, organizations, institutions and communities. The purpose of the in-depth, face-to-face interview is to understand the interviewee's life as lived by the person influenced by it or situation as expressed through their own words and actions (De Vos, 1998). Kruger (1988) further elaborates that the spoken interviews allow participants to be as near as possible to their lived experience, and does not preclude the possibility of dialogue during this early phase of research and does not involve the inhibiting effect of the process of writing on spontaneity of expression. This advantage of in-depth interviews as method of data collection precisely compliments the aim of this study, which explored and described learning of calculus phenomenological experiences.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The primary form of data analysis was Moustaka's (1977) phenomenological analysis model in which descriptions of the lived experiences of the participants are critical. Having used a phenomenological method of data collection, it becomes apparent to identify the specific characteristics and themes arising from sibling caregivers and professional's responses while avoiding the researcher's pre conceived perception about the phenomena under study. In analysing qualitative data, the emphasis on search for meaning that reflect various aspects of the experiences of the participants data will be coded in terms of predetermined and precisely defined characteristics (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001). The researcher will reduce the text by marking individual interesting passages, which will then coded/labeled and grouped into categories. The categories will systematically be selected, related to other categories, and connections will be made among categories. These categories will then be studied for thematic connections within and among them, in order to produce a set of interview responses that will be organized in themes. The themes and categories that will result from the data analysis and interpretation process will be grouped in four broad characteristics of experience, namely:

(1) Head teachers characteristics (2) School characteristic (3) Teachers response to Management styles (4) School academic performance perspective

The researcher will further consider his reflective observations and the thematically organized summary of responses against the research questions in order to synthesises the nature of dynamics on learning calculus experiences as well as the type of coping strategies the learners adopt.

Reliability and Validity

In research, the term validity is described as something which actually gives a true representation of what was being researched. For research outcomes to be considered valid evidence, they must be authentic to generalize the outcomes. An outcome was not considered to be valid evidence if it is only applicable to one research project, or to one sample group of participants (Green, 2000). Reliability is the degree of consistency with which research instrument measures whatever it is measuring. It involves the consistent of results over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study, and if the results of the study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable (Golafshani, 2003)

In order to ensure validity and reliability of the findings, this study will use triangulation in some cases. The first form is the use of more than one method of data collection, whereby the researcher will use questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions. Multiple methods are seen to be more valid, reliable and diverse construction of realities and that validity could be enhanced by solicit information using more than one method (Green, 2000; Golafshani, 2003). The researcher used questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussion to ascertain the views of the respondents on the challenges of teaching calculus in mathematics in secondary schools

Ethical Consideration

The following issues were be taken care of for the study to meet the ethical standard for any research that involves human beings.

Information and Consent Forms.

Research participants were provided with and asked to sign a printed consent form, which had provided an honest and accurate description of the aims and nature of the study. The consent form clearly stated that participation in the study will be voluntary, and further included information about how participants' concerns about privacy, anonymity and confidentiality would be addressed.

Privacy, Anonymity and Confidentiality of Data.

Although participants' names will be known, they will not appear on any data records or analysis sheets or results records. When the study will be completed, record sheets will be retained. All audio records of the research interviews and focus group discussions will be transcribed, and the audiotapes will be destroyed at the completion of the research. Interview transcripts will be coded so that participants' names do not appear. No identifying information will be included in any subsequent publications of research results. Coded transcripts will not include in the appendices because the participants would may or may not give consent to the researcher.

Feedback to Participants

A verbal and written summary of the findings in the study will be offered to participants and sent to those who may have provided their names and email addresses. A copy of the abbreviated report will also be sent to the professionals who gave valuable information and support.

Potential Risks

This study was presumed not to pose any danger, harm, embarrassment or offence to participants, professionals at large. As a precautionary measure, all participants were provided with referral information social support and containment services in the event that they might require such assistance after completion of the research.

4. CONCLUSION

This study has established that head teachers' management styles significantly influence teachers' performance in secondary schools in Kalomo District. The findings show that leadership approaches such as democratic and transformational styles promote teacher motivation, participation, and effectiveness, thereby improving overall school performance. In contrast, authoritarian leadership tends to limit teacher involvement and negatively affect

performance, while laissez-faire leadership produces mixed outcomes depending on the level of teacher independence.

The study further highlights that no single management style is universally effective; rather, successful school leadership depends on the ability of head teachers to adapt their leadership approach to different situations. Additionally, the application of appropriate leadership styles enhances collaboration, job satisfaction, and commitment among teachers, which ultimately contributes to improved academic outcomes. In conclusion, strengthening leadership capacity through training and professional development is essential for head teachers to effectively manage schools and improve educational quality. Policymakers and stakeholders should therefore prioritize leadership development programs to ensure sustainable improvements in school performance.

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