

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL STUDIES

Effect of Head Teachers' Leadership Style on Teacher Performance in Public Primary Schools in Turkana Central Sub County, Kenya

Rose Atoni

Lecturer, Department of Education, Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Kenya

Wenyaa Jacinta Lutomia

Masters' Student Department of Education, Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Kenya

Jennifer Karambu Munyua

Senior Lecturer, Department of Education, Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Kenya

Abstract:

The purpose of the study was to establish the effects of head teacher leadership styles on teacher performance in public primary schools. Despite measures taken to capacity build head teachers in leadership and management, teachers have cried foul at the delivery of leadership styles used by their head teachers. Performance of public primary schools in Kenya has been inconsistent due to the inability of teachers to record better performance and also inability of head teachers to sufficiently utilize leadership styles which may be hypothesized as being a hindrance to teacher performance. A causal-comparative research design was employed for the study. Stratified random sampling technique was applied to select 177 teachers and 44 head teachers. Data was collected using questionnaire and document Analysis guide. The obtained data was analyzed using means, percentages and frequencies; hypotheses were tested using ANOVA. The results showed that there was significant relationship between leadership style and performance of teachers in public primary schools in Turkana Central Sub County. The style adopted by the head teacher defined the school's work and social culture in the school, which in turn influence the teachers' commitment to work and to the school activities.

Keywords: Leadership styles, teacher performance, public primary schools

1. Introduction

Leadership styles play a very crucial role in organizational performance in educational institutions (Mugo, 2016). Leadership styles affect the institution both positively and negatively in terms of organizational processes, structures patterns of interaction, beliefs, attitudes and job behaviors (Koech and Namusonge, 2012). Head teachers' leadership styles have been observed as being fundamental to success of institution. They help in determining performance of both teachers and learners. A professionally developed teacher ensures effective and quality education delivery. Okoroji and Hannington (2011) in their study noted that the teacher is the boss, director, manager administrator and organizer. He/she enjoys relatively higher degree of privacy and autonomy. Ummoh (2013) noted that leadership styles have a significant impact on teacher performance, learner performance and even how the Board of Management perform.

The most observable leadership styles in Kenyan schools are autocratic, democratic and transformational styles. Autocratic leadership is a domineering style where the leader alone takes decision for others to implement without consultation, very little communication and the leader mostly uses threats and punishment. Psychologists believe this style stems from fear and feeling of insecurity Kimengini (2013). Democratic leadership style is grounded on the fact that the success of an organization is the responsibility of all workers even though the leader has the primary role of guiding the rest of the group in arriving at collective decisions thus encouraging, delegating, coaching, accepting responsibility and recognition of the ability and potential of others Andende (2016). A research by Koech and Namusonge (2012) concluded that head teachers who practiced democratic leadership had their teachers performing well since they were involved in the whole process of running the school by being involved in decision making and delegation. Transformational leadership depicts a situation where the leader works with teams to identify needed change, creates a vision to guide the change through inspiration and executing the change in tandem with committed members of the group. Basically, the leader is flexible, open-minded, sensitive to other people's needs encourages participation, sharing, decision-making and is highly tolerant of diversity (Anderson, 2012).

Teacher performance on the other hand could be described in various ways. Robert and Tim (2008) defined teacher performance as the act of accomplishing or executing different tasks or duties at a particular period in the school system achieving educational goals. The teachers' performance is gauged through annual report of his or her activities in terms of performance in teaching, adequate preparation of professional documents (schemes of work, lesson plans, progressive records, records of work) mastery of subject matter, competence teachers' commitment to job and

participation in extra-curricular activities. A teacher who does all that ensures proper learner performance. For a teacher to do this he/she will need to be working under conducive environment (Kitavi 2013).

Research on school leaders in Denmark, Scotland, England and Australia by Macbeth (2008), identified a number of characteristics of effective leaders as those who work along their colleagues, respect teachers' autonomy, protect them from extraneous demands and motivating them in different ways. In most of the developing countries teachers are the key source of knowledge, skills, wisdom appropriate orientation, inspiration and models for students. As a consequence, the teacher is central in facilitating the process that leads to meaningful education. Pupil education is affected by teacher quality, teacher professional development and performance provides opportunities for teachers to explore new roles, develop instructional techniques, refine their practices and broaden themselves both as educators and as individuals.

In the schools, conducive school learning environment constituted many factors; among them the nature of teachers' availability, availability of financial and material resources, quality of leadership available and, above all, nature of students to be taught. When these factors are in place, guided by qualified leadership excellent teacher performance is eminent. The leadership style employed by a given leader plays a pivotal role in quality of teaching and learning (Kabeta, 2019). Successful leadership depends on creating a strong constructive relationship with teachers which affects their attitude and performance towards their students in specific roles in general (Starr, 2014). Organizational performance, especially in educational institutions, is entirely dependent on the leadership styles used by the head teacher of an institution Mugo (2012).

1.1. Statement of the Problem

There has been an outcry from educational stakeholders on the continued decline in performance in public primary schools within Turkana Central Sub County. The concern has not only been academic but also in co-curricular activities where there has been very minimal participation from some zones in Turkana central sub county and complete lack of participation from other zones.

In 2016 the mean score for KCPE was 219.87, in 2017 the mean score 217.51, in 2018 the mean score was 218.76 while in 2019 the mean score was 220.07. Out of the 100 learners from Turkana County who participated in co-curricular activities in 2017 only 8 of them were from Turkana central sub county while in 2018 only from the same County participated in co-curricular activities at the National level (MoE, 2019).

A study by Wachira (2017) in Nairobi on the effects of principals' leadership styles on students' academic performance revealed that principals who used democratic leadership styles enhanced good academic performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE). Migosi, (2013) carried out a study on effects of head Teachers leadership styles on the performance of examinations in public primary schools in Kitui West District, Kenya. The study's findings were that head teachers' leadership styles played a role in students' academic performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE). Mugo (2016) conducted a study on the influence of Head teacher leadership styles on teachers' job satisfaction in public primary schools in Kirinyaga West Sub County, Kenya. The study's findings showed that head teachers' leadership styles had an effect on the teachers' job satisfaction.

According to the reviewed literature it is evident that little studies have been conducted on head teachers' leadership styles and teacher performance. Therefore, this study will investigate on the effects of head teachers' leadership styles on teachers' performance in public primary schools in Turkana Central Sub County Kenya.

2. Review of Related Literature

Successful school structures depend on qualified teachers together to ensure quality education for students and to ensure quality education for students and to achieve set goals and objectives (Day, 2011). Despite the efforts made by scholars to unmask the effects of leadership styles on educational institutions, few of them have tried to link these styles with teacher performance. Lack of this would be related to the scarce promotion and adoption of better leadership styles that would have somewhat improved teacher performance, and achievement of better academic results.

Andende, (2016) in her study in Zambia reported that teachers cried foul at delivery of leadership styles by their head teachers as all the leadership styles applied by teachers also had an effect on teacher performance. The researcher recommended that the organization should adopt a flexible structure of leadership that would enable it to adjust quickly to the dynamic complexity of the education environment. The reviewed study was conducted in Zambia whereas the current research was conducted in Turkana Central Sub County. Secondly the reviewed study adopted exploratory research design unlike the researcher of the current study who will adopt causal comparative research design to establish the effects of head teacher leadership styles on teacher performance in Kenya.

Verma, (2014) in his study revealed that the practices of leadership areas need to be aligned to teacher performance competencies level in order to help schools acquire, develop and retain a competent teacher workforce. Such alignment requires that the competencies be embedded within the leadership practices such as having professional development activities that focus on improvement of desired competencies. The researcher used simple random sampling to collect data and had a sample size of 1300 respondents. The researcher used interview schedule as the main instrument of data collection.

A study conducted by Markman (2010) on the role Principals leadership styles and its application on teacher performance, the main objective of the study was to investigate the effect of principal leadership styles towards teacher performance. A sample size of 159 respondents who were principals was used. The study employed a descriptive case study research design. The findings of the study revealed that 87% of respondents were of the opinion that principal's leadership styles have an effect on teachers' performance with another 78% of respondents being of the idea that

principles are not actively involved in creating learning opportunities for teachers in school. The study findings also revealed that Principals in schools are involved in supervision because they are concerned with person-to-person skills which are necessary in school leadership. Another 59% of respondents were of the opinion that principals are involved in giving counselling in forms of advice giving and wisdom sharing thus helping to enhance teacher performance.

A research conducted by Mohammed (2015) on the impact of leadership styles on teachers' job performance in private owned schools in Poland where independent variables used in the study included leadership, culture, organization structure and resource allocation and how they impact on teacher job effectiveness. The study adopted quantitative approach to investigate the head teacher leadership styles. Twenty-five (25) private owned schools were involved in the study and one hundred and fifty-one (151) teachers involved in the study responded to the questionnaire. The findings indicated that leadership styles, organization culture, structures and leadership styles adopted by the schools and resource allocation have a strong positive impact on teachers' job performance. While Mohamed (2015) conducted the study in Poland which is a developed country, the current research was conducted in Kenya which is ranked among the third world countries; the researcher also involved twenty-five (25) private owned schools whereas the current study will only be done in public primary schools in Turkana Central sub county, Kenya. The study also adopted convenience sampling whereas the researcher of the current study will use stratified and random sampling techniques.

Sekaran (2004) in his study observed that external and internal forces are what define leadership styles that are to be used in educational institutions. Internal factors include the leaders and followers while the external factors include technological, political, legal or economic forces. Leadership styles play a very crucial role in the performance of both teachers and students and therefore as stated by (Sekaran 2004) it is very important that both internal and external forces are considered by head teachers in their day to day running of schools. He studied the factors influencing job performance and satisfaction of teachers in the sultanate of Oman. He specifically examined the unique influence of leadership, changing lifestyles and job performance. One Hundred and Fifty (150) questionnaires were distributed to schools that include Mazoon, Majan and Muscat. One hundred and twenty-five questionnaires were responded to and data obtained in a five point Likert scale analyzed by descriptive statistics using SPSS version. The study adopted a survey research design and the findings indicated that leadership is by far the most important factor influencing successful implementation of strategy. The reviewed study was carried out in Oman whereas the present study was done in Kenya. The reviewed study was also conducted in private schools outside the country whereas the current research was carried out in public primary schools.

3. Research Design and Methodology

A causal-comparative research design was employed for the study. Stratified random sampling technique was applied to select 177 teachers and 44 head teachers from a total population of 529 teachers and 87 head teachers of public primary schools in Turkana Central Sub County. Data was collected using questionnaire and document analysis guide, which were subjected to both content and face validity. The obtained quantifiable data was analyzed using means, percentages and frequencies; hypotheses were tested using ANOVA.

4. Data Analysis, presentation and Discussion of the Findings

The results showed that majority (56.7%) of the respondents taught in mixed day schools, 36.3% taught in mixed boarding schools, 4.7% taught in girls' boarding schools while 2.3% taught in girls' day schools. This implied that most of the schools in Turkana Central Sub County were mixed day schools, with a small fraction of boarding schools. From the findings 100% of the schools actively participated in drama and music and engaged in external competitions with other schools. However, only 67% of the schools engaged in ball games and 61% participated in athletics. This is attributed to inadequate facilities for ball games and athletics in most of the schools in the region.

Leadership Styles	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Autocratic	215	1.00	4.60	2.85	0.432
Democratic	215	1.00	5.00	2.94	0.435
Transformational	215	1.00	4.80	1.94	0.488
Valid N (listwise)	215				

Table 1: Scores on Leadership Styles

From the findings, democratic leadership style was the most applied in Turkana Central Sub County, with a mean of 2.94 and standard deviation of 0.435, followed by autocratic leadership style, with a mean of 2.85 and standard deviation of 0.432. Transformational leadership style was the least applied in the schools, with a mean of 1.94 and standard deviation of 0.488.

4.1. Teacher's Performance

The level of teachers' performance was measured in terms of teachers' performance in lesson preparation, performance in learners' assessment and performance in time management. The performance of each teacher was rated in a scale of 10 to 50 and the scores of the teachers recorded, after which the means were computed according to the three methods of measurement.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Teacher's performance in lesson preparation	215	15.00	47.00	40.78	5.88
Teacher's performance in learners' assessment	215	15.00	48.00	39.98	7.57
Teacher's performance in time management	215	15.00	46.00	36.22	4.45
Overall Teachers' Performance	215	15.00	47.00	38.99	6.22

Table 2: Responses on Teachers' Performance

The lowest score in lesson preparation was 15 while the highest score was 47; the mean was 40.78 (out of 50) with a standard deviation of 5.88. This showed that the level of performance of the teachers of Turkana Central public primary schools in terms of lesson preparation was very good. The teachers prepared well their professional documents such as schemes of work, lesson plans, and records of work and lesson notes. Teaching resources were also prepared to a good level. However, most of the teachers 83.8% of the teachers had either never or sometimes researched on the internet when preparing for their lessons; this indicated that many teachers relied on available textbooks for research and for preparation of lesson notes.

The lowest score in learners' assessment by the teachers was 15 while the highest score was 48; the mean was 39.98 (out of 50) with a standard deviation of 7.57. The teachers of Turkana West sub county public primary schools effectively assessed the learners by giving daily homework, class assignments and examinations at stipulated time within the school calendar. According to Okoth (2008), the way the teachers performed on lesson preparation varied on the basis on the number of years of service and availability of resources in the school. Instructional supervision by the heads of department and the head teachers also influenced the level of lesson preparation by the teachers.

The lowest score in time management by the teachers was 15 while the highest score was 46; the mean was 36.22 (out of 50) with a standard deviation of 4.45. This demonstrated a good score in time management in the sub county. Most of the schools maintained attendance register and the teachers performed relatively well in maintaining time for various activities of the school. The areas that had the least score were teachers reporting to school on the first day of opening (18 out of 50) and preparation of professional documents before opening the school (16 out of 50).

The overall teachers' performance had a mean score of 38.99 out of 50. When translated into percentage form, this was equivalent to 77.98%, which demonstrated very good performance in terms of lesson preparation, learners' assessment and time management in Turkana West sub county primary schools. Mugo (2016) explained that the level of teachers' performance could rely on their involvement in decision making, working conditions, dealing with challenges at their work place and their welfare in the schools. Teacher's motivation to produce good performance depends critically on effective management at school level where the importance of teacher's work and competence in performing it are critically influenced by the quality of both internal and external factors, including leadership offered at the schools.

4.2. Relationship between leadership Styles and Teachers' Performance

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	12797.012	9	1421.890	5.107	.061
Within Groups	57071.388	205	278.397		
Total	69868.400	214			

Table 3: Relationship between Autocratic Leadership Style and Teachers' Performance

Table 3 shows that F (9,205) was 5.107 and the p-value was 0.061, which was greater than 0.05; this means that there is no significant relationship between autocratic leadership style and teachers' performance. The findings concur with Huka (2003) who argued that there is no strong relationship between autocratic leadership style and teachers' performance, but the style of leadership could slightly limit the workers' initiatives and leads to demotivation and lack of morale which then results in professional burnout and low performance. The style could be effective where workers are new or untrained and do not know the tasks or procedures on performing the tasks.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	12438.118	10	1243.812	4.418	.000
Within Groups	57430.282	204	281.521		
Total	69868.400	214			

Table 4: Relationship between Democratic Leadership Style and Teachers' Performance

Table 4 shows that F(10,204) was 4.418 and the p-value was 0.000, which was less than 0.05; this implies that there is a significant relationship between democratic leadership style and teachers' performance. This is because this type of leadership style is characterized by decentralization of authority, participatory planning and mutual communication. If the head teacher is involved in distribution of responsibility, empowering teachers and aiding group decision making

process, the teachers are motivated and feel part of the school's administrative process, which in turn positively influences work relationship in the school. The findings are in agreement with the results of Okoth (2008) who revealed that democratic head teachers produced higher mean score grades as compared to head teachers who applied other forms of leadership. He indicated that the democratic style of leadership was the most applied one by principals in secondary schools in Nairobi province.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	10862.288	6	1810.381	6.382	.000
Within Groups	59006.112	208	283.683		
Total	69868.400	214			

Table 5: Relationship between Transformational Leadership Style and Teachers' Performance

Table 5 shows that $F(6,208)$ was 6.382 and the p-value was 0.000, which was less than 0.05; this implies that there is a relationship between transformational leadership style and teachers' performance. When the head teacher encourages subordinates to have vision, mission, and organization goals, it encourages and motivates the teachers to show maximum performance; it also stimulates subordinates to act critically and to solve problems in new ways and treat employees individually. Nsubuga (2008) also established that school performance in secondary schools in Uganda is positively related to the transformational leadership style employed by school head teachers. This study also established that there is a strong relationship between transformational leadership style of head teacher and teacher's leadership. The study therefore submitted most schools would improve their performance by becoming more collaborative and more conducive leadership style; the head teachers of secondary schools in particular could be encouraged to use this style of leadership in the management of secondary schools.

5. Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

To answer the research question on democratic leadership style, the results from the study showed that there is a significant relationship between democratic leadership style and teachers' performance. The head teachers should therefore be involved in distribution of responsibility, empowering teachers and aiding group decision making process; this could motivate the teachers and make them feel part of the school's administrative process, which in turn positively influences work relationship in the school.

In answering the research question on transformational leadership style, the findings showed that there is a significant relationship between transformational leadership style and teachers' performance. The head teachers with positive and collaborative styles create a positive environment in schools, and teachers wanted a strong leader who can make clear and consistent decisions, while earnestly considering all opinions involved.

To answer research question on autocratic leadership style, the results demonstrated that there is no significant relationship between autocratic leadership style and teachers' performance. Motivation and reward of teachers and other employees are really key roles of school leaders since they are positively correlated with the employee performance. These roles are commonly overlooked in a situation where the head teacher employs autocratic leadership style. The teachers also do prefer a head teacher who is social, with high moral character and someone whose integrity and intellect are respected.

6. Recommendations

Since poor management practices and knowledge deficiency on strategy adoption were the main barriers to effective teacher performance, the schools need to always have clear policy, mission and vision coupled with the leader's competence in order to improve school culture and overall performance of both teachers and learners.

The head teachers should enable and empower all the teachers in the process of management, administration, and the overall improvement of the school through involving them in decision making process, delegation and even proper communication.

The head teachers and all the stakeholders in the school should embrace targets and goal setting so that all the employees can see a clear path for attaining those targets. Although setting goals/targets improves performance robustly across various settings, it is nevertheless a skill: and therefore head teachers should be regularly trained on how to effectively set goals and engage relevant stakeholders in achieving them.

7. References

- i. Mugo C, (2016). *Influence of head teacher leadership styles on teachers' job satisfaction in public primary schools in Kirinyaga West sub county, Kenya.*
- ii. Koech, P. & Namusonge, G.S. (2012). *Effect of Leadership Style on Organization performance at State Corporation in Kenya.* International Journal of Business and commerce. Vol. 2 (10) pp. 1 – 12.
- iii. Okoroji, G.C. & Harrington, R. (2011). *The relationship among participative management style and teacher performance.* International Journal of management, 50 (10) 1 – 9.
- iv. Ummoh, B., (2013). *Supervisory role of principals in enhancing teacher professional development and performance in secondary schools in Kitui West District, Kenya.*

- v. Kimengini N. (2013). *Principals' supervisory role in enhancing teachers' job performance in catholic schools in Machakos*.
- vi. Andende, N. (2016). *Head teacher leadership styles and their effects on teacher morale in selected primary schools of Zambezi District in the North western province of Zambia*.
- vii. Anderson, B. J., (2012). Transformational leadership, transactional leadership locus of control and support for innovations: key predictors of consolidated-business-unit performance. *Journal of applied psychology*; 78;6. Kenya Education Management Institute (2012) functions of KEMI.
- viii. Starr, K. (2014). *Interrogating conceptions of leadership: school principals, policy and paradox, school leadership and management*. Volume (34 (3)).
- ix. Ministry of Education (2019). *A policy framework for education, training and research: meeting the challenges of education in Kenya in the 21st century*.
- x. Migosi, A. et al (2013). *Effects of head teachers' leadership styles on performance of examinations in public primary schools in Kikuyu District, Kenya*.
- xi. Verma S. & SanjaJin (2014). *Principals' transformational and transactional leadership style and job satisfaction of college teachers*.
- xii. Day, C (2011). *Successful school leadership*. Berkshire: England. Open University Press.
- xiii. Markman, I., Mohamed, S., Ali, A.K. & Ismael, A. (2010). The relationship between strategy implementation and performance of private schools in Indonesia. *World Applied Science Journal*, Vol.20(7): 955-964.
- xiv. Mohamed, A.R. (2015). Impact of strategy implementation drivers on project effectiveness in non-governmental organization. *International Journal of Academic Research in Management (IJARM)*, Vol.4, No2, 2015. Pg. 35 - 47.
- xv. Sekaran, W. & Ekom, A. (2016). The impact of structure on strategy implementation among Telecommunication Firms in Nigeria. *European Journal of Business and Management*, Vol.8, No 14- 2016.
- xvi. Nsubuga, A. M. (2009). *The relationship between leadership styles and the job performance of service organizations in Kenya*. Unpublished MBA Project, the University of Nairobi.