"Implication of Leadership Styles Used By Principals on Performance of Secondary Schools in Kuria West Sub- County, Kenya"

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ABSTRACT: Leadership involves authority and responsibility in terms of deciding the way of being held responsible for the success or failure of achieving the agreed objectives. The purpose of this study was to determine the implication of leadership style used by principals on performance of secondary schools in Kuria West Sub- County, Kenya. This study used descriptive survey design as it enabled the researcher to collect both qualitative and quantitative data from respondents. The study targeted 26 public secondary school principals, 26 deputy principals and 267 teachers in Kuria West Sub- County which translates to 319 respondents. The study sample size comprised of 22 principals, 22 deputy principals and 79 teachers. In this study, secondary schools were stratified into educational Zones from which proportionate random sampling was used to select a total of 22 schools to participate in this study. Simple random sampling was used to select the schools from each zone and the researcher considered this to be representative sample. All the 22 principals and deputies of the participating schools were selected using purposive sampling technique to participate in this study. Simple random sampling was used to select 79 teachers from each participating school. This study employed questionnaires and interview schedules to collect data for the study. Data was analyzed by both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. It was established that the most prevalent leadership styles used by the management of secondary schools in Kuria West Sub-County are: autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire leadership styles while the least used are the transformational and transactional types. These two are participatory leadership styles that are expected in the 21st Century for the purpose of achieving the MDGs and vision 2030 in education. It was further established that transformational and transactional leadership styles have not been practiced in the secondary schools. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made: the County Directors and Sub-County Directors of education should sensitize the principals to use all the leadership styles with equal measure to reap the benefits. The principals should practice and use the transformational and transactional styles of leadership to change the schools and all stakeholders. The principals and deputy principals need to forge partnerships with community, organizations, agencies, and businesses to address the needs of children and families through use of transactional leadership style.

Key Words: Leadership styles, Academic Performance

I. INTRODUCTION

Leadership style is one of the critical antecedents to academic performance. It is simply construed as a way to manage a school. It is the general approach of a manager in dealing with people at work and exercising of authority over subordinates in an effort to reach organizational goals (Hartzell, 2006). The performance of any school is largely determined by the manner of work co-ordination, level of staff commitment to the school and the extent to which teaching staff and support staff co-operate with one another, management and the community. Management style is a managerial term often used to describe the how of management. It is a function of behaviour associated with personality (McGuire, 2005). Management style can be understood as a way to manage a school. It is the philosophy or set of principles by which the manager capitalizes on the abilities of the workforce. Management style is not a procedure on how to do but it is the management framework for doing. A management style is a way of life operating throughout the school and permits a principal to rely on the initiative of the staff of the school.

School leadership involves authority and responsibility in terms of deciding the way ahead and being held responsible for the success or failure of achieving the set objectives. The success or failure of principals can be determined by on their leadership management qualities and styles. In a constantly changing social, economic, and technological environment, leadership is a more important attribute of management today than

before. Whereas managers are concerned with bringing resources together, developing strategies, organizing and controlling activities to achieve set objectives, leadership performs the influencing function of management. Leadership increases the effectiveness and proficiency of management and sustainable performance (Reed, 2005) and effective management of resources. Educational institutions have changed rapidly over the years and as a result a new type of leadership that is less and more democratic is needed in order to ensure performance of the institution. Maicibi (2005) observes that proper leadership style leads to effective performance in learning institutions and leadership effectiveness is most conveniently quantified by academic performance.

There is a mass of research conducted with respect to the factors responsible for school performance over the years. Specifically, such research has been conducted in areas of monetary and fiscal policy management and school performance, leadership styles and public schools, motivation of teachers and school performance. However, little or no attention is directed at the use of selected leadership styles and secondary school performance. Consequently, this study was aimed at filling this knowledge gap by providing empirical evidence. In specific terms, this study sought to determine the implication of leadership styles used by principals on performance in Kuria West Sub- County.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A school being a functional unit of the education system must be able to afford a foresighted educational leadership which is based on sound management principles and techniques (Okumbe, 1999). With the rapid expansion and change in the educational system, quality control of education has been an issue of concern for quite some time in public secondary schools in Kuria West Sub- County. However, it appears that most secondary schools have been less successful in their leadership (MOE, 2012). Despite the importance of the principal in the leadership of schools and the awareness of the unique responsibilities bestowed upon the school principals, the means by which most of them in developing countries like Kenya are trained, selected and inducted and in-serviced makes them not prepared to carry out effective and efficient management. Records in the sub- county education office in Kuria West indicate that most of the secondary schools in the sub- County have a challenge in leadership of the schools and there is dismal performance. This state of affairs calls for urgent measures to address principals' selected leadership styles in secondary schools setup. For quality school management to exist there must be effective and efficient leadership style of principal as it enhances the achievement of goals and objectives of education (Goddard & Emersion, 1997). Therefore, this study determined the implication of leadership styles used by principals on performance in Kuria West Sub- County.

Purpose of the Study
The purpose of the study was to determine the implication of leadership styles used by principals on performance in Kuria West Sub- County, Kenya.

Objectives of the Study
The objectives of the study were:
* To identify the prevalent leadership styles used in secondary schools in Kuria West Sub- County.
* To determine the implication of leadership style used on performance of secondary schools in Kuria West Sub- County.

Significance of the Study
The study may be a contribution to the body of knowledge on leadership styles used and secondary school performance. The findings may assist policy makers to come up with strategies of sensitizing other stakeholders and principals on successful management. The study findings may enable principals and their deputies to improve on their leadership styles to enhance school performance. Unsuccessful principals may seek to conduct benchmarking from successful principals and may lead to motivation of teachers due to conducive on working environment. This study may act as an eye opener for the National Government and county governments to intensify training on principals' effective leadership for quality performance in secondary schools.

Implication of Leadership Styles and School Performance
Involvement of teachers and stakeholders in decision- making yield satisfactory results (Wong, 2003) and that employee satisfaction, motivation, morale and self-esteem are positively affected by involvement in decision making and implementation. Further, collaborative school management tends to create a sense of ownership of change initiatives and eventually extend stronger support to realize the goals of such efforts. They also argue that such leadership results to better decisions and greater efficiency since issues are discussed extensively via open communication among people having varying viewpoints involved in participative set-ups.

Research has also demonstrated that the quality of education depends primarily on the way schools are managed rather than on the abundance of available resources (IIEP, 2000). Other studies have also shown that there exists a strong relationship between the quality of the leadership provided by the head teacher and the capacity of schools to improve teaching and learning (IIEP, 2000). Therefore participatory management leadership is an important aspect that cannot be wished away especially in this era of technological advancement and emphasis in the attainment of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Kenya like other countries is in the race of attaining MDGs alongside the Vision 2030 where it is expected to be an industrialized nation. Therefore management of secondary schools is an important aspect towards attainment of the set national and international obligations. However, there has been criticism in the way schools are managed in Kenya. This may hinder the achievement of the most spoken out educational MDGs and the set Kenya's vision 2030. This study investigated the relationship between management styles of principals and academic performance in secondary schools in Kuria. This is despite the sub-county's dismal performance in national examinations over the years in most of the once renowned secondary schools. This study realized the importance of management styles and sets to investigate the situation in secondary schools in Kenya by taking Kuria West Sub- County as a case study. It is hoped that the information were to be relevant to policy makers in addressing some of the management issues facing secondary schools in Kenya.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used descriptive survey design. This was because the study investigated the principals' selected leadership styles and implication performance. The study covered secondary schools in Kuria West Sub- County, Kenya. The descriptive survey research design was used because it helped in collecting data through questionnaires and administering interviews to a sample of individuals (Orodho, 2005). The survey research was therefore useful because it was economical to take a sample of the population to generalize results for the whole population.

The study targeted all the public secondary school principals, deputy principals and teachers in Kuria West Sub- County. This target population was involved in the study because they were more informed on the leadership of secondary schools. Records in sub- County Education office-Kuria West Sub-County indicated that there were 26 public secondary schools in the sub- county, 26 principals, 26 deputy principals and 267 teachers. The target population was therefore 319 respondents.

Sampling is a process of selecting a number of individuals from a population such that the selected group contains elements representative of the characteristics found in the entire group (Orodho, 2005). Sample size selection was done in accordance with Nassiuma (2000) using the following formula:

$$n = NC^2 / (C^2 + (N-1) e^2)$$

Where n= Sample size   N= Population $C =$ Coefficient of variation of 0.21.
e = Standard error of 0.02.

The sample size in Table 1 is derived from the above formula.

Table 1: Sample Size against Target Population

	Population size N	Sample size S
Principals	26	22
Deputy Principals	26	22
Teachers	267	79
Total	**319**	**123**

Source: Sub- County Education office, Kuria West- 2012

In this study, secondary schools were stratified into educational Zones from which proportionate random sampling was used to select a total of 22 schools to participate in this study. Simple random sampling was used to select the schools from each zone and the researcher considered this to be representative sample because the sample size was large enough to contain all the variation in the population and equal and independence chance was to be given to each individual in the population to be selected. All the 22 principals and deputies of the participating schools were selected using purposive sampling technique to participate in this study. Simple random sampling was used to select 79 teachers from each participating school. Therefore the study sample comprised of 22 principals, 22 deputy principals and 79 teachers.

The research instruments that were used in collecting data were questionnaire and interview schedules. To ensure the reliability of the questionnaire, a pilot study was carried out in the schools that were not participating in the study within the Kuria West sub- County. The research instruments were administered to the same pilot group twice after an interval of two weeks and the results compared. The correlation coefficient between the two separate administrations of the questionnaires gave a coefficient of 0.8152, which was high enough to confirm the reliability of the questionnaires and therefore were adopted for data collection.

Validity is concerned with whether the instrument measures what it is supposed to measure or it is the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of the data actually represent the phenomenon under study (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). To ascertain content validity of the questionnaire and the interview schedules, researcher consulted experts and experienced personnel in the research methodology and their comments were incorporated in the questionnaires and interview schedules before the final administration of the instruments on the participants of the study.

Data in this study was collected by use of both closed-ended and open-ended questionnaire items. Quantitative data were presented by use of frequency tables and analyzed by use of percentages in consideration of the research questions. The qualitative data were read and categorized into distinct themes as shown by the responses of the respondents. These distributions were then be presented by use of frequency tables and analyzed and interpreted by use of percentages.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
The Prevalent Leadership Styles Used in Secondary Schools
Objective one of this study was to identify the prevalent leadership styles used in secondary schools in Kuria West Sub- County. The responses from the respondents were presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Prevalent Leadership Styles used in secondary schools

Leadership style	Teachers		Deputy Principals		Principals	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Autocratic	25	31.6	7	31.8	5	22.7
Democratic	30	38.0	6	27.3	7	31.8
Laissez-faire	10	12.7	5	22.7	6	27.3
Transformational	6	7.6	2	9.1	1	4.5
Transactional	8	10.1	2	9.1	3	13.7
Total	**79**	**100.0**	**22**	**100.0**	**22**	**100.0**

Data from Table 2 shows that 31.6 percent (25) of the teachers were of the opinion that autocratic leadership style is commonly used in secondary schools in Kuria West Sub-County while almost similar percentage 31.8 percent (07) of deputy principals were of the same opinion. The principals who confirmed that they commonly use autocratic leadership style in their schools represented 22.7 percent (05). According to Aldag (2001) the autocratic style of leadership is generally in disfavor in modern organizations as expressed by the consensus of several current leadership theorists. Burns (1978) stated that an autocratic leader maintains most of the authority by issuing orders and telling group members what to do without consulting them.

Concerning the use of democratic leadership style, 38.0 percent (30) of teachers confirmed that it also used in their schools with 27.3 percent (07) of the deputy principals being of similar opinion. The findings show that 31.8 percent (07) of the principals confirmed that they use democratic leadership style in their schools.

The findings in table 4.4 further indicate that 12.7 percent (10) of the teachers were of the opinion that laissez-faire leadership style is used in most schools in Kuria West Sub-County with 22.7 percent (05) of deputy principals having similar opinion. The principals who were of the opinion that they use laissez-faire leadership style represented 27.3 percent (06). This finding are in line with those of Newstrom and Keith (2002) who asserted that a laissez-faire leader turns over almost all authority to group members and does as little leading as possible. Given a situation in which the work to be done by each employee is clearly defined; such leaders maintain a hands- off-policy. They make few attempts to increase productivity to their employees. At times the laissez-faire leader is an abdicator who cares very little for achieving productivity, goals or supporting subordinates. This style of leadership may result in indiscipline due to non enforcement of rules and regulations in a school leading to poor performance in examinations.

On the use of transformational leadership style, minority 7.6 percent (06) of the teachers were of the opinion that this type of leadership style is less commonly used in secondary schools in Kuria West Sub-County with a similar percentage 9.1 percent (02) of the principals being of same opinion. The findings show that only 4.5 percent (01) of the principals used this type of leadership style in their schools. Finally, the findings in table 4.4 show that 10.1 percent (08) of the teachers were of the opinion that transactional leadership style is used in secondary schools in Kuria West Sub-County with 9.1 percent (02) of the deputy principals having the same opinion. It is shown that 13.7 percent (03) of the principals confirmed that they use this type of leadership to run secondary schools in Kuria West Sub-County. From the findings, it can be implied that the most prevalent leadership styles used by the management of secondary schools in Kuria West Sub-County are: autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire leadership styles while the least used are the transformational and transactional types. These two are participatory leadership styles that are expected in the 21st Century for the purpose of achieving the MDGs and vision 2030 in education. These findings were presented as in Figure 1:
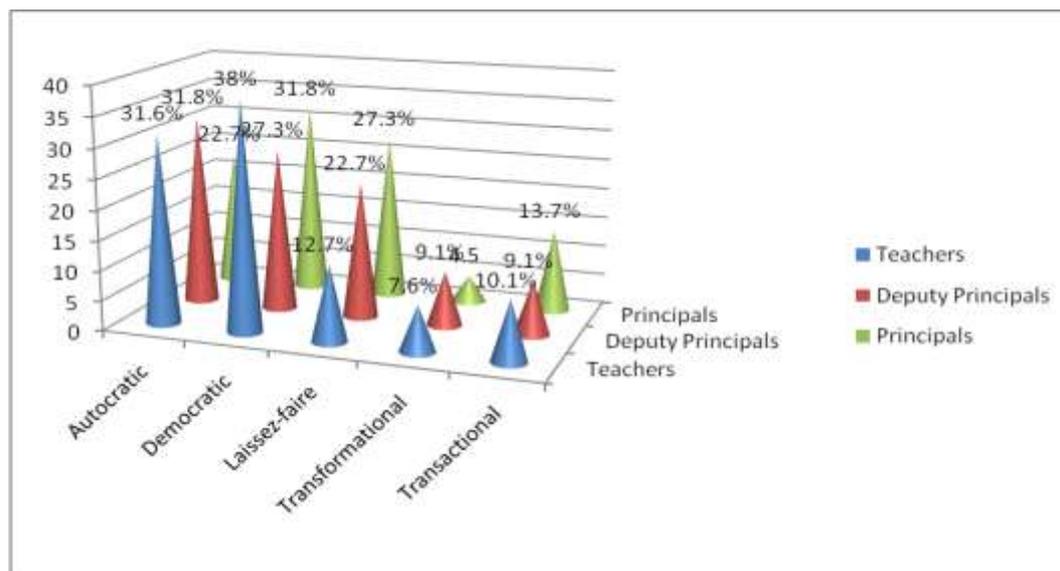
Figure 1: Leadership Styles used in secondary schools

The Implication of Leadership Style Used on Performance of Secondary Schools
        The second objective of this study was to determine the implication of leadership style used on performance of secondary schools in Kuria West Sub- County. To address this objective data on the examination schools in Kuria West Sub- County. They were compared against the responses obtained from deputy principals and the findings were presented as in Table 3:

Table 3: Implication of Leadership Styles used on academic performance schools

Leadership style	Teachers		Deputy Principals		Mean Standard Scores for the schools			
	F	%	F	%	2014	2013	2012	2011
Autocratic	25	31.6	7	31.8	4.325	3.849	4.245	3.563
Democratic	30	38.0	6	27.3	5.345	4.673	5.356	4.537
Laissez-faire	10	12.7	5	22.7	3.225	3.056	3.978	4.006
Transformational	6	7.6	2	9.1	5.678	6.045	6.667	5.678
Transactional	8	10.1	2	9.1	6.578	5.845	7.005	6.008
Total	**79**	**100.0**	**22**	**100.0**				

        Information from Table 3 shows the implications of the leadership styles used on academic performance at the KCSE. It was revealed that the schools in which the principals applied autocratic leadership style, laissez-faire and to some extent democratic, the mean standard score for the schools were relatively low as compared to the schools in which their principals used transformational and transactional leadership styles. Although studies have shown that there are different factors that contribute to academic performance, these findings reveal that the type of leadership styles used by principals could be one of the factors.
        A further statistical test (chi-square) was carried out to show whether there existed a difference between the leadership style used by principals and academic performance. The rejection level was set at 0.05. The results were tabulated as in Table 4:

Table 4: Chi-Square Results on difference between the leadership style used by principals and academic performance

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig (2- sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	19.371(a)	4	.004
Likelihood Ratio	21.263	4	.002
Linear- by- linear Association	1.234	1	0.101
N of valid cases	22		

        The $\chi2$ = 19.371 df =4 and sig = 0.004 was found. This implies that p<0.05. This implies that there was a significant difference between the leadership style used by principals and academic performance. Therefore, there is need for the principals in Kuria West Sub-County to apply leadership styles that may lead to high and sustainable academic performance.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the most prevalent leadership styles used by the management of secondary schools in Kuria West Sub-County are: autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire leadership styles while the least used are the transformational and transactional types. These two are participatory leadership styles that are expected in the 21st Century for the purpose of achieving the MDGs and vision 2030 in education. It can also be concluded that the type of leadership style used by principals has an implication to academic performance.

Recommendations for Practice

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

i.   The County Directors and Sub-County Directors of education should sensitize the principals to use all the leadership styles with equal measure to reap the benefits.

ii.   Given that the principals' leadership style affects academic performance, there is need of application of the leadership styles that lead to maximum academic achievement in secondary schools in Kuria West Sub-County.

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