

<https://doi.org/10.59298/NIJCRHSS/2024/4.2.2531>

The Effect of Transformational Leadership on Academic Performance of Primary School Pupils in Social Studies in Munkunyu Sub County Kasese District

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ABSTRACT

Educating a nation is crucial for the development of society in the developing world. This study used a cross-sectional survey design, employing both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Quantitative data were collected and processed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 22.0). The data were coded, entered into a computer, and summarized using frequency tables to identify errors and make necessary edits. The study included a total of 208 participants, with the findings presented as percentages. The study revealed that the number of female teachers was lower compared to male teachers, with females accounting for 45% and males for 55%. This disparity was attributed to the fact that many schools in villages had fewer female teachers, who often had spouses or lived separately in towns, resulting in limited teaching availability. Additionally, 43.4% of respondents had been in the same school for 4-7 years, while 26.6% had been in the same school for at least 10 years, suggesting a potential repetition of experiences year after year. Furthermore, 16.6% of teachers were separated and 20% were single, which could potentially interfere with their duties and impact student performance. Among the respondents, 8.4% were widowed and 5% had divorced, indicating that they had to handle everything on their own, potentially leading to less focus on their assigned duties in the classroom and resulting in poor student performance. Additionally, 50% of respondents were married, although some were not located in the same workplace as their spouses, making it challenging to concentrate on school assignments. The study emphasized the importance of equipping head teachers with leadership knowledge and skills in order to exert influence on their schools and academic work.

Keywords: transformational leadership, academic performance, primary school, pupils and social studies

INTRODUCTION

Educating a nation remains the most vital strategy for the development of the society throughout the developing world [1]. Student academic achievement is very crucial at every level; from a perspective of an individual, a family, an organization (like a school) and thenation as a whole. For a school to perform well both in academics and in co-curricular activities, effective leadership is needed [2]. Besides, in most school systems, school principal is required by the systemic authorities to improve student learning and is held accountable for it by building commitments in developing a shared vision for motivating and energizing the teachers and students [3, 4]. Globally, there is a desire in today's dynamic world class schools mainly those at a lower level have to contend with a desire to maintain or improve their competitive edge through education [5]. However, the most critical resource in UK, Switzerland and America is that more than 78% of these primary schools must harness academics with leadership behavior. An in-effective leadership styles has been one of the factors that has significant impact to the performance of many work organizations around the globe [1]. Findings from Malaysia according to [6] reported that in 2017 Primary School Achievement Test (UPSR) released in 2017 shows that (2016) 1.11% passed in A (distinction), 2015 8.65% while 2014 is 7.89%. [7] reported that after a strong improvement particularly between 2006 and 2009, in 2015 the performance of Italian 15-year-olds in mathematics, reading and science as measured by the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) was rather mixed. The proportion of low achievers in science (23.2% in 2015) and reading (21% in 2015) increased compared to 2012, while the proportion of low achievers in mathematics declined further (from 24.9% in 2009 and 24.7 % in 2012 to 23.3 % in 2015). In India, 2010 open school examination results show that out of 524, 273 (52.1%) passed in A, 305, 495 (54.1%) passed in B [8]. In Africa, according to [9] reported that in Ghana in the primary pupils results on the National Education Assessment (NEA) of 2007 shows that 23.6 % passed English and 13.8% in mathematics with high grade while 76.9% passed with low grade in English and 61.9% in mathematics.

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Mass education at primary education level, in African countries may require new leadership approaches in order to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in academic performance. Through inefficiency much learning time is lost in many Sub-Saharan African (SSA) education systems. Twenty five percent or more of schooldays may be lost each year in poorly managed schools [10]. Among Southern and East African countries according to [11], over 50.3% of the government effort should focus on efficiency which is needed and can be achieved through management reforms; raising the learner teacher ratio, increasing teachers' time on task, reducing repetition and improving accountability.

In Uganda, [12] reported that in Uganda 57,198 pupils passed in first division, 293,977 passed in the second division, 128,573 passed in third division while 91,504 passed in fourth division. Also, out of the 628,606 pupils who turned up for the exams, 571,252 (90.9%) passed the exams while 57,354 (9.1%) failed the exams. Comparing 2017 and 2016, it shows that there is improvement in 2017 where 90.9% passed while 87% passed in 2016. The total overall improvement in 2017 PLE is 3.9%. According to [13], only 67% of the head teachers in poorly performing rural schools attend activities as scheduled at schools, and 98% in urban best performing schools have seen head teachers perform their school activities as mandated by their appointing bodies. This envisions the role of leadership in schools' academic excellence.

METHODOLOGY

Study Design

This study adopted the cross-sectional survey design using both quantitative and qualitative approaches.

Study Population

The population of the study was 355 comprising 325 pupils, 12 deputy head teachers and six head teachers. The distribution of the population of pupils, teachers, deputy head teachers and head teachers were 54 from Munkunyu primary school, 49 from Kitsutsu primary school, 38 from Kacungiro primary school, 27 from Kilhambayiro primary school, 19 from Kabingo primary school and 21 from Katanda primary school [14]. These will be targeted because; this group of respondents provided information first on how administration styles affect pupil's performance (academic) [15].

Sample size determination

The sample size for quantitative respondents was got using Israel and Yamane formula, Yamane, Taro 1973. The formula is an extension of Slovenes formula by involving proportionate sampling. The Slovene's formula is used to determine the minimum sample size and computation. The total sample for the Quantitative, Qualitative and Tests will total to two hundred and eight (208).

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where;

n = the required sample size;

N = the known population size;

e = the level of significance,

which is = 0.05 and 1 is constant.

$$n = \frac{325}{1 + 325(0.0025)} = 179$$

Sampling Technique

The study used simple random and purposive sampling techniques. Simple random sampling was used to select pupils for the test and P7 class teachers. Simple random sampling allowed individual respondents to be chosen by chance [16]. Simple random sampling was selected because it enables the generalizability of the findings. Head teachers and Deputy Head teachers were selected using purposive sampling. Purposive sampling intensity purposive sampling.

Intensity sampling allows the researcher to select a small number of rich cases that provide in depth information and knowledge of a phenomenon of interest [17]. Using both simple random and purposive sampling, the study was able to collect both quantitative and qualitative data from the respondents.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criterion

P7 pupils, P7 class teachers, deputy head teachers and head teachers among Munkunyu, Munkunyu Primary School, Kitsutsu primary School, Kilhambayiro Primary School, Kabingo Primary School and Katanda Primary School, Kasese district, Learners in primary Seven, who consented to participate, were included in the study. While all teachers, head teacher, Director of Studies, Teachers of religion, Priests/Sheikhs and pupils among Munkunyu, who will not consent to participate were excluded.

Research instruments

Data was collected using objective type and semi-structured research questionnaires which maybe open ended or

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closed. The medium of instruction was English and others who were not able to read and write the questionnaires, the researcher translated to them, [18].

Data Collection Procedures

The researchers requested an introductory letter from the Director Post Graduate School introducing the researcher to schools where data were collected from after the proposal was accepted. The researcher presented the letter to the head teachers who then introduced the researcher to the deputy head teachers and teachers. The head teacher also allocated a teacher who directed the researcher to where the pupils who participated in the exercise. Each head teacher was briefed the importance of the study also, date and time for the distribution of the instruments was well arranged. The researcher personally distributed the research questionnaires and conduct interviews after obtaining consent from all the selected respondents as it has been described in sampling section. Each questionnaire was accompanied by a letter explaining the general purpose of the study. In conducting interviews, the researcher tape recorded the respondents after obtaining consent.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data collected was processed by coding, entering them into the computer using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 22.0), summarizing them using frequency tables to identify errors and editing them. After that, descriptive statistics namely; frequencies, percentages and means were calculated. Inferential statistics namely; correlation and regression were also done to test hypotheses. This produced data necessary for generalisation of the findings. To determine the control effect of background characteristics, control analysis was carried out. The qualitative data collected was coded and grouped according to the study objectives and emerging themes for through thematic methods and content analysis. Thematic analysis was involved clustering of texts with similar meaning. Content analysis helps to distil words into fewer content related categories. The aim is to attain a condensed and broad description of the phenomenon and the outcome of the analysis is concepts or categories describing the phenomenon [19]. Qualitative data supplemented quantitative data and help in providing explanations.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher respected the rights of the respondents and maintaining honesty. This involved obtaining informed consent, ensuring anonymity, confidentiality, respect for privacy and honesty in the reporting of data [20]. Informed consent involved ensuring that all the respondents participate in the study consciously, willingly and intelligently. For that reason, the researcher explained to the respondents the reason of this study to make them chose to partake in it on their own by signing a consent form. Anonymity was sustained by protecting the identities of the respondents by not linking the respondents' identities to their responses. The researcher tried his best to avoid all types of risk that may arise in exercise. In case if there is any risk the researcher took proper measure to solve it. Confidentiality was ensured through ensuring that the respondents are free to give and withhold as much information as they wish to the researcher. The researchers-maintained honesty by ensuring that data presentation, analysis and interpretation are strictly based on the data collected.

RESULTS

Table 1: Showing the background information of head teachers, deputies and the teachers.

SN	Category	Items	Response	%ge rate
1	Gender	Male	113	55%
		Female	95	45%
		Total	208	100
2	Level of education	Certificate	86	41%
		Diploma	64	30.7%
		Degree	58	27.3%
		Total	208	100
3	Years of service at the school	Up to 4 years	48	23%
		4 - 7 years	77	37%
		7 - 10 years	75	36%
		Over 10 years	8	3.8%
		Total	208	100
4	Age of respondents	20 - 30 years	86	41%
		30 - 40 years	64	30.7%
		Over 40 years	58	27.3%
		Total	208	100
5	Marital status	Married	105	50%
		Single	48	23%
		Divorced	43	20.6%
		Separated	12	5.7%
		Total	208	100%

Source: *Primary data, 2023*

This table gave in the background information of the respondents of the questionnaires. The total numbers were 208. It also gave in the percentages of the various items identified. In this study, the number of females were fewer than male counterparts 45% against the 55 of the males. The reason was that many schools in the villages had fewer female teachers when you compared with the town schools and these female teachers have their spouses in the town or they do not stay together in the same school rendering their teaching to be rare on many occasions. Additionally, 43.4% of the respondents have stayed in the school between 4-7 years and 26.6% have been in the same place for at least 10 years, this indication revealed that they may have the idea of making them to repeat the same thing year in and year out. The total of 16.6% of the teachers were separated and 20 percent are single, to be being in this situation can interfere with one's duties and can affect the performance of the learners since they may not concentrate fully in their duties. Representation of 8.4 percent are widowed and 5 percent had divorced indicating that they have to do everything by themselves, this would make them to have less concentration in their assigned duties in the classrooms which may lead to learners' poor performance, 50 percent of the respondents are married though some do not stay in the same work place with their spouses making it a bit difficult to concentrate to the assignments given by the school. The information also indicated that 41.7 percent of the respondents are still of youthful age between 20-30 years depicting that they still have ambitions to progress and may be get a better work place, therefore limiting the performance at the school, 33.3 percent are of ages over 40 years, but these are mainly the school heads. The respondents represent that 8.4 percent have degrees, 50 percent have diplomas in education and 41.6 are certificate holders. This highly qualified staff in the primary schools could be an indication of good performance, but still these teachers are having papers and not commitment in their work to change the performance level of the learners from the present state to the next better state.

Transformational leadership style and learners/pupils' performance

The summary of descriptive statistics for the transformational leadership style is presented in table six below. The

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summary was from questionnaires which were distributed to the respondents these respondents were the head teachers, deputy head teachers and the teachers. The target was met with a response rate to questionnaires to be 100 per cent. The main reason of reaching this percentage was that the researcher distributed the questionnaires himself and collected them himself too. Encouragements were given to those who were lazy to fill the questionnaire.

Table 2: Transformational leadership style result

Questionnaire statements	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean
Head teacher has more emphasis on task and low emphasis on the learners	0%	33.3%	10%	56.7%	0%	1.70
Head teacher depends on authority, control manipulation and hard work	0%	33.3%	1.7%	46.7%	18.3%	2.00
Head teachers involve other teachers in decisions at school	1.9%	8.3%	11.7%	75%	5%	2.00
Head teacher strictly supervises teachers and pupils to have work done	0%	0%	3.3%	83.3%	13.3%	2.15
Head teacher normally explains actions taken	0%	0%	0%	66.7%	33.3%	3.6
Head teacher criticizes subordinates in public	2.8%	0%	0%	66.7%	31.3%	3.6
Head teacher acts without consulting the staff	33.3%	33.5%	3.1%	30%	0%	3.56
Head teacher closely monitors the schedules to ensure tasks are completed	6.7%	26.7%	8.3%	58.3%	0%	3.80
To me, nothing is more important than accomplishing the assigned task/goal	0%	43.3%	8.3%	56.7%	0%	4.15

Source: Primary data, 2023

The table 2 above shows out the number of responses in the various statements given to the stakeholders, the responses were based on the 5 scales numbers depicting the SA-Strongly Agree, A –Agree, U- Undecided, DA-Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree. The above questions were asked to head teachers, deputies and the teachers, the responses to the statement “I put my emphasis on task and low emphasis on people” had the majority disagreeing with the statement (34, 56.7%) rated that they don’t agree with it. This corresponds to “Disagree” rating. However (20, 33.3%) of the respondents agree to the statement and (6,10%) were not decided on the statement. In a school setting many head teachers put in more issues on the task rather than the people they work with. These responses concurred with statements “I rely on control, authority, power manipulation”, and “I don’t involve people in decisions to be taken in the school.” (33.3%) agree to them while (46.7 and 18.3%) disagree to the statement having the rating of “Agree” and “Disagree” respectively. This is confirmed by the statistical mean scores on all the indicators with the highest of 4.1500 and the lowest of 1.70. The statements in transformational leadership were heavily disagreed by many respondents. “Strictly supervise teachers and pupils to have work done” and “I closely monitor the schedules to ensure a task to be completed in time” had (83.3%) and (78.5%) disagreeing to the statements. However, (33.3%) rated that they don’t explain their actions to the staff, while (67%) agreed that they act without consultations with the staff and another (33.3%) confirms close monitoring of staff; 97% don’t supervise their staff with strictness and only 3% are very strict to the staff. These findings correspond with the discussions and the interview conducted with the school management committees, parents and the learners. One respondent when asked about head teacher’s supervision on the staff replied “Head teachers are doing their job with a lot of laxity, because the teachers are left on their own and they do everything at their wish.”

Table 3: Correlation Analysis on transformational leadership

		Transformational leadership style	Learners performance
Transformational leadership style	Pearson correlation	1	0.338**
	Sig.(2-tailed)		0.003
	Number	208	
Learners performance	Pearson correlation	0.338**	1
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.003	
	Number	208	
** Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-Tailed)			

Source: Primary data, 2023

DISCUSSION

The result in the table 3 above shows that transformational leadership style significantly contributes to learners' performance and the relationship is seen at 0.338 significance. The correlation between them is $r=0.338$; $p=0.003$. The $r=0.338$ value means there is significant correlation between transformational leadership and learners' performance. "R" value of less than one means very strong contribution exists. The researcher concludes that there is significant sufficient evidence at the 5% level of significance that transformational leadership significantly contributes to learners' performance. "P" value of 0.003 is less than 0.01 which indicates a significant correlation between transformational leadership and the learners' performance at school. The finding implies that the improvement in the efficiencies of the leadership would lead to a corresponding improvement in the learners' performance. This therefore implies that leadership contributes to pupils' performance. When the respondents were asked whether they were satisfied with the PLE results of their learners, 35, (58.3%) disagreed and 25, (41.7%) strongly disagreed. This implies that the performances of learners at all levels is not satisfactory. The ascending mean score in the statement was calculated at 1.500. Evidence was also seen in the completion rate at school, 50, (83.3%) disagreed and 10, (16.7%) was in total disagreement (strongly disagreed). This finding was confirmed by [21], that completion rate of learners was very low in schools; 60, (100%) were in agreement that the enrolment at school is big. This issue therefore can affect the performance of the learners because the teachers will not have humble time for every child to attend to. The finding is in conformity with the finding of [22] who asserted that effective result demands fewer populations. 42, (70%) of the respondents were in agreement that the past rate was not satisfactory and 18, (30%) disagreed with the statement. The implication to the finding is that other schools are doing well in pass rates than other schools. Even though these learners do not meet division one (grade 1), their performance were relatively fair in the sights of others, [23]. The finding on absenteeism of learners indicated that it is very high in schools 60, (100%) respondents were in support to the statement advanced. In the statement, Teachers teach all the lessons as provided for in the timetable every day. The responses were disagreeing with the statement, 60, (100%) ticked disagreement ladder, the ascending mean was met at 2.00, although 20, (33.3%) agreed that formal guidance and counselling is given to learners on performance, 40, (66.7%) were not in agreement with the statement. The implication to this is that formal guidance is given very little attention by the teachers and the head teachers. On the other hand, 50, (83.3%) disagreed on the statement that learners were given home work in every subject, although 10, (16.7%) accepted that some formal counselling and guidance was given to the learners. However, 51, (85%) of the teachers did not give periodic tests to the learners nor did they take them through revision of such given tests. 46, (76.7%) of the respondent disagreed that the parents allowed pupils sometimes at home so that they can revise their homework, 14, (23.3%) agreed that some parents gave that allowance to the learners during their free time at home. The implication to this statement would be that learners would have limited time always at home and they would pay little attention to their performance through revisions of the learned activities at school; 60, (100%) agreed that facilities at the school did not affect the learners at school performance because the government put in a number of facilities at the school, but improvement in performance was at a standstill.

CONCLUSION

The study noted that unless the Headteachers are well equipped with knowledge and skills in leadership, they would not know if they have any influence on their schools and on academic work.

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CITE AS: Asanairi Bwambale, Tom Mulegi and Samanya Bulhan (2024). The Effect of Transformational Leadership on Academic Performance of Primary School Pupils in Social Studies in Munkunyu Sub County Kasese District. NEWPORT INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CURRENT RESEARCH IN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES 4(2): 25-31. <https://doi.org/10.59298/NIJCRHSS/2024/4.2.2531>