The Relationship between Head Teacher's Laissez-faire Leadership Style and Teachers' Burnout in Secondary Schools in Ibanda Municipality, Ibanda District, Uganda

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ABSTRACT

The investigated the relationship between head teacher's laissez-faire leadership style and teacher burnout in secondary schools in Ibanda Municipality, Uganda. In order to ascertain the relationship between the two variables, a correlation design was used, and to accommodate both qualitative and quantitative data, a mixed approach combining quantitative and qualitative research methods was also adopted. 217 teachers and 15 head teachers from the 15 secondary schools in Ibanda municipality provided the data. A questionnaire was given to the teachers, while an interview guide was given to the head teachers. The Leadership Styles Questionnaire and the Maslach Burnout Inventory served as the foundation for the questionnaire. The findings indicate that laissez-faire leadership style had a negative but moderate relationship with burnout, according to the correlation between them, which is r = -0.39, which shows a negative relationship between the two variables. This means that laissez-faire leadership does not lead to burnout since the two variables move in different directions. Therefore, high laissez-faire leadership was associated with reduced burnout. The researcher recommends that teachers' training colleges and universities need to restructure their curriculum to include in depth coverage of leadership styles and motivation as a way of preparing teachers for leadership positions or producing responsible teachers who are not going to demand for excessive freedom on their jobs. An emphasis on ethics will produce responsible teachers who will work well with their head teachers to improve their schools without injuring the relationship that exists between the two parties. Future head teachers will enter the teaching profession better equipped with skills that would lead to effective enhancement of leadership in schools. The researcher also suggests doing empirical research in Ibanda's non-municipality secondary schools and other regions of the country to see whether the study's conclusions are still relevant.
Keywords: Leadership Styles; Burnout, head teacher, School and relationship

INTRODUCTION

Burnout amongst teachers has become an issue that should worry all stakeholders in the education sector because it disrupts teachers' cognitive processes, makes them feel helpless, and drives them to withdraw psychologically [1]; [2]; [3]. Burnout refers to the final reaction that manifests as a result of chronic stressors from the job or a state of exhaustion brought about by excessive demmands on the individual's energy, strength, or resources characterized by three dimensions which are exhaustion, depersonilisation, and dimished personal achievement [4]; [5]; [6]; [7] .)The problem of teacher burnout is on the rise in Ibanda Municipality yet no empirical study had been carried out on the same among secondary schools in Ibanda Municipality [7]; [8]; [9]. This research therefore pursued to find out the relationship between the laissez-faire leadership style of head teachers and burnout of teachers in secondary schools in Ibanda Municipality, Ibanda district, Uganda. The idea of burnout first emerged in 1960 in the novel *A Burnt-Out Case* by Graham Greene in which the chief character had lost his drive to work and exhausted, worn out, and isolated. Therefore, the book popularized the word "burnout," which refers to someone who feels they have no choice but to despair given their circumstances [10]; [11]. Later, researchers picked interest in burnout. In the 1970s Freudenberger studied burnout in health professionals who had become depressed and fatigued from caring for drug users. Freudenberger operationalized burnout as exhaustion and depersonalization. Other studies done in

the 1980s by researchers Maslach, Pines, and Jackson who discovered that workers' productivity suffers when they feel overworked [11]. Over the last decades, burnout has become a commonly employed index of job-related distress [12]; [13]. Burnout has been defined as a stress-induced syndrome reflecting symptoms of exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy [14]. The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) embodies this three-component definition [15]; [16]. The MBI has been the most widely used measure of burnout and has played a decisive role in shaping burnout research [17]; [18]; [19]; [20]; [21]; [22]. [23], note that while burnout has gained considerable popularity since the introduction of the MBI in the early 1980s [24], occupational health specialists have identified worrying shortcomings in the construct [25]; [26]; [27]; [28]. Despite their gravity, these shortcomings have largely been overlooked, and few efforts have been devoted to investigating their root causes. As teaching became more demanding and leadership in schools more wanting, teachers subsequently became the group most associated with the burnout syndrome, in large part because of the rise in responsibility and decline in support and respect for the industry [29]. Globally, there is a lot of attention in the concept of burnout in the field of education and it has raised concern among all stakeholders in the education system [30]; [31]; [32]; [33]). Moreover, this is because a lot of changes such as the rise in the numbers of private schools and the high demand for academic performance have taken place in the education sector at all levels in most countries and this has made teaching become an emotionally demanding profession that requires teachers to react differently to the demands this sector imposes at any level of instruction, be it primary, secondary, or higher education [34]; [35]. Therefore, teacher burnout is currently a health issue and is reported to vary significantly across countries as there is a suggestion that programmes to prevent this problem should consider the whole educational environment for a greater impact [36]. Furthermore, today, teacher burnout leads to absenteeism, lowered work standards, low employee engagement and high staff turnover [37]; [38]. As such, burnout typically manifests as a lack of passion for one's work, a lack of creativity, and difficulty focusing. Burnt-out teachers frequently lose their composure in class and respond inappropriately to somewhat stressful events [39]; [40]. Burnt-out instructors who don't enjoy their jobs but stay in the field frequently prepare their courses carelessly, act rigidly to scholars, have inferior levels of brilliance, lose concern in their charges, and are biased of disappointment. Burnt-out teachers frequently leave their positions [41]. In addition, majority of research on burnout of educators comes from South America, Asia, Australia, Canada, Europe, the Middle East, New Zealand, and Africa on a consistent basis. In Southern Jordan, 50% of male and female teachers have emotional tiredness related to burnout [42], while almost partial of the educators in India experience burnout [43]. According to the 2014 Education Staff Survey in the United Kingdom, 91% of school teachers had experienced stress, and 74% had dealt with anxiety. Burnout is seen as a serious concern in Tennessee and around the world. In the USA, of the teachers surveyed in Tennessee, 43.6% evaluated themselves as suffering high levels of emotional tiredness and 45.4% reported less intensity of individual success [44].

In Africa, current studies on the issue of burnout highlight it as a grave issue in educators in most countries and it is considered to be one of the factors responsible for a great part of educators being absent from schools, staff turnover, low effectiveness, work dissatisfaction, poor physical and psychological health, and problematic interpersonal relations [45]. However, other studies have traced burnout in Africa way back to the overstretched workers under African kings, and later under the exploitative colonial masters [46]. A study carried out by [47] about issues affecting educators in eight countries in Anglophone Africa between August 2006 and January 2010 cited burnout of teacher as one of the leading issues that affect teachers in the countries studied that included Eritrea, The Gambia, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Uganda, Zambia, and Zanzibar [47]. Educators in Namibia face levels of burnout that are like those in most other countries in Africa, making teacher burnout a continental issue [35]. [36], found out that teacher burnout was associated with health issues with 10.6% of teachers in South Africa being hospitalised in the previous 12 months due to burnout and stress related issues. The study also found out that at least 75% of educators reported visiting a doctor in the six months before the study, which is another sign of their general health. In the last five years before the survey, stress-related disorders such high blood pressure (15.6%), stomach ulcers (9.1%), and diabetes (4.5%) were the most often reported diagnoses. In Uganda, there is high teacher burnout attributed to severe resource constraints as teachers have many teaching hours per day, large classrooms, limited or no textbooks, and limited physical infrastructure yet the pay is also very low, which all make burnout one of the issues causing a crisis that needs to be urgently attended to [48]. The rise in private education institutions and their endless quest for flashy academic achievements means overstretching teachers so that they milk marks from learners. Such a situation has called for night lessons, morning lessons, teachers being forced to stay in school and work Monday to Monday, day and night, including during holidays. Therefore, it has become inevitable for learners to experience burnout [49]. Teachers in Uganda exhibit burnout attributed to many factors such as delayed or poor pay in addition to very limited time to prepare for lessons on the side of part-time teachers [50]. On the other hand, it has been argued that head teachers, as supervisors for teachers through their rigid leadership styles may be a prime issue that causes burnout at ones job especially among educators [51], [52]. Much interest in studies on leadership styles of managers though much is still desired on head teachers' leadership styles and burnout has been registered in earlier studies so as to find out the most appropriate lead teacher's leadership style in reducing

teacher burnout. Still, the link between the kind of leadership style and burnout continues to be an issue in any given institution in modern research [53]; [54]. [55] have linked positive leadership to low emotional exhaustion among health workers in the medical profession.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Laissez-faire leadership style is where a leader abstains from making decisions or exercising supervisory control because they support employee autonomy and believe in giving individuals the freedom to do as they like. This managerial approach implies a failure on the manager's part to assume management responsibility [42]. [43], carried out a quantitative investigation of the effect of laissez-faire leadership on stress-related presenteeism in South African knowledge workers and found out that laissez-faire leadership did not influence or had no significant relationship with knowledge workers' job-stress and burnout, and ultimately organizational performance. The cross-tabulation results showed that there was no relationship between these two variables, indicating that both high and low laissez-faire leadership styles resulted in high job stress. Because the two variables were statistically insignificant, the chi-square test result likewise demonstrated that there was no association between them. Additionally, Pearson's correlation exhibited no correlation between the two variables. However, this research only looked at knowledge workers in South Africa leaving a gap of studying laissez-faire leadership, stress and burnout among teachers in Ibanda, Uganda. However, the study revealed interesting dynamics about the relationship between laissez-faire and stress, burnout or exhaustion since it completely found no significant relationship between the variables thus Laissez-faire leadership, according to scholars like [44], was linked to greater psychological suffering, a lack of social support, and job strain, stress, and burnout. It was thus very urgent and necessary to carry out a study to address such controversies. Again, the study concentrated on stress and did not clearly bring out burnout hence the urgent need to study burnout as a main variable. [45], also carried out a quantitative study on leadership styles and job satisfaction of librarians in tertiary institution libraries in Imo State, Nigeria", and established that laissez-faire leadership style, at 16%, was the least popular style adopted by head librarians in tertiary institutions, 54% posed for democratic style and 30% for Laissez-faire and that this style of leadership had no significant relationship with burnout of library workers. The result was consistent with observations made earlier by [46], who asserted that leissez-faire leadership was unpopular and had negligible effect on employee stress, exhaustion, job satisfaction and performance. However [47], concentrated on librarians and consequently left a gap of re-examining laissez-faire leadership style and burnout among teachers in secondary schools. [48], investigated the relationship between leadership style and burnout among employees of a Norwegian IT company and discovered that laissez-faire leadership had a relationship with burnout in that high levels of passive-avoidant (laissez-faire) leadership were associated with high levels of burnout. The study termed burnout as a syndrome characterized by emotional tiredness, depersonalization, and a lack of professional achievement that had negative impacts on both the individual employee and the organization. Burnout was seen as a result of job stress. Though this study found a relationship between laissez-faire leadership style and burnout, such results were not conclusive as studies done later, such as [49], did not find such a relationship. Therefore, there was still room for re-examining the relationship between these two variables. [50], in their systematic assessment of leadership styles over the past three decades conveyed that, [51] discovered a link between a laissez-faire leadership style and occupational stress. [50] Cronbach's alpha score fell short of the required standard of 0.70. As a result, the internal validity of the data for this laissez-faire leadership style was in doubt, and further research was required utilizing a new demographic and setting for a separate study. This was hoped to make it easier to determine why earlier studies failed to produce definitive findings. Both studies' findings of [50] and [52] maintained that there was no statistically significant correlation between a laissez-faire leadership style and burnout. Laissez-faire leadership style may not actually constitute leadership, according to some experts [53]. Although the studies mentioned above offer some knowledge of how a laissez-faire leadership style impacts burnout, they do not go far enough in explaining how this leadership styles moves burnout. Many of the studies reviewed also found no substantial relationship among laissez-faire leadership style and burnout with all its indicators. It was thus necessary to re-examine the two variables and find out their actual relationship. In addition, even some earlier researchers [50], had questioned results on studies on laissez-faire leadership style and burnout and had recommended further studies on the same. Again, none of the reviewed studies had directly investigated head teacher's leadership styles and burnout among secondary school teachers. On the relationship between laissez-faire and burnout, while several studies shed light on how a laissez-faire leadership style affects burnout, they only provided a partial knowledge of how it did so. Many of the studies reviewed also found no connection between a laissez-faire leadership style and burnout, with all its indicators. Even some earlier researchers [50] had questioned results of studies on laissez-faire leadership style and burnout and had recommended further studies on the same. Again, none of the reviewed studies had directly investigated head teacher's leadership styles and burnout among secondary school teachers. Therefore, there was still room for re-examining the relationship between these two variables to come up with conclusive results.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To establish the relationship between head teacher's laissez-faire leadership style and teachers' burnout in secondary schools in Ibanda Municipality, Ibanda District, Uganda.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

There is no significant relationship between head teacher's laissez-faire leadership style and teachers' burnout in secondary schools in Ibanda Municipality, Ibanda District, Uganda

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a correlation research design to establish the relationship between head teachers' leadership styles and burnout of teachers in secondary schools in Ibanda Municipality. Correlation means the relationship between two variables [54]. The researcher used a correlation design because it figured out which variables were connected hence making it easy to determine the relationship between laissez-faire leadership style and burnout as were studied. Correlation design also helped the researcher to deal with several statistical tests that would result into a correlation coefficient that numerically represents the strength and direction of a relationship. Correlation design was appropriate for the study because it does not allow manipulation of the independent variable and helps in making a prediction once a correlation between variables is known. The study also used a mixed approach where both quantitative and qualitative research approaches were used since the researcher intended to use an interview guide and a questionnaire. The interview guide had open-ended questions while the questionnaire had close-ended items. The quantitative approach also involved use of parameters such as mean, standard deviation, Pearson Correlation and regression.

Sampling technique

A sample is a section of the targeted population that is actually studied and the information got from it generalized to the large population [55]. The sample for the study was drawn from the 500 teachers and 15 head teachers that formed the study population. Krejcie and Morgan table was used to determine the sample for the study because it was considered to be accurate in determining sample size and easy to be used since it does not involve complex mathematical solutions that would compromise its accuracy, [56]. According to the Krejcie and Morgan table, a population of 500 teachers had a corresponding sample of size of 217. All the 15 head teachers were interviewed because of being few and the fact that they were all needed to give expert and crucial information. This made the total sample for the study 232 respondents (217 teachers and 15 head teachers). However, the researcher got proportional samples for teachers in each school by the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Number of teachers per school}}{\text{Total number of teachers in all schools}} \times \text{total sample size for teachers}$$

Table 1: *Sample Size Selection*

Category of Population	Population Size	Total Sample Size	Sampling Technique
Head Teachers	15	15	Purposive
Teachers	500	217	Simple Random
Total	515	232	

Source: Department of Education, 2023; Krejcie and Morgan, 1970

Table 2: Proportional Samples for Teachers

S/N	Schools	Teachers	Proportional Sample for teachers
1	School A	24	10
2	School B	32	14
3	School C	22	09
4	School D	71	31
5	School E	18	08
6	School F	20	09
7	School G	59	26
8	School H	60	26
9	School I	16	07
10	School J	27	12
11	School K	16	07
12	School L	46	20
13	School M	39	17
14	School N	28	12
15	School O	22	09
Total		500	217

Source: Department of Education, 2023

Simple random sampling was used to select teachers. This is because simple random sampling is a basic sampling technique where the researcher randomly selects a section of respondents for study from a larger group [57]. The researcher used this method by first getting a sampling frame from each school, assigning codes to names of teachers and putting each code on a separate piece of paper. The papers were subjected to a lottery after which the researcher picked papers at random up to when the required number reached. By doing this, simple sampling helped the researcher to ensure that all respondents had an equal chance of being selected. Purposive sampling was applied to head teachers. Purposive sampling is non-probability sampling that is applied on usually small numbers of respondents. It is also known as judgmental sampling [57]. Purposive sampling was used on head teachers because they were selected purposefully for their experience and knowledge about the problem under investigation and collecting in-depth data to supplement quantitative data.

Methods of data collection

The study adopted a selfadministered questionnaire as the main tool for data gathering. There were three sections in the questionnaire: Section A comprised of demographic information. Such demographic data included age bracket, sex, education level, and experience. Section B helped to measure laissez-faire leadership style. This section had 6 items developed from the Leadership Styles Questionnaire (LSQ). LSQ contains 18 items, with a five-point Likert scale, which determines the score of participants related to the three styles of leadership – laissez-faire (6 items), democratic (6 items), and laissez-faire (6 items). Therefore, only 6 items testing laissez-faire leadership were adopted. The five-point Likert scale ranges from 5=Strongly Agree 4=Agree 3=Undecided 2=Disagree to 1=Strongly Disagree. LSQ published by Sage was found popular and effective among studies on leadership styles [58]. Section C helped to measure burnout. This section had 22 close ended items adopted from Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) and rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 5=Always 4=Often 3=Sometimes 2=Rarely to 1=Never. Burnout was measured using MBI because over 90% of the studies measuring teachers' burnout used the Maslach Burnout Inventory [59]. The MBI scale comprises of 22 close ended items that fit into three subscales: emotional tiredness, (9 items), depersonalization/cynicism (5 items) and absence of a sense of personal success (5 items). The study also used an interview guide to collect qualitative data from head teachers. The interview guide helped the researcher to interview head teachers [60]. The researcher achieved this through interacting with head teachers by asking oral open-ended questions relating to their leadership styles and burnout of their teachers. The data got was analyzed qualitatively and reported. Using an interview guide, the researcher collected information on detailed perceptions, opinions, and attitudes of the study participants.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

In order to determine if the contents of an instrument measure what it was designed to measure, instrument validity must be established [61]. A validity test was performed before the research instruments were administered to see whether the items on the tools could measure the dimensions they were designed to assess, or in other words, capture the desired data. Research professionals looked through the tools to see if they could record the necessary responses. The tools were then intentionally given a Content Validity Index (CVI) to assess their validity. To assess if the study methods were reliable and the findings were displayed in a table, the researcher utilized the formula below.

CVI = <u>Relevant items by all judges as suitable</u>

          Total number of items judged

          The tools were considered suitable for collecting data because CVI was 0.70.

The ability of a research tool to accurately collect the data for which it was developed or utilized is referred to as reliability [62]. Reliability of a tool for study is defined by [63], as a metric used to evaluate how effectively a research tool delivers dependable results after several trials. The questions were piloted among 22 educators (or 10% of the anticipated respondents) in order to determine the degree to which surveys would provide similar findings if used under the same conditions. The reliability of the questionnaires was calculated using the SPSS program version 23.0. The reliability of the surveys was then evaluated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. According to [64], the alphas coefficient values were determined to be above 0.70, which was adequate for the questionnaire to be considered credible.

Table 3: *Reliability Statistics*

Respondents	Cronbach's Alpha
22	0.70

Methods of data analysis

Utilizing percentages and frequencies, quantitative data gathered through surveys was arranged and examined. Simple statistics like frequencies, means, standard deviations, and percentages were used to analyze and convey responses. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23.0 was used to produce descriptive statistics in response to the research questions. Regression and other inferential statistics were also used. This generated the data required for the findings to be generalized. The Pearson's Linear Correlation Coefficient (PLCC) technique was employed to fulfill the study's objectives. Data from surveys were interpreted, and their validity was strengthened, using qualitative information gleaned from the head teachers' interviews. As a result, the qualitative material

gathered was transcribed and subjected to a thematic analysis to assess its sufficiency, reliability, utility, and consistency.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The findings of the study are presented in line with the research objective and hypothesis as described below.

Background Information of the Respondents

The section shows the background characteristics of the respondents in terms of their sex, age ranges, level of education, and number of years of teaching experience. This study sought to ascertain if background factors in secondary schools had an impact on teachers' burnout levels. The information is displayed in the table below. Only the teachers were represented.

Table 4: *Gender, Age, Education Background, and Teaching Experience of the Respondents*

Back ground information		Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	145	66.8
	Female	72	33.2
	Total	217	100.0
Age(years)	25-29	61	28.1
	30-34	75	34.6
	35 & above	81	37.3
	Total	217	100.0
Education back ground	Masters	54	24.9
	Bachelors	101	46.5
	Diploma	62	28.6
	Total	217	100.0
Teaching experience	1-5 years	75	34.6
	6-10 years	38	17.5
	11-15 years	57	26.3
	More than 15 years	47	21.7
	Total	**217**	**100.0**

Source: Field data, 2023

Table 4 gives the survey respondents' backgrounds in terms of their gender, age, educational background, and prior teaching experience. 217 respondents in total responded to the surveys. The percentages of the various elements listed were also included in the table. In the research, there were 72 fewer women than men (33.2% vs. 145, or 66.8%). The findings show that more male teachers than female teachers participated in the survey. The cause was that there were often fewer female instructors than male teachers in many schools, especially those outside of town. Furthermore, 81(37.3%) of the respondents were 35 years and above, this was followed by 75 (34.6%) who had 30-34 years of age and finally 61(28.1%) who had 25-29 years. The results show that more teachers were old enough to give the information required to complete this study. In addition, 54(24.9%) respondents had attained Masters Degrees while 101(46.5%) had Bachelor's degrees and 62(28.6%) had diplomas. The results show that all educators who participated in this study were professional teachers. Finally, 75(34.6%) participants had worked from 1-5 years, followed by 57(26.3%) who had working experience of 11-15 years, 47(21.7%) who had an experience of more than 15 years and 38(17.5%) who had an experience of 6-10 years. The results show that more teachers had worked for a period of time sufficient enough to go through the dynamics of teaching to enable them sufficiently answer the questions in the questionnaire.

Laissez-faire Leadership Style

This section presents responses on laissez-faire leadership. According to a five-point Likert scale, the responses ranged from SA (strongly agree) to SD (strongly disagree), as shown in table 5:

Table 5: *Responses on Laissez-faire Leadership Style*

Statement	SA No. (%)	A No. (%)	U No. (%)	DA No. (%)	SD No. (%)	Mean
In complex situations, my head teacher lets teachers work problems out on their own	14(6.5%)	14(6.5%)	0(0%)	102(47.0%)	87(40.1%)	1.9200
My head teacher stays out of the way of teachers as they do their work	0(0%)	31(14.3%)	75(34.6%)	54(24.9%)	57(26.3%)	2.3700
My head teacher allows subordinates to appraise their own work	0(0%)	68(31.3%)	0(0%)	109(50.2%)	40(18.4%)	2.4400
My head teacher gives teachers complete freedom to solve problems on their own	14(6.5%)	37(17.1%)	0(0%)	78(35.9%)	88(40.6%)	2.1300
In most situations, we teachers prefer little input from our head teacher	24(11.1%)	94(43.3%)	52(24.0%)	17(7.8%)	30(13.8%)	3.3000
In general, my head teacher finds it best to leave teachers alone	28(12.9%)	0(0%)	92(42.4%)	57(26.3%)	40(18.4%)	2.5000

Source: Field data, 2023

According to the responses in Table 5 above, 14 (6.5%) of the study participants strongly agreed with the statement that "In complex situations, my head teacher lets teachers work out problems on their own," 14 (6.5%) agreed with the statement, none were undecided, 102 (47.0%) disagreed with the statement, and 87 (40.1%) strongly disagreed with the same statement. With a mean score of (1.9200), it indicates that secondary school head teachers often allow teachers to solve their own difficulties. Replies on "My head teacher stays out of the way of teachers as they work", 31 people (14.1%) agreed, whereas 75 people (34.6%) were unsure, 54 people (24.9%) disagreed, and 57 people (26.3%) strongly disagreed. With a mean score of (2.3700), it is clear that head teachers interfere with teachers' ability to accomplish their jobs and that they do some of it themselves. Responses to the statement "My head teacher allows subordinates to appraise their own work", 68(31.3%) agreed, none were undecided, 109(50.2%) disagreed with the statement, and 40(18.4%) strongly disagreed. With a mean score of (2.4400), head teachers do not allow subordinates to judge themselves. Responses on "My head teacher gives teachers complete freedom to solve problems on their own", indicate that 14(6.5%) strongly agreed, 37(17.1%) agreed, 78(35.9%) disagreed, and 88(40.6%) strongly disagreed. With a mean score of (2.1300), this shows more respondents disagreed with the statement. Responses on "In most situations, we teachers prefer little input from our head teacher" show that 24(11.1%) strongly agreed, 94(43.3%) agreed, 52(24.0%) were undecided, 17(7.8%) disagreed, and 30(13.8%) strongly disagreed. With a mean of (3.3000), therefore it is revealed that many times, educators do not like the input of their head educators secondary schools. Results on the statement "In general, my head teacher finds it best to leave teachers alone" indicate that 28(12.9%) strongly agreed, 92(42.4%) were undecided, 57(26.3%) disagreed, while 40(18.4%) strongly disagreed. With a mean score of (2.5000), the results therefore show that respondents disagreed with the statement hence generally, heads educators do not find it best to leave teachers alone in secondary schools. Generally, this leadership style was found unpopular as majority of the respondents disagreed to the statement testing it. Such results are in agreement with results from the interviews as majority of the head teachers did not recognize laissez-faire leadership

as a meaningful style of leadership. For example, respondent 14, on responding to question 9 of the interview guide said:

> Laissez-faire means you leave teachers to do whatever they want, but how can a sensible head teacher even think about such a situation? That would mean if teachers feel like not coming to school, it is okay they can stay at home? What madness!"

On the other hand, respondent 11 said, "Laissez-faire is not real because no head teacher does it."

Burnout

This section presents responses on burnout of teachers on emotional exhaustion, depersonalization/cynicism and lack of personal accomplishment.

Emotional exhaustion

This section presents responses on emotional exhaustion. The replies are measured on a five point Likert scale as shown in table 6:

Table 6: Emotional Exhaustion

Statement	SA No. (%)	A No. (%)	U No. (%)	DA No. (%)	SD No. (%)	Mean
I feel emotionally drained by teaching	81(37.3%)	40(18.4%)	30(13.8%)	31(14.3%)	35(16.1%)	3.4700
I feel like teaching is breaking me down/feel used up at the end of the workday	40(18.4%)	64(29.5%)	82(37.8%)	31(14.3%)	0(0%)	3.5200
Working with people all the day long requires a great deal of efforts	125(57.6%)	64(29.5%)	28(12.9%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	4.4500
I feel frustrated by teaching	64(29.5%)	75(34.6%)	78(35.9%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	3.9400
It stresses me too much to work in direct contact with people	0(0%)	64(29.5%)	21(9.7%)	88(40.6%)	44(20.3%)	2.4800
I feel like I am at the end of my rope	57(26.3%)	17(7.8%)	77(35.5%)	49(22.6%)	17(7.8%)	3.2200
I feel tired when I get up in the morning and have to face another day at school	104(47.9%)	82(37.8%)	31(14.3%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	4.3400
I feel am working too hard on my job	64(29.5%)	57(26.3%)	58(26.7%)	38(17.5%)	0(0%)	3.6800
I feel burned out from teaching	24(11.1%)	44(20.3%)	118(54.4%)	14(6.5%)	17(7.8%)	3.2000

Table 6 above shows replies on "I feel emotionally drained by teaching" indicating that 81(37.3%) participants strongly agreed, 40(18.4%) agreed, 30(13.8%) were undecided, 31(14.3%) disagreed, and 35(16.1%) strongly disagreed with a mean of (3.4700). Results thus show majority of the educators emotionally exhausted by the process of educating learners. Responses to "I feel like teaching is breaking me down/feel used up at the end of the workday", indicate that 40(18.4%) participants strongly agreed, 64(29.5%) agreed, 82(37.8%) were undecided, 31(14.3%) disagreed with a mean of (3.5200) meaning a big number of teachers feel exhausted during teaching especially after completing the day's work. Responses to "Working with people all the day long requires a great deal of efforts" indicate that 125(57.6%) participants strongly agreed, 64(29.5%) agreed, 28(12.9%) were undecided and none of the participants disagreed. This had a mean of (4.4500). The responses reveal that it is much tasking to work with people around you and needs a teacher to put in extra energies. Responses to the declaration" I feel frustrated by teaching", show that 64(29.5%) participants strongly agreed with the declaration, 75(34.6%) agreed, 78(35.9%) were undecided and none of the respondents disagreed. This had a mean score of (3.9400). Responses show that most educators were

frustrated with teaching. Responses on "It stresses me too much to work in direct contact with people", show that 64(29.5%) participants agreed with the statement, 21(9.7%) were undecided, 88(40.6%) disagreed and 44(20.3%) strongly disagreed with a mean score of (2.4800). The results show more teachers disagreed with the statement. Responses on "I feel like I am at the end of my rope", show that 57(26.3%) strongly agreed with the statement, 17(7.8%) agreed, 77(35.5%) were undecided, 49(22.6%) disagreed, and 17(7.8%) strongly disagreed with a mean score of (3.2200). The responses show that most teachers were undecided with the statement. Responses to the statement "I feel tired when I get up in the morning and have to face another day at school", show that 104(47.9%) strongly agreed with the declaration, 82(37.8%) agreed, 31(14.3%) were undecided and none of the respondents disagreed. The mean score for this is 4.3400. The responses show that educators feel exhausted when they wake up with a feeling of working again at school. Responses to the statement, "I feel am working too hard on my job" show that, 64(29.5%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the declaration, 57(26.3%) agreed, 58(26.7%) were undecided, and 38(17.5%) disagreed with a mean score of (3.6800). These responses show that more teachers are working too hard on their jobs. Responses to the statement "I feel burned out from teaching" show that 24(11.1%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 44(20.3%) agreed, 118(54.4%) were undecided, 14(6.5%) disagreed with the statement and 17(7.8%) strongly disagreed with the statement with a mean score of (3.2000). The responses show that more teachers were undecided.

Depersonalization/Cynicism

This section presents responses on depersonalization/cynicism, the replies are measured on five Likert scale as presented in the table 7:

Table 7: *Depersonalization/Cynicism*

Statement	SA No. (%)	A No. (%)	U No. (%)	DA No. (%)	SD No. (%)	Mean
I feel I look at some students impersonally as if they are objects	0 (0%)	24 (11.1%)	61 (28.1%)	54 (24.9%)	78 (35.9%)	2.1400
I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally	64 (29.5%)	23 (10.6%)	34 (15.7%)	35 (16.1%)	61 (28.1%)	2.9700
I have become more heartless/insensitive towards people since I took this job	0 (0%)	64 (29.5%)	122 (56.2%)	0 (0%)	31 (14.3%)	3.0100
I feel some students blame me for some of their problems	0 (0%)	61 (28.1%)	61 (28.1%)	34 (15.7%)	61 (28.1%)	2.5600
I really don't care about what happens to some of my students	0 (0%)	17 (7.8%)	87 (40.1%)	35 (16.1%)	78 (35.9%)	2.200

Source: Field data, 2023

Table 7: shows that according to responses on the statement "I feel I look at some students impersonally as if they are objects", 24(11.1%) agreed with the declaration, 61(28.1%) were undecided, 54(24.9%) disagreed with the statement, 78(35.9%) strongly disagreed with a mean score of (2.1400). These responses show that teachers disagreed with the declaration. Regarding responses to the statement, "I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally", 64(29.5%) strongly agreed, 23(10.6%) agreed, 34(15.7%) were undecided, 35(16.1%) disagreed, 61(28.1%) strongly disagreed with a mean score of (2.9700). Replies show that more teachers disagreed with the statement that the job is hardening them emotionally. Responses to the statement, "I have become more heartless/insensitive towards people since I took this job", show that 64(29.5%) agreed, 122(56.2%) were undecided, 31(14.3%) strongly disagreed with the statement with a mean score of (3.0100). This shows that more teachers were undecided. Responses to the statement "I feel some students blame me for some of their problems", indicate that 61(28.1%) agreed to the statement, 61(28.1%) were undecided, 34(15.7%) disagreed with the statement, 61(28.1%) strongly disagreed with a mean score of (2.5600). This shows that more teachers disagreed with the statement. Responses to the statement, "I really don't care about what happens to some of my students" show that 17(7.8%)

agreed with the declaration, 87(40.1%) were undecided, 35(16.1%) disagreed, while 78(35.9%) strongly agreed with a mean score of (2.200). This shows that more teachers disagree with the statement.

Reduced Personal Accomplishments

This section presents responses on reduced personal accomplishments, the replies are measured on five-point Likert scale as presented in the table 8:

Table 8: *Reduced Personal Accomplishments*

Statement	SA No. (%)	A No. (%)	U No. (%)	DA No. (%)	SD No. (%)	Mean
I do not accomplish many worthwhile things in this job	0(0%)	138(63.6%)	31(14.3%)	14(6.5%)	0(0%)	3.8800
I do not feel full of energy	24(11.1%)	23(10.6%)	125(57.6%)	45(20.7%)	0(0%)	3.1200
I do not easily understand what my students feel	0(0%)	0(0%)	102(47.0%)	71(32.7%)	44(20.3%)	2.2700
I do not look after my students' problems very effectively	40(18.4%)	41(18.9%)	52(24.0%)	53(24.4%)	31(14.3%)	3.0300
In my work, I do not handle emotional problems very calmly	0(0%)	99(45.6%)	51(23.5%)	53(24.4%)	14(6.5%)	3.0800
Through my work, I do not feel that I have a positive influence on people	0(0%)	57(26.3%)	31(14.3%)	91(41.9%)	38(17.5%)	3.4900
I am not able to create a relaxed atmosphere with my students	40(18.4%)	0(0%)	126(58.1%)	37(17.1%)	14(6.5%)	3.0700
I do not fell refreshed when I have been close to my students at work	40(18.4%)	0(0%)	88(40.6%)	61(28.1%)	28(12.9%)	3.8300

Source: Field data, 2023

Table 8 shows that responses to the statement "I do not accomplish many worthwhile things in this job" indicate that 138(63.6%) agreed with the statement, 31(14.3%) were undecided, 14(6.5%) disagreed with a mean score of (3.8800). The responses show that teachers do not accomplish many worthwhile things in their job. Responses to the statement "I do not feel full of energy" indicate that 24(11.1%) strongly agreed with the statement, 23(10.6%) agreed, 125(57.6%) were undecided, 45(20.7%) disagreed with a mean score of (3.1200). The responses show that more teachers were undecided. Responses to the statement, "I do not easily understand what my students feel" indicate that no participant agreed with the declaration, 102(47.0%) were undecided, while 71(32.7%) disagreed, and 44(20.3%) strongly disagreed with a mean score of (2.2700). Responses show that teachers are in disagreement with the statement. Responses to the statement "I do not look after my students' problems very effectively" indicate that 40(18.4%) strongly agreed with the statement, 41(18.9%) agreed with the declaration, 52(24.0%) were undecided, 53(24.4%) disagreed with the declaration, while 31(14.3%) strongly disagreed with a mean score of (3.0300). Responses show that teachers are in disagreement with the statement. Responses to the statement, "In my work, I do not handle emotional problems very calmly" indicate that 99(45.6%) agreed with the statement, 51(23.5%) were undecided, 53(24.4%) disagreed with the statement, and 14(6.5%) strongly disagreed with a mean score of (3.0800). Responses show that teachers are in agreement with the statement. Responses to the statement "Through my work, I do not feel that I have a positive influence on people" show that 57(26.3%) agreed with the statement, 31(14.3%) were undecided, 91(41.9%) disagreed with the statement, while 38(17.5%) strongly disagreed with a mean score of (3.4900). The responses show that most teachers are in disagreement with the statement. Responses to the

statement, "I am not able to create a relaxed atmosphere with my students" indicate that 40(18.4%) strongly agreed with the statement, 126(58.1%) were undecided, 37(17.1%) disagreed with the statement, and 14(6.5%) strongly disagreed with the statement with a mean score of (3.0700). Responses show that more teachers were undecided on this statement. Responses to the statement "I do not fell refreshed when I have been close to my students at work" show that 40(18.4%) strongly agreed with the statement, 88(40.6%) were undecided, 61(28.1%) disagreed with the statement, while 28(12.9%) strongly disagreed with a mean score of (3.8300). The responses show that more teachers were undecided on the statement.

Hypothesis Test Result

The second hypothesis was: "There is no significant relationship between head teacher's laissez-faire leadership style and burnout of teachers in secondary schools in Ibanda municipality, Uganda." To test the hypothesis, a correlation test was run. Correlation results of Laissez-faire Leadership Style and Teachers' Burnout are shown in the table.

Table 9: Correlation on Laissez-Faire Leadership Style

		Laissez-faire Leadership	Teachers' burnout
Laissez-faire leadership Style	Pearson Correlation	1	-0.39**
	Sig. (2-Tailed)		0.002
	Number	217	217
Teachers burnout	Pearson Correlation	-0.39**	1
	Sig. (2-Tailed)	0.002	
	Number	217	217

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-Tailed)

According to the aforementioned correlation findings for the Laissez-faire leadership style and teacher burnout, there is a negative relationship between Laissez-faire leadership style and teacher burnout. The two variables' correlation, r = -0.39, implies a negative relationship between them, and the fact that p = 0.002 is smaller than 0.01 suggests a substantial positive contribution as well. Thus, the researcher draws the conclusion that there is enough data to show that laissez-faire leadership styles do not contribute to teacher burnout at the 5% level of negative significance. The findings suggest that this leadership approach might greatly reduce teacher burnout. It also argues that the only way for head teachers to lessen teacher burnout would be to change how they employ the established leadership philosophies. Therefore, the hypothesis was rejected as correlation results confirm that there is a negative relationship between laissez-faire leadership style and burnout of teachers in Ibanda municipality, Uganda. This means that laissez-faire leadership does not lead to burnout because the two variables move in different directions. When laissez-faire leadership increases, burnout decreases and the vice versa. This also means that laissez-faire leadership is associated with reduced burnout. Such results are in agreement with interview results that generally do not find the laissez-faire leadership practiced significantly in Ibanda municipality secondary school head teachers. For example, respondent 1 said:

> I do not like laissez-faire and it is not real. I have not had my fellows practicing that. However, if you say I tell you how it affects burnout, I would say it cannot lead to burnout of teachers since they will be doing what they want.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The study also found a connection between teacher burnout and the lax leadership style of head teachers; however, it was found to be less significant. The results of this study show that in secondary schools, head teachers do not allow subordinates to grade their own work and instead let instructors solve problems on their own. The conclusions of this study are inconsistent with a correlational study carried out by [63] at secondary schools in Ondo State, Nigeria, to assess head teachers' leadership styles and their impact on teachers' burnout. There was no correlation between laissez-faire leadership style and teacher burnout, however there was a statistically significant association between the leadership style of the head teachers and teacher burnout in the schools. In research that examined the connection between head teachers' leadership styles and teachers' exhaustion, [64] also discovered a detrimental association between a laissez-faire leadership style and teacher burnout. Similar to [65], who looked at Kenyan head teachers' leadership philosophies and how they related to teachers' burnout, [66] found a negative, statistically significant link between laissez-faire leadership philosophies and teachers' burnout. [67] discovered a link between burnout among instructors and laissez-faire leadership. The study's results also showed that instructors prefer to

get less direction from their principal, who generally agrees that it is preferable to leave teachers alone. The relationship between teacher burnout and laissez-faire leadership style showed a less pronounced effect from the two variables. r = 0.39 between them, suggesting a moderate negative relationship, and p = 0.002, less than 0.01 between them, indicating a less influence. The literature that is now accessible on laissez-faire leadership, often known as the lack of leadership or the hands-off style, can support this. This type of leadership is characterized by a lack of management responsibility for decisions like omissions, rewards, or sanctions. This leadership style may result from negligence or ignorance, or a leader's regard for their followers. Teachers may regard a leader's carefree leadership style favorably as a conscious choice to demotivate them. Therefore, a more balanced approach to this style is crucial to avoid a conventional point of view and associated links with negative outcomes [66]. According to [67], organizational politics may have an impact on the link between leadership ideologies and job satisfaction. It took place at the Indonesian capital city's private sector firms. Managers and staff members who supported them from private sector companies in the capital city were the respondents. The poll employed questionnaires to gather information from 560 respondents. According to the results, a laissez-faire leadership style and job satisfaction were positively connected. In a related study, [68], investigated how the leadership style of head teachers affected the motivation and job satisfaction of teachers. Structured questionnaires were utilized to gather the data from 122 instructors and 13 school leaders using a descriptive survey approach. The findings demonstrated that the head teachers believed that in order for teachers to work to their full potential, strong monitoring was required. Since schools are where the next generation is raised and instructors need to be enthused to educate them rather than coerced into working under strict command, this study concluded that a laissez-faire leadership style was inappropriate in schools.

CONCLUSION

The research hypothesis was rejected as correlation results confirm that there is a moderate negative relationship between laissez-faire leadership style and burnout of teachers in Ibanda municipality, Uganda. This means that laissez-faire leadership does not lead to burnout because the two variables move in different directions. When laissez-faire leadership increases, burnout decreases and the vice versa. This also means that laissez-faire leadership is associated with reduced burnout.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Teachers' training colleges and universities need to restructure their curriculum to include in depth coverage of leadership styles and motivation as a way of preparing teachers for leadership positions or producing responsible teachers who are not going to demand for excessive freedom on their jobs. An emphasis on ethics will produce responsible teachers who will work well with their head teachers to improve their schools without inuring the relationship that exists between the two parties. Future head teachers will enter the teaching profession better equipped with skills that would lead to effective enhancement of leadership in schools. Future research should think concentrate on secondary school head teachers' leadership styles and teachers' classroom performance, as well as the working conditions and working conditions of teachers, teachers' performance and discipline, school inspection and performance, and other aspects. Future studies should also look at the leadership contributions made by head teachers in Ibanda's non-municipal schools and other low-performing districts in Uganda. Future research should also look at leadership styles and burnout of teachers in other levels of education such as pre-primary, primary and postsecondary education institutions.

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