THE APPLICATION OF LEADERSHIP STYLES IN SCHOOL MANAGEMENT: A CASE STUDY OF ARUSHA DISTRICT TANZANIA

Nakija Mussa[*]

[*]*Department of Education Foundations, School of Education, Zhejiang Normal University China*

[*]*Corresponding Author:*
nakijamussa08@gmail.com

Abstract

This study explores leadership styles in school management within the Arusha District, aiming to identify prevalent approaches, assess their practical application, and offer recommendations for successful leadership. Utilizing qualitative research, including interviews and document reviews, the study distinguishes five dominant leadership styles: Autocratic, Transactional, Transformational, Democratic, and Servant leadership. These styles reflect diverse strategies educational leaders in the Arusha District Council employ. The findings emphasize the need for flexibility and adaptability in leadership, recognizing that different schools may require varied approaches based on their unique situations and challenges. This adaptable leadership style allows schools to address specific needs, fostering a positive and supportive learning environment. The study proposes a holistic strategy for successful leadership, prioritizing training, inclusive decision-making, mentorship, effective communication, teacher professional development, and resource management while cultivating a positive school culture. Implementing these recommendations presents an opportunity to enhance education quality and overall school success in the Arusha District. This approach promotes a positive atmosphere beneficial for students and teachers, acknowledging adaptability is key to navigating challenges effectively. In essence, the study advocates for a comprehensive and dynamic leadership approach tailored to the specific context of each school within the Arusha District.

Keywords: Leadership styles, School management

1. INTRODUCTION

Leadership is how one person guides a group to reach a shared goal (Northhouse, 2004). It involves influencing the actions of an organized group to achieve a specific objective (Rauch, O and Behling, 1984). In simpler terms, leadership is when someone leads others in a group or organization to accomplish their goals (Prentice, 1961). School management oversees the educational system by coordinating people and resources to plan, strategize, and establish structures for effective education. It involves arranging and implementing systems to ensure policies and action plans are applied. The management process ensures that educational goals are achieved by understanding how different work units contribute to the overall objectives. Effective management ensures that the educational system is suitable for its purpose, implemented, and continuously improved. It involves collecting data to support educational system application and specifying policies and strategies for quality management systems. Educational administrators ensure that academic and non-academic staff are consistently trained to innovate, fostering a dynamic educational system (Amanchukwu et al., 2015).

Leadership, management, and administration have a close relationship but also have different meanings depending on the country and professional culture. In countries that speak English for example Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States, leadership is important for improving standards and promoting school improvement. This significance of leadership differs in other countries like the Netherlands and Scandinavian countries, showing a difference in educational systems and historical, national, and regional policy contexts (Leithwood et al., 2004). Schools, like any institution, require effective management to achieve their goals. Managing a school involves coordinating human and material resources to plan and implement structures for the overall education system. Leadership plays a vital role in realizing school goals. Leaders provide vision, plan, and influence others to work towards a common objective. Leadership styles may change based on the situation, with leaders adapting to different methods and techniques to address organizational problems while considering the welfare of the organization (Day & Sammons, 2014).

Objective and Research Questions of the Study

The study aims to achieve the following objectives: first, to identify the dominant leadership styles employed in school management; second, to assess the practical application of each identified leadership style in the daily operations of schools; and third, to provide recommendations for successful leadership in schools. To accomplish these goals, the research will address the following questions: What are the predominant leadership styles employed in school management? How are different leadership styles applied in the day-to-day operations of schools? additionally, What recommendations can be made for schools to achieve successful leadership?

Theoretical Framework

The study draws upon various leadership theories to better understand the intricate dynamics of leadership within organizational contexts. Leadership theories offer valuable frameworks for understanding and interpreting the complexities of leadership within various organizational contexts. One prominent theory is the Trait Theory, which posits that effective leaders possess inherent characteristics such as intelligence, confidence, and determination (Zhang, 2023). Another significant approach is the Behavioral Theory, which focuses on the actions and behaviors of leaders, categorizing them into task-oriented and people-oriented behaviors (Egner, 2009). According to Hersey (1997), situational leadership theory recognizes the dynamic nature of leadership by emphasizing the adaptability of leadership styles based on situational factors and followers' readiness. Transformational Leadership Theory highlights the leader's ability to inspire and motivate followers to exceed their self-interests for the collective good. Transactional Leadership, in contrast, centers on the exchange of rewards and punishments to achieve compliance. These theories contribute diverse perspectives, enriching our comprehension of leadership and aiding in developing effective leadership practices tailored to specific organizational needs and contexts (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

2. METHODOLOGY

In this segment, we outline the study's design, describe the chosen study locations, specify the intended participants, detail the sampling methods, and elucidate the research tools. Furthermore, it explores how data will be analyzed and presented. The paragraph also touches upon aspects of validity, reliability, and ethical considerations inherent in the study. In a qualitative research framework, these components collectively contribute to the rigor and ethical conduct of the research, ensuring the study's trustworthiness and adherence to ethical standards.

Research Design

A critical component for achieving effective and successful research, a well-crafted research design is essential. Serving as a roadmap, it systematically guides the planning, execution, and analysis of the study, ensuring efficiency in the research process. By providing a structured framework, a robust research design enhances the likelihood of achieving research objectives, contributing significantly to the overall success of the study (Trochim, 2007). In this study, a qualitative research design was employed to explore and understand the intricacies of the research questions. Qualitative research involves a deep and detailed examination of the subject matter, focusing on the quality of information rather than numerical data. To gather rich insights, methods such as interviews, and documentary review were utilized.

Area of Study

This study focused on the Arusha district council, located in the Arusha region of Tanzania. The choice of Arusha was driven by its significance as one of the major cities with a considerable number of secondary schools. The research, aimed to explore and suggest the importance of different leadership styles in school administration. By selecting Arusha, a hub

of educational institutions, the study sought to provide insights applicable to a diverse range of secondary schools in this prominent district, contributing to a broader understanding of effective leadership in school management.

Population of the Study
The population under consideration for this study consisted of 1,518 individuals, including 58 heads of schools and 1,460 other members. The aim was to draw meaningful conclusions by sampling from this group. Among the total population, 58 individuals held the position of school head, playing a crucial role in the context of the research. The larger subset, comprising 1,460 individuals, represented the broader school community, contributing to the overall diversity and perspectives within the study. The inclusion of both heads of schools and other members aimed to capture a comprehensive understanding of the application of leadership styles in school management, reflecting the varied experiences and insights within the educational setting.

Sample Size
A sample size, as described by Kumar (2010) is a subset of the population that is of interest to the researcher. It involves selecting a specific number of individuals or elements from the larger population to study and draw conclusions that can be generalized to the entire population. In essence, the sample is the practical implementation of the process of choosing a limited number of people or elements from the broader population from which the researcher aims to collect data. This method allows researchers to gain insights into the characteristics and patterns of the entire population based on the observations and analysis of the selected sample. The sample size will encompass 4 Heads of School and 20 teachers from the broader category of public secondary schools. The participants involved in this study possess crucial insights and pertinent information about leadership and management in schools. Their perspectives and knowledge are deemed essential for a comprehensive understanding of the issue being discussed.

Sampling Techniques
In this research, a random sampling method was applied to choose teachers from public secondary schools, ensuring a fair and unbiased representation. Additionally, purposive sampling was utilized to select specific schools and heads of schools deliberately. The goal was to gather comprehensive insights from the participants therefore detailed information for this study was gathered through in-depth discussions with the selected respondents.

Tools for Data Collection
Data collection is gathering information from various sources to address different research problems. In this study, a method called triangulation was employed, which involves using multiple data collection methods. Triangulation, in qualitative research, means utilizing various techniques or sources of data to develop a comprehensive understanding of phenomena (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007). The data collection process involved diverse methods, specifically structured and semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. During the interviews, researchers interacted with participants using both predetermined and open-ended questions to gather firsthand information. Concurrently, a comprehensive document analysis was conducted, encompassing a documentary review of various sources such as education circulars, government documents, and education journals. This approach enhances the reliability and validity of the research findings by cross-verifying information from different perspectives, contributing to a more powerful and significant analysis of the research topic.

Validity and Reliability of Research Instruments
Validity refers to the extent to which a research study measures what it intends to measure. Reliability refers to the consistency and stability of measurements or research results (Ahmed et al., 2022). In ensuring validity, the research instruments were reviewed by a panel of experts in the fields of education and leadership. Piloting the instruments with a small group was also conducted to refine and enhance their validity. Reliability was established through test-retest reliability where the qualitative data was gathered through interviews and documentary analysis.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
3.1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents
In the examined study, the distribution of respondents based on gender revealed that a higher percentage, specifically 60.7%, were male, while 39.3% were female. This indicates a predominance of male participants. For the case of age groups, 28.3% were 20–30 years category, 50.7% were in the 30–40 years range, and 21% were between 40–50 years. This suggests that a substantial portion of teachers in the Arusha district council were mature and likely possessed the energy needed for leadership roles.

Looking at educational qualifications, 27.5% of participants held diplomas, 65.3% had bachelor's degrees, and 7.2% possessed master's degrees. This distribution highlights that a significant majority of secondary school teachers had attained a high level of education, aligning with policy directives. As for teaching experience, participants had 5-10 years of experience which equals 73.1%, 30.4% had 10-15 years of experience range, and 10.3% had more than 15 years of experience. This indicates that a considerable number of teachers, especially school leaders, had substantial working experience of over 10 years. This extensive experience is valuable for understanding and addressing challenges related to school leadership and management, as it reflects a depth of knowledge and familiarity with the field gained through years of service in educational institutions.

3.2 Dominant Leadership Styles Employed in School Management

The study found during the review of documents and the interviews conducted with heads of schools and teachers within the Arusha district, distinct leadership styles were identified as prevalent among the educational leaders. The observed leadership approaches encompassed Autocratic, Transactional, Transformational, Democratic, and Servant leadership styles, reflecting the diverse strategies employed in managing schools within the local context.

In Figure 3.1, we can see how school leaders usually run their schools. Among the people interviewed, 34% said they follow an autocratic leadership style. About 27% mentioned they use Transactional leadership. Transformational leadership was noted by 20% of respondents, while 13% said they follow a Democratic leadership approach. Only 6% mentioned using Servant leadership. This figure breaks down the common methods that school leaders prefer in managing their schools.
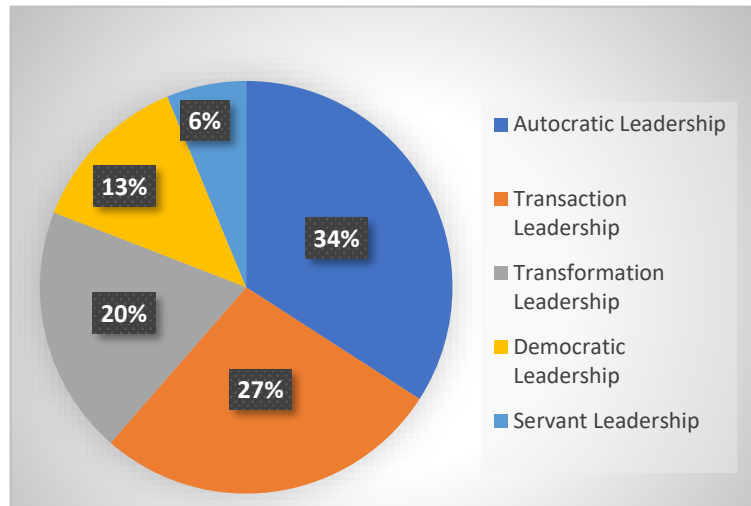

Figure 3.1: Dominant Leadership Styles Employed in School Management

Autocratic Leadership

Among the respondents interviewed, a noticeable number demonstrated Autocratic leadership. This style is characterized by a centralized decision-making process, where leaders make decisions independently without extensive input from others (Amanchukwu et al., 2015).In the Arusha district, some school leaders opted for this approach, emphasizing quick decision-making and a clear chain of command within the school administration. During the interview, a teacher expressed:

"*In our school, the head follows an autocratic leadership style. Decisions come from the top, and we are expected to follow without much input. It's a more directive approach where the head makes most of the decisions without consulting the teachers.*" (Respondent teacher 1)

Similarly, one of the heads of the school acknowledged practicing autocratic leadership, stating

"*Yes, I do practice autocratic leadership. In this school, I believe that having a clear hierarchy and making decisions centrally ensures efficiency. I make decisions based on what I think is best for the school, considering the overall vision and goals.*" (HOS B)

These statements from both teachers and the head of the school highlight a consensus on the predominant use of autocratic leadership in the school's management, emphasizing centralized decision-making and a clear chain of command. Also, the analysis of education circulars, government documents, and education journals pointed to the prevalence of Autocratic leadership among school leaders in public secondary schools. This style is characterized by centralized decision-making and limited input from others in the decision process. The documents indicated instances where school leaders adopted an autocratic approach, emphasizing a clear and decisive chain of command within the school management structure.

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From both perspectives, it's evident that the school operates under an autocratic leadership style. The head of the school acknowledges the deliberate and directive nature of their approach, emphasizing the need for efficiency and maintaining a clear path towards the school's goals. While the teacher expresses a sense of limited input, there is recognition that this style contributes to order and structure within the school environment. The findings suggest a centralized decision-making process aimed at achieving specific objectives.

Transactional Leadership

Another common leadership style identified through document analysis was Transactional leadership. This approach emphasizes structured roles, responsibilities, and a system of rewards and consequences(Emmanuel, 2022a). Also, transactional leadership was among the common leadership styles identified through document analysis. In the context of public secondary schools in Tanzania, school leaders utilizing Transactional leadership focused on setting explicit expectations for teachers and staff, with an emphasis on performance goals and accountability, aligning with the guidelines outlined in the educational documents. School leaders utilizing Transactional leadership focused on setting explicit expectations for teachers and staff, with an emphasis on performance goals and accountability, aligning with the guidelines outlined in the educational documents. This approach emphasizes clear roles, responsibilities, and a structured system of rewards and consequences (Jennstål, 2014). In the Arusha context, school leaders utilizing Transactional leadership focused on setting explicit expectations for teachers and staff, with an emphasis on performance goals and accountability.

During the interview, one teacher expressed that the head of the school tends to follow Transactional leadership. The teacher mentioned;

"*Our head is more focused on setting clear expectations and giving rewards for good performance. It operates on a reciprocal basis. Achieving the established objectives results in rewards, while failing to do so leads to consequences. It keeps things structured, but sometimes it feels more like a business deal than a collaborative learning environment.*" (Respondent teacher 4)

In the conversation with the head of the school, they provided insights into their leadership style, stating;

"*I believe in a Transactional leadership approach. It helps maintain order and ensure that everyone understands their roles and responsibilities. I set clear expectations for the teachers and students. If they meet these expectations, there are rewards, like recognition or other incentives. However, if there are shortcomings, consequences are applied. It's a systematic way to run the school efficiently*." (HOS D)

The remarks from both the teacher and the head of the school shed light on the use of Transactional leadership in the school. They highlight the importance of having clear expectations, setting specific goals, and implementing a reward system. This approach is seen as a way to motivate individuals, encourage high performance, and uphold an organized and disciplined environment within the school.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership was identified as a prominent style adopted by heads of schools in the Arusha district. Leaders employing this approach aimed to inspire and motivate their staff by fostering a shared vision and encouraging creativity and innovation. In these instances, the focus was on creating a positive school culture and promoting professional development among teachers (Leithwood & Sun, 2012). Based on the interviews with teachers, one teacher highlighted that the head of the school employs a Transformational leadership style. The teacher explained;

"*Our school head leads by inspiring us. The leader emphasizes we think beyond the day-to-day activities, to be creative so that we can be able to excel. Sometimes the head of the school talks to us about personal growth and teamwork. We should not only obey the rules and regulations but also have a positive contribution to the school community at large so that to impact school culture.*" (Respondent teacher 19)

On the other hand, when asked about their leadership approach, one of the heads of the school stated;

"*I believe in Transformational leadership. My emphasis is on inspiring and empowering teachers. I desire them to experience a sense of purpose and comprehend the broader perspective. It goes beyond merely following instructions; it involves comprehending the impact of our work on students and the community. My objective is to cultivate a positive and innovative culture within the school.*" (HOS A)

In general, both teachers and the head of the school acknowledged and affirmed the use of Transformational Leadership within the school. The consistency between their perspectives highlights a shared commitment to creating a positive, inspiring, and innovative educational environment. The emphasis on motivation, shared vision, and collective responsibility underscores the transformative impact of this leadership style on the school's culture and the personal and professional development of its members.,

Democratic Leadership

The study revealed that Democratic leadership practices were observed among some heads of schools. In this style, leaders involve staff members in decision-making processes, seeking input and feedback before making important decisions (Probst & Raisch, 2005). Within the Arusha district context, this approach aimed to promote shared governance, allowing teachers and staff to contribute to decision-making processes. According to the teacher interviews, one teacher expressed that the head of the school follows a Democratic leadership style. The teacher shared;

"*Our head believes in involving us in decision-making processes. There's open communication, and our opinions are considered. It creates a sense of belonging and collaboration within the school community.*" (Respondent teacher 16)

In line with this, during the interviews with the teachers, they confirmed their use of Democratic leadership. As one of the teachers claimed;

"*I strongly believe in fostering a democratic environment within the school. I sometimes tell teachers in my school to express their opinions and always participate in decisions that affect them and the students. This approach makes teachers and other people in the school setting they are responsible and empowered and hence contribute to the school's success.*" (Respondent teacher 11)

Furthermore, The head of the school elaborated on their Democratic leadership style, saying;

"*In practice, I ensure that there are regular team meetings where we discuss important matters collectively. Taking example in my school Teachers are given a chance to express their ideas and concerns. I am not the only person who makes decisions but we do make decisions together for the benefit of the entire school community. This inclusivity is vital for a positive and collaborative educational environment.*" (HOS C)

This statement reflects the head of the school's commitment to the principles of Democratic leadership and their efforts to involve the school community in decision-making processes. The study also revealed the prevalence of Democratic leadership practices among school leaders, as outlined in education circulars, government documents, and education journals. Democratic leadership involves the inclusion of staff members in decision-making processes, seeking input and feedback before making important decisions. The documents indicated instances where public secondary school leaders

were encouraged to adopt a more participatory and collaborative leadership style, involving teachers and staff in important decision-making aspects.

Servant Leadership

Additionally, Servant leadership emerged as a notable style practiced by heads of schools in the Arusha district. This approach prioritizes the well-being and development of staff, with leaders serving the needs of others (Greenleaf, 2004)). Heads of schools using Servant leadership focused on supporting teachers, addressing their concerns, and cultivating a positive and supportive working environment.

In the teacher interviews, one teacher shared insights into the leadership style of the head of the school as one of them said;

"*Our head practices Servant leadership. They give importance to our needs and well-being, always willing to offer assistance and hence encourage a sense of community and support among the staff, creating a working environment that is more collaborative and positive.*" (Respondent teacher 6)

During the same interviews, the head of the school affirmed the use of Servant leadership in their approach. One of the heads of the school expressed;

"*I believe in leading by serving others. Understanding and addressing the needs of my team is essential to establish a harmonious and productive working environment. I make an effort to be attentive and supportive, ensuring that teachers have the resources and assistance necessary for excelling in their roles.*" (HOS B)

Furthermore, when discussing the application of Servant leadership, the head of the school A elaborated;

"*In my role, I emphasize collaboration and empowerment. I actively listen to the concerns and ideas of the teachers, and I work alongside them to address challenges. By putting their needs first and facilitating their professional growth, I aim to create a culture of mutual respect and shared success within the school community." This statement provides a detailed perspective on how the head of the school implements Servant leadership principles in their management style.* " (HOS A)

Generally, both the teachers and the head of the school acknowledged and affirmed the use of servant leadership within the educational setting. The consistent emphasis on prioritizing the needs of others and fostering a supportive environment reflects a commitment to a leadership style that values collaboration and mutual respect. The identification of diverse leadership styles in the Arusha district underscores the flexibility and adaptability of educational leaders in addressing various contexts and challenges. The prevalence of Autocratic, Transactional, Transformational, Democratic, and Servant leadership styles reveals the dynamic nature of leadership practices within the local educational landscape. Each style reflects a nuanced response to the unique demands and circumstances faced by schools in the region, showcasing the versatility of educational leaders in navigating the complexities of their roles. This diversity in leadership approaches suggests a thoughtful and context-sensitive leadership culture that can effectively address the multifaceted needs of the educational community in Arusha.

3.3 The Application of Leadership Styles in School Management

Leaders have direct and indirect effects on students' learning as stated in the statement by the authors of a large-scale research study in 180 schools in 43 school districts in North America titled "Learning from Leadership: Investigating the Links to Improved Student Learning" adds to the research findings, throughout this evaluation, it has been noted that leadership, particularly that of the head teacher counts. Indeed, the study's authors say that they did not discover a single incidence of a school that was increasing student achievement despite a lack of talented leadership(Day & Sammons, 2014). Efforts to inspire followers are made using several leadership philosophies, there is no "one size fits all" approach to leadership. The right leadership style should be chosen and modified for organizations, circumstances, groups, and people, in this way useful to have a deep awareness of the various styles, increasing the number of leadership tools at your disposal effectively, different leadership styles are required for different situations, and each leader must understand when to use a specific technique. Leadership strategies define each leader's particular leadership style school leaders may use some of these methods to achieve the organization's goals and objectives (Amanchukwu et al., 2015)

Autocratic Leadership

This is the type of leadership process, whereby one person controls the decisions, and the staff input is not put into consideration. Autocratic leaders make decisions based on their ideas and judgments and rarely take advice from their followers. In autocratic leadership, the motivation environment is produced by creating a structured set of rewards and punishments (Chukwusa, 2019). When faced with the necessity to make a choice, an autocratic leader will come up with a solution for the entire group. The autocratic leader would generally address a problem and make group decisions based on observations and what they believe is most required or important for the rest of the group members will benefit at that time. Autocratic leaders would make decisions for themselves, when they wake up and depart, as well as how far they should go on that particular day. If the team came across any conflicts or difficulties within the expedition, these leaders would also make the decisions on their own, seeking feedback from the three hired instructors to guarantee that their decisions were ok (Val & Kemp, 2012).

In times of crisis, such as natural disasters or unexpected policy changes, the head of the school may choose to use autocratic leadership. This means making quick decisions without necessarily consulting everyone. This approach is important for the safety and well-being of students and staff. For instance, one school head explained;

"*We face incidents from time to time that demands swift decisions. For example, if a student has an accident at school, I, as the head, have to decide quickly to handle the situation and ensure everyone's safety*." (HOD)

In an autocratic leadership style, the head of the school makes decisions unilaterally without seeking much input from others. This could be applied in situations where quick decisions are needed, such as in emergencies or when there is a need for strong control.

Transactional Leadership

Transactional leaders focus on rewarding good behavior and punishing undesirable actions. This could be applied in school management through systems of rewards for academic achievements, punctuality, and adherence to rules. Transactional leaders effectively motivate members so it is easy to achieve goals, the goals are normally achieved because there is a specific ending point, and transactional leadership allows workers to choose what reward they want to get (Jennstål, 2014). Bill Gates once said "I believe that if you show people the problems and you showthem the solutions they will be moved to act". The head of the school might use a transactional approach, which involves recognizing and rewarding students and teachers for their outstanding academic achievements or positive contributions to the school community. One, of the teacher interviewed shared their experience, saying;

"*When our students excel in exams, the school management acknowledges their efforts by providing gifts like books, pens, and mathematical sets. Additionally, for us teachers, we receive monetary rewards for good performance in our subjects. For instance, for every   student scores in my subject, I receive 10,000 Tshs, and for a B, I get 5,000 Tshs*." (Respondent teacher 11)

The school employs a transactional leadership style to encourage and appreciate both students and teachers for their dedication and success in academics, using a combination of tangible rewards and recognition. This can be applied by leaders in managing the school since it is easy to achieve organizational goals as teachers will work hard to reach a certain ending point so that they can get rewarded and since the leader works closely with followers to watch their mistakes, teachers can be very active and perform their work effectively so that they can avoid mistakes that will lead to punishments. This can be applied by leaders in managing the school since it is easy to achieve organizational goals as teachers will work hard to reach a certain ending point so that they can get rewarded and since the leader works closely with followers to watch their mistakes, teachers can be very active and perform their work effectively so that they can avoid mistakes that will lead to punishments.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is a leadership style, whereby the leader's behavior influences the followers to accomplish more than what is usually expected, the core element of transformational leadership is emotion, values, ethics, standards, and long-termgoals. This leadership style is frequently linked to vision, direction-setting, organizational restructuring and realignment, staff development, curriculum development, and engagement with the outside community. In the research that has been done, most of what has been learned about such leadership confirm the reliability of the four fundamental sets of leadership principles (Day & Sammons, 2014). Generally, we can say transformational leadership is leadership that encourages, inspires, and motivate those whofollow, to innovate, develop create, and achieve unexpected remarkable result. The study found that the head of the school may adopt a transformational leadership approach by, expressing a clear vision for the school's future, promoting innovative teaching methods, and fostering a passion for learning among both students and teachers. In an interview, a teacher shared;

"*Our head teacher sets clear goals, inspires us, leads through influence and charisma, and encourages us to take actions that contribute to achieving goals. This positively impacts the school, and as teachers, we feel a sense of belonging as part of the team.*" (Respondent teacher 8)

This highlights the positive impact of the head teacher's transformational leadership style. The emphasis on clear goals, inspiration, influence, and encouragement creates a collaborative and motivated environment within the school Steve Jobs "Management is about persuading people to do things they don't want to do, while leadership is inspiring people to do things, they have never thought they could."

Democratic Leadership

This is the type of leadership style where the leader depends on the group in making decisions and the decision-making involved in the team normally recognizes others and encourages them to meet achievements. Democratic leaders are those who lead the group in a relaxing but dominating manner. Democratic leaders are those leaders who participate and consult frequently when challenged with a problem and take into account the suggestions of others, but the leader has the final say on what specific approach is used. Leadership by seeking input from other group members to arrive at a decision when attempting to address a problem or an issue, a group agreement is formed. These decision-makers would then debate amongst themselves and arrive at a decision (Val & Kemp, 2012). The research discovered that school principals prefer a democratic leadership style, involving consultation and input from different stakeholders in decision-making processes. This style is implemented in school management by engaging teachers, students, and parents in various decision-making aspects. According to one school head;

"*We, as school leaders, use a democratic leadership style when deciding on things like curriculum changes, extracurricular activities, or school policies. We seek input from teachers, parents, and even students*.

The application of democratic leadership in key decisions fosters collaboration and inclusivity within the school community. The involvement of various stakeholders contributes to a more comprehensive and representative decision-making process. In managing a school, a democratic leadership style can be applied, as on the other hand, results in strong employee performance, cooperation, and commitment, it eliminates the need for controls, formal rules, and procedures, resulting in reduced employee absenteeism and attrition, to put it another way. A democratic leadership approach fosters competent and committed personnel willing to give their all, think for themselves, communicate openly, and seek new

experiences. Furthermore, all of the excellent characteristics related to decision-making become overstressed under democratic leadership because opinions and extensive debates play an important role in the process that improves performance (Dike & Madubueze, 2019).

Servant Leadership

"The servant leader is servant first. It begins with a natural feeling that one wants to servefirst, as opposed to wanting power, influence, fame or wealth" (Greenleaf, 2004), also (Maxwel, 1998) once said "Whoever wants to become great among you must be a servant".Servant leadership is the type of leadership whose main belief is to serve others rather than taking control of things, in the servant leadership style, leaders put the needs of their followers first. Servant leaders have the following characteristic, asking questions as opposed to providing answers and approaching someone else by posing questions like, "What do you think we should do?" or "How do you advise we proceed?". Naturally, whether you stay behind or not depends on how seriously you intend to take that other person's advice or response giving other people the chance to guide you, this goes beyondthe conventional idea of seeking out chances for others to develop, you are not putting yourself in the position of a follower until the chance in issue carries a genuine risk for theoutcome of your performance, actual work in support of others rather than just the oppositeputting in the work and providing "sweat equity" for others effort and results. Servant leaders, also they are foresight, good listening, empathy, and commitment to the growth of people (Hill & Exeter, 2003). Servant leaders prioritize the needs of others ahead of their own, aiming to contribute to the greater good. The study revealed that in school management, the head of the school embraces servant leadership, focusing on the well-being and growth of both staff and students. One teacher shared their observation, stating;

"*During our staff meetings, our head school consistently encourages teachers to invest in their professional development. Despite the limited number of teachers at our school, he actively supports those who wish to pursue further studies by approving their leave requests*." (HOS C)

In essence, the head of the school demonstrates servant leadership by not only advocating for the professional growth of teachers but also fostering a positive and inclusive school environment. By prioritizing the needs of both staff and students, the head of the school exemplifies a commitment to the greater good within the educational community. Headteachers can apply this kind of leadership because it has the following benefits, it boosts team morale, it is easy to earn respect from employees and staff can grow well in an environment where they feel that they are valued and allowed to make decisions but servant leadership has a complication, for example, it takes time in making decisions which may be a problem in the times of crisis.

In the Arusha District Council, schools may need a mix of leadership styles based on their unique situations and challenges. Being flexible and adaptive in leadership can help manage schools effectively, creating a positive and supportive learning environment. Recognizing that different situations may require different approaches, this flexible leadership style allows schools to address specific needs and promote overall success. By adapting to the context, school leaders can better navigate challenges and contribute to a positive atmosphere for both students and teachers.

3.4 Recommendations for successful leadership in schools

In the pursuit of effective leadership in public secondary schools within the Arusha District, the following recommendations emerge from the study. These suggestions are crafted to address the unique needs and challenges faced by schools in the district, aiming to enhance overall leadership and contribute to a positive educational environment.

Emphasize Leadership Training

The study found that Leadership training is crucial for successful leadership. It provides individuals with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively lead and inspire others. This type of training helps leaders understand various leadership styles, communication techniques, and problem-solving strategies. It equips them with the ability to make informed decisions, manage conflicts, and foster a positive work environment. The Head of School A emphasized the significance of training, stating;

" *We as leaders need training as it is crucial in managing a school effectively."* (HOS A)

This highlights the leader's recognition of the crucial role that training plays in the effective management of the educational institution. Leadership training enhances the capabilities of individuals in positions of authority, contributing to their effectiveness in guiding teams and achieving organizational goals. To strengthen successful leadership, it is imperative to implement ongoing training programs for school leaders. These programs should encompass a range of leadership styles, communication strategies, and conflict-resolution techniques. The goal is to ensure that school leaders are equipped with the essential skills needed to navigate a variety of challenges (Emmanuel, 2022b).

Foster Inclusive Decision-Making

During the discussion, the study revealed that promoting inclusive decision-making is highly significant for successful leadership. This means ensuring that everyone's input and perspectives are considered when making decisions. Inclusive decision-making acknowledges the diverse ideas and experiences within a team, fostering a collaborative and effective leadership approach. It creates an environment where everyone feels valued, leading to better-informed decisions and a more cohesive team. Prioritizing inclusive decision-making is a key factor in achieving successful leadership outcomes. Encourage a culture of inclusive decision-making by involving teachers, students, and parents in key aspects of school governance. This participatory approach not only values diverse perspectives but also contributes to a sense of ownership and commitment within the school community (Stacey et al., 2010).

Implement Mentorship Programs

In the interview, the Head of Schools emphasized the significance of implementing mentorship programs in successful leadership. According to the Heads of Schools and teachers, these programs play a crucial role in developing effective leadership skills, fostering positive relationships, and ensuring the overall success of school management. Mentorship programs provide valuable guidance and support, contributing to the professional growth and capabilities of individuals in leadership positions within the school setting. Establishment of mentorship programs to facilitate the transfer of leadership knowledge and skills from experienced school leaders to emerging ones. This promotes continuity, shared experiences, and a supportive network that can guide new leaders in navigating the complexities of school management (Foxcroft et al., 2018).

Strengthen Communication Channels

The study revealed the significance of enhancing communication channels for ineffective leadership. This emphasis underscores the crucial role that clear and strong communication plays in achieving success in leadership roles. Improved communication fosters understanding, collaboration, and a more cohesive working environment, ultimately contributing to the overall success of the leadership efforts. Developing and maintaining clear and open communication channels between school leaders, teachers, students, and parents. Regular and transparent communication ensures that everyone is well-informed, fostering a collaborative environment and building trust within the school community (De Weger et al., 2018).

Establish a Positive School Culture

The study also found that establishing a positive school culture is crucial for successful leadership. This involves creating an environment where positivity, collaboration, and shared values thrive. Such a culture contributes significantly to effective leadership by fostering a supportive atmosphere that enhances learning, teamwork, and overall success within the school community. Promoting a positive school culture that values diversity, fosters a sense of belonging, and emphasizes respect and collaboration. A positive school culture contributes to a conducive learning environment, enhances teacher-student relationships, and supports overall well-being (Cherkowski & Walker, 2019).

The success of leadership in public secondary schools in Arusha District hinges upon a holistic and dynamic strategy. By prioritizing training and continuous development, embracing inclusive decision-making, fostering mentorship, ensuring effective communication, investing in teacher professional development, managing resources wisely, and cultivating a positive school culture, a comprehensive framework for success emerges. Through the implementation of these recommendations, there is a substantial opportunity to elevate the quality of education and enhance overall school success in the Arusha District, creating an environment conducive to the flourishing of both students and educators alike.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMANDATION

The research highlighted the importance of adaptability in leadership, emphasizing that different situations require different approaches. This flexibility fosters positive and supportive learning environments, crucial for the overall success of schools. Recognizing and responding to the specific needs of each school contributes to a dynamic and holistic strategy for effective leadership.

Based on the findings, it is recommended that school leaders in the Arusha District adopt a flexible leadership approach, blending styles as needed. Prioritizing training, continuous development, and inclusive decision-making can further enhance leadership effectiveness. The establishment of mentorship programs, improvement of communication channels, and investment in teacher professional development are crucial steps for creating a positive school culture. Additionally, school administrators are encouraged to tailor their leadership styles according to the unique challenges and situations within their schools. By embracing this adaptable approach, leaders can navigate challenges more effectively and contribute to an environment that promotes success for both students and educators. This study provides a valuable foundation for schools in the Arusha District to refine their leadership strategies and enhance the overall quality of education.

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