



INVESTIGATION ON THE EFFECTS OF THE PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP STYLE ON SECONDARY SCHOOL PERFORMANCE IN TONGAREN DIVISION IN BUNGOMA NORTH SUB-COUNTY, BUNGOMA COUNTY

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of principals' leadership styles on secondary school performance in Tongaren Division, Bungoma North Sub County, Bungoma County. The research used descriptive survey. The study used both qualitative and quantitative methods. Primary data was collected using questionnaires from 75 teachers and 15 principals while secondary data was collected from student's KCSE result documents. Data was analyzed using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) to give computed descriptive percentage mean, mode and frequencies. The key finding was that there is a strong positive relationship between the leadership style and school performance. The study results indicated that there was a negative relationship between the autocratic leadership style of the school's principals and school performance (-0.65) and also a strong negative correlation between the laissez-faire leadership style and school performance in secondary schools (-0.66). There is a weak positive relationship between the transformational leadership and school performance in secondary schools (0.34); while there is a strong positive relationship between democratic leadership style and school performance in secondary schools (0.48). There was therefore need for the school administrators to embrace and practically employ democratic and transformational leadership styles. Key recommendation was that there is a need for equipping the principal with the necessary management and leadership skills through a structured and regular in-service programme. Nurturing of democratic principles should be instituted in all spheres of school administration, including the student leadership. Experienced and productive principals should also act as mentors to newly appointed and underperforming principals and model them to employ both democratic and transformational leadership styles to influence school performance positively. This study also recommended that elaborate plans be made to develop staff development programmes and succession plans by both the teachers service commission and the Kenya education management institute. This would ensure sustained supply of competent personnel to run schools.

Key Words: Leadership Styles, Autocratic Leadership, Democratic Leadership, Laissez Faire Leadership, Transformational Leadership, School Performance

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INTRODUCTION

Leadership plays an important role in the school effectiveness and school improvement and this importance has always been emphasized by researchers from the field of school effectiveness and school improvement (Hargreaves, 2003). Globally, educating a nation remains the most vital strategy for the development of the society throughout the developing world (Unterhalter, 2005). Earlier scholars; (Meijer, 2004; Unterhalter, 2005 & Nkata, 2005) on human capital development holds that it is the human resources of a nation and not its natural resources that ultimately determine the pace of its economic and social development. School leadership is an important part of our education system. Educational practitioners have recognized leadership as vitally important for education institutions, since it is the engine of survival for the institutions. This recognition has come at a time when the challenges of education development worldwide are more demanding than ever before (Nkata, 2005). The rapid growth of educational institutions and the ever-increasing enrollment will require improved management.

Education and training play a vital role in assisting individuals and societies to adjust to social, economic and cultural changes and promote the development of the human capital essential for economic growth. Modern education, schooling in particular, aims at imparting knowledge, skills and attitudes required by the young ones to become functional in their respective societies. Schools are therefore, intended to serve as agents for developing individual citizens within a country (Cole 1997). In essence, schools are institutions where children are groomed to appreciate what the society in which they live stands for, and are equipped in order for them to contribute to the advancement of their society. In Kenya formal education has been the central focus in the government's development policy .Formal education reflects the skills needed in the economy,

and it often determines income level, social status and quality of life of a people.

Education in Kenya is perceived as a socializing process through which values, norms and skills are perpetuated. Thus, schools seem to be at the center of peoples' aspirations and hope. Martin and Acuna (2002) observe that schools are similar with a moderate difference in the organizational structures. According to these scholars, schools have a category group of students with a teacher, scheduled times for teaching and all other activities, specific times for starting and closing the school day, and management structures which are mainly hierarchical. The highest official position, running the school is that of a principal.

Leadership style is the patterns of behaviors which a leader adopts to influence the behaviors of his/her followers. Leadership styles vary depending on the character of the leader. Each character has its own style, so that leadership styles can be described as "the kind of behavior and abilities which the manager has and which enables him to interact with the employees to achieve goals" (Hesham, 2010: 39). Strengthening this idea, Kinard (1988: 326) wrote, "Leadership style is a behavior pattern, which a leader exhibits in directing the behavior of the employees toward the attainment of personal or organizational goals. Avolio and Bass (2002) presented full range leadership theory according to which three leadership styles known as transactional, transformational and laissez-fair were identified. Dufour, Eaker (2006), and Huka (2003) claimed that decisions by leaders depend on these three leadership styles which are democratic, autocratic and laissez-fair. A democratic style is characterized by co-ordination, co-operation and collaboration. Amukoa (2007) states that autocratic leadership style allows no participation in decision making and laissez-fair which is also known as Freire in leadership style empowers subordinate to work with freedom and free-will. To rebuild the organization, the leader is considered to be one of the most critical factors that play a significant role in high performance school (Hall, 2002).

Principals differ in the styles they use to carry out all these tasks. Okumbe (1999) states that some leaders employ an autocratic leadership style; some use a democratic style, while others use the laissez-faire leadership style. Amukoa (2007) believes that leadership styles are as many as personality types that exist. According to him, some styles are open, some are closed, and some are flexible while others are rigid. Some leaders use a style that is manipulative; others use more participatory styles. Some styles are driven by product whereas others are driven by process. Considering the importance of the principal's tasks, his/her leadership style is one of the major factors determining the school performance in his/her school. Msila (2005) contends that any school performance starts with the principal, and it is reflected in the relationships among teachers, between teachers and students, among the student body, commitment of teachers to the achievement of school goals and objectives, as well as ethos of the school. In other words, the principal is in the position to initiate and maintain the kind of atmosphere he/she wants through his/her behavior. Nalemo (2002) explains that the existence of quality relationships between the principal and teachers, among the teachers, and between the teachers and students and among students reflects a positive school climate.

According to Muta (1993), the main tasks of the school head teacher are to interpret national policies, executing curriculum program, seeing to students' welfare, equipping physical facilities and finances, inducting and retaining school community relations. In other words, if the school fails in performance of examinations and discipline the head teacher has failed. After several extreme cases of student indiscipline that is drug abuse sexual offences and strikes have been reported in Tongaren division, many infrastructures were destroyed in secondary schools. Although many schools are working in this division, unfortunately the performance of the secondary schools in this area is poor because the leaders of the schools do not have enough skills and knowledge which causes

poor performance and lack of quality management in the school Ngome (2013). It is worth mentioning that effects of leadership styles on secondary school performance in Tongaren division contest is wanting and this area of research has scarcely been touched by researchers. Therefore the researcher felt a need to undertake this study. Thus this study sought to assess effects of leadership style on school performance in Tongaren division

Statement of the Problem

Secondary schools in Kenya continue to face pressure to attain set international and national goals of education and Kenya's vision 2030 (World Bank, 2008). Worldwide there is increasing efforts to improve students' learning outcomes at all levels in the education sector. This is greatly changing the way by which secondary schools are being managed. Secondary schools in Kenya however continue to face a myriad of management problems. Various stakeholders have continued to point accusing fingers at the management styles used by secondary school principals. There is continued disharmony precipitated by the way school principals manage their respective schools. According to Amukoa (2007) Tongaren division has been among the division that has faced problems on management of the schools. Several extreme cases of indiscipline have been reported in Tongaren division, examples being: taking of alcohol, drug abuse, sexual offenses and strikes where they destroy school properties. Ngome (2013) showed that 6-9% of students account for approximately 50% of indiscipline problems in schools. It is estimated that youth aged 13-20 years make 14.3% of the population. The mean alcohol consumption was 12.6%. It was found that 10% of the youth drop out of school every year. It also shows that every week a youth is arrested for some violent crime. While other schools were recording high performance in most parts of the county, most schools in Tongaren division showed perennial mass failure in national examination. The underperformance of these schools is attributed to

the poor leadership styles of the schools in Tongaren division.

The performance of the school is determined by many factors in which leadership style plays a very significant role in its quality. Litner (1994), Dean (1995) and Ibrahim and Orodho (2014) established that principals' leadership styles have a significant input on student achievement in national examinations. It was for that reason that this study was carried out to investigate the effect of leadership styles on secondary schools performance in Tongaren division.

Research Objectives

The general objective of the study was to investigate the effects of the principal's leadership styles on secondary school performance in Tongaren Division, Bungoma North sub-county. The specific objectives of the study were as follows:-

- To establish the leadership styles used by school principals in secondary schools in Tongaren Division.
- To determine the effects of principals' autocratic leadership style on school performance in Tongaren Division
- To establish how principals' democratic leadership style affects the performance of schools in Tongaren Division.
- To find out the effects of laissez faire leadership style on school performance in secondary school Tongaren Division.
- Establish how transformational leadership style affects school performance in secondary school in Tongaren Division.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Globally, educating a nation remains the most vital strategy for the development of society throughout the developing world (Kamd&Unterhalter2005). A strong believe on education is to create individuals who innovative and, not simply repeating what generations have done, men and women who inventive and discoverers (Republic of Kenya 2005)

Education is an investment, and hence quality learning and training contributes greatly to economic growth and creation of employment opportunities, (Olembo, 1997). An education system in any country is established as a result of the determination of the broader goals of education which are in time with the aspirations of the country thus when people are educated, their standards of living are likely to improve, since they are empowered to access productive ventures, which will ultimately lead to an improvement in their livelihood.

According to Kenzevich (1975), leadership is a force that can initiate action among people, guide activities in a given direction, maintain such activities and unify efforts towards common goals. Jacques and Clement (1991:4-5) define leadership as a process in which an individual provides direction for other people and carries them along in that direction with competence and full commitment. According to Oyetunyi (2006), this perception of leadership signals a shift from bureaucracy (in which the leader tends to direct others and make decisions for them to implement) to no bureaucracy where the emphasis is on motivation, inclusion and empowerment of the followers .Along the same lines, Ngome, (2013) and Nalemo, (2002) define leadership as the process of motivating people to achieve specific goals. Hannagan, however, falls short of mentioning those motivational procedures that leadership offers to effect organizational change.

Educational practitioners have recognized leadership as vitally important for education institutions since it is the engine of survival for the institutions. This recognition has come at a time when the challenges of education development worldwide are more demanding than ever before(Nkata, 2005) .The rapid growths of educational institutions and the ever-increasing enrollment will require improved management. Mass education at different levels will also require new leadership approaches in order to enhance efficiency and effectiveness. Okoth, (2000) maintain that

leadership is the heart of any organization, because it determines the success or failure of the organization. Oyetunyi (2006) posits that in an organization such as a school, the importance of leadership is reflected in every aspect of the school like instructional practices, academic achievement, learners' discipline, and school climate, to mention but a few.

Leadership style is the manner and approach of providing direction, implementing plans, and motivating people (Louis, Anderson, & January 2004). Lewin led this group of researchers to identify different styles of leadership. This early study has been very influential and established three major leadership styles, authoritarian, participative, and delegating. These styles of leadership have broadened over the years. The following studies have incorporated some aspect of these foundational leadership styles in an effort to aid principals in the development of leadership styles conducive to current educational systems.

Types of leadership styles and their effect on School Performance

Authoritative Leadership Style: Vibrant enthusiasm and clear vision are the hallmarks of the authoritative style. This leadership style, research has shown, drove up every aspect of the organizational climate. This leader motivates people by making it clear to them how their work fits into the larger vision of the organization. People understand that what they do matters and why, thus maximizing commitment to the organization's goals and strategies. The standards for success and the rewards are clear, but people have great freedom to innovate and flexibility in accomplishing the goals. This style works well in almost any business situation. It works best when the organization is adrift and the authoritative leader charts a new vision. A limitation is if the leader works with a group of experts or peers who are more experienced. They may see the leader as pompous or out of touch. If the leader becomes overbearing, she/he may undermine the egalitarian spirit of the team Hall, (2002).

Directive Leadership Style: Directive leadership engenders telling followers what needs to be done and giving appropriate guidance along the way. This includes giving them schedules of specific work to be done at specific times. Rewards may also be increased as needed and role ambiguity decreased (by telling them what they should be doing). This may be used when the task is unstructured and complex and the follower is inexperienced. This increases the follower's sense of security and control, and hence is appropriate to the situational Hall, (2002).

Democratic Leadership Style: With this style, spending time getting people's buy-in, the leader builds trust, respect and commitment. Because the democratic leader affords people a say in decisions that affect their goals and how they do their work, it drives up flexibility, responsibility and keeps morale high. Its impact on climate is not as positive as some of the other styles. Its drawbacks are the endless meetings, where consensus remains elusive and people can end up feeling confused and leaderless. This style works best when the leader is uncertain about direction and needs guidance or fresh ideas for executing the vision. In times of crises, consensus may not be effective Amukoa (2007). 2.6.4. Supportive Leadership Style

Supportive leadership style is more of a relationship-oriented style. It requires the leader to be approachable and friendly. She/he displays concern for the well-being and personal needs of the subordinates. She/he creates an emotionally supportive climate. This style is effective when subordinates lack self-confidence; work on dissatisfying or stressful tasks and when work does not provide job satisfaction Hoy & Miskel (2001).

Participative Leadership Style: The leader who employs this style consults with subordinates for ideas and takes their ideas seriously when making decisions. This style is effective when subordinates are well motivated and competent Lussier and Achua (2001)

Achievement-Oriented Leadership Style: In this style, the leader sets challenging, but achievable goals for the subordinates. She /he pushes work improvement, sets high expectations for subordinates and rewards them when the expectations are met. That is, the leader demonstrates both high directive (structure) and high supportive (consideration) behavior. This style works well with achievement-oriented subordinates Lussier and Achua, (2001).

Transformational Leadership Style: Transformational leadership in his book, Leadership. Transformational leadership is a process in which leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation Transformational leadership is the buzz word in educational leadership today. This leadership style evolved from Marzano and McNulty (2005), who proposed a theory of. According to him, transformational leadership is the favored style of leadership given that it is assumed to produce results beyond expectations. Transformational leaders form a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and may convert leaders into moral agents. They also articulates the vision in a clear and appealing manner, explains how to attain the vision, acts confidently and optimistically, expresses confidence in his followers, emphasizes values with symbolic actions, leads by example, and empowers followers to achieve the vision.

Transactional Leadership Styles: In the late 1970s, leadership theory research moved beyond focusing on various types of situational supervision as a way to incrementally improve organizational performance Cole, (1997). Research has shown that many leaders turned to a transactional leadership theory, the most prevalent method of leadership still observed in today's organizations Dufour (May, 2002). Transactional leaders lead through specific incentives and motivate through an exchange of one thing for another (Bass, 1990). The underlying theory of this leadership method was that leaders exchange rewards for employees' compliance, a

concept based on bureaucratic authority and a leader's legitimacy within an organization Duening and Ivancevich, (2003).

Instructional Leadership Styles: The shift toward instructional leadership started in the 1980s and was a response to the public's desire that schools raise standards and improve the academic performance of learners Njuguna (1998). The principal who was an instructional leader became the primary source of educational expertise in the building. The principal became responsible for managing the school and improving the teaching and learning in the building. The nature of instructional leadership was typically top-down because most principals set school goals. The principal 'led' the faculty towards attainment of the goals as a means to school improvement. According to Muli, (2005), however, the practices which defined an instructional leader were not achieved. Educational researchers have noted reasons and limitations of instructional leadership which help explain this failure to change schools. One major area of concern for scholars is the top-down nature of instructional leadership. School improvements are a complex and diffuse process so top-down leadership is not an effective mechanism to accomplish school change.

According to the researcher, the type of a leader depends on his/her overall disposition. A leader will inherently have one or more of these leadership qualities. Hence, it's essential that while looking for someone who will occupy the post of the leader, one should check the type of leader the organization really needs; otherwise it would be a futile exercise. In the above description of leadership styles, I have tried to set out some of the elements of a 'classical' view of leadership. I have seen how commentators have searched for special traits and behaviors and looked at different situations where leaders work and emerge. Running through much of this is a set of beliefs that I can describe as a classical view of leadership where leaders: Tend to be identified by position, are parts of the hierarchy, become the focus for answers and

solutions. We look to them when we do not know what to do, or when we cannot be bothered to work things out for ourselves, give direction and have vision, have special qualities setting them apart. These help to create the gap between leaders and followers.

This view of leadership sits quite comfortably with the forms of organization such as a school, where the desire is to get something done, to achieve a narrow range of objectives in a short period of time, and then it may make sense to think in this way. However, this has its weaknesses. Whilst some 'classical' leaders may have a more participative style, it is still just a style. A great deal of power remains in their hands and the opportunity for all to take responsibility and face larger questions is curtailed. As our awareness of our own place in the making of leadership grows, we may be less ready to hand our responsibilities to others.

School Performance: Mwalala, (2008) examined performance in relation to effectiveness and efficiency. According to him, effectiveness refers to goal accomplishment. For instance, a principal who takes over a stuck or a sinking school and who manages to rejuvenate it and improve performance might be referred to as an effective principal. Efficiency evaluates the ratio of inputs consumed to the output achieved. The greater the output for a given input, the more efficient you are. A principal who provides education to learners from a low socio-economic status and manages to provide them with good education (holistic education) 'against all odds' and with meager resources so that they qualify for the next level may be referred to as an efficient principal. So in case performance has been examined in terms of productivity Mwalala, (2008). In addition, productivity, as measured in terms of efficiency and effectiveness, can also be used to describe an employee who not only performs well in terms of productivity, but also minimizes problems for the organization by being at work on time, by not missing days and minimizing loss.

In the context of teaching, performance refers to the teacher's ability to teach consistently with diligence, honesty, and regularity. To the learner, performance would mean excelling regularly in the examinations and class tasks. The researcher wishes to add, however, that the school's performance should not only be viewed in terms of the academic severity, but should also focus on other domains of education such as the affective and the psychomotor domains.

A school that has all three domains should by all means be regarded as an effective school with a very good standard of performance. All this is only possible if the school's principal focuses on the achievement of good results in all domains. Therefore, from this definition, one can deduce that the school's performance is the response of the school to the needs of the stakeholders in terms of the education outcomes.

The focus of leadership on academic standards in the school will depend on the school's dedication and commitment to effect academic changes in respect of the demands on the learners and the community at large. Focusing on teacher development initiatives is one of the ways in which academic standards can be maintained. The maintenance of this teacher development involves putting into place a leader who is committed to subordinate development Hornby, (2000). Furthermore, educationists have defined academic performance to include leader-led

Successful implementation of these functions of the principals will depend on the form of leadership and leadership style, which the principals adopt. In terms of the form of leadership, the principals can decide to distribute leadership to his deputies and HoDs as well as by promoting teacher leadership by empowering his teachers. The principals manage tasks professionally, which according to Tekamura, (2008): setting achievable objectives for education; seizing new opportunities and coping with change; maintaining a committed staff and managing effective teams; developing an effective communication system; allocating and managing

resources effectively; participating effectively; staff management, managing time effectively, and evaluating the school curriculum.

Schools, as learning organizations, deserve to be led well and effectively. Principals need to be effective leaders if schools are to be good and effective. The principals should possess all good attributes of leaders and good quality leaders. Oyetunyi (2006) asserts that leadership matters because effective leaders make a difference in people's lives; they empower followers and teach them how to make meaning by taking appropriate actions that can facilitate change. The findings of Quinn's (2002) study on the relationship between principals' leadership behavior and instructional practices, supports the notion that leadership impacts on instruction and performance. Its findings indicate that the principal's leadership is crucial in creating a school that value and ultimately strives to achieve academic excellence for students Hornby, (2000) research findings indicate that principals' effective leadership can significantly boost learners' achievement. The ability of the principals to relate to the teachers, to enable them to act and to improve organizational performance is critical for the smooth and effective operation of a school.

Principals should motivate and encourage all staff members to feel that they are part of a team with a common mission. A good team is one that works in an atmosphere of mutual trust and concern for performance.

Leadership and Performance

Dubrin (1998) described autocratic leadership style as style where the manager retains most authority for him/herself and makes decisions with a view to ensuring that the staff implements it. S/he is not bothered about attitudes of the staff towards a decision. S/he is rather concerned about getting the task done. S/he tells the staff what to do and how to do it asserts him/herself and serves as an example for the staff. This style is viewed as task-oriented Dubrin, (1998). Autocratic leaders are generally disliked, as there is no scope for initiative, consideration, and self-development on the part of

followers. Teachers and learners, for example, whose school principals employ the autocratic leadership style, remain insecure and afraid of the leadership authority. This eventually reduces their ability to explore their potential. This style is typical of a leader who tells his employees what he wants done and how he wants it done, without requesting the input/advice of his subordinates.

Decentralization of authority, participatory planning and mutual communication are some of the main features of democratic leadership. However, as Oyetunyi (2006) points out, the major focus is sharing - the manager shares decision-making with the subordinates. Even though s/he invites contributions from the subordinates before making a decision, s/he retains the final authority to make decisions (consultative). The manager may also seek discussion and agreement with teachers over an issue before a decision is taken (consensus). S/he may allow the subordinates to take a vote on an issue before a decision is taken (democratic). S/he coaches subordinates and negotiates their demands (Dubrin, 1998). This type of leadership is viewed as an important aspect of empowerment, teamwork and collaboration.

It has been observed that a school is more effective when those who are affected by the organization's decisions are fully involved in the decision-making process. Good as it is, the concern expressed by Dubrin (1998) is that the participative style of leadership wastes time due to endless meetings and may lead to confusion and lack of direction. By implication, it is not appropriate for use in times of crisis when the situation demands on-the-spot decision (Oyetunyi,2006). However, unlike the laissez-faire style, the leader adopting this style maintains the final decision-making authority. Using this style is not a sign of weakness; rather it is a sign of strength that one respects the employees' ways of doing things. Using this style is of mutual benefit as it allows staff to become part of the team and allows one to make better decisions.

The manager delegates almost all authority and control to subordinates. There is no person of authority in the organization. The manager leads the organization indirectly, s/he does not make decisions; rather s/he abides by popular decisions. There is no setting of goals and objectives by the manager. Tasks are done the way the manager thinks it should be done, but s/he gets involved on request and this may lead to the digression from broad organizational policy. Thus, this style of leadership may be effective with well-motivated and experienced employees Dubrin, (1998), but could lead to failure when subordinates are deceptive, unreliable and untrustworthy.

Theoretical Framework

Theoretical framework of this study is based on McGregor's theory X and theory Y (1960). Theory X postulates that people are generally lazy, dislike work and will avoid it hence need to be coerced in order to do it. People also avoid responsibility, will seek to be led, self-centered and hence place security above other factors. The theory emphasizes that in order for high performance to be attained, strictness, control and application of extrinsic rewards need to be employed. Use of coercion and threatening people is advocated. In applying this theory, the principal need to ensure strictness, control, coercion, threats and reward

power in order to attain high student's performance. This is supported by Lall and Lall (1976) who view this approach as enabling things being done. Likert and Likert (1976) also support the use of this approach where leaders have high technical competence and high performance goal. In this case, there's no probability of anarchy and chaos since people are guided.

On the other hand, theory Y postulates that people are not lazy and do view work as natural and necessary. Once committed to objectives, they will exercise self-direction and control. In this way, people seek and accept responsibility as well as have ability to make innovative decision. The leader in this case only needs to provide an enabling environment for the people to release the potential they are endowed with. In this study theory Y advocate for the use of democratic as well as transformational leadership style in order to register improved students' performance. Uris, (1964) and Muzaasi (1982) support this theory by contending that high group productivity thrives and leaders are more mature and less aggressive. Group members work well and feel free with the leaders. This theoretical concept is applicable in this study since it shades light on leadership styles used by a leader to have a task completed.

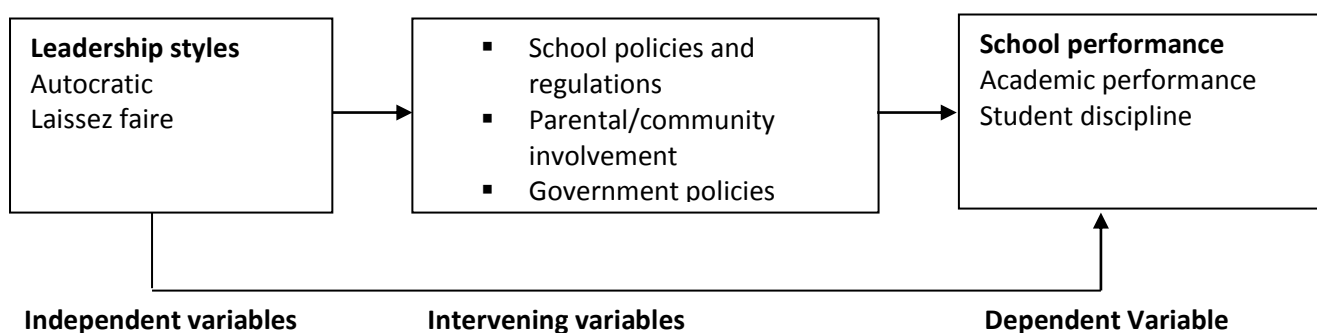


Figure 1: Principal's leadership style affects school

Source: Researcher, 2017

METHODOLOGY

The research used descriptive survey design to obtain information regarding leadership styles and their effect on student's performance. The research

was carried out in Tongaren division, Bungoma County, Kenya. The target population of this study was 15 principals and 75 teachers in public secondary schools in the district. According to

Tongaren division, there were twenty public secondary schools in the Sub County. Two schools were girls boarding only and two are boys boarding. Five were mixed boarding while eleven were mixed day schools. However, only 15 public secondary schools which had offered candidates for KCSE examination were targeted. The primary consideration of purposive sampling that was used in this study was based on the best suited person to provide the required information to achieve the objective of the study. The targeted fifteen schools offered students for Kenya certificate of Secondary education (KCSE) for the past three years. All fifteen principals were purposively sampled as respondents. Five teachers in each school were sampled using stratified simple random sampling representing the five academic departments which translated to 75 teachers. Data pertaining the effects of secondary school leadership styles on school performance was collected using a questionnaire for principals and teachers designed using likert scale. The researcher developed the questionnaire based from the literature review and study objectives. Data was coded and entered in a code sheet. Data was then analyzed using statistical

package for social sciences (SPSS) to give computed descriptive percentage, mean, mode and frequencies.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Leadership styles used by principals

In answering this question, which leadership style was preferred or mostly used in secondary schools in Tongaren Division? Data on the prevalent leadership style used by principals' of secondary schools in Tongaren Division was collected from the responses of the respondents. A five point scale was used that ranked from strong disagree (SD) -1, disagree (D) - 2, undecided (UD) – 3, agree (A) – 4, and strongly agree (SA) – 5. Average responses are shown along with the percentage of principals who rated each leadership style as being either “strongly agree” or “agree” that the style was being used at Tongaren Division secondary schools. Descriptive statistics were computed to calculate the average response and additions of percentage score of the respondents that indicated strongly agree” or “agree” that the approach was being used. The table 1 summarized the findings.

Table 1: Prevalent leadership style used by principals

Leadership style	Average Response	Percent rating as SA or A
Democratic	1.4063	31.3
Autocratic	2.4063	40.6
Laissez-faire	1.8438	25.0
Transformational	2.3438	12.5

In table 1, the autocratic leadership style had the largest number of responses. Most of the principals (40.6%) claimed that they used autocratic leadership style. Although, some of the principals (31.3%) were using the democratic style of leadership in their schools, evidence from the findings of the study indicated that minority of the principals of secondary schools were using Laissez-faire followed by transformational style of leadership. Autocratic leadership style was the most used leadership style leading to poor performance in the region. School leaders who use autocratic

style of leadership always result in poor academic performance because, they adopt harsh leadership style which are highly resented by their subordinates. This concurs with Huka (2003) that when one uses autocratic leadership style alone, will lead to poor school performance because the leaders often create a reign of terror, bullying and demeaning their subordinates lowering with displeasure at the slightest problem. Subordinates gets intimidated and stop bringing in any new idea or information in fear of being bashed for it and the morale of workers plummet.

Principals perceptions toward their leadership style

The researcher requested the principals to rate the level of their use of various leadership styles in management of school through structured questionnaires containing list of tasks that school managers usually perform. Next to each task, the principals wrote one of the following numbers to indicate whether or not they agree with that particular task. A five point scale was used that ranged from strongly disagree, disagree, moderate, agree and strongly agree. Average responses are shown along with the percentage of head teachers who rated each leadership style as being either “strongly agree” or “agree” that the style was being used at Tongaren Division secondary schools.

Principal were asked to indicate how they cooperate or collaborate in school. Democratic leadership style is where the principal seeks for the opinion of the others before making a decision. The principal is regarded to be consultative and participative. In this study the principals were to indicate how they cooperate and collaborate with their teachers in their school. Principals were to respond to questionnaire items on democratic leadership to show whether they usually apply it in school through their daily interaction with the teachers and subordinates. Their response would help the researcher compare with teachers response in principals democratic leadership style in school. The table below summarizes the findings.

Table 2: Principals rating on democratic leadership style

Democratic leadership style	Average	Percentage (%)
The democratic principal consult with subordinate on proposed activities and make decision in the school	2.5313	45.0
The principal seeks discussion and agreement with teachers over an issue before the decision is taken	1.6250	37.5
The principal shares decisions made with subordinate concerning their responsibilities	1.7500	40.6
The principal coach subordinate and negotiate their demands before decision is made	2.000	12.5
High level of consultation with members of staff and subordinates on proposed activities and decision	2.2812	16.0

Democratic leadership styles was the most prevalent leadership style used by principals. In table 2, it was established that 45.0% of the respondents were of the opinion that democratic leader consults with teacher, subordinate on proposed activities and decision in the school, 37.5% were of the statement that the leader seeks discussion and agreement with teachers over an issue before a decision is made, 40.6% were of the opinion that democratic leader shares decision making with the subordinate to take decision concerning their responsibilities. 12.5% said that democratic leadership coaches subordinates and negotiates their demands before decision making while 16% of the respondents declared that the leader invites contribution from the subordinate

before decision making. This leader allow the subordinate to take a vote on an issue before a decision is taken and coaches subordinate and negotiates their demands Dubrin (1990). This also concurs with Amukoa (2007) who states that schools where principals exercise democratic leadership style posted impressive results due to harmonious working relationship amongst teachers and learners, hence intellectually stimulating environment. Learners and teachers at all levels would wish to be part of the decision making process. It also gives them a sense of belonging, feeling appreciated and thus motivated to perform to their best.

Principals’ response on autocratic leadership style

Principals were requested to respond to questionnaire items on autocratic leadership style to indicate if they do applied it in school during their daily interaction with the teachers. Their responses were tabulated in table 3.

From the table 3, principals' response to autocratic leadership style in school indicates that a good percentage of the principals often exercise autocratic leadership style in school. For instance. About 40.2% cited that they expect the staff and students to comply with the direction given at all

times without question. 31.9% stated that all discussion regarding school programme are solely made by the principals and the governing body. 24.1% punishes those who don't toe the line. 41.0% cited that all powers are centralized to the principal that is the system of administration is top-down. Lastly 41.9% stated that they reward handsomely to those teachers or subordinate who are loyal to them .Other previous studies like that of Huka (2003) and Muli (2004) agreed that autocratic leadership styles affects school performance.

Table 3: Principal's response on autocratic leadership style

Autocratic leadership style	Average responses	Percentage rating as per S.A or A
Decision regarding school programmes are solely made by the principals and governing body	2.437	31.9
The principal rewards wholesomely to those loyal to him her	2.0983	41.9
The system of administration is top _ down also punishes those who don't toe the lines	2.163	24.1
All powers are centralized to principals	2.301	41.0
The autocratic leader expects the staff and students to comply with the direction given by him without questioning	2.000	34.6

Principal responses on laissez-faire leadership style

To solicit for more information about leadership style applied by principals in schools, principals

were requested to respond to questionnaire items on laissez-fairre leadership style and data recorded as shown in table 4.

Table 4 Principals rating on Laissez-Faire Leadership Style

Laissez-Faire Leadership Style	Average Response	Percent rating as SA or A
Teachers have freedom to do as they think best in the interest of promoting progress in the school	2.4063	66.3
Teachers and students are free to make their own decisions without any reference from the principal	2.643	28.1
Principals are not moved by low productivity of teachers	2.406	56.3

About 66.3% of the principals indicated that they give their teachers freedom to do as they think best in the interest of promoting progress in the school. 56.3 percent of the principals are not moved by low productivity of their teachers. While among 28.1 percent, their teachers and students are free to make their own decision without any interference. In an institution where laissez-faire leadership style

is practiced, school performance has some implication that may be negative as it affects the school working environment Ngome (2013). To gather information on how transformational leadership styles affect school performance, principals were to respond on questionnaire items on transformational leadership style. Data was recorded as shown in table 5.

Table 5: Principals rating on Transformational Leadership Style

Transformational Leadership Style	Average Response	Percent rating as SA or A
Extent of raising the level of awareness to all the staff/students on key issues	2.5000	50.1
The extent of the support and encouragement staff/students to attain high performance target	1.6250	37.5
Level of concern/involvement on the welfare of staff and student	1.7500	40.6
The extent to which the Principal stimulate both the staff/student to attain their best performance possible	2.0000	12.5
The extent to which the staff/students are encouraged to do things in a creative and innovative way	2.437	15.6
The level at which the staff development is encouraged	2.4375	21.9

Most principals also did not provide instructional leadership in their schools by, among other things, monitoring learner progress, showing high Expectations of learners and visiting classes regularly to ensure that teaching and learning take place.

Teachers perception towards their principal's leadership style

The researcher sought to understand the teacher's perception on their principal's leadership styles in their schools. A five point scale that ranged from strongly disagree, disagree, moderate, agree and strongly agree was used. Average responses are

shown along with the percentage of teachers who rated each leadership style as being either "strongly agree" or "agree" that the style was being used at Tongaren Division secondary schools. The table 6 summarizes the findings.

Teachers were interviewed on whether it was reasonable for the head teacher to use a laissez faire leadership style in order to manage academic performance in the school. Accepting teachers to fully make decisions that are intended to improve the academic standards of the schools is quite good. However, the head teacher should monitor and concur with decisions made.

Table 6: Teachers rating on Democratic leadership style

Democratic leadership style	Average Response	Percent rating as SA or A
Teachers participate in decision making	1.9063	41.3
Teachers are involved in designing academic programmes in schools	1.8062	39.2
Delegation of powers to teachers and subordinates in this school strongly exist	1.7188	38.6
The Principal consults a lot with staff members on proposed activities and decision	2.0000	14.6
The Principal is partly involved in policy formulation at school level.	2.0000	15.6
Principal make decision after consulting the teachers	2.4375	20.8

About 41.3% of teachers indicated that they participated in decision making, 39.2 percent cited that the teachers were involved in designing academic programmes in their schools while 38.6 percent stated that delegation of powers to subordinates in their schools strongly existed, their school leadership stressed on frequent systematic evaluation of students. Principal consults a lot with

staff members on proposed activities and decision was at 14.6 percent, 14.6 percent cited that principal was involved in policy formulation at school level but did not dominate while 20.8 percent cited that principal made decision after consulting the teachers. This shows the level of principals' use of democratic leadership style.

Table 7: Teachers rating on Autocratic Leadership Style

Autocratic Leadership Style	Average Response	Percent rating as SA or A
The Principal commands and expect compliance at all times without question	1.6250	46.9
The Principal makes all decision without welcoming any suggestion	1.6250	47.5
The Principal rewards handsomely those loyal to him	2.5000	50.1
The Principal punishes those who do not toe the line	1.6250	37.5

About 46.9 percent teachers cited that their schools principals commanded and expected compliance at all times without question, 47.5 percent felt that principal made all decision without welcoming any

suggestion, 50.1 percent felt that principal rewarded handsomely those loyal to him/her while 37.5 percent felt that principal punished those who do not toe the line.

Table 8: Teachers rating on Laissez-Faire Leadership Style

Laissez-Faire Leadership Style	Average Response	Percent rating as SA or A
Principal allow the staff to make their own decision without any interference	2.0000	15.6
Each department/staff are free to make own decision without any reference to the Principal whatever	2.4375	21.9

Teachers were interviewed on whether it was reasonable for the head teacher to use a laissez faire leadership style in order to improve school performance. About 15.6 percent of the teachers felt that their schools principal allowed the staff to make their own decision without any interference and 21.9 percent cited that each department/staff

are free to make decision without any reference to the Principal whatever. Accepting teachers to fully make decisions that are intended to improve the academic standards of the schools is quite good. However, the principal should monitor and concur with decisions made.

Table 9: Teachers rating on Transformational Leadership Style

Transformational Leadership Style	Average Response	Percent rating as SA or A
Teachers are encouraged to have high expectation for the students achievement	2.0000	31.9
The school leadership emphasize on basic skills	2.5000	26.9

The Principal accomplishes a lot of what he purpose to do	1.7500	40.6
Principal is proactive in schools undertakings	2.0938	21.9
The Principal raises the level of awareness to all staff on key issues	2.1563	25.1
The Principal encourages and support to attain high performance target	2.9375	37.6
The Principal is genuinely concerned about the welfare of the staff and students	2.2812	16.0
The Principal stimulate both the staff and the student to attain their best performance possible	3.5313	18.8
The Principal encourages both students and the staff to do things in a creative and innovative way	1.8750	23.1

About 31.9 percent teachers cited that their schools principals encouraged teachers to have high expectation for the students achievement, 40.6 percent cited that their principal accomplished a lot of what he purpose to do, 18.8 percent cited that principal stimulate both the staff and the student to attain their best performance possible and 23.1 percent cited that principal encourages both students and the staff to do things in a creative and innovative way.

Effects of Leadership Style and School Performance

Before ascertaining the values of each objective the researcher sought to establish the general relationship between leadership styles and school performance in secondary schools. This finding was necessary to compare results from the independent variable-leadership styles and those from the exogenous variables so as to determine which variable had a greater influence on school performance.

Table 10: Leadership Style and School Performance

	R	R Square	Adjusted R square	Std. Error of estimate	Change Statistics	
Model 1					R Square Change	F statistic
	0.615	0.328	0.241	2.6770	0.328	11.168

The results in Table 10 indicated that the R-square, as computed using the regression, is 0.328 showing that the predictor variable, represented by leadership styles, contributes less than a half (32.8%) to student school performance in secondary schools. The regression coefficient (R) is 0.615 or 61.5%. We can conclude that there is a strong relationship between leadership styles and school performance in secondary schools in Tongaren Division. That is, school performance in secondary schools may be explained by the prevailing styles of leadership.

The effects of Autocratic Leadership Style and School Performance

The first objective of this study was to establish whether autocratic leadership style employed by the principal affects school performance in Tongaren Division. This was done in order to answer the research question: "To what extent does autocratic leadership style affect school performance in Tongaren Division?"

The autocratic style of leadership refers to a situation whereby a leader issues close instructions to his/her subordinates and makes most of the

decisions by himself (Ezenne, 2003). It was necessary to ascertain the levels at which the autocratic leadership style singularly affected school performance in secondary schools. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used

to analyze the relationship between autocratic leadership and school performance.

Table 11 showed the correlation coefficient results from the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (see results in Table 11).

Table 11: Correlations between autocratic leadership style and school Performance

		School performance	Autocratic leadership
Pearson Correlation	Autocratic leadership	1.000 -0.65	-0.65 1.000
Sig (1-tailed)	School performance	1.000 -0.65	
N	75	75	

Table 11 indicated the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient results for the relationship between the autocratic leadership style and school performance from the teachers' questionnaire. We can conclude from the analysis that autocratic principal negatively influence (-0.65) school performance, because they adopt leadership style which is widely detested by the teachers and students alike. This implies that the more the autocratic styles is used, the poor the school performance. This concurs with Ngome (2013) who states that principals who use strict control measures are likely to face students and teachers resistance and increase in indiscipline because the teachers and subordinates tends to protest against doctoral measures used. Principals also were asked whether during time of leadership they used the autocratic leadership style, they stated that there were situations where they had to take decisions without consultations or when they felt that consulting would delay or when policies had been compromised in the process of decision making. Under such circumstances they used autocratic leadership style

Effects of Democratic Leadership Style and School Performance

The second objective of this study was to establish whether democratic leadership style employed by the principal affects school performance in Tongaren Division. This was done in order to answer the research question: "To what extent does democratic leadership style affect school performance in Tongaren Division?" In order to examine the extent of the relationship between the democratic leadership style and school performance, the analyses were performed using the Pearson Correlation Coefficient.

The scores obtained on the independent variable (democratic leadership style) were correlated with the predicted variable school performance. The coefficient of determination in the relationship was established. In subsequent steps, data was collected on the dependent variable school performance and then correlated with that of the independent variable democratic leadership style.

Table 12: Performance as indicated by principals' responses

		School performance	Democratic Leadership
Pearson Correlation	Democratic leadership	1.000 0.48	0.48 1.000
Sig (1-tailed)	School performance	1.000 0.48	
N	13	13	

From the results obtained on a 1-tailed test of significance and 3 degrees of freedom, it was seen that there is a positive moderate (0.48) relationship between the democratic leadership style and school performance in secondary schools in Tongaren Division.

The positive correlation between the democratic leadership style and the school performance means that at the end of the day school progress depends, on allowing for the participation of all stakeholders in the school matters. It can be argued that in schools the leader should minimize making lone decisions regarding what team members should do and how they should do it. In addition leaders should avoid setting the desired achievements standards and work in plan action without consulting team members. This is in agreement

with Dubrin (1991) who states that democratic leader allows the subordinates to take a vote on an issue before a decision is taken and co-hearse subordinates to negotiate their demands.

Effects of Laissez-Faire Leadership Style and School Performance

Laissez-faire leadership style is where principals let the teachers and subordinates to decide on what will be done with little or no principals' intervention.

The third objective of this study was to establish whether Laissez-fair leadership style employed by the principals affect school performance in Tongaren Division. This was done in order to answer the research question: "To what extend does Laissez-faire leadership style affect school performance in Tongaren Division?"

Table 13: Laissez-Faire Leadership Style and School Performance

		School performance	Laissez-faire leadership
Pearson Correlation	Laissez-faire leadership	1.000 -0.66	-0.66 1.000
Sig (1-tailed)	School performance	1.000 -0.66	
N	75	75	

There is very strong negative (-0.66.) relationship between laissez-faire leadership and performance in secondary schools. The laissez-faire prncipal tries to give away his powers and does not follow up progress. In most cases, laissez-faire principals do not prompt good academic performance because they are too liberal and flexible. This concurs with Okumbe (1998) who outlined that Laissez-faire is one where the leader tends to avoid power and authority the Laissez-faire principal tries to give away his power and does not follow up progress this is why their overall performance is often poor.

According to the questionnaire given to the principals, it revealed that the Laissez-faire leadership style and school performance had a negative relationship. Laissez-faire leadership style

is not suitable for use by principals, because, complete delegation without follow up mechanisms creates performance problems. Ensuring effective academic performance requires the involvement of both superiors and subordinates through collective participation and monitoring of performance Okumbe (1998)

The responses from the teachers' questionnaire revealed that they were motivated when they were afforded opportunities to make their own decisions. The acceptance of their opinions and ideas together with the monitoring of performance was seen as a healthy way of enhancing academic performances in secondary schools

Effects of Transformation Leadership Style and School Performance

The fourth objective of this study was to establish whether transformational leadership style employed by the principal affected school performance in Tongaren Division. This was done in order to answer the research question: "To what extent does transformational leadership style affect school performance in Tongaren Division?" School managers argue that there is no single style of

leadership used all the time. The adoption of a particularly relevant style in a specific situation leads to school effectiveness and is better than the use of one style throughout one's management experience. Leadership is dictated by change within the school situation and outside. Therefore given situations in the school setting determine the particular leadership style one would adapt.

Table 14: Transformation Leadership Style and School Performance

		School performance	Transformation leadership
Pearson Correlation	Transformation	1.000 0.34	0.34 1.000
Sig (1-tailed)	School performance	1.000 0.34	
N	13	13	

Results in Table 14 indicated a positive relationship between Transformational leadership and school performance in secondary schools according to teachers. In most cases transformational leadership practices influences followers to achieve their goals based on the situations and also encourages followers to exert effort beyond self-interest in favour of their collective group achievement. This concurs with Miskel and Hoy (2008) who states that transformational leadership style creates, promotes and raises the awareness levels of followers on inspirational, collective interests and help followers achieve unusually high performance outcomes and they are motivators to make the staff to be committed.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the study findings and literature review the following observations were made;

Autocratic leadership style leadership style has a negative relationship with school performance. This leadership style to a large extend affects performance in a negative way. This style brings about resentment among colleagues and may only be used while introducing key changes. It should be blended with an appropriate explanation.

A positive moderate relationship was found to exist between the democratic leadership style and school

performance in relation to other leadership styles. Using this leadership style may therefore lead to improved performance as the pool of intelligent people in the school is used by bringing in their opinions and ideas.

A negative relationship exists between laissez faire leadership style and school performance. There is need for further follow up on tasks assigned to subordinate by the leaders.

A weak positive relationship was established between the transformational leadership style and school performance. This may not really imply that the leadership style is not appropriate but few people may be aware of style's attributes. Principals should be made aware/study the attributes of the transformational leadership style and apply them in their leadership.

Effective school research shows that there is a significant leadership effect not only on the student learning. Leadership is a very strong predictor of school performance (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2007). This study established that among the pillars on which education is anchored leadership is pivotal. For example, if leadership per se, is expected to have a major effect on education, it must be visionary, transformational and shared.

This section therefore strongly recommended the following on the basis of the research findings; The leadership style employed by a school's principal is a function of his/her training, professional development and exposure. Being a principal is challenging task. There is need therefore to equip the principal with the necessary management and leadership skills. Structured and regular in service for all principals is hereby called for. Membership to professional associations like that of secondary heads association should also be mandatory in order to become an astute administrator.

Democratic principles should be nurtured in the running of school activities since involvement guarantees ownership and good results. Such principles should be extended to all levels of leadership and manuals should be developed by heads association in conjunction with Kenya education management institute (KEMI). Elections at school level should be held in a democratic way and appropriate training offered on regular basis.

School principals should be encouraged to use the transformational leadership management style as it encourages loyal followers who give results. The finding denotes a positive relationship between performance and this leadership style.

Though not commonly used, the style may be more to do with lack of the necessary skills and information rather than expected positive results on leadership style. Principals should therefore be encouraged to use this style which promises to produce loyal and logical followers rather than fanatical boot lickers.

The study has established the need to have qualified principals in schools who can meet the leadership challenges. There is need therefore to build a constant supply of such needed manpower for schools possibly by coming up with staff development and succession plans. In doing this, the issue of quality leadership will be addressed.

This study therefore recommended that elaborate plans should be made to come up with staff

development programs and succession plans by both the teacher's service commission and the Kenya education management institute to ensure sustained supply of competent personnel to run schools. Regular and compulsory training for school deputy heads, and HODs should also be carried out by KEMI.

In a bid to improve the performance of principals, a mentoring program is strongly recommended for newly appointed and underperforming principals. The Ministry of Education should identify mentors from experienced and knowledgeable serving principals with a proven track record of success to mentor their colleagues on their models of success.

The study recommended a review of the teacher training curriculum so that sufficient attention is given to management and leadership skills. This is due to the existing gap between theory and practice. Trainee teachers should also be examined on leadership skills right from teaching practice. All the teachers are potential leaders - future head teachers/principals. Ministry of Education and the universities in liaison with the teacher training colleges should undertake the review of the said curricula.

Suggestions for Further research

In the course of this investigation, it has become clear that further research needs to be carried out in the following related areas:

- A similar study to be carried out in other secondary schools in other counties to see how the situation is portrayed.
- Conduct a study comparing the influence of male and female principal leadership styles on school climate and student achievement. This recommendation was influenced by the assertion of Johnson, Busch, and Slate (2008) that male leadership is more directive and authoritative, while females practiced leadership through suggestion accompanied by a strong democratic style.

- Replications of this investigation will need to be carried out five or six years from now to establish exactly what changes will have taken place in school administration.
- Conduct a study that solicits how head of department perceive the leadership styles of

the head of subjects in their department. Head of department perceptions of the head of subject leadership styles may aid in the training of aspiring administrators

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