# Management styles used in the selected secondary schools in Uganda

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## ABSTRACT

This paper looked at the management styles used in the some selected secondary schools in Uganda. Globally, educating a nation remains the most vital strategy for the development of the society throughout the developing world. As management styles ensure school stability, various challenges are faced. These include generational gap, weak management, gender disparity, inadequate education, limited resources, conflict of interest and liberalization of human rights. The independent variables bring a relationship between management styles and school activities to achieve stability such as improved performance, improved student administration relationship, round table discussion and problem resolution, improved response to students' issues, student empowerment and discussion making. However, independent variables indirectly lead to strategies including strengthening partnership and student participation, improving managerial hierarchy and power flow, ensuring openness, transparency and communication, proper school planning, good coordination and supervision. In conclusion, this research shows that there are many situational and laissez faire challenges faced by managers in execution of duties

**Keywords:** Management, styles, secondary schools, Uganda.

## INTRODUCTION

Mass education at secondary education level, however may require new management styles in order to enhance efficiency and effectiveness. Improved efficiency is needed and can be achieved through management reforms; raising the learner teacher ratio, increasing teachers' time on task, reducing repetition and improving accountability [1]. Through inefficiency much learning time is lost in many Sub-Saharan African (SSA) education systems. Twenty five percent or more of school days may be lost each year in poorly managed schools [2]. Management at work in secondary schools is thus a dynamic process where an individual is not only responsible for the group's tasks, but also actively seeks the collaboration and commitment of all the group members in achieving group goals in a particular context [3]. Management in that context purses effective stability in schools, because it does not only examine tasks to be accomplished and who executes them, but also seeks to include greater reinforcement characteristics like recognition, conditions of service and morale building, coercion and remuneration [4]. Management incorporates the accomplishment of the task, which is the human resource requirement. [5] Contends that, without a proper management style, effective school stability cannot be realized. Even if the school has all the required instructional materials and financial resources, it will not be able to use them effectively, if the students are not directed in their use, or if the teachers who guide in their usage are not properly trained to implement them effectively. However, [3] defines management as inspiring people to perform. Even if an institution has all the financial resources to excel it may fail dismally if management does not motivate others to accomplish their tasks effectively. This goes a long way in Ntungamo district where a numbers of schools have faced challenging moments in their tenure. Education management has experienced both stable and unstable seasons leaving adverse effects to the whole system when unstable situations occur. A number of gaps have been sighted but management styles have attracted the attention of the researcher to find out their contribution to school stability in selected secondary schools in Ntungamo District

[6] Defines management as influence, power and the legitimate authority acquired by a manager to be able to effectively transform the organization through the direction of the human resources that are the most important organizational asset, leading to the

achievement of desired purpose. This can be done through the articulation of the vision and mission of the organization at every moment, and influence the staff to define their power to share this vision. This is also described by [7] as visionary management. However, according to them, the concept of management that matters is not being limited to those at the top of the school such as head teacher, but depends on certain characteristics of the manager. It involves much more than the manager's personality in which management is seen as more of mutating followers to achieve goals [7].

This is supported by Lao Tzu that good management commits to doing less and being more. School stability in any secondary school should not only be considered in terms of academic rigor, but should also focus on other domains of education like the affective and psychomotor domain. This should be the vision of every manager in such a school and the cherished philosophy, structures and activities of the school would be geared towards the achievement of this shared vision [7]. School stability is any form of situation that is attained when there is smooth running of an educational institution. Such a situation may arise from interpersonal relationship between head teachers, teachers and students due to their interactions. Two systems or persons interact indirectly in such a way that the actions of one tend to compel some outcome of the other. This is a common phenomenon in schools as head teachers and teachers enforce school rules upon students. Public secondary schools have many cases of behaviors ranging from situation of chaos, confusion, disorder and a cause of stampede towards school programs to the extent of putting a halt to the schools programs where they occur [8].

In Uganda, research shows that "striking of public secondary school students is a means of seeking attention or protest had become rampant. Hardly a term passes without a school striking and the pattern was becoming bizarre with school property being destroyed by students, Ntungamo district not being any exception, [9]. The management styles available for head teachers like dictatorship of the head teacher, democratic tendencies, situational style and laissez style influence dependent variables including Improved decision making, Improved performance, Improved student administration relationship, Round table discussion and problem resolution, Improved response to student issues, Student empowerment which operate alongside intervening variables which are Sourcing funds and resources, Transparency and accountability, Training and education, Human rights, School facilities, government policies, Competitors influence [8]. Consideration will be made to find out how these factors interrelate to explain the challenge of school stability in selected public secondary schools in Ntungamo District. In essence, the study will determine the contribution of management styles used by head teachers (Independent variables) using the intervening variables (Proximate factors) on school stability (dependent variable) [8]. The researcher will then determine the contribution of management styles on school stability (Dependent variable). In considering the fact that public secondary schools must maintain school stability in order to earn reputation in the market place and improve performance, one of the most important action the head teachers must engage in is that of having correct theory of management and detailed knowledge of the management styles [8]. Various studies have been carried out about factors that influence schools stability but did not explore the contribution of management styles on school stability. It is therefore imperative to analyze the contribution of management styles in relation to school stability in various selected public secondary schools in Ntungamo district.

As management styles ensure school stability, various challenges are faced. These include generational gap, weak management, gender disparity, inadequate education, limited resources, conflict of interest and liberalization of human rights. The independent variables bring a relationship between management styles and school activities to achieve stability such as improved performance, improved student administration relationship, round table discussion and problem resolution, improved response to students' issues, student empowerment and discussion making. However, independent variables indirectly lead to strategies including strengthening partnership and student participation, improving managerial

hierarchy and power flow, ensuring openness, transparency and communication, proper school planning, good coordination and supervision. The study will determine management styles used by head teachers (Independent factors) and the availability of intervening factors (Proximate factors) and then find out its contribution to school stability (Dependent variable). Management styles are modes or methods of management adopted by various managers. For the purposes of this study, the definition of management styles is per the United States of America Army Handbook which recognizes three styles of management namely: authoritarian or autocratic style; the participative or democratic style and the declarative or free reign leadership style. However, the study will also employ the situational style, which affirms that managers can be made to choose a style based on the prevailing situation [10]. Management requires a network of decisions and communication centers for structures must be understood, and styles must be put into practice. The head of a school is seen as the programmer of all school activities in which the teachers and students get involved. He assigns the various responsibilities to every teacher and the teachers are expected to follow from the head teacher's example. Management also involves developing an internal structure of roles for effective performance which is a land mark of school stability. Management styles and their effect on school stability can be understood further by considering the various styles of management as showed here under;

**Autocratic leadership style and its effect on stability in selected public secondary schools**

This style is used when leaders tell their employees what they want done and how they want it accomplished, without getting the advance of their followers. Some of the appropriate conditions to use are when you have all the information to solve the problem, you are short on time, and your employees are well motivated. Some people tend to think of this style as a vehicle for yelling, using demeaning language, and leading by threats and abusing power. This is not the authoritarian style, rather it is an abusive, unprofessional style called bossing people around. It has no place in a leader's repertoire [11]. The authoritarian style should normally only be used on rare occasions. If you have the time and want to gain more commitment and motivation from your employees, then you should use the participative style. There is a relationship between the autocratic management style and school stability which is a strong negative relationship. This simply means that the more autocratic one becomes, the poorer the stability of the school and the contrary is also true. School managers who use the authoritarian leadership style lead to unstable school environment because they adopt harsh management styles, which are highly resented by their subordinates [1]. The coercive style often creates a reign of terror, bullying and demeaning his subordinates, roaring with displeasure at the slightest problem. Subordinates get intimidated and stop bringing bad news in fear of getting bashed or blamed for it, and the morale of the workers plummets, the extent this is applicable in the case of Ntungamo district will be established [4].

**Democratic leadership style and its effect on stability in selected public secondary schools**

There is a positive moderate relationship between the democratic leadership style and school stability in selected public secondary school in Uganda. Schools are composed of intelligent people whose ideas are crucial in the day to day running of the same schools. Teachers, students and prefects for example have the capacity to advise effectively on academic matters in the school. Their ideas and contributions cannot be ignored. This approach to management has led many school managers to rely on participatory governance mechanisms or the democratic leadership styles [12]. The leader in the school uses the democratic leadership style to build trust, respect and commitment because the style allows people to have a say in decisions that affect their goals and how they do their work. Students in schools need to be involved in the schools' administration and in the implementation of decisions because they affect them directly [12]. Democracy is the best management strategy for school environments because schools are systems with parts that are interrelated. The head teachers for example have to motivate the teachers to participate in decision making because academic progress depends on the quality of

teaching exhibited. Today there is a very school of thought that schools can no longer be managed by a lone figure at the top of the hierarchy [12]. Managers are essential and have an impact on the stability of a school. In addition departments need to be empowered to lay strategies in order to improve teaching and learning. Good management is associated with a caring environment. This kind of caring environment leads improved education outcomes. It also leads to a situation where students can develop a culture of confiding with their teachers. In such cases when and where the home environment worsens the learners can always use the school as the last resort. This improves the school stability and students' learning [13]. Lewis study found that participative (democratic) management is generally the most effective and allow input from other group members. Participative leaders encourage group members to participate but retain the final say over the decision making process. Group members feel engaged in the process and are more motivated and creative. This style involves the manager including one or more employees in the decision making process (determining what to do and how to do it). However the manager maintains the final decision authority. Using this style is not a sign of weakness rather it is a sign of strength your employees will respect [13]. This style is normally used when managers have part of the information and employees have other parts. Note that a manager is not expected to know everything; this is why schools employ knowledgeable and skillful employees. Using this style is of mutual benefit and it allows managers to become part of the team and allows people to make better decisions.

**Situational leadership style and its effect on stability in selected public secondary school.**

One of the most frequently used styles to management is the situational management style. School managers have, through experience come to terms with the fact that the adoption of a particularly relevant style in a specific situation leads to school effectiveness, rather than relying on a single style of one's choice. Management is dictated by environmental changes within and outside the school. At one time, students may be so unruly and militant that it requires the head of schools to use strict measures in implementation of duties so as to improve school stability. However, in another development students may be so committed and focused that it may require being liberal minded to allow participative management to prevail. Of course, this depends on the changes in the situation of the school [14].

This is also corroborated by [15] who asserts that the relationship between school stability and management style is moderated by the situational factors. These "trait" investigations were followed by examinations of the "situation" as the determinant of management abilities, leading to the concept of situational management. Studies attempted to identify "distinctive characteristics of the setting to which the manager's success could be attributed. [16] Reviewed management styles and noted that "the situation style maintains that management is determined not so much by the characters of the individuals as by the requirements of the social situation". According to this research focus, a person could be a follower or a manager depending upon circumstances. Attempts were made to identify specific characteristics of the situation that affected students' stability. [17] listed four areas of situational management: "structural properties of the organization, organizational climate, role characteristics, and subordinate characteristics". Situational management revealed the complexity of management but still proved insufficient because the style could not predict which management style would be more effective in certain situations.

**Laissez-faire style and its effect on stability in selected public secondary schools**

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, he/she does not make decisions; rather he/she 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 he/she gets involved on request and this may lead to the digression from broad organizational policy. Thus, this style of management may be effective to promote stability with well-motivated and experienced employees but could lead to failure when subordinates are deceptive, unreliable and untrustworthy [18].

## Challenges faced by managers in improving stability

The duty of the Department of Curriculum Development and Evaluation Designs is to design, and revise curriculum to meet the socio-economic needs of the country and that of individuals. It is the duty of schools to implement this curriculum in a stable environment by applications of technical knowledge and skills to reinforce action using appropriate management styles to achieve the desired outcome [19]. [19] emphasized that schools should operate through the management of both senior management teams which comprise the school head, deputy school head and heads of departments, and school management teams which comprise of members of senior management and senior teachers of Grade one. Both management teams supervise, facilitate, make decision, act as instructional leaders, are responsible for staff and students welfare and ensure good relations within the schools. They are also responsible for managing day-to-day school operation [19].

Most of the managers in the education system rise to these positions without any prior management training. Some get these positions because of their long-service in the system, while others assume them because of their flowery curriculum vitae or having excelled in the interview. This, therefore, suggests that SMT (school management team) should know the sources of instability and strategies that can be used in reducing them in the schools [20]. Instability leads to disagreements in the school, which leads to poor communication. This results in compromise or further depreciation of order. On the other hand, disagreement can result in polarization of viewpoints. It is argued that it can lead to the end of communication and personal animosity among members within the school. In this case, the results of instability bring about negative effects to the running of the school [21].

One of the challenges in schools is shortage of teaching staff. (Poor education), Students react negatively when they sit without a teacher for certain subjects for a long time. Distribution of qualified teachers in the secondary system in Kenya is an important determinant factor of the quality of education in Schools [22].

Teachers operating in a situation where teacher-pupil ratio is high would be expected to be overworked: overcrowding in classes affects teaching and learning. If children are crowded in their sitting positions, teachers find it difficult to move round a class. This means that teachers will not be able to reach with ease all children in order to check their individual work as they sit working in their places. Inability to move freely in a class means that the teacher can neither help the needy children nor can he/she mark the pupils exercises as they continue working. good and quality staff is an asset to the school. A quality staff is essential for efficient student management which causes a challenge to school stability [22]. Teaching/learning Resources especially Reading materials such as textbooks, non-reading materials such as charts and posters and maps, that is, real things or artifacts. These advantages include economy, individualism of instructions and improvement of teaching practices. The element of economy is seen from the fact that the textbooks can be used for longer period of time. The textbook helps to individualize instructions. It helps the learner to proceed with learning process at a rate determined by his abilities [23].

It should however be noted that textbooks have shortcomings. Among its major criticism is that it reduces the learners ability to think, organize data and draw independent conclusion. This arises from the fact that text materials are presented in a logical "pre-digested" form. Under such circumstance, critics say, reading becomes more of a matter of reading to remember obtained data with which to make decisions or solve Challenges. Textbooks can only be effective in the instruction process if they are combined with supplementary materials such as reference books [22]. Conflict of interest and the relationship between beneficiaries and managers tends to be weak in many secondary schools. This has long presented managers with a dilemma. This causes tension between the monitoring and incentive functions of management styles and indicators of stability. Managers preoccupied with fiduciary concerns, tends to keep a close watch on the programs they support, hence the focus on the short term process undertakings rather than genuine

outcome measures as triggers for stability evaluation [24]. It appears, by and large, that existing school does not serve the students effectively, partly because they fail to identify the real needs, because their structures and objectives prevent them from making a flexible response to these needs. Without access to the manager, the means of making an objective decision which would be timely. Where managers prefer a few individuals at the expense of others, a bigger section is placed at a disadvantage. They may have the power to influence decisions in the management systems and in due course fail to assist in keeping the school stable [25]. The interpretation of gender has traditionally referred to reproductive women being a weaker sex. While this may improve their obedience to status quo, it hinders the significant roles in ensuring that schools are stable. Focusing on their weaknesses tends to ignore the fact that gender inequality itself can lead to imbalance in execution of management roles. Women face particular barriers in reporting and seeking resolutions and so being a woman may be one of the predisposing factors to school stability. Their low status in society and the household limits the availability of their input to management styles in attaining school stability.

### Relationship between management styles and school's stability

Studies in management style and school stability show a relationship between style and stability. Studies have observed that the quality of management correlates highly with employee morale. Research suggests that poor teacher morale can ultimately affect school stability. It further indicates that morale is affected by management. The study concluded that constructive use of

management styles plays a key role in establishing and maintaining high teacher morale. This is also in agreement with a study made by [26] which investigated how management behaviors of Head teachers can affect the morale of teaching staff. One of the specific findings in this study was that in schools where teachers perceived themselves to have the highest morale were those where the teachers perceived themselves to have more participation in the organization of the school, [26]. [27] In a research study that examined the relationship between teacher performance and actual and desired participation in the decision making process concluded that a significant relationship exists between teacher job-performance and desired participation in decision-making. This is in agreement with another study by [28], which indicated that there was a positive correlation between management style and verbal participation rate in shared decision-making. This correlation between participation in decision-making and teacher job-performance is also supported by [17] who asserts that lack of participation in decision-making is a source of poor coordination and thus instability. [29] In a study to determine the relationship between stability and absenteeism among elementary school teachers found a relationship between the two variables. Teachers who enjoyed their work had a lower absenteeism rate than those who didn't. This concurs with another earlier study by Doran (1986), who observed that low absence teachers are more satisfied with their work than high-absence teachers. A similar study also confirms this in its finding that teachers who perceive their school climate as open tend to exhibit less absenteeism.

## CONCLUSION

This research shows that there are many situational and laissez faire challenges faced by managers in execution of duties.

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