

A Review of Head Teachers' Leadership Styles and Burnout of Teachers

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ABSTRACT

Teacher burnout is a concern of paramount importance for all education stakeholders due to its detrimental impact on teachers' cognitive abilities, emotional well-being, and overall engagement in their roles. Across many countries, burnout is a significant issue within the teaching profession, leading to increased absenteeism, staff turnover, reduced productivity, diminished job satisfaction, as well as physical and mental health issues, along with strained interpersonal relationships. While the leadership approaches of head teachers have been acknowledged as potential solutions to mitigate burnout among educators, it remains unclear whether certain leadership styles are more effective than others in addressing this challenge. This article, by conducting a comprehensive review of the existing literature on head teachers' leadership styles and burnout, sought to shed light on the association between these factors. Employing search engines like ProQuest, Google Scholar, and Connected Papers, the researcher scoured journal articles and dissertations to gather relevant literature. Based on the review, it is evident that there is ample room for further research into the relationship between head teachers' leadership styles and teacher burnout, addressing the identified gaps in the current body of knowledge. In light of the need for a more in-depth understanding of the relationship between head teachers' leadership styles and teacher burnout, it is recommended that an empirical study be conducted in secondary schools located in Ibanda Municipality, Ibanda District, Uganda. Such a study would be a valuable contribution to mitigating the issue of high teacher burnout in the area, as no previous research has delved into the interplay between these two variables in this specific context.

Keywords: Head Teachers' leadership styles, burnout, teachers.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this article is to review and analyse the previous studies on head teachers' leadership styles and burnout of teachers. The article discusses the introduction, methodology, body, conclusion and recommendations relating to the review of head teachers' leadership styles and burnout of teachers. Burnout refers to a state of exhaustion brought about by excessive demands on the individual's energy, strength, or resources characterized by three dimensions which are exhaustion, depersonalisation, and diminished personal achievement [1, 2]. Burnout amongst teachers is an issue that should worry all stakeholders in the education sector because it disrupts teachers' cognitive processes, makes them feel

helpless, and drives them to withdraw psychologically [3, 4., 5]. Consequently, there is a lot of attention in the concept of burnout in the field of education and it has raised concern among all stakeholders in the education system [6]. This is because a lot of changes such as the rise in the numbers of private schools and the high demand for academic performance and this has made teaching become an emotionally demanding profession [7]. Therefore, teacher burnout is currently a health issue and is reported to vary significantly across countries as there is a suggestion that programmes to prevent this problem should consider the whole educational environment for a greater impact [6, 8]. Moreover, teacher burnout leads to

absenteeism, lowered work standards, low employee engagement and high staff turnover today. Burnout typically manifests as a lack of passion for one's work, a lack of creativity, and difficulty focusing. Burnt-out teachers frequently lose their composure in class and respond inappropriately to somewhat stressful events [2, 9, 10, 11].

In addition, majority of research on burnout of teacher comes from South America, Asia, Australia, Canada, Europe, the Middle East, New Zealand, and Africa on a consistent basis. In Southern Jordan, 50% of male and female teachers have emotional tiredness related to burnout [7, 5], while approximately partial of the educators in India experience burnout [12]. According to the 2014 Education Staff Survey in the United Kingdom, 91% of school teachers had experienced stress, and 74% had dealt with anxiety. Burnout is seen as a serious concern in Tennessee and around the world. In the USA, of the teachers surveyed in Tennessee, 43.6% evaluated themselves as suffering great intensities of emotional tiredness and 45.4% stated little intensities of personal success [11]. Furthermore, In Africa, the issue of burnout is a solemn issue in educators in most countries and it is considered to be one of the factors accountable for much absenteeism, staff turnover, low output and job gratification, unfortunate physical and psychological health, and challenging educator to educator networks [13]. A study carried out by [14] about problems of educators in eight African countries between August, 2006 and January, 2010 cited teacher burnout as one of the leading issues that affect teachers in the countries studied that included Eritrea, The Gambia, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Uganda, Zambia, and Zanzibar [14]. Educators in Namibia show intensities of burnout similar to other nations in Africa, making teacher burnout a continental issue [15]. [16] also indicates that teacher burnout was associated with health issues with 10.6% of educators in South Africa being admitted to hospitals in the past one year due to burnout and stress related issues. Furthermore, 75% of educators opened up about visiting a doctor in the six months before the study, which is another sign of their general health. In addition, stress disorders such great

blood pressure (15.6%), stomach ulcers (9.1%), and diabetes (4.5%) were the most often reported diagnoses.

Moreover, there is high teacher burnout in Uganda attributed to severe resource constraints as teachers have many teaching hours per day, large classrooms, poor pay, lack of time due to part-timing, limited or no textbooks, and limited physical infrastructure yet the pay is also very low, which all make burnout one of the issues causing a crisis that needs to be urgently attended to [14, 17]. In addition, an earlier study in the Bugisu sub region by [18] found out high levels of burnout among teachers which was responsible for poor academic performance in this region. A study by [19] established that majority of the teachers (91%) who were involved in social services delivery in Northern Uganda had high stress levels and ranked among the seven specialists experiencing most stress, others being nurses, managers, social workers, road transport drivers, police officers and prison officers. The study further found out that the stressed teachers mostly relied on their head teachers for solutions. There have also been reports of high burnout and other stress related issues among teachers in upcountry Uganda, and in Ibanda district, such issues are forcing teachers to quit early or avoid demanding and stressful schools [20].

On the other hand, it has been argued that head teachers, as supervisors for teachers through their rigid leadership styles may be one of the factors that cause work related burnout to teachers [21, 22, 23]. There has also been great deal of interest in research on leadership styles of managers though much is still desired on head teachers' leadership styles and burnout so as to establish the most appropriate head educator's leadership style in reducing teacher burnout. Still, the link between the kind of leadership style and burnout continues to be an issue in any given institution in modern research [24]. [25] have linked positive leadership to low emotional exhaustion among health workers in the medical profession. Such a study leaves a gap for studying the two variables in the education sector particularly to establish the relationship between head teachers' leadership styles and burnout of teachers. This may help

to reduce on the problem of teacher burnout, make teachers more satisfied with teaching and give more value to education. This review is therefore a precursor to a study that will seek to establish the relationship between

leadership styles of head teachers and burnout of teachers in secondary schools as this may help in reducing the problem of burnout and making the education sector better.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher used search engines such as ProQuest, Google, Google Scholar, and Connected Papers to search for literature that involved previous studies, journals articles and dissertations on leadership styles and burnout of teachers. Keywords such as Head Teachers' leadership styles,

burnout, and teachers were used in searching for literature. These terms were representative of the search conducted. Initially, 60 articles were retrieved. After screening, 46 articles were finally used in this paper.

Body

There is a substantial amount of research on head teachers leadership styles and burnout of teachers that the researcher reviewed. In the body of this review, the researcher looks at research relating to three subheadings. Therefore, the main

body is divided into three subheadings that include authoritarian leadership style and burnout, democratic leadership style and burnout and laissez-faire leadership style and burnout.

Authoritarian Leadership Style and Burnout

Authoritarian leadership is where one does tight and strict control over their subordinates and demands complete loyalty and complete submission [4, 26]. The absolute dominance of the leaders is the primary trait of authoritarian leadership. Those in positions of authority sometimes try to maintain control by enforcing regulations and showing signs of punishing the defiant [27]. They frequently demonstrate their power over decision-making and enforce severe discipline on subordinates' work [28]. When leaders use an authoritarian strategy to implement their followers, subordinates are required to conform to leaders' demands without disagreement and subordinates might experience undesirable feelings to managers [29, 30]. [31] carried out an investigation on the connection between autocratic leadership head workers' abnormal working behaviours and organizational cynicism among manufacturing workforces in north China. This research found out a positive and significant relationship between authoritarian leadership and organizational cynicism. However, the study only looks at one construct of burnout leaving a gap for studying the other two. Therefore, it is important to study emotional exhaustion and reduced personal accomplishment in relation to authoritarian leadership style to close the gap left by the study. [32] did a study to establish the association between leadership styles and burnout of

aquatics coaches in Tehran, Turkey. This research discovered that authoritarian leadership had a relationship with burnout. Results for the third hypothesis showed that there was a significant and inverse relationship between authoritarian leadership style and burnout of coaches. This means that authoritarian leadership style was associated with reduced burnout. However, the study concentrated on burnout in aquatic coaches and ignores burnout among teachers leaving a gap for studying the same variables but in the school setting among teachers. This gap supports a study on head teachers' leadership styles and teacher burnout. [33] carried out a study on the connection between sports leaders' stress indicators and leadership styles among male sports coaches from various educational institutions in the Punjab state districts of Jalandhar and Phagwara, India and found out that sports leaders had high levels of the authoritative leadership style and that these were related to the high burnout of sports persons though there was a non-significant relationship with some indicators of stress such as physical and emotional dimensions. According to findings, authoritative style leaders had good correlations with stress, despite not being able to achieve a considerable level particularly with the behavioral dimension of stress. The study, however, looked at leadership styles among sports

leaders and not head teachers. This leaves a gap for studying leadership styles of head teachers in a school setting. The study also concentrated on stress and exhaustion leaving out other dimensions of burnout. Stress only handles a few aspects of burnout and does not clearly bring out all the scope of burnout. It is necessary to study burnout in entirety looking at the other indicators of burnout like cynicism and reduced personal accomplishment.

[34] investigated the impact of head teachers' leadership styles on teachers' levels of motivation in government elementary education institutions in Ngong Zone, Kajiado North District, of Kenya among school teachers and found out a significant positive correlation between leadership styles and teacher burnout. The findings also showed that school teachers led by authoritarian head teachers were de-motivated to a large extent and showed high levels of stress, exhaustion, and disinterest in work due to the pressure from the "unfavourable leadership style". However, the study concentrates on motivation and brings in burnout and stress as products of demotivated teachers. Therefore, not enough is done on burnout. The study also studies primary teachers and ignores secondary teachers yet [14] finds out that secondary teachers stand a higher risk of being affected by burnout

Laissez-faire Leadership Style and Burnout

Laissez-faire leadership style is where a leader abstains from making decisions or exercising supervisory control because they support employee autonomy and believe in giving individuals the freedom to do as they like. This managerial approach implies a failure on the manager's part to assume management responsibility [36]. In their quantitative analysis of the impact of laissez-faire leadership on anxiety-related presenteeism in South African knowledge workers, [37] found that knowledge workers' job stress and burnout, and ultimately organizational performance, were not influenced by or significantly correlated with laissez-faire leadership. The findings of the cross-tabulation revealed no correlation between these two variables, proving that both extremes of laissez-faire leadership philosophies contributed to high levels of workplace stress. The chi-square test

resulting from unfavourable working environments. On this ground, a study of leadership styles and burnout in secondary schools is necessary to close such gaps. [35] carried out an investigation on the impact of head educators' leadership styles on educators' job satisfaction in public primary schools in Kajiado, Kenya among head teachers and teachers in government elementary education institutions and found out that authoritarian leadership leads to high levels of burnout among teachers which consequently negatively influenced levels of job satisfaction. According to the outcomes of the research, teachers under autocratic head educators were often dissatisfied with their jobs because they were being stressed and burned out by their authoritative leaders. Since this study only concentrates on primary school teachers, it leaves a gap of studying the same variables but among secondary school teachers. The study is also carried out in Kenya hence making a study on leadership styles and burnout in Ibanda, Uganda necessary. The study tends to concentrate on job satisfaction and does not explore the construct of burnout widely since the main variable under focus is job satisfaction. This prompts this researcher to identify that the study does not do much on burnout hence a need to study it further.

result showed that there was no link between the two variables since they were statistically unimportant. Additionally, there was no association between the two variables according to Pearson's correlation. However, this research only looked at knowledge workers in South Africa leaving a gap of studying laissez-faire leadership, stress and burnout among teachers in Ibanda, Uganda. However, the study reveals interesting dynamics about the relationship between laissez-faire and stress, burnout or exhaustion since it completely finds no significant relationship between the variables thus Laissez-faire leadership, according to scholars like [38], is linked to greater psychological suffering, a lack of societal sustenance, and work tension, stress, and burnout. It is thus very urgent and necessary to carry out a study to address such controversies. Again, the study

concentrates on stress and does not clearly bring out burnout hence the need to study burnout as a main variable.

[39] also carried out a quantitative study on leadership styles and work pleasure of librarians in higher education institutions libraries in Imo State, Nigeria", and established that laissez-faire leadership style, at 16%, was the least popular management method accepted by managing librarians in higher education institutions, 54% posed for democratic style and 30% for autocratic and that this style of leadership had no significant relationship with burnout of library workers. The result is consistent with observations made earlier by [40], who asserted that laissez-faire leadership is unpopular and has negligible effect on workers' stress, exhaustion, job satisfaction and performance. However, [39] concentrates on librarians and leaves a gap of re-examining laissez-faire leadership style and burnout among teachers in secondary education institutions.

[41] investigated the relationship between leadership style and burnout among employees of a Norwegian IT company and discovered that laissez-faire leadership had a relationship with burnout in that great intensities of passive-avoidant (laissez-faire) leadership were associated with high levels of burnout. The study termed burnout as a syndrome characterized by emotional tiredness, depersonalization, and failure of professional accomplishment that has negative impacts on both personal workers and the organization. Burnout is a result of job stress. Though the study finds a relationship between laissez-faire leadership style and burnout, such results are not conclusive as studies

Democratic Leadership Style and Burnout

[46] defines democratic leadership style as the sharing of duties and the empowerment of group members, as well as the support offered by group members during the decision-making process, functions. Democratic leadership favors the group members' sharing of the leader's administrative authority [47, 48, 49, 50]. The most notable aspect of this leadership approach is that the leader solicits feedback from the group while formulating objectives, strategies, and

done later, such as [37] do not find such a relationship. Therefore, there is still room for re-examining the relationship between these two variables.

According to [42] in their systematic assessment of leadership styles over the past thirty years conveyed that, [43] discovered a connection concerning laissez-faire leadership style and occupational stress. [37] Cronbach's alpha score fell short of the required standard of 0.70. As a result, the internal validity of the data for this laissez-faire leadership style is in doubt, and further research may be required utilizing a new demographic and setting for a separate study. This might make it easier to determine why earlier studies failed to produce definitive findings. Both studies' findings of [37, 44] maintain that there is no statistically significant correlation between a laissez-faire leadership style and burnout. Laissez-faire leadership style may not actually constitute leadership, according to some experts [45]. Although the research mentioned above offer some knowledge of how a laissez-faire leadership style impacts burnout, they do not go far enough in explaining how this leadership styles moves burnout. Many of the studies reviewed also find no substantial relationship among laissez-faire leadership style and burnout with all its indicators. It is thus necessary to re-examine the two variables and find out their actual relationship. Even some earlier researchers [37] have questioned results on studies on laissez-faire leadership style and burnout and have recommended further studies on the same. Again, none of the reviewed studies has directly investigated head teacher's leadership styles and burnout among secondary school teachers.

policies [51, 52, 53, 54, 55]. [50] carried out a study to examine the relationship between teachers' cynicism and school principals' leadership styles among participants teaching in high schools in Turkey's Balikesir district of Turkey and found out that organizational cynicism and democratic leadership were related. The study discovered that, democratic leadership is a key predictor of organizational cynicism and is negatively connected with it [56, 57, 58, 59].

However, the study ignored other dimensions of burnout as it only concentrated on cynicism. This gives ground for examining whether emotional tiredness and a lack of personal success are also affected by the negative relationship between democratic leadership style and cynicism. [60, 61, 62] carried out a study on the impact of democratic leadership style on job performance of subordinates in academic libraries in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria and found out that there was a link between democratic leadership and burnout. The study, which included professional and paraprofessional library personnel, found that democratic leadership styles in academic libraries had a beneficial impact on employees' job performance because it reduces burnout levels and all its factors resulting in high employees' productivity [63, 64, 65, 66]. According to the study, burnout was a factor that slowed down job performance. The democratic leadership style tended to solve burnout in order to create very effective work teams and subordinates who were very satisfied with their jobs [67, 68, 69]. The study though does not exhaustively and clearly look at burnout as it focuses mainly on job performance. Burnout is looked at as a factor that affects job performance hence studied under performance. There is need to study burnout comprehensively to close this gap.

On the relationship between democratic leadership and burnout, [33] stated that, interestingly, sportspeople who used very high degrees of democratic style showed least burnout levels, permitting to the relationship between leadership styles and stress indicators of sports leaders. The obtained findings confirmed democratic leadership style having a relationship with burnout for it showed less stress levels with its various indicators. In terms of physical and behavioral stress indicators, democratic leadership style significantly do negatively correlates with stress. This indicates that sports leaders who follow democratic leadership style are less stressed and generally have better physical and behavioral health. Besides, democratic athletes demonstrated a significant detrimental association between total stress and their sport.

These results concur with past studies on democratic leaders. Since the study concentrated only on sports leaders, it becomes necessary to study the styles of school leaders as well in relation to the stress of teachers to fill this gap. The study which concentrates on stress also ignores some indicators of burnout like cynicism and reduced personal accomplishment yet they too are important in studying burnout. Therefore, it becomes necessary to re-examine democratic leadership and burnout especially in education to fill gaps identified in this study. In the study by [32] on leadership styles and burnout of aquatics coaches in Tehran, Iran, findings of the second, fourth and fifth hypotheses related to democratic leadership. The findings on the second hypothesis showed that there was no significant relationship between democratic leadership style and burnout of coaches. However, the study concentrates on aquatic coaches leaving a gap for studying the same variables but in the school setting among head teachers and teachers. This gap supports a study on head teachers leadership styles and teacher burnout to see if the findings by [32] could apply to the education sector. [52] carried out a survey that investigated the relationship between leadership behaviour and occupation burnout among social care professionals and found out a relationship between the two variables. The correlational tests for the study showed that democratic leadership style positively correlated with reduced personal accomplishment, depersonalisation and emotional exhaustion. However, the results showed a substantial difference in male and female ratings on the depersonalization subscale of burnout. Additionally, compared to those who worked for volunteer organizations, social care professionals who worked for statutory organizations reported higher levels of emotional tiredness. Thus demographics and democratic leadership therefore functioned as prognostic antecedents of burnout. However, the study only concentrated on some behaviours of democratic leaders but never studied the style in totality. A comprehensive study on democratic leadership and burnout needs to be done and such should be

applied to another field such as education to find out if the results would

be same as those from the health care profession.

CONCLUSION

Based on the reviewed articles, it has been concluded that there is still room for re-examining the relationship between head teachers' leadership styles and burnout of teachers to address the existing gaps identified in the existing studies. For example, regarding authoritarian leadership style and burnout, studies reveal interesting dynamics in the relationship between the two variables. Most of the studies found out a relationship between authoritarian leadership and burnout. However, to some it is positive while to others in negative. For example, [53, 31] found out a positive and significant relationship between authoritarian leadership and dimensions of burnout such as organizational cynicism and mobbing yet [32] found out a significant and inverse relationship between autocratic (authoritarian) leadership style and burnout hence the fact that authoritarian leadership style was associated with reduced burnout. A survey of these studies leaves much desired to be studied on burnout as most of them concentrated on cynicism and left out

other dimensions of burnout. Regarding democratic leadership and burnout, studies found out either negative or positive relationships between the two variables. [50] discovered that democratic leadership has a negative relationship with organizational cynicism and with a strong predictor of the same. [32] showed that there was no significant connection between democratic leadership style and burnout of coaches. On the relationship between laissez-faire and burnout, while several studies shed light on how a laissez-faire leadership style affects burnout, they only provide a partial knowledge of how it does so. Many of the studies reviewed also find no connection between a laissez-faire leadership style and burnout, with all its indicators. Even some earlier researchers [37] have questioned results of studies on laissez-faire leadership style and burnout and have recommended further studies on the same. Again, none of the reviewed studies has directly investigated head teacher's leadership styles and burnout among secondary school teachers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It has been recommended that research on head teachers' leadership styles and burnout should be carried out in secondary schools Ibanda Municipality. While a significant amount of research exists on burnout and education in general elsewhere [14, 18, 11, 7, 54], there is no empirical study that has been done in Ibanda municipality to address the problem of high burnout of teachers in secondary schools. Besides, leadership styles and burnout are not static factors as they vary according to the prevailing environment. The issue of leadership styles of head teachers and its relationship with burnout is also pertinent issue for all stake holders in education [14]. However, this issue is

currently not treated with urgent concern and has also not been addressed by an empirical study in the municipality even when reports point to the existence of undesirable leadership styles [55, 56]. Therefore, there is an urgent need to address this issue through an empirical study on leadership styles and burnout in Ibanda municipality. This study will thus close this gap by contributing to the already existing literature by providing data on the theoretical and practical implications of leadership styles on burnout in Ibanda Municipality and establishing the relationship between the two variables so as to identify the most appropriate leadership style that could help reduce burnout.

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