INFLUENCE OF HEADTEACHERS' LEADERSHIP STYLES ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN DODOMA URBAN DISTRICT, TANZANIA

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Abstract:

The quality of education in Tanzania has declined over the past five years with unsatisfactory results recorded in summative evaluation. The purpose of the study is to assess the influence of head teachers' leadership styles on students' academic performance in Dodoma Urban District Council, Tanzania. The specific objectives of this study were to determine the influence of head teachers' supportive leadership style on students' academic performance and to assess the influence of head teachers' participative leadership style on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Dodoma Urban District Council, Tanzania. The study adopted a mixed research approach. Specifically, the researcher adopted a concurrent mixed-method design. The target population for this study consisted of seven (7) head teachers and 110 teachers from seven (7) public secondary schools in Dodoma Urban District. The study used proportionate random sampling and purposive sampling to sample respondents. A closed and open-ended questionnaire was used on teachers and interviews were used on head teachers. The study employed Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS) version 26, to analyze quantitative data which was generated by the use of frequencies, tables, and percentages. The analysis of the interviews involved reading the transcript, annotating the transcript, conceptualizing the data gathered from respondents, segmenting the data, analyzing the segment, and writing the results that were obtained. Findings indicated that, to improve students' academic performance, head teachers encourage team members to express their ideas or suggestions ensure work is done

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independently, and provide the opportunity to make decisions. In addition, findings revealed that supervision is done to the team members to meet school objectives and achieve better academic performance in schools. The study recommended that the Ministry of Education (MoE) needs close monitoring of the leadership styles to ensure that it is current and preferably suits both students and teachers to be able to achieve the intended goals and objectives of the school. Good cooperation among the heads of schools, teachers, and students should be strengthened to ensure the excellent academic performance of the students.

Keywords: head teachers, leadership, leadership styles, students, academic performance

1. Introduction

Student academic performance is very crucial at every level, individual, family, organization, and the nation as a whole. For a school to perform well, in academic and co-curricular activities, effective leadership is needed. Copland (2003) suggests that leadership involves the sharing of tasks, responsibilities, and power within the school vested in the head teacher, which cannot be delegated and is based on experts rather than hierarchical authority. Good leaders should often be able to influence their subordinates toward the achievement of organizational objectives. The headteacher is charged with the role of providing direction and exerting influence on persons and other resources in order to achieve schools' goals. Effective leaders use a variety of leadership styles according to the demands of the situation in order to ensure that pupils improve in their performance. The head teachers play a key role in determining the performance of their schools.

Today, improved performance among students is a key requirement by stakeholders across the world. According to Chemers (2014), a number of leaders employ a directive leadership style, some use a supportive leadership style, some exercise participative leadership style while others employ achievement-oriented leadership style. All these styles influence performance differently. This study aimed to assess how supportive and participative styles of leadership influence students' academic performance.

In the USA, students' academic performance difficulties have been trailed in the past years. Hallinger (2018) highlighted, that student academic performance in the USA is often understood as associated with head teachers' leadership style. It is the sole mandate of the head teacher to create a path toward excellence in educational institutions which will later lead to improved performance. According to Nyongesa (2014), it is vital for the school leader to adopt an administrative manner that will cultivate, motivate, and maintain a facilitating atmosphere for academic performance. Additionally, school leaders must create avenues for identifying strong and weak areas among their students. This will help in motivating them leading to improved performance.

Another related study by Rautiola (2009) on the study on effects of leadership styles and secondary schools found that, in America, schools focus much on the effectiveness of the classroom and of the school at large. The majority of school heads in America employ a participatory leadership style which involves stakeholders including teachers, principals, and parents to play roles in an organizational structure, curriculum, and instruction process.

Regionally, students' academic performance troubles are sophisticated in Sub-Saharan Africa. In Uganda, studies show strikes by students seeking to be heard are common (Katolo, 2016). Aweriale (2017), highlights that Nsubunga in his paper 7 found out that school administrators had a duty to address matters on academic performance among students especially when the performance was deteriorating. In the case of Ethiopia, Altinyelken (2015), says that Ethiopia ensured quality education provision was part of her agenda and the responsibility for improved performance in schools was vested in head teachers. The head teachers' leadership styles thus became a major center of interest for the government. Therefore, the schools' head teachers play an important role in making teaching and learning successful.

In Kenya and according to Kitavi (2014), the success of educational institutions is influenced by the head teachers' leadership styles. The government of Kenya and the general public time after time put more blame in the hands of school leaders to guarantee that students carry out healthy in their examinations. Nyongesa (2014) explains this argument and reports that the major duties of the school leader are to explain the policies guiding school management and maintain the school plan and curriculum implementation among others. Kinyanjui & Orodho (2014), contend that the leadership mode of the school heads is of ultimate significance in the school's success. This shows the importance of the school head teacher in improving students' academic performances.

In Somalia, a study conducted by Nur (2013) indicated that performance in subjects such as Mathematics was very poor among secondary school students. Nur (2013) notes that data from Imam Shafi'i Foundation (ISHF), shows that almost half of students who sat the final secondary school examination in 2005-2006 failed. The results can be attributed to the reality that the achievement in secondary schools in the wider Somalia and specifically in Banadir region is poor. The cause of the poor performance was due to wanting leadership styles by head teachers. Although other factors could cause poor performance, the school head was partly blamed.

In recent times, education stakeholders in Tanzania have expressed their concern over the poor performance of students in the secondary school certificate examination. Part of the responsibility for the poor performance has been directed towards school administrators (principals) and the teachers while some portion of the responsibility has been put squarely on the shoulders of the students themselves and the parents.

Isundwa (2015) looked at the influence of leadership styles on students' academic performances in secondary schools in Morogoro municipality, Tanzania. The study found that there is a very negative influence of laissez-faire leadership style on students'

achievement. Also, laissez-faire leader does not bother to tell subordinates their wrongs or weaknesses as they leave all tasks to them done independently leading to poor students' academic achievement. Wu & Shiu (2009) observes that laissez-faire is not a good leadership style to be used by school heads because complete delegation without follow-up creates performance problems. Wu & Shiu added that teachers and students are motivated when they are afforded opportunities to make their own decisions.

In Tanzania, a study by Aunga & Masare (2017) who researched on the effect of Leadership Styles in Primary Schools of Arusha District found that democratic leadership decentralizes power and authority whereby decisions are made through consultations. The head teacher agrees with the goals for which he/she expects achieved. He/she encourages personal initiatives and solutions to problems are found among the pupils and teachers.

Again Limbe (2017) found that the number of candidates who pass the primary leaving examination is low compared to the number of candidates who sit for Primary Leaving Examination, that means, every year Tanzania loses a lot of pupils who could join form one to the fact that most candidates fail the examination. Among the factors for such failure is leadership in those schools (Mosha, 2018). Also, in the study by Lindsay, Kofie, & Mbepera (2017) and Limbe (2017) have linked the same challenge of leadership facing primary schools towards their performance. Therefore, undertaking this study would be important in Public Secondary Schools in Dodoma Urban District Council for future performance.

A report of 2018-2020 shows that secondary schools run by the public authority were performing ineffectively as reflected in the National Form Four Examination results in Tanzania (Laddunuri, 2022). In Tanzania, academic performance has been declining in the course of recent years with unsuitable outcomes recorded in summative assessment. With the arrangement that each Ward should have its local area secondary school, there has been a mushrooming of schools without a related rate of quality affirmation. The National Examination Council of Tanzania (NECTA) shows a drop in performance somewhere in the range of 2015 and 2022 in the Form Four examinations (NECTA, 2022). Among different components, the leadership styles of head teachers were thought to be a contributing variable.

Student's academic achievement is very crucial at every level; from a perspective of an individual, a family, an organization (like a school), and the nation as a whole. For a school to perform well both in academics and in co-curricular activities, effective leadership is needed. The leadership style of the head teacher is of the highest importance in the school's performance. The school headteacher has the role of providing direction and exerting influence on persons and other things in order to achieve the school's goals. This shows the importance of the school principal's role in improving student performance and achievement. It is against this background that this study seeks to examine the influence of principals' leadership styles on students' academic performance in Public Secondary Schools in Dodoma Urban District Council, Tanzania.

2. Statement of the Problem

Governments in all countries of the World strive to provide education to their citizens with the understanding that it is essential, not only for economic growth but also for social stability (REPOA, 2008). According to West and Jackson (2002), school leadership globally has become more complex since the circular demands have grown, government expectations and demand for greater school effectiveness have been raised. As a result, head teachers have not been able to provide effective leadership, which affected pupil performance.

In Tanzania, head teachers are scarcely prepared for their leadership tasks (Bush and Oduro, 2006). The lack of support from education stakeholders affects the effectiveness of leadership offered by the head teachers thus negatively impacting the pupil's performance. According to the NECTA report (2018-2020), national form four (SCEE) results in the six sampled secondary schools declined remarkably. In the year 2019 a total of 310 candidates sat for the certificate for secondary education, 24% scored division one to three, while 61% scored division four and 15% scored division 0. Furthermore, in the year 2021, a total of 1013 students sat for examination in the surveyed secondary schools. It is only (8%) of students who scored division i-iii, while (47%) obtained division iv, with the rest (45%) obtaining division zero.

Tanzania like many other countries, has tried to radically improve the state of education, particularly in terms of classroom infrastructure and enrollment through the introduction of SEDP in 2004. Despite of significant empowerment of infrastructure and enrollment of students in public secondary schools, the students' academic performance is still very low. Among different components, the leadership styles of head teachers were thought to be a contributing variable. Hence, the current study seeks to find out whether there is an influence of head teachers' leadership styles on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Dodoma Urban District Council.

2.1 Objectives of the Study
1) To determine the influence of head-teachers' supportive leadership style on students' academic performance in Public Secondary Schools in Dodoma Urban District Council.
2) To assess the influence of head-teachers' participative leadership style on students' academic performance in Public Secondary Schools in Dodoma Urban District Council.

2.2 Research Questions
1) How does the headteachers' supportive leadership style influence students' academic performance in Public Secondary Schools in Dodoma Urban District Council?

2) How does the headteachers' participative leadership style influence students' academic performance in Public Secondary Schools in Dodoma Urban District Council?

3. Theoretical Framework

The study employed Path-Goal Theory. The proponents of this theory are House and Mitchell (1975). According to Malik (2012) utilizing the information prepared from the Path-Goal Theory, head teachers should guide teachers to accomplish greatness in schools. Therefore, the Path-Goal Theory underlines that, for any organization including a school to succeed, leaders should lay out certain goals for an organization to accomplish and set the procedures to accomplish them (Wofford, 1993). For the goals to be accomplished, the leaders should advise the subordinates about the goals and led the subordinates in the manner through which the goals can be accomplished. The leaders additionally need to eliminate the snags in accomplishing the goals just as to offer the fundamental help for the goals to be accomplished. The leaders can make a few arrangements and show of the exercises to be done in the organization. The leaders can likewise tell the bearings on the best way to play out the work in an organization. The initiative practices, for example coordinating; putting together, fulfilling, and so forth are learned by people. Subsequently, leaders need to become familiar with the way of life of inspiring the subordinates to meet their fulfillment in the organization.

Alongside the leaders' conduct, the theory hypothesizes the meaning of leadership style in carrying out organizational goals. In the event that a leader is to spur, show how to do the exercises, provide guidance to subordinates, and so forth, then the styles of leadership are vital and fundamental in an organization. The theory clarifies four kinds of leadership styles that might be unexpectedly embraced by head teachers under various conditions to accomplish organizational goals. These are participative leadership style, supportive leadership style, directive leadership style, and achievement-oriented leadership style.

Path Goal Model depicts the significance of head teachers' capacity to inspire teachers to work on students' performance. The head teachers, through the theory, are subsequently educated regarding the significance of inspiring teachers just as they attempt to accomplish their fulfillment. This theory tried to show how the heads of schools propel teachers and be happy with their work. Further to this, the head teachers are educated, through this theory, of the need to foster the goals to accomplish objectives within a specific period. This exploration is, therefore, defined as realizing the goals set by the head teachers toward accomplishing students' academic performance and how they advise their teachers about the goals to accomplish and how to accomplish them. The theory has likewise accentuated the significance of utilizing distinctive administration styles to help, direct, and empower support. This study is educated by the theory to explore the styles of leadership that head teachers utilize in dealing with their schools and how the style of authority they use contributes to students' performance.

3.1 Supportive Leadership Style and Students' Academic Performance

House (1997) in a study done in the USA, shows that a strong leadership style is utilized when a leader thinks about the requirements of the collaborators, showing worry for their government assistance and causing a cordial working circumstance. The upside of this style of leadership is to expand the adherents' confidence and make the positions designated to the supporters more appealing. Furthermore, a similar study accentuates that a strong leadership style builds the satisfaction and self-assurance of subordinates and is likewise essential to diminish any regrettable elements. Strong leadership would likewise offer advantages to those subordinates who are happy with their work. Being agreeable leader needs to utilize strong conduct to make the workplace lovely treat the subordinates as equivalents and give them regard for their status (Cheng, 2002). In the supportive leadership style, the head teacher allots errands and gets the outcomes from the staff in a school to have positive outcomes in academic matters.

Adeyemi (2010) executed a study to assess the Head Teachers' leadership style in Senior Secondary School in Ondo State, Nigeria. It was tracked down that the Supportive leadership style was the most generally utilized leadership style among head teachers of Senior Secondary Schools in the State. Instructor's work performance was observed to be better in further developing student academic performance in the school than in schools having head teachers utilizing other leadership styles. Also, Silverthorne (2005) affirmed that a strong leadership style builds school performance, and decreases any adverse perspectives present in the workspace. In any case, this implies that a steady leadership style would offer exceptionally high advantages to students' school performance. Rizik (2001) contended that a strong leadership style would be reasonable when the work task is dreary and fitting to be liked with opportunity and work achievement observed to be testing.

Ampaire & Namusonge (2018) attested that leaders who utilize a steady leadership style in dynamic empower bunch conversation and put stock in dynamic through agreement. Steady leadership pioneers actually settle on an official choice, however do so solely after cautiously thinking about what other gathering individuals have said. Generally, their choice goes with the greater part. In a school arrangement, the head teachers need to counsel the Board of Governors, Directors, teachers, and now and again student pioneers before any choices are made. While this technique is viewed as successful, the time that it takes to arrive at a gathering agreement can be devastating for an undertaking. For each gathering part to be heard, a conversation can keep going for seemingly forever. This can prompt disappointment particularly where there is a requirement for desperation. Njuguna (1998) urges that headteachers who utilize strong leadership styles have higher academic performance than those headteachers who utilize the absolutist leadership style.

Ampaire & Namusonge (2018) contend that although steady leadership has been depicted as the best leadership style, it has some possible disadvantages. In circumstances where jobs are muddled or time is a significant factor, strong leadership can prompt correspondence disappointments and uncompleted projects. Now and again,

a bunch of individuals might not have the vital information or mastery to settle on quality commitments to the choice interaction. Strong leadership works best when individuals are talented and anxious to share information and thoughts and when there is sufficient opportunity. Regardless of the way that there have been many examinations on education leadership in Tanzania, there has not specific study done on the influence of head teachers' leadership style on students' academic performance which centers around open secondary schools in Dodoma metropolitan area, Tanzania and so this presented the need to embrace the study on the influence of head teachers' leadership style on students' academic performance on open secondary schools in Dodoma metropolitan locale, Tanzania.

4.2 Participative Leadership Style and Students' Academic Performance

The participatory leadership style is characterized by cooperation and collaboration. This leadership style refers to situations where a leader seeks the opinion of the subordinate before making a decision. In this leadership style, the leader seeks the opinion of the subordinates on a tentative plan of action and then makes decisions or the leader may ask for group input in formulating plans before making a decision. The style decentralizes power and authority (Okumbe, 1998).

Cole (2005) advocates for the leadership of a head teacher to be participative combining self-confidence, friendliness, firmness, and tact, and should not merely consist of issuing orders. The head teacher should be aware of the techniques that work in which situations and those that backfire. Participative style of leadership practiced by head teachers, proper delegation of duties relieves the school administrators from their many tasks and secondly it inculcates a sense of responsibility, hardworking and commitment among the subordinates which in turn enhances students' performance.

Oyetunyi (2006) points out that the major point of focus in leadership is sharing; the manager shares decision-making with the subordinates. Even though he/she invites contributions from the subordinates before making a decision, he/she 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). He/she may allow the subordinates to take a vote on an issue before a decision is taken (democratic). 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 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 decisions (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.

David & Gamage (2007) argue that effective participatory school administration;

leadership and management affect the trust levels of stakeholders. David's (2007) study focused on a survey of the effectiveness of democratic and participative school administration and management in one school division in the Philippines. Indicators of participative school administration, leadership, and management effectiveness, according to David's study, correlated with the stakeholders' level of trust. The study suggested that school leaders wishing to enhance the levels of trust among the stakeholders in their schools should consider these indicators, pertaining to the participative or democratic leadership approach, in carrying out their leadership duties and responsibilities. The implication of this study is that just like in the Philippines; school heads in Tanzania who favor the use of the participative style of leadership, attach the same level of trust to their stakeholders in the management of schools. They engage subordinates, parents, students, and the community in the decision-making process.

Kapela, Kopoka, and Namusonge (2019) assessed the contribution of leadership styles to academic performance in public primary schools in Tanzania. The study employed mixed and descriptive design. The findings indicated that the democratic leadership style revolved within the school structure as teachers and their leaders' shared responsibilities for teaching and handling administrative duties, but there was no evidence that head teachers and teachers had full power soliciting for school funding. Despite this study being conducted in Tanzania, it focused on primary schools left behind secondary schools. Therefore, the current study assessed the influence of leadership styles on students' academic performance in Secondary Schools focusing on Dodoma Region, Tanzania.

Akaro (2017) investigated influences of the school leadership styles on the students' academic performance in Tanzania community secondary schools: a case of Dodoma municipality. The study adopted a qualitative research approach into thematic areas for easy coding and interpretation, whereby the researcher transcribed each of the interviews by identifying and reviewing common themes through the coding process. The results of this study revealed that the democratic style is mostly used by heads of the schools in community secondary schools, and by large, teachers believe in the democratic leadership style due to their involvement in the decision-making process.

5. Research Methodology

The study adopted a mixed research approach. Specifically, the researcher adopted a concurrent mixed-method design. The target population for this study consisted of seven (7) head teachers and 110 teachers from seven (7) public secondary schools in Dodoma Urban District. The study used proportionate random sampling and purposive sampling to sample respondents. A closed and open-ended questionnaire was used on teachers and interviews were used on head teachers. The questionnaire instrument was pilot-tested on a small sample of ten teachers from one public secondary school in Dodoma Urban District Council which was excluded from the actual study. In the pilot study, the questionnaires were administered to ten teachers in a pre-test. The study employed

Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS) version 26, to analyze quantitative data which was generated by the use of frequencies, tables, and percentages. The analysis of the interviews involved reading the transcript, annotating the transcript, conceptualizing the data gathered from respondents, segmenting the data, analyzing the segment, and writing the results that were obtained. The researcher used internal consistency as this reliability type can be estimated by giving one form of a test once. The researcher administered questionnaires to ten teachers during pilot testing. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23.0 was used to compute the reliability index. This yielded a reliability index of 0.83. To ascertain the consistency of findings, the researcher reviewed the raw data, and the summary of the findings to see if there was any inconsistency. This was supplemented by member checking throughout the writing process. This was done by going back to the respondents from time to time to ascertain what the researcher had written was what the respondents had said.

6. Research Findings

6.1 Supportive Leadership Styles on Students' Academic Performance

The first objective of this study was to investigate directive leadership styles on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Dodoma Urban District Council. Teachers rated the items using the scale: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Not Sure, Agree, and Strongly Agree. The teachers' responses are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Supportive Leadership Styles on Students' Academic Performance (n=50)

Statement	SD	D	NS	A	SA
My supervisor prioritizes employees' satisfaction.	-	-	3 (6.0%)	35 (70.0%)	12 (24.0%)
My supervisor provides support and cooperation in the accomplishment of objectives.	-	-	3 (6.0)	35 (70.0)	12 (24.0)
My supervisor helps colleagues overcome the challenges they encounter.	-	-	9 (18.0%)	36 (72.0%)	5 (10.0%)
My supervisor is result-oriented.	-	-	1 (2.0%)	43 (86.0%)	6 (12.0%)
My supervisor treats us with respect and dignity.	-	-	3 (6.0%)	38 (76.0%)	9 (18.0%)

Source: Field Data (2023).

Table 1 shows that 70% of the teachers agreed that supervisors prioritize employees' satisfaction so as to ensure students' academic performance at school. These leaders who are the head-teachers in this case, prioritize employee satisfaction and morale when making decisions and developing long-term strategies. Furthermore, 70% of the teachers agreed that the supervisor provides support and cooperation in the accomplishment of objectives. This is affirmed by the findings of Muhia (2021) who revealed that supportive leadership is where a leader does not simply delegate tasks and receive results but

instead supports an employee until the task's completion. Muhia (2021) continues to say that a major upside to supportive leadership is that the leader will work with the employee until he or she is empowered and skilled enough to handle tasks with minimal supervision in the future.

The majority (72%) of the respondents agreed that supervisors help colleagues overcome the challenges they encounter. In a supportive leadership style, head teachers need to build trust, and inspiration, and help colleagues overcome the challenges they encounter in their work. Headteachers looking to be more supportive of their teachers and other staff should try to encourage teamwork, pay attention to members' relationships, and also show commitment.

The study also revealed that 86% of the teachers agreed that the supervisor is result oriented This finding is in agreement with Afza (2020) who says that a supportive leader offers employees the tools and tools required to ensure their team produces the desired results without needing to micromanage or give orders. This implies that a supportive head teacher aims at providing the necessary resources, tools, advice, and other necessities to all his employees so as to achieve the desired end results, in this case, the excellent academic performance of the students.

The study further found out that 76% of the teachers agreed that the supervisor treats them with respect and dignity. This finding is in line with Afza (2020) who indicated that supportive leadership emphasizes the importance of respect, trust, and affiliation between leaders and team members. Headteachers should aim to be friendly, approachable, and responsive to teachers' struggles and concerns. This finding was further affirmed by one of the principals during the interview who said that:

"If you're approachable and empathetic, then you're probably a supportive head teacher. You show concern for other employees including teachers, and you treat them with dignity and respect. All your employees, in turn, feel valued and cared for. In times of change or even a pandemic, they trust you to help them manage uncertainty and this will always bring a great impact on our students' academic achievement." (Principal 3, July 2023).

This implies that a supportive head teacher listens carefully to his/her employees and helps them deal with stress and the conflicting personalities of other employees which may hinder the excellent academic performance of the students. This requires empathy and a degree of sensitivity on the side of the headteacher that is difficult for some of them to achieve. As a supportive leader, the headteacher needs to train employees to deal with issues themselves, as they arise, relying on him/her when necessary but dealing with the problems themselves as much as possible. This requires significant time investment by the head teacher.

6.2 Participative Leadership Styles on Students' Academic Performance
The second objective of this study was to investigate participative leadership styles on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Dodoma Urban District

Council. Teachers rated the items using the scale: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Not Sure, Agree, and Strongly Agree. The teachers' responses are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Participative Leadership Styles on Students' Academic Performance (n = 50)

Statement	SD	D	NS	A	SA
My supervisor expresses ideas or suggestions	-	-	11 (22.0%)	28 (54.0%)	12 (24.0)
My supervisor ensures work is done independently	-	-	7 (14.0%)	33 (66.0%)	10 (20.0%)
My supervisor provides an opportunity to make decisions	-	-	2 (4.0%)	41 (82.0%)	7 (14.0%)
My supervisor recommendations are used to make decisions	-	-	3 (6.0%)	42 (84.0%)	5 (10.0%)
My supervisor provides the opportunity in decision-making on the tasks and duties to be performed and provide feedback	-	-	3 (6.0%)	41 (82.0%)	6 (12.0%)

Source: Field Data (2023).

Based on the findings of Table 2, the majority of the teachers (54.4%) agreed that the supervisor encourages team members to express their ideas or suggestions while 66% of teachers agreed that the supervisor ensures work is done independently. This is affirmed by the findings of Muhia (2021) who revealed that school heads should leave the teachers to be free to do what is worth to them without any directive or reminders. This is further supported during a face-to-face interview by one of the principals' who responded that;

> *"…the school heads need to treat teachers in a mature way and acknowledge that they have knowledge and skills to ensure students perform well academically and in all other dimensions, hence they can lead themselves as individuals."*

Furthermore, 82% of teachers agreed that the supervisor provided an opportunity to make decisions. These findings are in line with the study conducted by Musa (2014) which contended that school-level motivation is an important aspect that can improve school performance. Teachers' participation in decision-making leads to the recognition of intellect power and when teachers, intellect power is acknowledged, they participate more, become creative, and are thus motivated to work hard to ensure students' academic excellence. Therefore, school heads should respect teachers' ingenuity, knowledge, growth, ideas, and decision-making making, maintain friendship, and collegiality. This was supported by one of the principals during a face-to-face interview who stated that:

> *"As a participative leader, am required to be harmonious, and collaborative, and show friendship, respect, and association to my teachers. As a leader, am required to exercise power and authority in a democratic manner, whereby decisions should be taken by debates. As the school leader, I need to agree with the teachers on targets that I want to be accomplished. I am supposed to promote individual plans and solutions to issues raised by*

my teachers especially those concerning the academic performance and discipline of my students." (Principal 3, July 2023).

Another principal added that:

"*As a school principal, you need to invite contributions from the subordinates before making a decision through consultation. As a principal, I may also seek discussion and agreement with teachers over an issue before a decision is taken. This is called consensus. Sometimes I may allow the subordinates to take a vote on an issue before a decision is taken. This always makes my subordinates feel valued and that they belong to an organization hence improving their morale to work which then leads to good students' academic performance.*" (Principal 4, July 2023).

The majority (84%) of teachers agreed that the supervisor's recommendations are used to make decisions while 82% agreed that the supervisor provides an opportunity for teachers in decision making on the tasks and duties performed and provide feedback. This is affirmed by one principal during the interview who said that; "*teachers in this school offer feedback, and as their supervisor, I always implement that feedback into their decision-making process.*" The results imply that the participative leadership style is practiced to a large extent by school heads in public secondary schools in Dodoma Urban District Council.

In order to improve the academic performance of the students, the tendency to solve administrative problems is very crucial in an organization. It is very important for school heads to involve subordinates in solving non-emergency administrative problems that do not require urgent solutions. Respecting the ideas of subordinates will make them feel that they belong to an organization hence improving their morale to work which then leads to good students' academic performance. Supporting this study, Kavale & Omar (2015) contend that the practice of participative leadership style is by inviting contributions from as many stakeholders as possible before making decisions. The principals allow subordinates to vote over a presented issue and, thereafter, the decisions are made. School heads allow subordinates to negotiate their demands from the institution. They added that leaders of schools should use the participative leadership style to facilitate collective responsibility and consultative decision-making with subordinates.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study and guided by the research questions, it was concluded that:

Support from the head teacher is provided to teachers and students to ensure better performance. Furthermore, the supervisor normally provides solutions to the problems in order to ensure that goals are realized to attain the results. Head-teachers are

respectful to teachers and the students which has enabled them to work in a harmonious manner to attain good academic performance.

The study also concluded that, for a school to perform well academically, the head teacher encourages team members to express ideas and suggestions and he/she ensures that work is done independently. The school's head provides the opportunity to make decisions and he/she provides the opportunity in decision making on the tasks and duties to be performed by teachers and the students.

The study recommended that the Ministry of Education (MoE) needs to support head teachers by providing frequent and vigorous training in management programmes aimed at increasing efficiency and effectiveness in school management. It can also organize seminars and workshops for head teachers aimed at making them understand leadership skills better. Leadership skills are a prerequisite for better academic performance. The study further recommended that the headteachers should ensure that they use the most appropriate leadership styles that facilitate collective responsibility and create a conducive teaching and learning environment in schools in order to improve their academic performance.

Conflict of Interest Statement

As authors of this journal article entitled, Influence of Headteachers' Leadership Styles on Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Dodoma Urban District, Tanzania, we have no conflicts of interest to declare. We have all seen and agreed with the contents of the manuscript, and there is no financial interest to report. We certify that the submission is original work and is not under review by any other publication.

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