



Leadership Behaviours and its Relation with Female Principals' Management Experience: The Case of Vihiga County and Kisumu Municipality, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

The study sought to determine the leadership behaviours in initiating structure and consideration leadership dimensions reported by principals and observed by teachers and its relationship with management experience of female principals. A descriptive cross-sectional survey research using the correlational design sub-type was adopted for the study in Vihiga County and Kisumu Municipality in Kenya. A sample size of 124 teachers was used to generate requisite information. The study utilized the Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) and focus group discussion guideline as the main research instruments. The data were analyzed with the assistance of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to generate both descriptive and inferential statistics. A t-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were utilized to determine the nature of relationship between leadership behaviours and female principal's management experience. The results revealed that the scores of teachers gave to leadership behaviours. It was concluded that the greater variability in the teacher observer ratings of their principal's leadership behaviours in terms of initiating structure and consideration dimensions, the more realistic the perception of their principals. The test of hypothesis at $\alpha = .05$ level of confidence led to rejection of the hypothesis that there was no statistically significant difference between leadership behavior and principal's management experience leading to the adoption of the alternative hypothesis. It was thus concluded that there was a statistically significant correlation between the selected demographic variable of management experience and principals' leadership behaviours with regard to initiating structure and consideration. As a result, it was recommended that the Ministry of Education through the Kenya Education Management Institute (KEMI) should intensify offering leadership courses to newly recruited female Headteachers on current trends of institutional management. The Teachers Service Commission should carefully review the demographic characteristics of teachers before appointing them to management positions.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the Problem

Scholars have argued that demographic variables and critical other factors that could be used together with factors to explain the variances in the behaviours of effective leaders. They are very significant to virtually all kinds of organizations (Bell & Rvanniekerk, 2015). The current workforce in management positions seen in many countries is increasingly getting younger, well educated and gender skewed at the disadvantage of females (Zacher, Rosing & Fraises, 2011).

Previous studies conducted on leadership behaviours have obtained mixed results (Mehdinezhad & Sardarzahi, 2016). Alaei (2010) compared the importance of leadership and managerial behaviours from the perspective of leaders and principals of schools of Zahedan. The results showed that teachers and principals value leadership and managerial behaviours generally. However, among the components of leadership, principals believed that initiating structure and modeling are more important and related to demographic variables. Both teachers and principals stated that managerial behaviours outweigh demographic variables, although principals considered more value for managerial leadership behaviours than men. Mehdinezhad & Sardarshahar (2016) concludes that there is no significant difference between private and public schools in terms of effectiveness of leadership behaviours and also that there is no significant relationship between demographic variables such as academic qualifications of principals and efficiency of their leadership behaviours.

In both developed and developing countries, educationists and researchers have attempted to analyze the persistence of a gender discrepancy in education and particularly at higher education administrative levels through varied lenses and approaches (Acker, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Kanini, Mutungwa & Orodho, 2017). Some researchers have examined this issue by using structural perspectives (Johnsrud & Heck, 1998), socio-cultural perspectives (Lee, 2001; Ramanan et al., 2006), or even multiple perspectives (Oplatka, 2006; Lam, 2009; Nguyen, 2013).

Scholars such as Eagly and Wood (2011), Madsen (2008) and other prominent writers such as Oplatka (2006) who focus on women's experiences in higher education have presented more balanced narratives and insights on the gender inequality in administrative positions. As a result, researchers in various levels of education agree generally that women who aspire to top management positions navigate paths full of 'twists and turns' (Gray, 2011; Iverson, 2011). The socio-economic status, particularly the demographic variables of women is likely to be one of the chief indicators of women Headteachers effective leadership behavior in employment.

Gender-based workplace segregation occurs when women's work can be clearly distinguished from men's occupations and when concentrations of men and women appear at different levels in workplace hierarchies. This latter form of job participation difference is often called vertical segregation (Nguyen, 2013). Occupation segregation by gender constitutes a major social problem for working women. Full-time working women earn less than three-quarters of what full-time workingmen earn, and at least 40% of this wage gap is due to women's concentration in lesser paying jobs (Kanini, Mutungwa & Orodho, 2017). Its against this backdrop that this study attempted to examine the leadership behaviours and its relation with female principals' management experience: the case of Vihiga county and Kisumu Municipality, Kenya

1.2. The State of the Art Review

There are many leadership theories, for example the Trait Theory; Fiedler's Contingency Theory; Path-Goal Theory; Charismatic Leadership theory among others. Jago (1982) proposed a framework that organizes leadership theories based on each theory's focus and approach. Leadership behavioral theories; the theories on which this research is based; focus on the observable behavior that makes a leader effective. Their approach believes that there is a universal formula for establishing the behavior of an effective leader. In other words, that there is "one best way" to lead in all situations.

The most comprehensive and replicated of the behavioral theories resulted from research that began at Ohio State University in the late 1940s. These studies sought to identify independent dimensions of leader behaviour. Beginning with over a thousand dimensions, they eventually narrowed the list into two categories that substantially accounted for most of the leadership behaviour described by subordinates. They called these two dimensions initiating structure and consideration. These two dimensions are distinctly separate.

Initiating structure refers to the extent to which a leader is likely to define and structure his or her role and those of subordinates in the search for goal attainment. It includes behavior that attempts to organize work, work relationships and goals. The leader characterized as high in initiating structure could be described in terms such as 'assigns group members to particular tasks,' 'expects workers to maintain definite standards of performance,' and 'emphasizes the meeting of deadlines'.

Consideration is described as the extent to which the leader is likely to have job relationships characterized by mutual trust, respect for subordinates' ideas, and regard for their feelings. This type of leader shows concern for his followers' comfort, well-being, status and satisfaction. A leader high in consideration could be described as one who helps subordinates with personal problems, is friendly and approachable and

treats all subordinates as equals. Extensive research, based on these definitions, found that leaders high in initiating structure and consideration (a 'high-high' leader) tended to achieve high subordinate performance and satisfaction more frequently than those who rated low on either initiating structure, consideration, or both (Nguyen,2013).

The most important finding of this group is the discovery of both task and human dimension in assessing leadership. This two-dimensional approach helped in bridging the gap between Scientific Management movement and the Human Relations movement. Based on the premises of this theory the study of the leadership behaviors of secondary school Headteachers can be achieved by teachers documenting their inferences on the observable leadership behaviors of their Headteachers using the guidance of the leadership behavior description questionnaire.

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1.3 Statement of the Problem

Several factors account for differences in attitudes, behaviours and performance of effective leaders. The level of education, gender and age have been identified as important determinants. The scholars argue that these demographic variables influence people's values, wants and needs, and make them thin and behave differently (Michel,2000). The Kenyan labour force, especially the teachers under the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) is flooded with employees with high education. Researchers argue that managers are selected mainly because of their high level of formal education and previous merits such as years of job experience. This has created a challenge for organizations in identifying and selecting effective leaders amongst people with seemingly good qualities. These credential requirements are seldom important, and too often, people with high education levels do not have the competencies to match with the job (Guion & Highhouse,2004). Some scholars also argue that, without educated, skilled and motivated public managers, effectiveness and efficiency will never be attained (Guildhuys,2004). However, the scholars have argued that leaders can be educated and learn by experience to become effective managers. The personal qualities of effective leaders include among others, intellectual capacity.

On the other hand, ineffective leadership destroys the human spirit that is critical for ensuring organizational effectiveness. The human outcomes of ineffective leadership include, amongst others, employee stress, disenchantment, lack of creativity, cynicism, high staff turn over and poor performance. The present study, therefore, explores relationship between female headteachers demographic variables and their leadership behaviours. Rather than concentrating on what leaders are, the behavioral approach focuses on examining the observable behavior to rate the leadership of a head of an organization. It is on this premise that the study sought to determine secondary school teacher's

perception of their female Headteachers leadership behavior in Vihiga district and Kisumu city.

1.4. Objectives, Research Questions and Hypotheses

The main objective of the study was to determine the leadership behaviours and its relation with female principals' management experience: the case of Vihiga county and Kisumu municipality, Kenya/

The related research questions were:

1. What is the teacher's perception of the leadership behaviours of their school principals?
2. What is the principals perceptions of their own leadership behaviours?
3. Is there any significant difference between leadership behaviours reported by principals themselves and those observed by teachers?

The hypotheses were that:

H_0 : There is no statistically significant difference between leadership behaviours reported by principals themselves and those observed by teachers.

H_A : There is a statistically significant difference between leadership behaviours reported by principals themselves and those observed by teachers.

2.0. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1. Research design

This study is a descriptive-correlation research design. The choice of this design was based on the fact that it is a type of design that allows the gathering of data at a particular point in time with the intention of describing the nature of the existing conditions, identifying the standards against which existing conditions can be compared (Orodho, 2017). It was carried out in one rural area represented by Vihiga County and an urban area represented by Kisumu Municipality, Kisumu County.

2.2. Study Locale

The study was carried out in one rural area represented by Vihiga County and an urban area represented by Kisumu Municipality. Vihiga County forms one of the six Counties of Western province. It borders Kakamega County to the north, Nandi County to the east and Kisumu County to the south. The district is 33Km wide from east to west and 19Km from north to south and occupies a total area of 541 sq. Km. It has six Sub-Counties (Vihiga County Development Plan 1997-2000). By 1995 the district had six male only secondary schools, 13 females only schools and 55-mixed sex secondary schools.

Kisumu Municipality is in Winam Sub -County of Kisumu County, one of the four administrative divisions of Kisumu County. The others are Maseno, Kombewa and Kadibo. The Municipality has an area of 395.6 sq. Km with a population of 350,365. It is the largest urban area in western Kenya. It also has the largest number of schools 28 in total as compared to other divisions in the district (Kisumu District Development Plan, 2002-2008) eleven of which are administered by women.

2.3. Study Population and Sampling

The study population consisted of 19 public secondary schools in Vihiga County whose school administrators were women. In these schools there were a total of 156 male and 120 female teachers. Kisumu Municipality had 11 schools that had women as their headteachers, and these institutions had a total population of 108 male teachers and 115 female teachers. From the institutions stratified sampling was used to select a sample of the teachers using sex as the criteria. With an average of 8 male and 6 female teachers per school in Vihiga County and 9 male and 10 female teachers per school in Kisumu Municipality, the study utilized 5 male and 5 female teachers in each school to ensure a uniform sample in all institutions. Therefore, with a total of 10 teachers participating in each school and 16 schools to be studied then a total of 160 teachers and 16 female headteachers yielding a sample size of 176 participants, which allowed for equal representation and generalizability of results (Cohen,2012; Orodho, Nzabaliwa, Odundo, Waweru & Ndayambaje,2016).

2.4. Data Collection Instruments

According to the nature of the research topic, Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) developed by Kozes and Posner (2001) was used in two forms of self -reporting by principals and leadership behaviours observed by teachers. The instrument was adopted and domesticated slightly to fit in the local context of Kenya. The LBDQ outlines two dimensions of leadership; consideration and initiation structure, which have remained very much a constant in leadership studies. The questionnaire consists of 30 items in a five-point Likert Scale from very low=1 to very high =5.

Rather than concentrating on what leaders are, as the trait approach urged, the behavioral approach focused at what leaders do because contrary to traits, behaviors could be observed. Utilizing this headteacher the LBDQ carries 30 statements each describing a specific form of leadership behavior. The first fifteen statements seek information on the extent to which a leader exhibits initiating structure dimension leadership behaviors, while the next fifteen inquire about the extent to which a leader demonstrates consideration dimension leadership behaviors. A participant is able to describe a leader's behavior in either of the dimensions by indicating the frequency with which the leader engaged

in that form of leadership behavior by checking the statements against five-point Likert- scale.

2.4. Pretesting of Instruments

The instrument was given to 5 teachers 3 principals from schools not included in the study. The validity of the instrument, to establish the extent the instrument is measuring what it is supposed to measure (Orodho,2017; Orodho, Bizimana, Ampofo, Nadyamabje,2015) was confirmed by a number of academic staff in the relevant Department of Educational Management, Policy and Curriculum Studies, School of Education, Kenyatta University. In addition, reliability, which measures the consistency of the instrument in eliciting similar responses (Orodho, Nzabaliwa, Odundo, Waweru & Ndayambaje,2016) was determined using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The coefficient obtained .968 for the questionnaire form on leadership behaviours observed by teachers and .705 for the questionnaire form on self-reporting by principals. These figures were considered high enough to declare the instruments reliable as suggested by Orodho (2017).

2.5. Data Collection and Analysis

Upon obtaining the mandatory Research permit from the Ministry of Education Science and Technology, the investigator proceeded to County headquarters in Vihiga and Kisumu Counties and further obtained a letter of authorization from the County Education Officer in Kisumu. Phase one of data collection commenced with the distribution of the questionnaires by the investigator to the schools that had been sampled. The participants included female secondary school headteachers and teachers in their respective schools. First there was a visit to each of the schools to request permission to carry out the study from the schools' headteacher. During that time arrangements on the most suitable days, time and procedure to be followed in conducting the study in each school was established. Questionnaires were distributed and collected on the same day in some schools while others requested for more time and a later date. Participants were assured that all the information they provided would be treated as highly confidential. Phase two then set off by the investigator proceeding to the Vihiga County Education office where a letter of authorization to carry out the investigation in schools within the area was obtained. The whole process was conducted as previously explained.

2.6. Data Analysis

Data analysis was categorized into two stages: first the determination of responses to the leader behaviours description and testing of the hypotheses. The quantitative data collected through questionnaires were analyzed with the assistance of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Computer package for windows version 21. The SPSS Computer package

generated means, standard deviations and other inferential tests such as t-test and analysis of variance (ANOVA) depending on the nature of data (Orodho, Khatete & Muiraneza,2016) .

3.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Findings of the Study

The demographic variables of interest in this study were gender, education, teaching experience and age of participants. The teachers were requested to indicate their age and results displayed in Table 1.

Table 1: Age of Teachers and Headteachers sampled in Vihiga and Kisumu Counties

Age in Years	Teachers		Headteachers	
	f	%	f	%
Below 25	9	7.3	-	-
25-30	33	26.6	-	-
31-35	40	32.3	1	6.25
36-40	27	21.8	5	31.25
40 Years and above	15	12.1	10	62.5
Total	124	99.9	16	100

The demographic data of this study indicated that majority of the teachers in this region ranged between the ages of 31-35 constituting 32.3% of the all the respondents. Cumulatively, this shows that over 66% of the teachers implying that this region attracts young teachers. With regards to Headteachers, it was noted that majority, constituting 62.5% were of the 40 years and above bracket. This shows a contrasting scenario in which the relatively older Headteachers are in charge of the youthful teachers.

Table 2: Teaching experience of Teachers and Headteachers

Years' Experience	Teachers		Headteachers	
	f	%	f	%
1-5	37	29.8	8	50.0
6-10	42	33.9	5	31.2
11-15	34	27.4	3	18.8
16-20	7	5.6	-	-
Over 20 years	4	3.2	-	-
Total	124	100.0	16	100

The data contained in Table 2 indicates that the modal class is 6-10 years confirming that majority of teachers in the sample were having a teaching experience of between 6-10 years. The sample captured quite experienced teachers as 91 percent had an experience of at least 15 years.

From the data collected 50% of the headteachers had administrative experience of between 1 to 5 years. No headteacher had administrative experience of between 11-15 years therefore showing a

5years gap within the female headteachers population. There were two major categories of very junior and very senior female headteachers who had administrative experience of over 16 years.

Teachers Perception on Headteachers Initiating Structure and Consideration

The first question was on teacher's perception of the leadership behaviours or management styles. Teachers were requested to indicate the extent to which they considered their headteachers leadership behaviours with regards to initiating structure and consideration. The results are depicted in Table 4.

Table 4: One sample t-test on teachers' perception of leadership behavior of their principals(N=124)

Variable on leadership	Mean	Std D	T-value	t-test	df	Sig
Models the way	23.612	4.51	17.89	14.35	123	.001
Inspire a shared vision	23.901	4.83		13.57		.001
Challenge the process	23.301	5.25		11.42		.001
Enable others to act	22.841	5.23		10.45		.001
Encouragement and support	24.00	5.03		13.32		.001

The results of a one sample t-test in Table 4 shows that in total and in all components of female headteachers leadership behaviours, the calculated mean is more than the assumed mean (T-Value) and significant at $p < .001$). In fact, the teachers surveyed in both Vihiga County and Kisumu Municipality rated their principals highly in the leadership categories that depicted both initiating structure and consideration. The standard deviations ranged from 4.51 to 5.23. It is apparent that teachers in this study rated their principals most favorably in the leadership area of encouragement and support with a mean of 24.00 (SD= 5.03). The other

are is inspiring a shared vision, with a mean of 23.901 (SD=4.83). Overall, it appears that teachers in his study view their principals' leadership behaviours with respect to imitating structure and consideration dimensions favorably.

The second question: What is the principals' perception of their own leadership behaviours with regards to initiating structure and consideration? Principals were requested to rate themselves regarding the leadership behaviours of initiating structure and consideration of five questions and results depicted in Table 5.

Table 5: One sample t-test on Principals' perception of their own leadership behaviours(N=16)

Variable on leadership	Mean	Std D	T-value	t-test	df	Sig
Models the way	27.612	6.51	18.2	8.35	15	.001
Inspire a shared vision	25.901	4.83		16.57		.001
Challenge the process	24.301	4.25		15.42		.001
Enable others to act	23.841	4.23		14.45		.001
Encouragement and support	26.00	5.03		19.32		.001

According to data carried in Table 5, in total and in all components summarizing initiating structure and consideration, the calculated mean is more than the assumed mean (T-Value) and significant at $p < .001$. In other words, the principals from Vihiga County and Kisumu Municipality surveyed rated themselves relatively very high on each of the five components that summarize initiating structure and consideration. The mean scores ranged from 23.841 to 27.612. Based on the data displayed in Table 5, it can be concluded that Principals view their overall leadership behaviours with

regards to initiating structure and consideration very favorably.

The third question: Is there any significant difference between leadership behaviours reported by principals themselves and those observed by teachers (N= 140). One sample t-test was performed to determine the relationship between the rating of the two groups of respondents regarding the leadership behaviours of female headteachers in their schools. The results are displayed in Table 6.

Table 6: One-Sample Test for Teachers and Principals Evaluation of Leadership behaviours

T	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
					Scores obtained	70.317
Participant	41.292	139	.000	1.11429	1.0609	1.1676

An examination of results of an independent t-test in Table 6 show that there is a significant difference between the views and evaluations of teachers and principals on both behavior components if initiating

structure and consideration. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed at $\alpha=.05$ level of confidence and results displayed in Table 7.

Table 7: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Scores obtained					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.168	1	.168	.331	.566
Within Groups	69.968	138	.507		
Total	70.136	139			

According to results carried in Table 7, there is no significant relationship between teachers and Principals rating on female principals' leadership behaviours in terms of initiating structure and consideration. Overall, it can be deduced that there isn't any significant difference because teachers and principals concur that female principals generally are well versed and practice management leadership of initiating structure and consideration.

3.2. Discussion of Findings

The analysis of data has established teachers rated their principals high in both areas of initiating structure and consideration. This result is at variance and hence inconsistent with the findings of Kursunoglu and Tariogen (2009) who reported that teachers evaluated their principals as moderate. The results, however, seem to be consistent with Kouzes and Posner (2003) for the general population. From the perspectives of teachers, there is no significant relationship between any of the components of leadership behaviours and management experience of principals. In other words, leadership behaviours of both experienced and inexperienced principals are relatively the same and generally acceptable (Mehdinezhad & Sardarzahi, 2016).

A study by Mehdinezhad & Sardarzahi (2016) established that there is no significant difference between self-reported leadership behaviours by principals and those observed by teachers on enable others act which is more of initiating structure. In terms of other components, a significant difference was found between self-reported leadership behaviours by the principals and those observed by teachers (Mehdinezhad & Sardarzahi, 2016). In fact, the study by Mehdinezhad & Sardarzahi (2016) showed that leadership behaviours reported by principals and observed by teachers are at favorable level and consistent with findings of Kozes and Posner (2003) for the general population.

The study findings contrast with Johnson & Eby (2011) who found that female managers were more interpersonally oriented in feminine contexts but agree that they are more task oriented in male-dominated

contexts. Kanini, Mutungwa and Orodho (2017) explain the difference in the shift in leadership orientation towards change of subordinate composition. The argument is that women who have a token status in a predominantly male organization might be treated and perceived differently because of their visibility, and change their leadership style accordingly. In summary, organizational factors, especially sex-composition of a work Environment, are likely to affect the behavioral styles of female managers. To some extent they adapt to the organizational context, acting more congruent with the female- or male-dominated setting.

When probed to explain the criteria for rating the female Headteachers, on FGD had the following to say:

Research findings on female headteachers leadership behavior showed in table 4 describe the frequently displayed leadership characteristics. They include; emphasis on meeting deadlines; making leader and subordinates roles explicit; always asking that subordinates follow rules and procedures; maintaining high standards of performance; emphasizing schedules and specific work assignments.

Some of the leadership characteristics perceived by the teachers as frequently displayed by their headteachers on the consideration dimension include; friendly and approachable; made group members feel at ease when talking with them; refused to explain their actions. Further still the teachers agreed that the headteachers rarely did personal favors for group members or did little things that made it pleasant to be a member of the group (Orodho, Waweru & Getange, 2014).

This finding is in agreement with Allan (2004) and Alaei (2010) in whose study's findings were that female headteachers rated higher on initiating structure leadership dimension but in disagreement with Mehdinezhad and Sardarzahi (2016) studies who found that female headteachers scores were high both in initiating structure and on consideration. Asunda (1983) study noted that teachers perceived the female head

teachers as autocratic. They contrast the femininity/masculinity dimensions of existing sex stereotypes where femininity is associated with the consideration dimension. Women have traditionally been perceived to possess characteristics such as emotionality, kindness and nurturance, termed consideration behavior (Brubakar & Coble, 2005; Kursunoglu & Tanrigoen, 2009). Thus, women are predicted to engage more in consideration leadership behaviors. They raise the same concerns as found in Razai -Vashti (2011) study which in examining the attitudes that teachers have toward female principals found that female principals lacked legitimate authority.

CONCLUSION

The study sought to determine the leadership behaviours in initiating structure and consideration leadership dimensions. It can be concluded that although the scores teachers gave to leadership on both initiating structure and consideration of principals were less than the scores principals gave to their own leadership behaviours, the scores were at an acceptable and satisfactory level. It is also concluded that there is a significant positive correlation between the rating of teachers and principals on both leadership components of initiating structure and consideration. Finally, there is no statistically significant difference between the perceptions of teachers and principals regarding the leadership traits of initiating structure and consideration.

On the basis of the foregoing findings and conclusions the following recommendations were made;

1. Given the current situation in the country, TSC should employ teachers and school principals who conform with acceptable leadership behaviours is vital.
2. The female headteachers should be trained in school leadership through in servicing to enable them achieve a balance of various management components.
3. Female teachers who aspire to be education administrators should therefore be motivated to pursue higher training in education management. They should also be encouraged to attend seminars and workshops that offer training on school management.
4. TSC should provide study leave, and study loans for female teachers willing to pursue higher education. Female teachers should also be motivated to make use of the degree programs being offered by universities designed to accommodate the normal school programme to advance their academic qualifications.
5. Current headteachers should be sensitized on the need to encourage female teachers to take up school duties that will provide them with opportunities to gain expertise in school management.
6. TSC should appoint more female headteachers to manage schools with large student population as it has been demonstrated in this study that they possess the capability to do so as their leadership behavior was rated highest.

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