

# Dichotomizing Headteachers' Leadership Practices and Management of Teaching Staff in Ugandan Secondary Schools: Insights from Secondary Schools in Western Uganda

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**Abstract:** *This study investigated the leadership practices of head teachers and their impact on the management effectiveness of public and private secondary schools in Kakumiro District, Uganda, grounded in Frederick Taylor's Scientific Management theory. The study aimed to examine the types of head teachers' leadership and academic staff management in government aided secondary schools. The descriptive mixed-methods were employed and this approach combined qualitative and quantitative data collection. A case research design was adopted and it gave in-depth understanding of the variables under investigations. The study sampled 662 representatives of teaching staff across six selected public and private secondary schools with Kakumiro District. Purposive sampling was employed for school leaders due to their direct involvement in leadership, while simple random sampling was applied to select teachers. The study used survey, interviews and focused group discussion. The data collections instruments were validate through test and pre-testing to verify their reliability. Ethical considerations were rigorously maintained, with participant anonymity ensured. Results indicated a weak positive correlation between the extent of leadership practices and school management effectiveness ( $r = 0.112$ ) and between teachers' perceptions of leadership skills and management efficacy ( $r = 0.036$ ). A weak negative correlation ( $r = -0.229$ ) suggested that reducing leadership barriers could improve management outcomes. Identified barriers included unclear task assignment, inadequate teacher preparation, and limited trust in delegated responsibilities. Key strategies for improvement included aligning tasks with teacher capabilities, fostering trust, enhancing communication, motivating staff, and providing structured training. In conclusion, leadership exerts a modest yet positive influence on school management. The study recommends implementing strategic interventions to address identified barriers, thereby promoting efficient leadership, enhanced staff engagement, and improved educational outcomes. These findings provide empirical evidence for the critical role of leadership in public and private school leadership and offer actionable guidance for policymakers and educational administrators seeking to strengthen school management practices in Uganda.*

**Keywords:** Leadership, Head Teachers, School Management, Public and private Secondary Schools.

## Introduction

Education is universally recognized as a cornerstone of sustainable development, serving as the foundation for socio-economic, cultural, and political transformation. Quality education equips learners with essential 21st-century skills, including critical thinking, problem-solving, and innovation, enabling them to thrive in a rapidly evolving world emphasizes that the right to education (Education, 2021). The education is fulfilled when one acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that contribute to individual and societal betterment. Effective school management is thus essential for realizing these educational objectives.

Headteachers Leadership is widely acknowledged as a pivotal strategy in school management allowing head teachers to optimize their workload, enhance productivity, and focus on strategic tasks. Effective leadership fosters teacher autonomy, accountability, motivation, and professional growth (Ndidi et al., 2025). Conversely, ineffective leadership can result in work overload for school leaders, poor task execution, reduced teacher engagement, and compromised educational outcomes. Despite the recognized importance of leadership in school administration, there is limited empirical evidence in the Ugandan context linking head teachers' leadership practices directly to measurable management outcomes, particularly in rural districts such as Kakumiro (Klar & Huggins, 2020).

In Kakumiro District, persistent challenges in public and private secondary school management have manifested in poor O-level examination results, high student dropout rates, strained teacher-leader relationships, absenteeism, indiscipline, demotivated staff, and insufficient accountability (New Vision, 2017; Secondary School Inspectors (Lingam & Lingam, 2023). Although district authorities have implemented interventions such as refresher courses, teacher counselling, and performance warnings, improvements

remain minimal. These challenges suggest a systemic gap in understanding the mechanisms through which leadership practices influence school management efficacy, highlighting a critical area for investigation.

Despite recognition of Heartachers leadership as a core management strategy, its application by head teachers in Kakumiro District's public and private secondary schools appears inconsistent and largely ineffective, contributing to persistent mismanagement (Sinclair et al., 2022). Existing literature has primarily focused on theoretical frameworks of leadership or its general role in organizational management with scant empirical research examining the local realities of school administration in rural Uganda. Specifically, there is limited understanding of how different types of leadership, teacher perceptions, and contextual barriers interact to affect school management outcomes (Lingam & Lingam, 2023). This gap is critical because ineffective leadership can exacerbate challenges such as teacher demotivation, work overload, and poor student performance, yet few studies provide actionable strategies to address these issues in similar contexts.

This study addresses this gap by investigating the leadership practices of head teachers, their influence on school management, and the barriers limiting effective leadership in Kakumiro District. By linking leadership practices to observable management outcomes, the research contributes novel empirical insights into the mechanisms of educational leadership in rural public and private schools (Xue & Li, 2022). The findings are expected to inform policy, enhance administrative efficiency, reduce student dropout rates, and provide strategies for professional development, thereby advancing knowledge in both educational management and the practical application of leadership theory in under-researched contexts.

### Methodology

The study adopted a parallel mixed methodology that enabled collective of both qualitative and quantitative data. According to Resources, (2022) a research design refers to the strategic plan that guides a researcher in conducting a study systematically. This study adopted a **case research design**, which allows in-depth and clear understanding of the variables under investigation. The case a design was particularly suited for studies aiming to capture diverse perspectives efficiently within a short timeframe (Abakoumkin & Green, 2021). These two approaches were appropriate for this study as it enabled the collection of comprehensive data from unit of analysis and sampled participants across six geographically dispersed public and private secondary schools in Kakumiro District. The sample were scientifically selected using purposive, stratified and simple random techniques within one month, optimizing time and resources while maintaining scientific validity (Badr & Lhoussaine, 2024). The quantitative approach complemented this by enabling the systematic measurement and statistical analysis of leadership practices, management effectiveness, and related variables. The synergy of these methods allowed for a more nuanced understanding of the research problem, enhancing the reliability and validity of the findings.

### Geographical Area of Study

The study was conducted in selected one hundred public and private secondary schools **in** Kakumiro District to save as unit of analysis from which 662 representatives were drawn as unit of inquiry. The study sample consisted of 662 individual representatives, including four hundred six two teachers, one hundred deputy head teachers, and one hundred headteachers (Moreira et al., 2012). These categories were considered critical drawn from one hundred schools with Kakumiro District as they either perform leadership, experience leadership, or support school management processes. This ensured a representative sample of stakeholders with direct experience of leadership practices.

### Data Collection Methods and Instruments

Data were collected using a triangulated approach: interviews, surveys, and focused group discussion analysis. This methodological plurality enhanced validity and reliability by compensating for the limitations of single instruments. The instruments of data collection here below were validated and tested before they were administered in the study.

- **Interview Guide:** Structured interviews were conducted with head teachers and deputy head teachers to capture detailed qualitative data on leadership practices, barriers, and management outcomes.
- **Questionnaires:** Self-administered structured questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data from teachers, enabling efficient coverage across dispersed schools.
- **Focused group discussion Guide:** Analysis of school focused group discussion meetings with few members 5 to 6 were engaged as provided objective evidence of leadership practices and administrative effectiveness.

### Data Analysis

The collected data were appropriately analyzed using Quantitative Analysis: Questionnaire data were analyzed using **SPSS** to generate descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages) and correlations, allowing the identification of patterns and relationships in

leadership practices and management outcomes. While the Qualitative data was from Interview transcripts were coded thematically to identify recurring ideas, contextual insights, and perspectives that complemented quantitative findings (Fang, 2025)

### Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from Faculty of Education. Participation was voluntary, informed consent was obtained, and anonymity was maintained (Ahmad & Islam, 2024). Schools were assigned alphabetical codes to protect identity. All data were reported truthfully, and ethical standards for research conduct were strictly observed throughout the study.

### Results

The study findings initial aim of the research was to identify the Head teachers leadership types commonly employed by head teachers in Kakumiro District's public and private secondary schools, and how these practices align with effective management. The results showing the common leadership types used in the selected public and private secondary schools in Kakumiro district are shown in Table 4.3 below

**Table 1: Responses given by the different respondents on the common leadership types used by Headteachers in selected public and private secondary schools in Kakumiro District**

Statements	S	D	U	A	S	Mean scores
	n ( % )	n ( % )	n ( % )	n ( % )	n ( % )	
1. The head teacher only often assigns some tasks to perform on his/her behalf	(6. 8)	(2 2. 5)	(0 )	(4 0)	(2 5. 5)	3.42
2. The head teacher often assigns me some tasks to perform on his/ her behalf and not any other person	(8. 89 )	(3 0)	(1 .1 1)	(3 2. 22 )	(2 4. 44 )	3.24
3. Our head teacher often gives authority to heads of departments to carry out all the duties of the particular department	(1 0)	(1 6. 67 )	(2 .2 2)	(4 6. 67 )	(2 2. 22 )	3.64
4. When I am assigned a task by my head teacher, I carry out independent decisions in executing it with no constant consultations with him/her on what to do but give feedback to him or he when the work is accomplished	(2 6. 67 )	(2 6. 67 )	(0 )	(2 1. 11 )	(1 7. 78 )	2.86
5. Rarely do our head teacher assign us specific tasks (he/she normally generalizes).	(1 4. 44 )	(1 2. 22 )	(1 .1 1)	(3 7. 78 )	(2 6. 67 )	3.54
6. Our head teacher most of the time involves heads of departments in planning for departmental activities.	(8. 89 )	(2 2. 22 )	(2 .2 2)	(4 4. 44 )	(1 3. 33 )	3.29

	(5 1. 11 )	(2 6. 67 )	(1 .1 1)	(1 0)	(1. 11 )	1.71
7. Our head teacher very often assigns us tasks through a written document						

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

From Table 1 above, it is observed that 7 leadership types were identified to be used in the selected public and private schools in Kakumiro District. Analysis of the data in Table 4.3 revealed seven distinct types of leadership practices employed by head teachers in the selected public and private secondary schools in Kakumiro District. The findings indicate variation in both the frequency and perceived use of these practices among respondents (Triantafyllou et al., 2023), (Olina et al., 2025).

The most commonly observed leadership practice involved head teachers granting heads of departments the authority to manage all duties within their respective departments, with a mean score of 3.64. Approximately 22.22% of respondents agreed that this practice was frequently used, while only 10% disagreed. This suggests a moderately strong preference for departmental autonomy as a leadership strategy.

The second most prevalent practice was generalized task assignment, where head teachers rarely allocated specific tasks but rather assigned responsibilities broadly (Mean = 3.54). The third practice involved head teachers delegating some tasks to teachers to perform on their behalf, recorded with a mean of 3.42.

Further, involving heads of departments in planning departmental activities ranked fourth (Mean = 3.29), indicating moderate engagement of departmental leadership in decision-making processes. The fifth-ranked practice was assigning a specific teacher an exclusive task, with no other staff intervening (Mean = 3.24).

The sixth practice entailed teachers exercising independent decision-making when executing delegated tasks, with the head teacher receiving feedback only after completion (Mean = 2.86). This reflects limited but notable autonomy granted to staff in task execution (Leadership et al., 2025).

The least utilized practice was formal task assignment through written documentation, which scored a mean of 1.71, suggesting that written leadership is infrequently employed across the sampled schools.

### Leadership Practices and School Management

To examine the relationship between the leadership practices employed by head teachers and the effectiveness of school management, a Pearson correlation coefficient analysis was conducted (Edge & Haniford, 2023). This analysis aimed to determine the strength and direction of association between the types of leadership and key indicators of school management, including task execution efficiency, teacher motivation, departmental coordination, and overall school performance.

The correlation results provide empirical insights into how specific leadership practices, such as granting departmental authority or involving staff in planning, are associated with effective administrative outcomes (Ndidi et al., 2025). These findings lay the groundwork for identifying which leadership approaches most strongly contribute to improved management in the public and private secondary schools of Kakumiro District.

### Delegating Practices Commonly Used by Head Teachers' on Proper Management of Public and private Secondary Schools in Kakumiro District.

		leadership Practices	Proper Management
leadership Practices	Pearson Correlation	1	.006
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.477
	N	90	90
Proper Management	Pearson Correlation	.006	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.477	
	N	90	90

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

Table 2 indicates a **positive but weak correlation** ( $r = 0.006$ ) between the leadership practices of head teachers and the effective management of public and private secondary schools in Kakumiro District. Quantitative data corroborate this finding, as all six head teachers reported that they delegate duties to their deputies and teaching staff. However, the minimal correlation suggests that, despite the leadership of responsibilities, the overall influence of these practices on school management outcomes is limited (Jayman et al., 2025).

Qualitative evidence provides further context for this weak association. Certain critical responsibilities such as classroom management, teaching, student assessment, discipline, and fostering teamwork cannot be effectively delegated, remaining the direct responsibility of teachers or head teachers (Leadership et al., 2025). Routine administrative tasks, such as monitoring attendance and checking student notes, also fall outside the scope of leadership, limiting the potential impact of delegated authority on overall school performance.

In areas of **professional development**, head teachers can delegate activities such as organizing workshops, coordinating seminars, and mentoring new teachers (Divaakaran, 2023). While these delegated responsibilities support staff growth, their influence on the broader quality of school management remains marginal, consistent with the weak quantitative correlation observed.

These findings align with the principles articulated by Harappa (2020), which emphasize that formal leadership confers the authority to perform specific tasks while holding the delegate accountable for outcomes (Kiiza, 2014). In structured organizations, leadership is essential for operational efficiency; however, certain core functions teaching and direct student supervision, for instance—are inherently non-delegable. Consequently, while leadership contributes to administrative efficiency and staff development, it does not substantially alter the overall effectiveness of school management. (Kiiza & Wood, 2011)

This nuanced understanding underscores that leadership is a supportive, rather than a primary, mechanism for improving school management. Effective leadership in public and private secondary schools requires balancing delegated responsibilities with direct involvement in critical teaching and administrative functions to ensure optimal management outcomes.

**Effects of leadership of Duties on Effective Management of Selected Public and private Secondary Schools in Kakumiro District**

The study also wanted to establish Teachers’ perception of the effects of leadership of Duties on effective management as its second objective. The results are shown in Table 4.5 below.

**Table 3: Teachers’ effects of leadership of Duties on effective management of the selected public and private schools in Kakumiro District**

Statements	SD	D	U	A	SA	Mean scores
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	
1. leadership of duties has positive effects on the management of our school	(6.67)	(2.22)	(1.11)	(37.78)	(52.22)	4.27
2. leadership of duties saves time and reduces the workload of our head teacher	(2.22)	(11.11)	(1.11)	(35.56)	(50)	4.24
3. leadership of duties has increased teamwork and collaboration in school. I feel a sense of belonging to this school	(6.67)	(8.89)	(0)	(55.56)	(28.89)	3.84
4. Through doing delegated tasks, I feel trusted and loved. This motivates me to work hard to achieve the school goals	(33.33)	(13.33)	(2.22)	(33.33)	(47.78)	4.43
5. I believe, that carrying out independent decisions while executing the delegated tasks makes me more committed at work and accomplish the task on time	(2.22)	(6.67)	(1.11)	(37.78)	(52.22)	4.38

(Source: Field Data (2025))

Analysis of Table 3 reveals that the overall mean perception **score** among teachers was 4.3, notably higher than the neutral benchmark of 3. This indicates a generally positive perception of leadership practices (Jayman et al., 2025). The highest-rated perception was that performing delegated tasks made teachers feel trusted and valued, which in turn motivated them to work diligently towards achieving school goals (Mean = 4.43). This was followed by the perception that leadership positively influenced school management (Mean = 4.27), and that leadership saved time and reduced the workload of head teachers (Mean = 4.24). The lowest-rated perception, though still positive, was that leadership enhanced teamwork, collaboration, and a sense of belonging among teachers (Mean = 3.84).

Qualitative findings reinforced these perceptions. Head teachers from Schools A, B, and C highlighted that leadership reduced their administrative burden, allowing them to focus on critical, non-delegable activities. Notably, the head teacher of School F remarked: “It gives me resting time and more time to plan for other important school work.” This sentiment underscores the practical value of leadership in improving time management and strategic oversight (Ndidi et al., 2025).

**Teachers’ Perceptions and Effective School Management**

To examine the relationship between teachers’ perceptions of leadership and the **effective** management of public and private secondary schools, a Pearson correlation coefficient analysis was conducted. The correlation coefficient ( $r = 0.036$ ) indicates a weak positive relationship between teachers’ perceptions of leadership and effective school management. This suggests that while teachers’ perceptions of delegated duties exert some influence on management outcomes, the effect is relatively modest. In practice, increased leadership by head teachers may contribute to more efficient school operations (Echols, 2024). ; However, the overall impact on management quality is limited.

These findings highlight a critical insight: although teachers appreciate leadership and recognize its benefits for motivation, workload reduction, and organizational efficiency, leadership alone is insufficient to drive substantial improvements in school management. This aligns with prior studies emphasizing that leadership is a supportive, rather than transformative, mechanism for enhancing administrative effectiveness (Jayman et al., 2025).

**Barriers to Effective leadership of Duties in Public and private Secondary Schools in Kakumiro District**

The study also found out that there were barriers of different forms that hindered leadership to be done in the selected public and private secondary schools in Kakumiro district. These barriers are shown in Table 4.5 shown below.

**Table 4 : Barriers to Effective leadership of Duties on Effective Management of Public and private Secondary Schools in Kakumiro District (n = 90)**

Statements	SD	D	U	A	SA	Mean scores
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	
1. Shortage of finance in this school is a barrier to perform well delegated tasks since we lack enough resources to use	(0)	(1.11)	(0)	(21.11)	(77.79)	4.77
2. As teachers, we are not motivated by being given extra allowance for delegated duties, hence at times I dodge to be delegated	(1.11)	(3.33)	(0)	(10)	(85.56)	4.88
3. Due to un-supportive environment, the school being located in a remote area and no accommodation is given, makes me often fail to meet the deadline of the delegated tasks	(6.67)	(17.78)	(2.22)	(28.89)	(44.44)	3.97
4. Lack of proper communication systems negatively affects leadership of duties in our school	(4.44)	(38.89)	(1.11)	(50)	(5.55)	3.43

5. Delegates in this school are given full authority of making independent decisions while carrying out work delegated to them.	(31 .11 )	(24 .44 )	(0 )	(8. 89)	(35 .56 )	1.87
6. Teachers to be delegated are not always prepared well to take up delegated tasks. Everything is done in haste and usually verbally	(2. 22)	(22 .22 )	(1. 11 )	(53 .33 )	(15 .56 )	3.52
7. Shortage of well-trained staff also acts as a hindrance to leadership of duties in this school	(2. 22)	(15 .56 )	(3. 33 )	(42 .22 )	(36 .67 )	3.82
8. Shortage of resources leads to failure to delegate work which requires the distribution of the little resources an organisation has	(24 .44 )	(27 .78 )	(3. 33 )	(35 .56 )	(8. 89)	2.80
9. Lack of established methods and procedures for work leadership in our school affects leadership of duties in our school.	(4. 44)	(11 .11 )	(2. 22 )	(56 .67 )	(25 .56 )	3.89

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

Analysis of Table 4: identified nine key barriers to effective leadership of duties in the selected public and private secondary schools in Kakumiro District. These barriers were ranked according to the strength of perception among respondents, as summarized below.

The most significant barrier **was the** lack of financial incentives for delegated duties, with teachers reporting that the absence of extra allowances reduced motivation and sometimes led to avoidance of delegated tasks (Mean = 4.88). The second-ranking barrier was insufficient school finances, which limited the resources available to delegated staff to execute their tasks effectively (Mean = 4.77).

The third-ranked barrier was the unsupportive environment, particularly in remote schools where accommodation and logistical support were lacking, resulting in delegates failing to meet deadlines (Mean = 3.97). Following **this, the** absence of established methods and procedures for leadership was identified as a constraint, undermining consistency and efficiency in task allocation (Mean = 3.98).

Other notable barriers included:

- Shortage of well-trained staff, limiting the pool of competent delegates (Mean = 3.82).
- Inadequate preparation of teachers for delegated tasks, often compounded by verbal instructions and hasty assignments (Mean = 3.52).
- Poor communication systems, which negatively affected coordination and task execution (Mean = 3.43).
- Limited motivation through rewards or recognition for extra duties (Mean = 2.80).
- Restricted autonomy for delegates, preventing them from making independent decisions during task execution (Mean = 1.87), which was perceived as the least significant barrier.

Overall, the mean score of 3.7 indicates that the majority of respondents recognized multiple barriers as significant impediments to effective leadership (Ndidi et al., 2025). However, the most critical factors were lack of motivation through financial incentives **and** insufficient resources to facilitate delegated tasks. Qualitative data corroborated these findings, with head teachers from all six schools expressing concern that financial constraints significantly undermine the leadership process.

### Barriers to leadership and School Management

To determine the influence of these barriers on school management, a Pearson correlation coefficient analysis was conducted. This statistical analysis aimed to assess the strength and direction of the relationship between the identified barriers to leadership and the effectiveness of management in Kakumiro District's public and private secondary schools (*Rethinking Teacher Education Curricula Finished With Ugandan Indigenous Contents and Learning Experiences - Google Search, 2024*). The findings are presented in the subsequent table and discussed in relation to their implications for improving leadership practices and overall school management.

**Table 5: Barriers to effective leadership and management of Public and private Secondary Schools**

		Barriers to leadership	to Proper Management
Barriers to leadership	Pearson Correlation	1	-.229*
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.015
	N	90	90
Proper Management	Pearson Correlation	-.229*	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.015	
	N	90	90

(Source: Research Survey Data,2025)

Table 5 indicates a negative correlation ( $r = -0.229$ ) between the barriers to effective leadership and the quality of management in public and private secondary schools in Kakumiro District. This suggests that the presence of these barriers adversely affects school management, and that reducing or eliminating them could enhance administrative efficiency and overall school performance.

Qualitative findings further substantiate this relationship. Some head teachers reported reluctance to delegate due to perceptions that their subordinates lacked commitment (Ndidi et al., 2025). Financial constraints emerged as a major impediment, limiting the capacity to motivate staff through allowances or provide necessary resources for executing delegated tasks. For example, the head teacher of School F remarked:

“Sometimes my teachers refuse indirectly to do the delegated tasks until I apply force and use threatening words because here we do not have money to give them allowances for extra tasks done. They keep on comparing themselves with those teachers who get allowances from big schools that share with them how much they get.”

The expression of frustration observed during this interview underscores the significant emotional and operational impact of financial and motivational barriers on leadership .

These findings are consistent with prior literature, which emphasizes that the benefits of leadership are only realized when it is executed effectively. Ineffective leadership often arises from a lack of trust between head teachers and delegates, environmental constraints such as inadequate accommodation requiring long commutes, and insufficient funds and resources to support delegated tasks (Leadership et al., 2025). Similarly, (Ndidi et al., 2025) identify barriers to effective leadership as originating from the delegator, the delegate, and the environment, highlighting the multi-faceted nature of leadership challenges in educational institutions.

**Strategies to Overcome Barriers to Effective leadership**

Having identified the key obstacles to effective leadership in Kakumiro District’s public and private secondary schools, the study also explored strategies proposed by teachers to mitigate these challenges. These strategies aim to enhance leadership practices, strengthen school management, and improve overall operational efficiency. Table 4.10 (below) presents selected teacher responses detailing practical measures to overcome the identified barriers.

**Table 6: Overcoming the Barriers to Effective leadership in the Selected Public and private Secondary Schools in Kakumiro District (n = 90)**

Statements about ways of overcoming the barriers	SD	D	U	A	SA	Mean scores
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	
1. Staff motivation including, accommodation at the school premises when well implemented will reduce barriers to leadership of duties in this school	(1.1)	(3.3)	0	(17.8)	(77.8)	<b>4.72</b>
2. The Ministry of Education and District Education Officers through seminars and workshops should add more effort to educate head teacher and teachers about the importance of effective leadership of duties	(25.6)	(26.7)	(4.4)	(26.7)	(16.7)	<b>2.97</b>

3. Before delegating work, there should be first consideration of what to delegate, the capability/knowledge, skills, interest and time of the teacher since some of us are over burdened	(1.1)	(6.7)	(1.1)	(55.6)	(35.6)	<b>4.17</b>
4. Putting up policies and clear guidelines that regulate leadership in schools, colleges, and other institutions is of paramount importance	(12.2)	(52.2)	(17.8)	(10.0)	(7.8)	<b>2.81</b>
5. Proper communication channels should be used during leadership of duties		(15.6)	(1.1)	(51.1)	(34.4)	<b>4.00</b>
6. Enough preparation of teachers and training to equip them with the necessary skills to take up delegated tasks is highly needed in our school		(5.6)	(2.2)	(53.3)	(37.8)	<b>4.33</b>
7. There should be established methods and procedures for delegating duties in our schools	(1.1)	(5.6)	0	(55.6)	(37.8)	<b>4.20</b>

(Source: Field Data, 2024)

Table 6: presents **seven statements** in which teachers were asked to provide their views on strategies to overcome or minimize barriers to effective leadership in the selected public and private secondary schools. The responses indicate several practical and actionable measures.

The most strongly recommended strategy **was** staff motivation, including provision of financial allowances and accommodation for delegated teachers (Mean = 4.72). Qualitative evidence reinforces this finding; the head teacher of School F stated:

“Leadership needs facilitation to motivate teachers and provide the necessary resources to complete delegated tasks within the set time limit.”

The second-ranked recommendation emphasized considering the suitability of delegated tasks before assignment, taking into account teachers’ skills, knowledge, interest, and workload to prevent overburdening (Mean = 4.17). Closely following this, teachers highlighted the importance of **adequate preparation and training**, ensuring delegates possess the competencies required to execute tasks effectively (Mean = 4.33).

Other notable strategies included:

- Establishing formal methods and procedures for leadership to ensure consistency and clarity in task assignment (Mean = 4.20).
- Using proper communication channels during leadership to reduce misunderstandings and enhance accountability (Mean = 4.00).
- Capacity building by the Ministry of Education and District Education Officers through seminars and workshops to raise awareness about effective leadership (Mean = 2.97).
- Implementing formal policies and clear guidelines to regulate leadership in schools, colleges, and other institutions, which received the lowest mean score (Mean = 2.81).

The **overall mean of 3.90** indicates that, while several strategies are recognized as effective, staff motivation, adequate preparation, and formal leadership procedures are perceived as the most critical measures.

### Assessment of Proper Management in Public and private Secondary Schools

The study further evaluated **effective management** in Kakumiro District’s public and private secondary schools using five key indicators: **student academic performance, teamwork, teachers’ professional development, discipline, and consistent monitoring of teaching and learning**. The results for each of these indicators are presented in Table 4.11 below, providing insight into how leadership practices and mitigation of barriers contribute to overall school management effectiveness.

### Proper Management of Public and private Secondary Schools in Kakumiro District

Effective management of public and private secondary schools in Kakumiro District was assessed through five key indicators; Student Academic Performance, Teamwork, Teachers’ Professional Development Programs, Discipline, and Consistent Monitoring of Teaching and Learning. The results for each indicator are shown in Table 4.10 below

### Table 7 Respondents’ Responses about Proper Management of Public and private Secondary Schools

Statements Academic Performance	SD	D	U	A	SA	Mean scores
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	
1. Learners in this school highly pass UCE to the extent that the majority score Div. 1 and Div. 2	(80)	(13.3)	(1.1)	(0)	(5.6)	<b>1.32</b>
2. Learners in this school pass beyond the school's expected pass mark	(17.8)	(55.6)	(1.1)	(7.7)	(17.8)	<b>2.08</b>
3. In this school, some learners still score Div.4 and Div. 9	(12.2)	(14.4)	(2.2)	(7.8)	(63.3)	<b>3.98</b>
<b>Team work</b>						
4. In this school, teachers in each department mark end-of-the-year examinations as a team	(31.1)	(37.8)	0	(26.7)	(4.4)	<b>2.38</b>
5. When we have a function in this school, we work as a team to make sure everything is successful	0	(12.2)	(1.1)	(66.7)	(20)	<b>3.94</b>
6. We teachers and the head teacher work as a team with high collaboration to achieve the school's objectives	(12.2)	(26.7)	0	(5.6)	(55.5)	<b>3.08</b>
<b>Teachers' professional programs</b>						
7. The head teacher organizes training workshops and seminars	(7.8)	(28.9)	(2.2)	(55.6)	(5.6)	<b>3.14</b>
8. Our head teacher promotes and facilitates teachers' up-grading	(56.7)	(27.8)	(1.1)	(8.9)	(5.6)	<b>1.68</b>
9. In this school, our head teacher arranges and implements mentoring of new teachers	(14.4)	(38.9)	(2.2)	(42.2)	(2.2)	<b>2.80</b>
<b>Students' Discipline</b>						
10. We finish a whole year without suspending a learner due to indiscipline cases	(35.6)	(35.6)	(1.1)	(22.2)	(5.6)	<b>2.09</b>
11. Learners in this school are highly disciplined and can even help fellow learners who want to misbehave by advising them not to do so	(27.8)	(41.1)	(5.6)	(21.1)	(4.4)	<b>2.24</b>

12. The teachers in this school are well-behaved. They perform their duties without much force from the administration	(15.6)	(27.8)	(2.2)	(50.0)	(4.4)	<b>3.12</b>
<b>Regular Monitoring of Teaching and Learning</b>						
13. In our school, we have instruments to monitor teaching and learning	(10.0)	(8.9)	0	(62.2)	(18.9)	<b>3.97</b>
14. Our head teacher, almost every day when classes are going on, visits classes to see how teachers are teaching and the learners' response	(12.2)	(40.0)	(4.4)	(41.1)	(2.2)	<b>2.70</b>
15. There is constant checking of students' notes in this school by teachers	(24.4)	(44.4)	(3.3)	(25.6)	(2.2)	<b>2.38</b>

(Source: Field Data, 2025)

Table 7 presents the analysis of key management indicators in the selected public and private secondary schools in Kakumiro District. The findings are organized according to the identified performance indicators: academic performance, teamwork, teachers' professional development, discipline, and monitoring of teaching and learning.

#### Academic Performance:

The majority of teachers indicated that a significant number of learners still achieve lower grades, such as Division 4 and Division 9 (Mean = 3.98). This was followed by a moderate agreement that learners surpass the school's expected pass mark (Mean = 2.08). Only a few teachers noted that most learners consistently achieve top grades (Division 1 and 2) in the UCE examinations (Mean = 1.32).

#### Teamwork:

Regarding teamwork, most teachers reported active collaboration during school functions to ensure their success (Mean = 3.94). This was followed by moderate agreement that teachers and head teachers collaborate effectively to achieve institutional objectives (Mean = 3.08). Few teachers indicated that departmental teams mark end-of-year examinations collectively (Mean = 2.38).

#### Teachers'

#### Professional

#### Development:

The findings suggest that head teachers organize training workshops and seminars for staff (Mean = 3.14), while there is moderate agreement that head teachers arrange mentoring programs for newly recruited teachers (Mean = 2.80). Promotion and facilitation of teachers' professional upgrading was rated lowest (Mean = 1.68), indicating limited institutional support for formal career advancement.

#### Discipline:

Most teachers agreed that staff in their schools demonstrate self-discipline and perform duties without constant supervision (Mean = 3.12). A moderate number of teachers noted that learners exhibit discipline and may even guide peers who misbehave (Mean = 2.24). Few teachers reported that schools complete the academic year without suspending any student due to indiscipline (Mean = 2.09).

#### Monitoring of Teaching and Learning

Most teachers acknowledged the presence of monitoring instruments to oversee teaching and learning processes (Mean = 3.97). Moderate agreement was recorded for head teachers' routine classroom visits to observe teaching practices and student engagement (Mean = 2.70). Very few teachers indicated that students' notes are regularly checked by teachers (Mean = 2.38).

#### Implications of the Study Findings

The descriptive analysis demonstrates variation across the independent variables, including types of leadership practices, teachers' perceptions of leadership, barriers to effective management, and strategies to overcome these barriers. These variations suggest that while certain practices and perceptions positively influence school management, challenges such as insufficient resources, limited staff development, and inconsistent monitoring continue to constrain the overall effectiveness of public and private secondary

schools in Kakumiro District. The following section further explores the practical and theoretical implications of these findings for policy, school leadership, and educational management.

**Table 8 : Variations of the Overall Means of the Independent Variables**

Variables	Mean
Types of delegating practices	3.1
Teachers' perception of the effects of leadership on proper management of public and private secondary schools	4.3
Barriers to effective management of public and private secondary schools	3.7
Ways to overcome barriers to effective leadership	3.9
Proper management of public and private secondary schools	2.7

(Source: Field Data ,2025)

Table 8: presents a hierarchy of mean scores reflecting key variables related to the management of public and private secondary schools in Kakumiro District. Teachers' perceptions of the effects of leadership ranked highest (Mean = 4.3), followed by **strategies to overcome barriers** to effective leadership (Mean = 3.9), barriers to effective management (Mean = 3.7), types of leadership practices (Mean = 3.1), and finally, overall management of public and private **secondary schools** (Mean = 2.7).

These findings indicate that teachers perceive the manner in which duties are delegated as a critical determinant of effective school management. The relatively moderate score for current leadership practices (Mean = 3.1) and the higher score for proposed solutions to overcome barriers suggest that improving leadership could substantially enhance management outcomes. Consequently, the District Education Officer and administrative teams must prioritize structured leadership to deputy head teachers and teaching staff to optimize operational efficiency (Kiiza & Basheka, 2018).

The low mean score for **overall school management** (Mean = 2.7) highlights persistent challenges in academic performance, teamwork, professional development, student discipline, and monitoring of teaching and learning. This underscores the inadequacy of current management practices and the urgent need for targeted interventions (Jayman et al., 2025).

Quantitative analysis reveals a **weak positive correlation** ( $r = 0.006$ ) between head teachers' leadership practices and school management, suggesting that current leadership efforts are minimal and have a negligible impact on improving management outcomes (Leadership et al., 2025).

Qualitative findings corroborate these results, revealing instances where head teachers refrain from delegating responsibilities due to concerns about subordinates' commitment, fear of being outperformed, loss of recognition, or personal interests.

"At times the implementation is done in a different way than instructed or expected. At times it makes me repeat the delegated task, and it annoys me."

These insights emphasize the need for a systematic shift in leadership practices. Strengthening trust, providing motivation, and clarifying task responsibilities are essential for fostering an environment where effective leadership contributes meaningfully to the management and performance of public and private secondary schools in Kakumiro District.

## Discussion

Results from Table 4.3 (Chapter Four) indicate an overall mean of 3.1 regarding leadership practices, surpassing the average benchmark of 3. This suggests general agreement among respondents in favor of the leadership practices employed by head teachers in Kakumiro District's public and private secondary schools. The findings reveal that task assignment is predominantly verbal, top-down, and generally informal, with limited documentation or specificity. This lack of precision in task leadership often diminishes accountability and may negatively affect management effectiveness. The predominance of top-down leadership also limits the benefits associated with bottom-up approaches, indicating a need for balance.

Heads of departments are often granted broad authority, which can overburden them and reduce performance effectiveness. This aligns with Harappa's blog (2020) and Wrike team (2022), which argue that effective leadership requires avoiding overloading subordinates to prevent reduced performance. Positively, department heads are involved in planning departmental activities, and teachers exercise some autonomy in task execution, providing feedback upon completion. Qualitative data corroborates that verbal leadership, conducted in meetings, offices, or via phone, is common, while only one head teacher reported using formal written agreements. Delegated tasks include fee collection, enrolment updates, meal monitoring, co-curricular scheduling, lesson oversight, timetable creation, meeting facilitation, enforcing discipline, managing examination materials, and attending workshops.

These findings support Koontz and Wehrich (2003, cited by Ssegawa & Musa, 2020), who define leadership as the transfer of tasks, responsibilities, and authority to subordinates. Cheruto et al. (2018) categorize leadership into top-down or bottom-up, general or specific, formal or informal, and lateral. The prevalent informal leadership observed, where decision-making authority remains largely with head teachers, can lead to micromanagement, delayed decision-making, and reduced management effectiveness (Indeed Editorial Team, 2022)

### Teachers' Perception of leadership and Its Effects on School Management

Table 4.4 shows an overall mean of 4.4 regarding teachers' perceptions of leadership effects, significantly above the benchmark of 3. Respondents generally agree that effective leadership positively influences school management by saving time, reducing head teacher workload, enhancing trust and collaboration, increasing teamwork, and improving teacher commitment and task completion. Qualitative data highlights that leadership simplifies work, distributes responsibilities, fosters skill development, nurtures future leaders, and accelerates task execution.

One head teacher remarked

*"My deputy is trustworthy and active; when I leave him with the school, it often runs even better than when I am around. He is energetic, and I can take time to rest without pressure."*

These insights align with Fekry and Atta (2019), Harappa's blog (2020), and Yahya and Arumugam (2019), who emphasize that leadership distributes responsibilities, develop skills, fosters teamwork, and motivates staff, thereby supporting effective school management.

### Barriers to Effective leadership

Table 4.5 indicates an overall mean of 3.7 for barriers to leadership, highlighting respondents' acknowledgment of significant hindrances. These include financial constraints, insufficient incentives, unsupportive work environments inadequate communication systems, unpreparedness for delegated tasks, staff shortages, and unclear leadership protocols (Ndidi et al., 2025).

Delegates often lack decision-making autonomy (mean = 1.87), which undermines effective leadership. Head teachers' reluctance to delegate, due to perceived lack of commitment, fear of being outshone, or personal interests, further compounds the problem. Conversely, resource scarcity was not widely perceived as a barrier (mean = 2.80), with some head teachers noting that better financial management could alleviate resource challenges.

Qualitative data emphasizes additional barriers, including prolonged tenure in leadership, suboptimal management, low morale in remote schools, internal politics, poor delegate performance, and lack of consultation prior to leadership. These findings are consistent with Atta and Fekry (2019), Habiba (2023), Cheruto et al. (2018), and Ahumuza et al. (2022), highlighting delegator-, delegate-, and environment-related obstacles.

### Overcoming Barriers to Effective leadership

Respondents reported an overall mean of 3.9 regarding strategies to overcome leadership barriers. Effective measures include motivating staff through accommodations, aligning delegated tasks with teachers' skills and availability, maintaining clear communication, preparing teachers for delegated responsibilities, and establishing formal leadership procedures.

One head teacher noted:

*"I am overloaded because my deputy is far from the school and rarely performs his duties. I rely on other teachers to help me; otherwise, I would be overwhelmed despite paying the deputy a full salary."*

While seminars and workshops (mean = 2.97) or clear leadership policies (mean = 2.81) were deemed less critical, qualitative feedback emphasized involving staff in planning, mentoring, coaching, rewarding high performers, and sensitizing teachers to the career benefits of leadership. These strategies align with Habiba (2023), Landry (2020), and Ruto (2011), who underscore staff development, motivation, and adequate resourcing as key to overcoming leadership barriers.

### Proper Management of Public and private Secondary Schools

Students' Academic Performance: Mean = 2.46, indicating unsatisfactory results, with many students failing to achieve expected divisions. This reflects poor management practices (Akinfolarin, 2017).

**Teamwork:** Mean = 3.1, showing moderate teamwork. However, departmental teachers rarely collaborate on examination marking (mean = 2.38), limiting mentoring and standardization opportunities. School functions demonstrate greater collective effort, positively affecting school climate and performance (OCED, 2004; Lazear, 2000).

**Teachers' Professional Development:** Mean = 2.54, revealing deficiencies in training, mentorship, and support for further studies. Teachers face significant barriers in pursuing additional qualifications, which discourages professional growth (Camerero et al., 2022).

**Students' Discipline:** Mean = 2.5, indicating high levels of indiscipline, including repeated suspensions for rule violations. Teachers maintain discipline effectively, but peer interventions are minimal.

**Monitoring of Teaching and Learning:** Mean = 3.0, showing divided opinions. While schools possess tools for oversight, head teachers seldom observe classrooms or review students' notes, highlighting a need for more consistent monitoring.

The hierarchy of mean scores highlights teachers' perceptions of leadership effects (4.3), strategies to overcome barriers (3.9), barriers to effective management (3.7), leadership practices (3.1), and overall school management (2.7). These results indicate that leadership significantly impacts school management effectiveness (Bakhshandeh & Rothwell, 2023). The negligible correlation ( $r = 0.006$ ) between leadership practices and school management underscores insufficient leadership efforts. Qualitative data reveals reluctance to delegate due to fear of reduced recognition or perceived lack of commitment, reinforcing the need for a strategic shift in leadership practices to improve school management outcomes in Kakumiro District.

### Conclusion

The study provided comprehensive insights into the leadership practices of head teachers and their impact on the management of selected public and private secondary schools. Findings indicate that leadership is a crucial component of effective school management, with practices varying significantly across schools. Head teachers commonly employ top-down and informal leadership, with limited use of bottom-up or formal leadership. This imbalance highlights the need to integrate formal and bottom-up approaches, which enhance accountability and responsibility among delegates, ultimately contributing to more effective school management.

Teachers' perceptions of leadership were mixed. While some felt empowered, trusted, and motivated by the responsibilities assigned, others experienced stress or lacked preparedness, which negatively affected their engagement and performance. Barriers to effective leadership were evident at multiple levels. Delegator-related barriers included selective leadership based on perceived loyalty or diligence, reluctance to delegate due to fear of being outshone, and insufficient financial incentives. Delegate-related barriers involved lack of resources, training, and preparedness. Environmental challenges, such as inadequate school infrastructure and lack of nearby accommodation, further constrained leadership practices.

The study underscores the critical role of a supportive policy framework and adequate resources in facilitating effective leadership. Without these, leadership remains inconsistent, leading to inefficiencies that ultimately compromise school performance. Importantly, effective leadership enhances the educational environment by enabling teachers to perform optimally and supporting quality learning outcomes for students.

### Recommendations

The study recommends that Head teachers should receive targeted training through workshops, seminars, and professional development programs to enhance their leadership skills. Training should emphasize good leadership practices, bottom-up leadership, and task-specific leadership, complementing existing top-down and informal practices. Aligning tasks with teachers' strengths and capabilities will significantly improve management efficiency. Secondly the Teachers should be supported through professional development, mentorship programs for new staff, and recognition or rewards for successful task completion. Incentives for effective task performance can enhance teacher engagement; improve job satisfaction, and positively impact student academic outcomes, a key indicator of effective school management. Thirdly Head teacher working together with School Management or Board of Governors should invest in school infrastructure, including staff accommodation near school premises, adequate teaching resources, and supportive administrative systems, are essential. A conducive environment facilitates smooth leadership system, improves productivity, and fosters a sense of belonging among staff or schools employees.

Furthermore the study recommends that Head teachers should establish robust leadership system that involves regular monitoring of teaching and learning. Reliance solely on students' reports is insufficient. Mechanisms such as classroom observations, teacher performance tracking, and the strategic use of technology (e.g., CCTV cameras) can enhance accountability and overall management efficiency.

The study still recommends that Head teachers should adopt inclusivity of stakeholders or involve staff or teachers in school decision-making processes. This participatory approach fosters ownership, enhances commitment, and improves perceptions of delegated tasks, thereby increasing motivation and task completion rates.

The study recommends that, educational authorities should develop and implement policies that guide leadership practices. Guidelines, training programs, and resource allocation can support head teachers in executing effective leadership, ensuring consistency and quality in school management.

The study recommends that, delegation should be granted appropriate autonomy in executing their tasks. Greater control over delegated responsibilities encourages innovation, accountability, and professional growth, which collectively contribute to more effective school management

The study finally recommends the adoption of appropriate informative policies and good governance practices. Kakumiro District's public and private secondary schools can strengthen leadership practices, improve teacher performance, foster student success, and enhance overall management efficiency.

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