



Participation of head teachers in the education leadership and management training programme in Lusaka district, Zambia

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine participation of head teachers in Education Leadership and Management (ELM) training programme in selected primary and secondary schools of Lusaka District. The objectives were to; determine the relevance of Education Leadership and Management training programme offered to school head teachers; establish whether or not the head teachers who had done education leadership and management training programme would recommend the programme to their colleagues who had not yet trained. The study adopted a mixed methods approach on a sample of 103 respondents which comprised 100 head teachers and 3 Education Leadership and Management Training Programme Providers. Qualitative data were analysed thematically while quantitative data was analysed using Micro soft excel. The findings revealed that majority respondents (89=89%) reported that Education Leadership and Management (ELM) was a relevant programme for head teachers because it trained head teachers in the proper management of human and non-human resources. The study concluded that the head teachers were not participating in the programme as expected. This was because the products did not change their educational management strategies and leadership styles when they went back to school. The government and the institution (Chalimbana University) should put more effort in advertising and marketing the programme to all provinces.

Keywords: participation of head teachers, leadership and management

Introduction

The Ministry of Education has over the years been grappling with ways to improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools which would subsequently raise the standard of education. It is widely recognised and agreed that one of the factors influencing school effectiveness is the nature and quality of the school leadership and management provided by each school head teacher. Thus, improving school effectiveness means supporting head teachers to improve their skills as instructional leaders (MOE, 1996:159) [7].

Statement of the Problem

Without the necessary skills, many head teachers are overwhelmed by many tasks. In rapidly expanding systems, inexperienced and unskilled teachers are customarily appointed to run complex schools without adequate preparation, training and back-up support. In Africa, the situation is particularly acute. There are convincing reasons for authorities to actively identify, select, prepare and ensure the continuing development of teachers who see themselves as future school leaders. Morally there seems to be no argument. Pragmatically there is a concern about a less-than-adequate pool of possible applicants for leadership training (Ozigi 1997; Bolam, 1999).

The training programme has been going on at Chalimbana University, nonetheless participation of those untrained head teachers is still low. Authorities are doing everything possible to encourage capable people to take their first leadership steps in terms of training. Despite all these efforts, we do not know whether or not the training provided

for serving head teachers is having the desired effect to motivate those untrained to participate.

Purpose of the Study

Thus the purpose of this study was to determine the participation of head teachers in Educational Leadership and Management (ELM) training programme in selected primary and secondary schools of Lusaka district. In addition, the study was designed to find out whether or not the head teachers who had undertaken the training in the area of educational leadership and management would recommend their untrained colleagues to train in the area.

Objectives

1. To determine the relevance of education leadership and management training programme offered to school head teachers and;
2. To establish whether or not the head teachers who had done education leadership and management training programme would recommend the programme to their colleagues who had not yet been trained.

Research Questions

1. How do you explain the relevance of education leadership and management training programme offered to school head teachers at Chalimbana University?
2. What are some of the practices that would make you recommend a colleague who has not yet trained in education leadership and management programme to enrol?

Overview of the literature

In the developing world, especially Africa, preparation and development of principals/Head teachers is not as pronounced and systematic as it is in the developed world. In fact, in most cases it is either lacking or not formal (Bush and Oduro, 2006) [3]. Nonetheless, most studies on principals in Africa concentrate on the problems facing principals/Head teachers in the performance of their duties (Harbey & Dadey, 1993; Oduro & MacBeath, 2003; Kitavi and Van Der Westhuizen, 1997; Njeri, 1996) [4, 10, 9]. This means that not much has been done to assess whether or not head teachers are given necessary training before and after appointment.

According to Locke (2010) [5], technical skill is the competence in knowledge, methods and techniques of a particular discipline or subject. It includes the understanding and ability to perform effectively specific tasks as required on the job (Okumbe, 1998) [11]. Various personnel in a school have various technical skills. For instance, teachers have the pedagogical skills, the accountant or bursar has accounting skills, the watchman has security skills among others.

Head teachers and departmental heads are supposed to have the ability and knowledge to supervise others as an additional technical skill to their subjects of specialization (Lunenburg, 2010) [6]. Lunenburg further argues that the technical skills for head teachers are twofold, namely; subject experts and instructional supervisory. As subject experts they acquired the skills during training and enhanced them through practical teaching for many years. On the other hand, the instructional supervisory skills are acquired through experience and ad hoc in-service courses. Njeri (1996) [9] noted that a good school manager is someone who is very knowledgeable and should have competencies in form of qualification.

The head teacher must be a competent teacher in a particular subject, able to organize the staff, acquire relevant resources, and able to evaluate performance. He or she should also be able to relate well to the community and wider stakeholder of the school. The head teachers need technical skills, although the amount of time spent performing technical activities is limited compared to other teachers (Lunenburg, 2010) [6]. The headteacher closely monitors the teaching of the students or pupils in school.

However, Banda (2014) [2] holds that training head teachers was a share waste of time since these people assume to an office at an old age and they cannot change their greedy way of leadership and school management. It was for this reason that some of the head teachers withdrew from the course because it taught them not to practice the bad administration they had in schools. Nyirenda (2012) [8] also mentions that head teachers attend a lot of workshops and seminars where they are told on how to manage their schools. These messages of being good administrators and being good school managers were always preached and there was no need for head teachers to attain a qualification from it. Nevertheless, school head teachers carry out a number of tasks including being responsible and accountable to; the Ministry of Education and its agents on the interpretation of educational policies and objectives as well as curriculum implementation. Oduro and MacBeath (2003) [10] add that head teachers provide instructional leadership, supervision and inspection; the model for his/her staff and pupils to emulate; the community as a public relations officer; human

resource management and welfare; School finance and facilities and discipline.

Stakeholders expect head teachers to ensure that schools provide quality education and achieve other school objectives. Adan and Orodho (2014) [1] observed that the provision of quality education requires effective use of resources through sound leadership hence conceptual, human and technical skills are critical. Those who are selected for headship require additional training before they assume office. It should be noted that once appointed, the head teacher has an opportunity to influence change beyond the classroom. The Primary Education certificate and Diploma qualifications which most school teachers have only equip them with adequate technical skills. However, Balanskat and Gerhard (2005) observe that training of head teachers differs from country to country, depending on the policy of that particular nation. Globally, the majority of the school leaders were not trained as school leaders but they assumed offices because of their experience. According to Odubaker (2007) [12], experience means familiarity with a skill or a field of knowledge acquired over months, or years of actual practice and which presumably has resulted in superior understanding or mastery but gaining knowledge is better than experience.

Methodology

Research Design

The study adopted a mixed methods approach in which data collection methods were triangulated. The study used a Concurrent Triangulation Mixed-Methods design. This was due to the fact that the researcher wanted to collect and analyse both qualitative and quantitative data simultaneously.

Target Population

The targeted population for this study was head teachers from selected government and private schools in Lusaka District.

Sample size

The sample consisted of 100 school head teachers from primary and secondary schools, government and private, were selected out of the entire population of head teachers in Lusaka District. The Acting Deputy Vice Chancellor of Chalimbana University, the Director of Distance Education and Deputy Director of Distance Education from the same institution were also sampled. The total population sample was 103.

Sampling procedure

In this study the sampling was non-probable and purposive. The rationale for choosing this approach was that the researcher was investigating the participation of head teachers into the education leadership and management training programme offered by Chalimbana University. Purposive (non-random sampling) was the most practicable in this study because there is just one head teacher at every given school, one Acting Deputy Vice Chancellor, one Director and one Deputy Director of distance Education at Chalimbana University. Hence purposive sampling technique.

Instruments and data collection procedures

Semi structured questionnaires were used to collect data from Head teachers while interview guides were used to collect data from ELM providers, Acting Deputy Vice

Chancellor, Director and Deputy Director of distance Education of Chalimbana University.

Data analysis

Qualitative data were analysed through thematic approach where data were tabulated, categorised and arranged into themes and sub themes. On the other hand, quantitative data were analysed in three phases. First, data were entered in Microsoft excel. Secondly, software known as Statistical Package for Social sciences (SPSS) was employed to analyse the data. Finally data were presented in form of bar charts, pie charts and frequency and percentage tables.

Ethical consideration

Participants were never forced or coerced into helping with research. Participation was voluntary and participants had sufficient information about the research to arrive at a reasoned judgment about whether or not they wanted to participate. It was explained that participants had the right to withdraw at any stage of the research if they so wished and that their rights were protected.

Findings and discussions

Determining the relevance of education leadership and

If so how is it a relevant programme?

management training programme offered to school head teachers

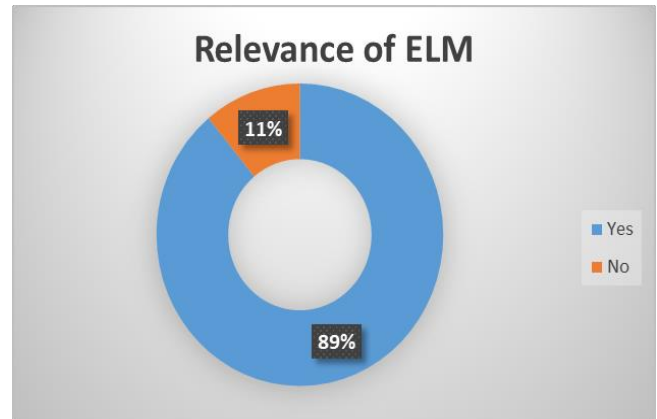


Fig 1

Figure 1 above revealed that 89 head teachers representing 89% respondents indicated that ELM is a relevant programme while 11 head teachers representing 11% of respondents indicated that ELM is not a relevant programme for head teachers.

Table 1

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Trains on proper management of human and non-human resources	3	3
Enhances effective and efficient way of handling matters	6	6
Relevant managerial and leadership skills	21	21
Empowers head teachers with new techniques, knowledge and skills in the field of education	19	19
ELM is key to school leadership	4	4
Heads understand their roles in their school and community in an updated manner.	3	3
It provides good platform for every head to acquire skills in leadership and management	16	16
Broadens understanding in leadership and management	3	3
Creates uniformity in the way schools are operated as well as running schools in a coordinated manner	11	11
Practical programme for all heads	3	3
Not sure	11	11
Total	100	100

The findings in table 1 above revealed that 3 head teachers representing 3% of respondents indicated that the ELM programme was a relevant programme for head teachers because it trained proper management of human and non-human resources. 6 head teachers representing 6% of respondents indicated that it enhanced effective and efficient ways of handling matters in schools. 21 head teachers representing 21% of respondents indicated that the programme provided relevant managerial and leadership skills.

Further, 19 head teachers representing 19% of respondents revealed that the programme was relevant because it empowered head teachers with new techniques, knowledge and skills in the field of education. 4 head teachers representing 4% indicated that the programme was key to school leadership. 3 head teachers representing 3% of respondents pointed that it enabled head teaches understand their roles both in their school and community in an updated manner.

Still 16 head teachers representing 16% of respondents indicated that the programme provided a good platform for every head to acquire skills in leadership and management.

3 head teachers representing 3% revealed that the programme broadened understanding in leadership and management. 11 head teachers representing 11% of respondents added that it created uniformity in the way schools were operated as well as running schools in a coordinated manner. 3 head teachers representing 3 head teachers representing 3% indicated that ELM was a practical programme for all heads while 11 head teachers representing 11% of the respondents were not sure.

Findings from programme providers

Interviewee 1

In order to establish how relevant ELM training programme was, the programme providers were interviewed using an interview guide. Interviewee 1 had this to say,

“ELM is a programme that introduces head teachers to their roles of develop, motivate and lead all staff to achieve the highest professional standards, maintain and develop the already existing community links, manage change effectively, among other things. To me I think it is relevant because if

the head was not sure of how to manage the school, then this is the right programme for him/her”

The interviewee continued by mentioning that *“if we are to have improved teaching and learning standards in schools, then visionary heads are a must”*.

Interviewee 2

Interviewee 2 remarked that, *“ELM programme is relevant to head teachers and to the ministry of education, though a lot of sensitisation should be done. There are still many untrained head teachers out there may be due to lack of knowledge about the programme.*

A lot of head teachers may still not be aware of their programme being offered here, but otherwise, those head teachers who came here for training attach a lot of meaning and value to the programme. The programme is relevant because it gives specific training to head teachers”.

Interviewee 3

Interviewee 3 responded to the same question as follows, *“in my view, I think this programme is okay because it gives confidence to head teachers. Without training, some heads have abused delegation before just because they were not sure of what to do.*

I think head teachers should undertake the course so that they all benefit. After all, teachers are leaders in nature. Again you find that there are a lot of changes in the ministry, such changes are to be implemented immediately without resisting. It becomes very easy for a trained head teacher under ELM to adopt and move on. It is also worth noting that for the government to allow this programme to continue, it means they have seen value in it. It should be supported to allow the newly appointed heads to come through for training. Educational development is best achieved through head teachers who are well informed about what to do in their day to day responsibilities”.

What practices would enable you recommend a colleague who has not yet trained in education leadership and management training programme to do so?

Distribution of respondents on whether or not they are trained in education leadership and management themselves.

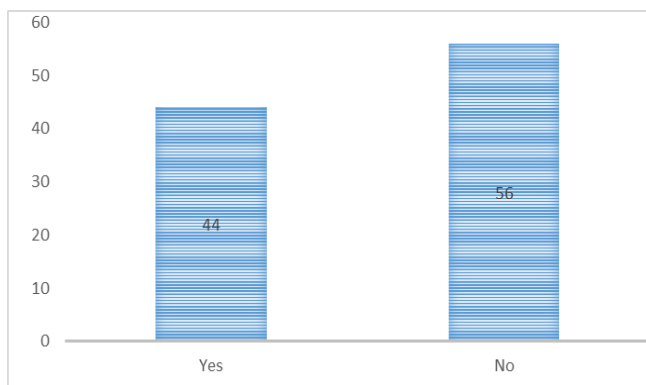


Fig 2

The findings in figure 2 above revealed that 44 respondents representing 44% are trained in education leadership and management while 56 respondents representing 56% were not trained.

Findings from head teachers

Distribution of respondents on whether or not would recommend a colleague to train in ELM

Figure 3. Percentage of trained head teachers who would recommend their colleagues to undergo training.

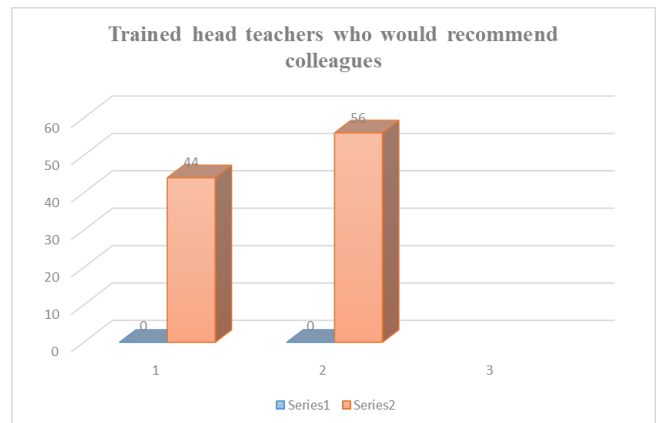


Fig 3

The findings in bar figure 3 above indicate that 44 of respondents representing 44% of the trained head teachers in ELM would recommend their colleagues to take up the training. While 56 respondents representing 56% who indicated that they were not yet formally trained in ELM did not take part in this question. The trained head teachers were further asked to give justifications for recommending colleagues to train.

Justification for recommending colleagues

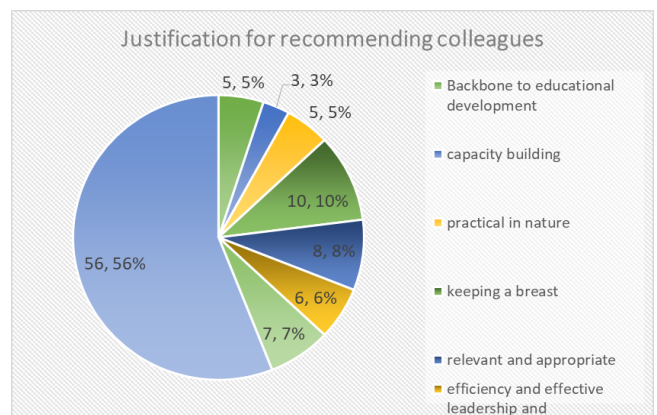


Fig 4

The findings of pie figure 4 above revealed that the trained head teachers would recommend their colleagues who are untrained in ELM to do so. The justification for recommending colleagues varied. 5 respondents representing 5% would recommend a colleague because Education Leadership and Management is the backbone for educational development. 3 respondents representing 3% would recommend a colleague because ELM is a must attend programme for capacity building; 10 respondents representing 10% would recommend a colleague to train in ELM for keeping abreast; 8 respondents representing 8% indicated that they would recommend a colleague to train because the programme is relevant and appropriate; moreover, 6 respondents representing 6% indicated that the programme equips them with efficiency and effective

leadership and management skills, while 7 respondents representing 7% indicated that the training allows no chance for trial and error. Yet another 5 respondents representing 5% indicated that the training programme is practical in nature. This indicates that the trained heads valued the programme for various reasons. However, 56 respondents representing 56% were not captured because they were not trained.

b) Findings from ELM programme providers

The ELM programme providers had this to say, *“Head teachers have now realised that education leadership and management is purely a professional course where they needed to attend. Those head teachers who graduate from the training encourage their colleagues to apply as well when they go back to their stations”*. Another interviewee had this to say, *“Many untrained head teachers have been asking about when the next intake shall be especially those that were our students before, and had interacted with their friends who came for ELM during their training. “If we are to have better schools, we definitely have to have leaders who have skills on how to manage schools properly. The same trained head teachers network and have encouraged one another in their groups to take up the training in education leadership and management”*. He added that ELM is a programme that is bringing uniformity in the way schools are managed. *“Head teachers have confessed before that they managed schools as if they were personal homes where when they went out, they carried office keys and no one else had access to the office. Through ELM training, head teachers have learnt to operate in a transparent manner where offices are treated as public offices. ELM has given confidence to head teachers and those who went through the training link their untrained friends to the programme.*

Discussion of findings

Education leadership and management relevant and appropriate for managing teachers and learners- Human skills

The findings on the trained head teachers revealed that they can recommend a colleague to do the programme because education leadership and management was relevant and appropriate for the training of how to handle teachers and learners. To this extent, Arnett (2010) contends that human skills refer to the ability to understand the teachers, students and school stakeholders and interact effectively with them. He further pointed out that head teachers will use human skills for motivation, facilitation, and communication as well as for management of conflicts among teachers, students and school stakeholders. Lunenburg (2010) ^[6] also adds that effective human relations enables school leaders to unleash staff potential and assist them to achieve their maximum performance. Head teachers must use human skills to manage school committees, teachers, students, support staff and other stakeholders.

Efficiency and effective leadership and management skills

The findings further revealed that ELM enables head teachers to be efficient and effective in their leadership and management skills. In view of this, Locke (2010) ^[5] opines that technical skill is the competence in knowledge, methods and techniques of a particular discipline or subject. It includes the understanding and ability to perform effectively

specific tasks as required on the job. For instance, personnel in a school have various technical skills, such as; teachers have the pedagogical skills, the accountant or bursar has accounting skills, the watchman has security skills among others. To acquire necessary skills the head teachers require both a planned deliberate training as well as experience.

i) Education leadership and management- no chance for trial and error

The findings revealed that ELM trained head teachers would recommend the programme to their colleagues to avoid trial and error in their leadership.

Kirui (2012) noted that a school, like any other organization, requires effective administration and management in order to achieve its objectives. Primary and secondary school head teachers carry out a number of tasks including being responsible and accountable to; the Ministry of General Education and its agents on the interpretation of educational policies and objectives as well as curriculum implementation. Head teachers provide instructional leadership, supervision and inspection; the model for his staff and pupils to emulate; the community as a public relations officer; human resource management and welfare; School finance and facilities and discipline. He further points that stakeholders expect head teachers to ensure that schools provide quality education and achieve other school objectives as expected. At the school level, the Head teacher is regarded as an agent of supervision and translation of educational policies and objectives into programmes within the school. Even if head teachers are appointed from among teachers with similar training and experience, yet once appointed the head teacher is expected to offer leadership in the provision of quality education.

The findings from service providers also revealed that the trained head teachers in ELM are also able to recommend the programme to their colleagues; citing that head teachers have now realised that education leadership and management is purely a professional course where they needed to attend. Those head teachers who graduate from the training encouraged their colleagues to apply as well when they go back to their stations. However, the programme may not be achieving the intended objectives as only 44=44% respondents were trained in ELM. Therefore, it can be concluded that the findings are not fully in tandem with the Fredrick Taylor's Scientific Management theory which emphasises on select, train, and develop each worker rather than leaving them to train themselves. Despite the stipulated roles of the head teacher, chances for trial and error may still be experienced.

Education leadership and management training a backbone for educational development

Katz (1974) and Okumbe (1998) ^[11] point that, it is not in dispute that Head teachers are administrators, managers and leaders of a school, hence it is important to analyse the skills and competencies required for the job. The research findings are in line with the position of the two writers that all administrators must first and foremost have conceptual, human and technical skills. These skills are necessary for the roles played by head teachers namely planning, organizing, facilitating and monitoring and evaluation. A conceptual skill is the ability to obtain, analyse and interpret information in a logical and meaningful manner (Okumbe, 1998) ^[11].

Conclusion

The study concluded that the head teachers were not participating in the programme as expected because the untrained head teachers have not seen the difference in school administration and leadership styles from the graduates. However, the study concludes that a good head teacher is someone who is knowledgeable and uses the learnt skills in managing their schools. Such a trend was what would create the difference between the trained teachers and the untrained head teachers in school leadership and management styles. This implied that the Chalimbana University and her advertising strategies did not reach out to most potential participants. It was further concluded that the programme did not receive the best participation due to lack of sensitization to the public.

Recommendations

Findings of this study concluded that participation of head teachers into the education leadership and management training programme in Lusaka District, Zambia, was not up-to-date due to; lack of information about the programme, lack of time to attend and lack of funds to enable them pay. Arising from the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. The government and the institution (Chalimbana University) should market the programme to all provinces. The use of radio and television was recommended because of their wide coverage to masses. This can strengthen the already existing communication strategies to reach the prospectus participants;
2. Other recommendations from the findings were that the government should make it mandatory for all head teachers to train in ELM;
3. The government should consider sponsoring all head teachers including those in private schools. The government should also ensure that the programme is affordable by subsidizing the fees to allow those on self- sponsorship manage the payments;
4. ELM programme should also be offered on full time basis to allow those who can get leave to pursue than waiting for holiday programme alone;
5. The government should make it a policy that only trained teachers should be appointed head teachers to manage schools. No teacher should be appointed to head a school without prior training;
6. the Government should partner with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) to support the running of the programme and widen it;
7. the government should decentralize the programme to other education centers for accessibility to all head teachers;
8. give award to head teachers who improve in managing their schools after ELM training, just to encourage and motivate others to attend;
9. the government should introduce fast track programme for ELM;
10. the government and the institution must introduce the programme online to cater for those who cannot manage to attend either on holidays or during the term; and
11. government to upgrade the salaries of those who have the education leadership and management training to make it attractive.

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