

# Analysis of Leadership Styles Practiced by Primary School Head Teachers on Teachers Career Commitment in Soin Division, Kericho County

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## Abstract

Schools have been under pressure because of poor management and planning and are now faced with serious consequences of low staff morale, poor academic performance and pupils falling rolls. The parents from Soin Division attribute this low work output to head teachers' and teachers' laxity in performing school activities and responsibilities well. The purpose of this study was to find out whether head teachers' leadership styles have influence in teacher career commitment in public primary school in Soin Division, Kericho County. This study employed a descriptive survey design. The researcher targeted 306 teachers and 44 head teachers in the Division, giving a target population of 350. In selecting the number of schools to be involved in the study, the guidelines given by Kathuri and Pals was used. According to these guidelines, 48 respondents were selected from a population of 55. Using the same guidelines, the number of the respondents were equivalent to 39 head teachers and 266 teachers which translate to 305 respondents. The main tool of data collection for this study was questionnaires, which were administered to head teachers and teachers. A coefficient correlation of the two tests was calculated using Cronbach's Alpha was used. A reliability coefficient of 0.7685 was found to be reliable for the study. Teacher's career commitment can lead to children good academic performance, retention of teachers and pupils, staffing and high of teachers' motivation. Policy makers in education may tap from the knowledge derived from this research. Based on the findings, the study concluded that head teachers' transformational leadership style positively influenced teacher career commitment. The study recommends that the Ministry of Education need to seek ways to improve career commitment of teachers by improving their working conditions and giving them more opportunities for training. One way of doing this is to encourage teachers to join professional associations and other forums that would enable them solve career-related problems. It is hoped that the findings of the study will equip administrators with knowledge to influence the retention rate of teachers to the benefit the students, the teachers, and the school system.

**Keywords:** Career commitment, Influence, Leadership Styles

## 1. Introduction

Ezeuwa (2005) states that leadership is the key to the progress and survival of any organization whether it is an enterprise or institution. It is the act of influencing people so that they strive willingly and enthusiastically towards the accomplishment of goals. Kasinga (2010) says effective leadership is essential in all organization. He further states that, success of an organization largely depends on the quality of its leadership. It is an admitted fact that deficiency in dedicated leadership prevails all over the world. Hence different countries have different leadership styles on the basis of their cultural associations (Rad & Yarmohammadian, 2006). Societal values and beliefs of a specific region and country play a significant role. The suitability and effectiveness of a leadership style depend on the operating situation in which a leader matches his/ her leadership style with the task of their followers (Hersey, Blanchard, & Johnson, 2001). Commitment is a term that teachers frequently use in describing themselves (Vias, 2001). It is a word they use to distinguish those who are caring, dedicated and take their job seriously from those who put their interest first. Some teachers see their commitment as part of their professional identifies (Tyree, 2006). Lack of commitment by employees is behind much of the behavior blamed for high costs and poor services (Sherwn, 2002). Teacher's commitment counteracts the extent to which employees identify themselves with organizational goals, value organizational membership and intend to work hard to attain the overall organizational mission (Steers & Porter 2009).

Osei (2006) asserts that low work commitment of teachers in developing countries seem to stem from low remuneration and lack of incentives. This has affected teaching as a profession and its how professional status in many developing countries like Kenya. These negative impacts have affected teachers' morale and career commitment.

Among determinants of teacher career commitment on, leadership is viewed as an important predictor and plays a central role. Employee job satisfaction depends upon the leadership style of managers (Rad & Yarmohammadian, 2006). Mosadeghrad (2003) defined teacher career commitment as an employee's affective reaction to a job, based on a comparison between actual outcomes and desired outcomes. teacher career commitment is the totality of employees' social and psychological well-being relative to job performance

(Omeke & Onah 2011). It leads to satisfactory interpersonal relations, fringe benefits, financial rewards, decision-making, free channels of communication, staff development among others. This influences employees to work hard for optimum productivity.

### Statement of the problem

The problem addressed by this study is that of low levels of teachers' career commitment among primary school teachers in Soin Division. The schools have been under pressure because of poor management and planning and are now faced with serious consequences of low staff morale, poor academic performance and pupils falling rolls. The school community and parents blamed school headteachers for this. The fact that school teacher career commitment is important the realization of school goals, it has remained to be untapped by researchers, therefore it is important to identify committed teachers as well as understanding whether headteacher leadership styles stimulate and sustain career commitment to the teaching profession in Soin Division in Kericho county.

### Methodology

The study employed a descriptive survey design. According to Orodho (2002) descriptive design is used in preliminary and exploratory studies to allow the researcher to gather information, summarize, present and interpret for the purpose of clarification. The design was relevant as it covered a broad category of head teachers and teachers. It also helped in gathering knowledge that enhanced the understanding of the design process, application, methods and context. The stakeholders were involved in the investigative influence of head teachers' leadership styles on teachers' career commitment in Soin division Kericho County. The researcher targeted 306 teachers and 44 head teachers in the Division, giving a target population of 350. According to these guidelines, 48 respondents were selected from a population of 55. Using the same guidelines, the numbers of the respondents were equivalent to 39 head teachers and 266 teachers which translate to 305 respondents. The researcher used questionnaires as data collection instrument. The research data was analyzed using descriptive and was presented in table and charts.

### Presentation of Results

This section presents the background information of the Teachers and Head Teachers on analysis of leadership styles practiced by primary school Head Teachers in Soin Division, Kericho County.

#### Age of Teachers and Head Teachers

Age bracket	TEACHER		HEADTEACHERS	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
20-25 years	27	11.25	-	-
26 -30 years	55	22.9	-	-
31-35 years	45	18.75	7	17.94
36-40 years	50	20.83	8	20.51
41-45 years	53	22.08	13	33.33
Over 50 years	10	4.16	11	28.20
<b>Total</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100</b>

#### Source :( Survey data, 2015)

The study sought to establish the age respondent of the headteachers and teacher in public primary schools in Soin Division, majority of the teachers respondent were aged 26 -30 years 55 (22.9%), 50 (20.83%), aged 36-40 years while 41-45 years were 53 (22.08%), 31-35 years 45 (18.75%),20-25 years, 27(11.25%) and finally, teachers aged over 50 years were 10(4.16%). Majority of headteachers were aged between 41-45 years 13(33.33%), this was followed by those over 50 years who were 11 (28.20%), headteachers aged 36-40 years were 8 (20.51%) and the least were between age 31-35 years 7 (17.94%). From the above findings it is a clear indication that age is factor as far as leadership was concern; those who were older had the position of being headteachers unlike for the case of teachers. It shows that there were about their role as on curriculum implementation was concern.

#### Gender Distribution

Gender	TEACHER		HEADTEACHERS	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Male	134	55.83	37	94.87
Female	106	44.17	2	5.13
<b>Total</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100</b>

#### Source :( Survey data, 2015)

The findings indicated that majority of the teachers 134 (44.84%) were male and 106 (44.17%) were female, whereas 36 (92.31%) of the headteachers in Soin Division were male and only 2 (5.13%) were female.

With a small difference in the male and female respondents, it shows that there is still a gap on gender parity in the schools covered. This shows that female teachers in Soin Division have been given unequal leadership in educational opportunities in teaching careers.

### Leadership Styles Employed by Primary School Head Teachers

A number of items to measure the extent to which they exhibited the leadership traits of autocratic, laissez faire, participatory and transformational management.

#### Autocratic leadership style

Autocratic leadership style is a task-oriented leadership style referring to the degree to which a leader defines and organizes his / her role and the roles of the followers. Based on their responses on each item, an average score was computed to establish the extent to which they engage in initiative structure. The teachers were also requested to rate the extent to which their head teachers engage in the same structure of initiative styles.

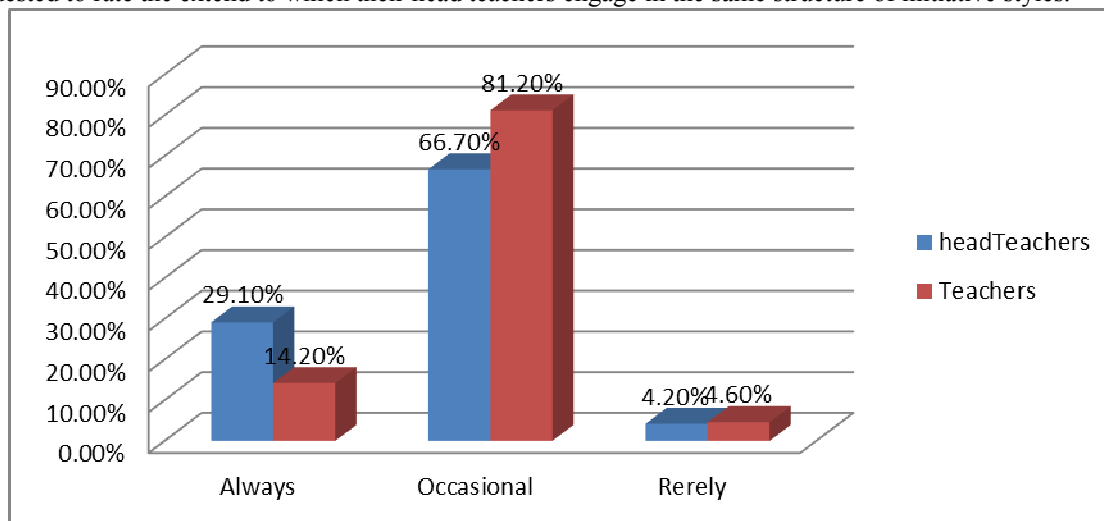
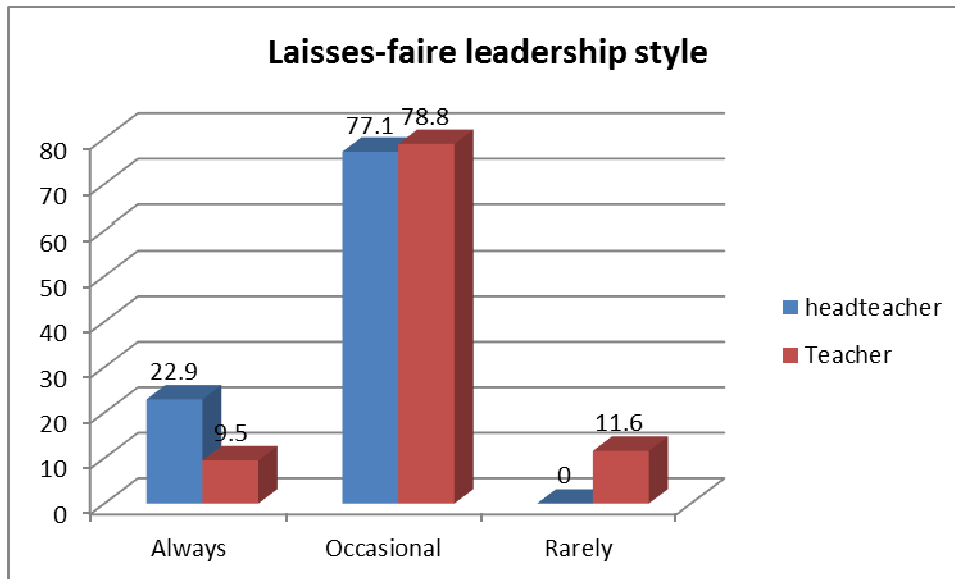


Figure 3 shows that (29.1%) of the head teacher rated themselves to always engage in Autocratic leadership, while they were rated (14.2%) by their teachers to engage in always styles.

The figure also shows that (66.7%) of the head teachers rated themselves to occasionally engage in Autocratic leadership style, while (81.2%) of their teachers rated them to engage in the style occasionally. Lastly, 4.2% of the head teachers rated themselves to rarely engage in Autocratic leadership and 4.6% of the teachers confirmed this. This indicates that teachers differed with their head teachers on the extent to which they engage in initiative structure, whereby the head teachers rated themselves higher than they were rated by their teachers. However it emerges that majority of the head teachers engage in initiative structures styles occasionally.

#### Head Teachers Laissez-faire leadership style

To measure the extent to which the head teachers engage in this leadership traits, they were presented with a series of items to measure the extent to which they engage in Laissez-faire leadership styles. . Figure 3 shows the rating of the head teachers and teachers on this structure.

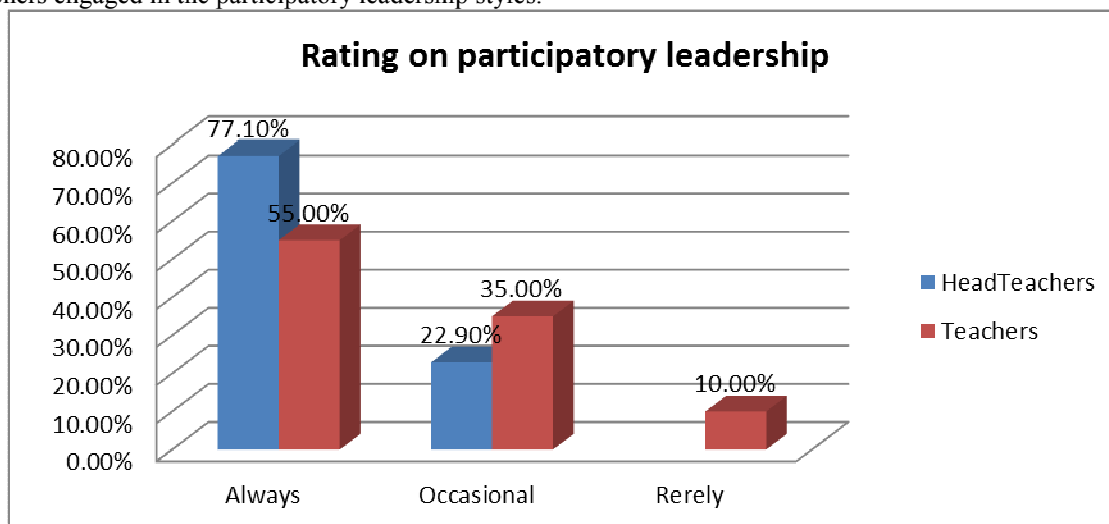


Source :( Survey data, 2015)

The figure shows that while (22.9%) of the head teachers rated themselves to always engage in Laissez-faire leadership style styles, only (9.6%) of the teachers rated thus. The figure further shows that (77.1%) of the head teachers indicated that they occasionally engaged in consideration styles and this was supported by (78.8%) of the teachers. None of the head teachers rated themselves to engage in rarely in Laissez-faire leadership style styles, (11.6%) of the teachers showed that their head teachers’ rarely engaged in this style. This again shows that head teachers tended to over rate themselves on the extent to which they engage in Laissez-faire leadership styles.

### Participatory Management

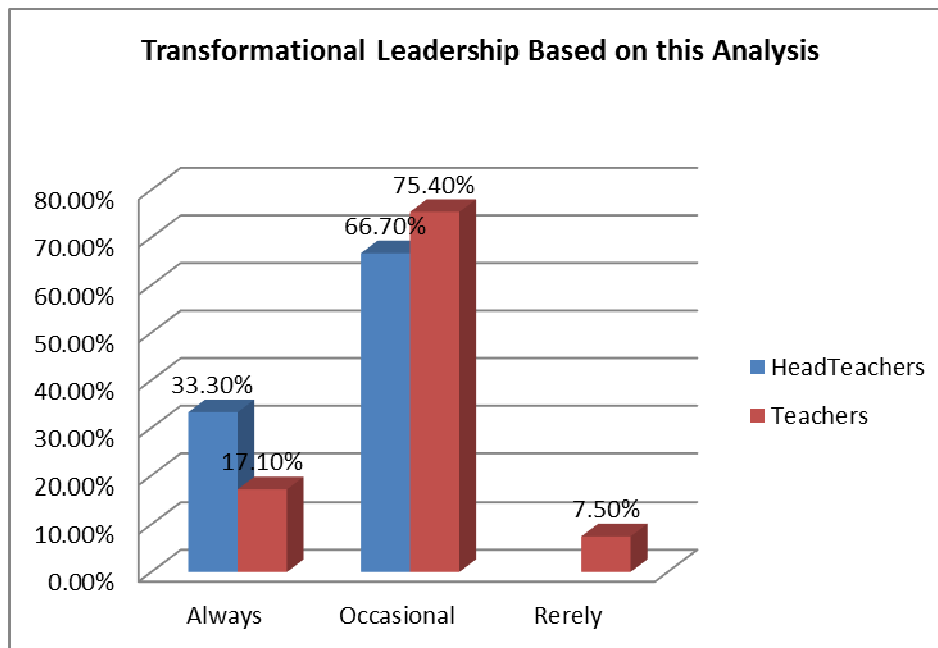
The head teachers were presented with a series of items to measure the extent to which they engage in the participatory management styles presented above. Teachers were also asked to rate the extent to which their head teachers engaged in the participatory leadership styles.



The above figure shows that (77.1 %) of the head teachers rated themselves to “always” engage in participatory while (55%) of the teachers rated themselves to occasionally engage in the trait.

On the other hand, (22.9%) of the head teachers rated themselves to occasionally engage in participatory leadership. (35%) of the teachers indicated that their head teachers engage in this style of leadership, while (10%) indicated that their head teachers engage in the styles attributed to participatory leadership, none of the head teachers indicated that they ‘rarely’ engage in such styles of leadership. This again shows that head teachers tended to rate themselves higher than they were rated by their teachers.

Based on the responses of the head teachers and their teachers on three structures – initiative consideration and participatory leadership, an average score was computed to determine the extent to which head teachers exercise transformational leadership.



Source :( Survey data, 2015)

The findings indicate that (33.3%) of the head teachers rated themselves to “always” exercise transformational leadership, while (17.1%) of the teachers viewed them to practice this leadership style. The findings further show that (66.7%) of the head teachers rated themselves to practice transformational leadership occasionally and 75.4% of the teachers agreed with this. However, (7.5%) of the teachers found their head teachers to rarely practice transformational leadership. None of the head teachers rated themselves to rarely practice this leadership style. This shows that head teachers over rate themselves on the extent to which they practice transformational leadership. Research has shown that individuals tend to over rate themselves on desirable traits and under rate themselves on undesirable traits (Sharma, 2008).

It is also notable that perceptions of teachers on the extent to which their head teachers exercise transformational leadership could be more reliable than the self rating of the head teachers.

### Conclusion

The findings of the study conclude that headteachers in Soin Division employed different leadership styles in their respective primary schools. They also modified their leadership styles to meet the situations in their various schools. The leadership styles practiced in the region was laissez faire, democratic and transformational styles. It is therefore concluded that the autocratic leadership style of school head teachers was found to have negative influence on primary school teachers’ career commitment. Further findings indicated that head teachers’ democratic leadership styles positively influenced teachers’ levels of career commitment. Head teachers’ laissez faire leadership style moderately influence primary school teachers’ levels of job satisfaction while transformational leadership style positively influence primary school teachers’ levels of teachers career commitment.

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