

CHALLENGES EDUCATIONAL LEADERS FACE IN ENHANCING STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS IN MOROGORO MUNICIPALITY, TANZANIA

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Abstract

The study was conducted to investigate the challenges educational leaders face in enhancing students' academic achievements in Morogoro municipality, Tanzania. The study used a case study design based on mixed research approach that is both qualitative approach and quantitative approach. The study used both primary and secondary source of data collection. Primary data were collected using questionnaires while secondary data were obtained through documentary reviews from books, internet sources, NACTE and from JUCo library. Both purposive and random sampling techniques were used in selecting 100 respondents for this study. The collected data were coded, recorded, cleaned, processed; finally, analyzed using the statistical tool SPSS version 20 to compute descriptive statistics such as percentages and frequencies. Results presented in the form of charts and tables. The study found that shortage of teaching and learning materials, inadequate of well-equipped laboratories and libraries, teachers' motivation i.e., working environment, were found to be the major challenges educational leadership face on enhancing students' academic performance. Basing on the study findings the study concluded that motivation to teachers should be considered for increasing the degree of accountability and hardworking in improving students' academic performance. The study recommended that in improving educational leaders the governments should increase motivational, encourage cooperation and build teamwork to teachers for the benefit of educational system.

Key words: *Challenges, Educational Leaders, Students' Academic Achievements*

1.0 Introduction

Education is essential in providing the chances and perspectives envisioned in a competitive and quality demanding labor market for each of a country's individuals and for the country itself in an emerging global environment (Dina, 2013). Also, Dina argued that educational leadership is a term that has to do mainly with the duties and responsibilities of the leadership team in improving school management, as well as students' achievement. Leadership is a fundamental and has got a direct influence on students' academic performance (Hallinger, 2011). Recently Wieczorek and Manard, (2018) argued that school leadership is critical in developing and sustaining school-level conditions for instructional improvement. Indeed, scholars have called for a re-focusing of scholarship in the field of educational administration in general (James, 2004). Therefore, for educational leaders to

impact on students' achievements, professionally qualified leaders are essential. However, Dennis (2014) found that there is the continuous nature of change and the speed of change which requires intrinsic, longer-term motivation, rather than short-term, spur-of-the-moment motivational activities which is the major challenge to educational leaders. Also, Dennis emphasizes that it is more important to, among other things, develop educational leaders' decision-making skills and emotional competencies, rather than just their skill in the legal process, be it in drafting a budget or in the technicalities involved in appointing a staff member.

There is a great interest in educational leadership in the early part of the twenty first century. This is because of the widespread belief that the quality of leadership makes a significant difference to school and students' outcomes. In many parts of the world, including both developed and developing countries, there is recognition that schools require effective leaders and managers if they are to provide the best possible educations for their students. As the global economy gathers pace, more governments are realizing that their main assets are their people and that remaining, or becoming, competitive depends increasingly on the development of highly skilled workforce. This requires trained and committed teachers but they, in turn; need the leadership of highly effective principals with the support of other senior and middle managers (Bush, 2008).

School leaders are consistent drawn from the wider teaching professions. Given the centrality of leadership for learning, noted earlier, it is essential for school heads and other leaders to have substantial professional experience. In practice, of course, the journey from teacher to leaders is an incremental process, which generally involves the gradual substitution of leaders and management activities for class room teaching. Therefore, enabling leaders to develop and inculcate a sense of purpose in their schools, and to facilitate school improvement, is the recognition of the need for ongoing development of teachers and leaders. The nature and pace of change make it inevitable that initial teacher education will need to be supplemented by adding professional development to enhance subject knowledge and pedagogy (Bush *et al.*, 2010). Moral leadership has similar characteristics to transformational leadership in its emphasis on developing the commitment of followers, but its distinctive element is the focus on values and moral purpose. Leaders are expected to behave with integrity and to develop and support goals underpinned by explicit values of leaders. The main difficulty arises when staff or stakeholders do not support the values of leaders (Bush, 2008).

1.1 Analytical and Theoretical Framework

Contingency theory is a leaders-match theory which means it tries to match leaders to appropriate situations. It is called contingency because it suggests that a leader's effectiveness depends on how well the leader's style fits the context. To understand the performance of leaders, it is essential to understand the situations in which they lead. Effective leadership is contingent on matching a leader's style to the right setting. In short, contingency theory is concerned with styles and situations. It provides the framework for effectively matching the leader and the situation (Northouse, 2010). This theory argues that there is no single way of leading and that every leadership style should be based on specific situations, which means that there are certain people who perform at the maximum level in certain places; but at a minimal level when out of their element. Therefore; the researchers used this theory as it indicates three classifications that measure the kind of power and the influence a leader in influencing academic achievements.

2.0 Research Methods and Methodology

2.1 Description of the Study Area

The study was carried out in Morogoro Municipality, Tanzania. Purposively Morogoro municipality selected as the study site because it is experiencing the problems related to the educational leadership on student's achievement specifically Bundodimwe and Lupanga secondary schools. Geographically, it covers 260 square kilometers and it has a total population of 315,866 people; whereby male is 151,700 and female 164,166 (URT, 2012). Its geographical location coordinates are 6° 49' 20" south, 37° 40' 0" east.

2.2 Research Design

The study used a case study design to investigate challenges facing educational leaders on student's achievements at Bundodimwe and Lupanga Secondary Schools. Also, the study used mixed research approach that is both qualitative approach and quantitative approach.

2.3 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

Both purposive and random sampling techniques were used in this study; purposive sampling was used in selecting the study area, i.e., Bundodimwe and Lupanga secondary schools while random sampling was used in obtaining 90 respondents i.e., 70 students and 20 school teachers. The sample size was derived from the Slovin's formula (1960) which allowed researchers to sample the population with a desired degree of accuracy.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Whereby;

n = Number of samples or Sample size

N = Population size

e = Error margin/ margin of error

Researchers used a confidence level of 90%, to decide on the Sample size to be used in this study. Therefore, researchers using the adopted formula computed the sample size as;

Given;

N = 5,049 (A total number of all form four students and all teachers in Morogoro municipality i.e., 3,871 form four students and 1,178 school teachers)

$$e = 10\% (0.10)$$

$$n = \frac{5049}{1 + 5049(0.10)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{5049}{51.49}$$

Sample size = 98 respondents Approximated to 100 respondents

Researchers were confident with 100 respondents in Morogoro municipality and hence a sample size (n) was be chosen i.e., at least it was equal or greater than 10% of population size identified in the study area. The study used simple random sampling and purposive sampling for the purpose of avoiding biasness to the respondents.

2.4 Data Type and Collection

The study used both primary and secondary source of data collection. Primary data were collected from 90 respondents using questionnaires and interview while secondary data were obtained through documentary reviews from books, NECTA reports, from the internet sources and from JUCo library.

2.5 Data Analysis

The collected data were coded, recorded, cleaned, processed; finally, analyzed using the statistical tool SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) version 20 to compute descriptive statistics such as percentages, frequencies and standard deviation. Results presented in the form of charts and tables.

3.0 Results and Discussion

3.1 Response Rate

In this study, researchers distributed and administered 100 questionnaires to respondents whereby 70 questionnaires for form four students and 30 questionnaires for school teachers. Overall, 90 questionnaires were returned well filled which represented a response rate of 90% indicating that researchers were active in ensuring the intended information is collected from the expected number of the respondents. Only 10 questionnaires accounted to 10% were not well filled.

3.2 Challenges Educational Leadership Face in Enhancing Students' Academic Achievement

In assessing the challenges educational leaders face on students' academic achievement. Twelve statements (12) were provided to 90 respondents (both teachers and students) in examining the challenges educational leaders face in enhancing students' academic achievements. The respondents were required to specify the degree of progress they know by specifying whether they Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (UN), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The results described in the Table 1 below.

Table 1 Challenge Facing Educational Leaders Face in Enhancing Students' Achievement

S/N	Statement(s)	S A	A	U	D	S D
1	Inadequate training of head teachers in school administration	28%	39%	13%	10%	10%
2	Lack of Community Participation	33%	31%	7%	17%	12%
3	Inadequate qualified school staff	51%	21%	4%	12%	11%
4	Lack of staff motivation	58%	27%	2%	12%	1%
5	Poor decision-making in the administration of schools	23%	30%	20%	20%	7%
6	Poor leadership style of school heads	30%	24%	17%	20%	9%
8	Indiscipline among teachers and students	17%	23%	14%	20%	26%
9	Supervision and inspection of the staff	14%	21%	24%	27%	13%
10	Frequent changes in education policies	11%	21%	23%	26%	19%
11	Political interference by both government and the political class	37%	31%	12%	9%	11%
12	Inadequate of Teaching Materials	0	75%	0	25%	0

Source: Field Study, 2021.

Inadequate Training of Head Teachers in School Administration; the results from Table 1 indicated that 35 (39%) of the respondents agreed to some extent that at Bungodimwe secondary school and Lupanga secondary school there is inadequate training of Head teachers which led to poor performance of students and school in general followed by 25(28%) respondents who strongly agreed, while 12 (13%) of respondents were neutral and lastly 9 (10%) of respondents disagreed

same to strongly disagreed 9(10%) of respondents. The same results were presented in the bar-graph in Figure 1 below.

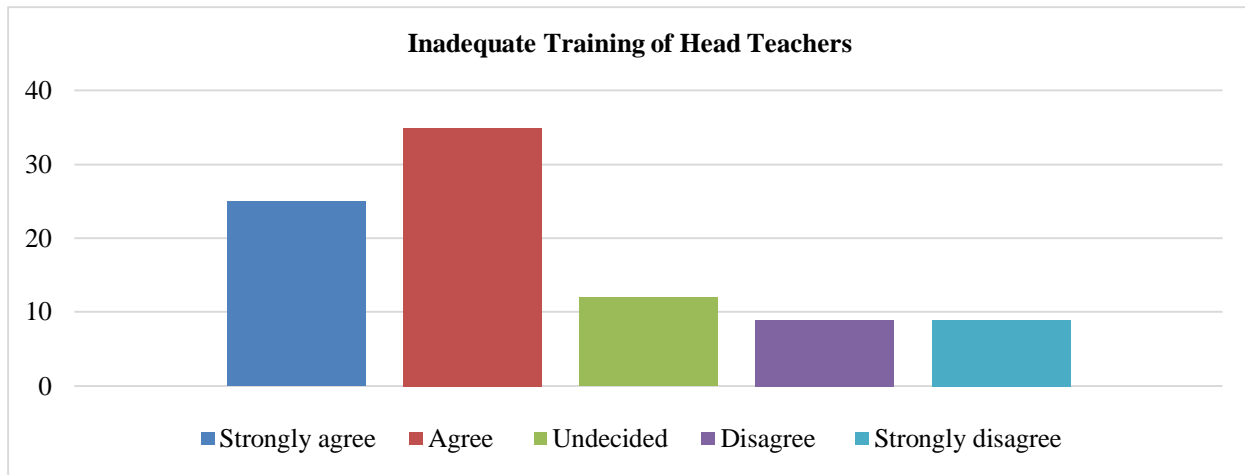


Figure 1 Inadequate Training of Head teachers
Source: Field Study, 2021

It was found that training of head teachers was a major challenge in Bungodimwe and Lupanga secondary schools, indicating that inadequate training of head teachers in schools led to poor students' academic performance. Kruger *et al.*, (2015) argued that stable and well trained leaders contribute in influencing students' academic performance. Although, the study results acknowledged that there is a positive effects of educational leadership in secondary schools. Basing on the study results researchers recommended that for the Tanzania educational system to be marketable there is a need of introducing in-service training for head teachers in order to increase the quality of education to school and students at large.

Lack of Community Participation; the study result revealed that a total number of 30 (33%) respondents strongly agreed that lack of community participation was a major challenge head teachers face in enhancing students' academic performance followed by 28 (31%) respondents who agreed with the statement to some extent. Despite the fact that majority more than 64% of respondents agreed but some of respondents 6 (7%) were neutral followed by 15 (17%) who disagreed while 11 (12%) of respondents strongly disagreed. The same results presented on the bar-graph in Figure 2 below.

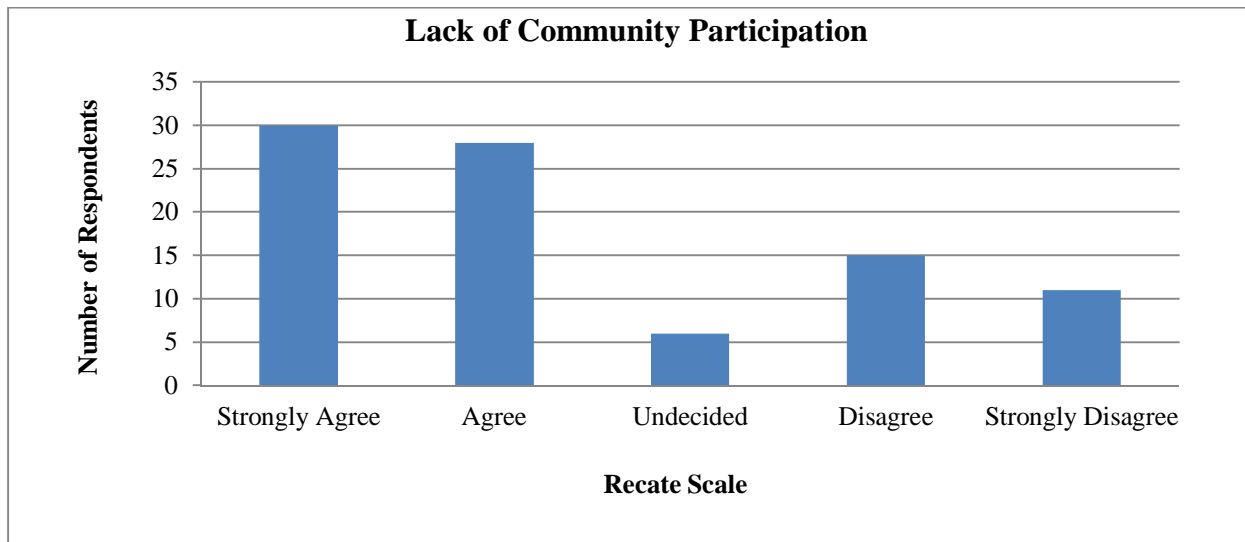


Figure 2 Lack of Community Relationship
Source: Field Study, 2021

The study result from the Figure 2 revealed that majority of respondents strongly agreed that poor students' academic performance at Bungodimwe and Lupanga secondary schools is highly influenced by lack of community participation in academic matters. The study result implies that school decisions are made by top management staff members and other decisions were made by heads of the schools themselves. Therefore, to achieve the school desired goals especially students' academic achievement, community participation in the school management is highly required. The study result is in line with the findings of various related studies (Firmina, 2015; Kambambovu, 2018) who found that community involvement in school managerial issues is to a small extent. Therefore, basing on the study findings the researchers recommended that in order to increase the students' academic performance there is a need of engaging community in making decision concerning the matter of school development.

Inadequate Qualified School Staff; it was found that inadequate qualified of school staff is the great challenges in enhancing students' academic achievements. This statement was supported by different respondents where by 51% of respondents strongly agreed, followed by 21% agreed to some extent, then 4% were undecided followed by 12% who disagreed to some extent and lastly 11% strongly disagreed. This indicates that students' poor academic performance is resulted by inadequate of qualified school staffs. The same results were presented in bar-graph on Figure 3 below.

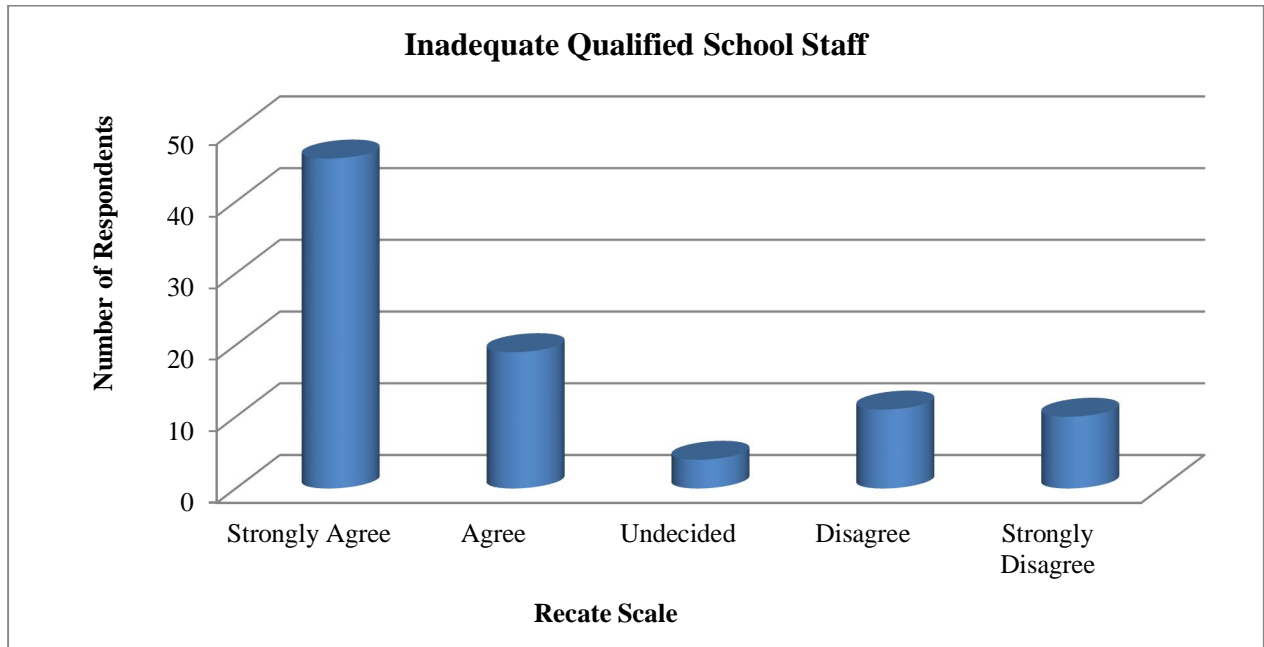


Figure 3 Inadequate Qualified School Staff
Source: Field Study, 2021

From Figure 3 above it was found that lack of qualified teachers is a major challenge to educational leaders in enhancing students' academic performance among students from Bungodimwe Secondary School and Lupanga Secondary School. Therefore, Inadequate qualified of school staff contributes in poor students' academic performance. However, the improvement in academic performance of the students in school level is supported by good and well trained teachers. The study result is in line with the findings of Firmina (2015) who found that the continuous assessment tests in schools has not translated to improve students' academic performance due to the lack of enough teaching staff in public secondary school, though the tests given to students were not standardized and students' centered as it was required, this were undermining the quality of tests which may not provide a means of determining the extent to which understanding and skills have been achieved by students. Therefore, the study concluded that to improve academic performance the government in collaboration with Ministry of Education should introduce a program for teachers in order to give them more skill on their professionals for the matter of raising the quality of education national wise.

Lack of Staff Motivation; it was found that majority of the respondents accounted to 58% Strongly agreed, followed by 27% agreed to some extent that lack of motivation among staff members is the source of poor students' academic performance. However majority of respondents strongly agreed that in our school there is inadequate of staff Motivation but few respondents accounted to 2% were undecided, followed by 12% disagreed to some extent lastly only 1% strongly Disagree. The same results presented in bar- graph on Figure 4 below.

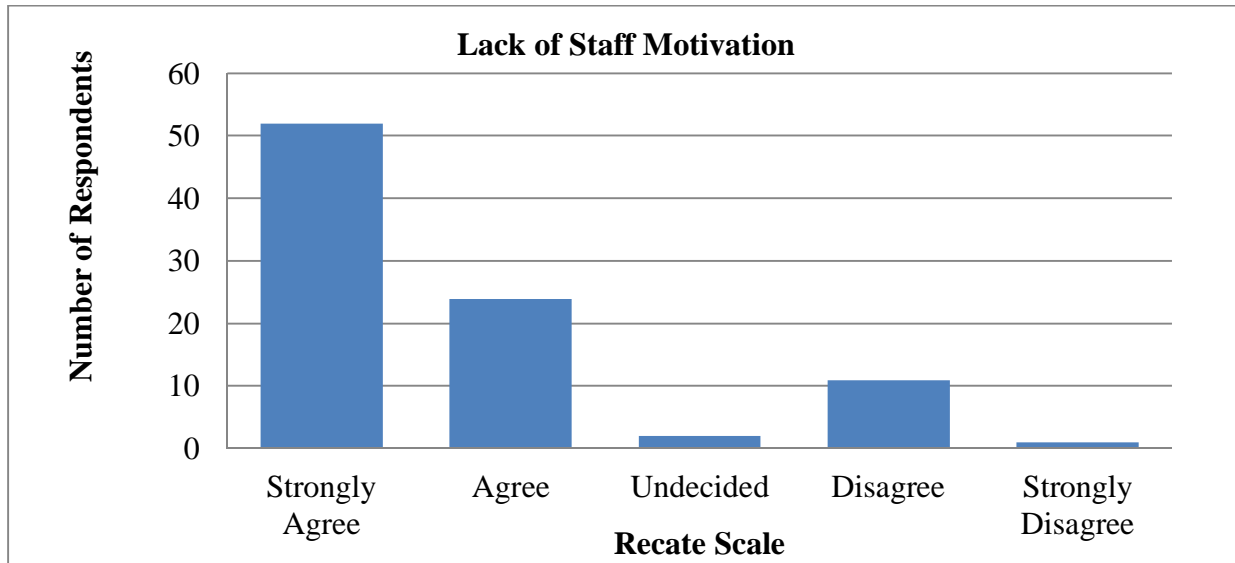


Figure 4 Lack of Staff Motivation

Source: Field Study, 2021

The results from the Figure 4 above revealed that majority of respondents strongly agreed that there is lack of staff motivation in selected secondary schools especially in Bungodimwe and Lupanga secondary schools. Therefore, lack of motivation is the great challenges to educational leaders in enhancing students' academic performance. The study results is in line with the findings of Nyongesa (2019) who argued that lack of motivation has been expressed in head teacher unwillingness to participate in school activities, poor attendance, unexpected absence, late coming, lack of additional training, uncreative and non-stimulating teaching, lack of interest in meetings, uncooperative attitudes when assistance is needed, occurrence of hold-ups because deadlines are not kept, resistance to contributing more than what is required of them and development of arguments between colleagues. Basing on the findings the study recommended that motivation to teachers should be considered increasing the degree of accountability and hardworking in improving students' academic achievements.

Poor Decision-Making in the Administration of Schools; it was revealed that majority of the respondents accounted to 30% agreed to some extent followed by 23% who strongly agreed that the school administration have no room for decision making to other staff. However, majority agreed that there is no decision making but some of respondents accounted to 20% were undecided and few respondents accounted to 20% disagreed followed by 7% who strongly disagreed. The same results were presented in bar graph in Figure 5 below.

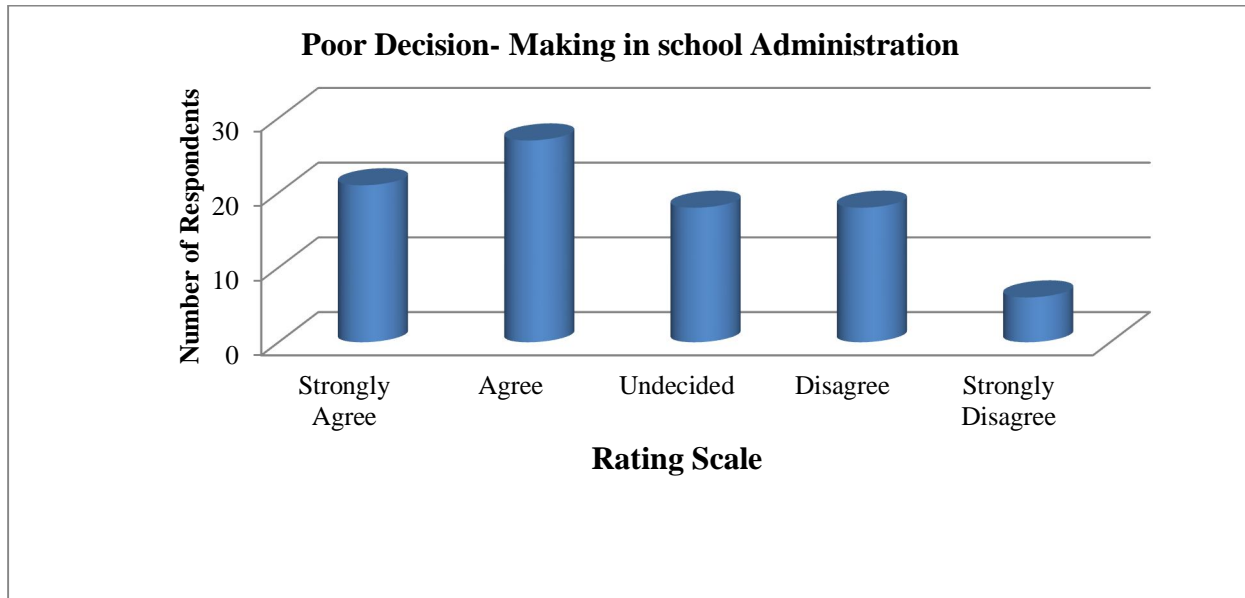


Figure 5 Poor Decision-Making in School Administration

Source: Field Study, 2021

The study revealed that majority of respondents agreed to some extent that there is no freedom of decision making in public secondary schools. A well decision making of school administration led to improvement of students' academic performance, due to the involvement of teachers and students in making decisions for the school improvements. The study result is in line with the findings of various related studies (Firmina, 2015; Nyongesa 2019) who argued that students are less involved in decision making in Tanzanian school management. Proponents of participatory management in schools view cases of disruptions of academic programs as a direct result of the failure by school management authorities to involve students in decision-making. Basing on the study findings the researcher concluded that in improving academic performance the school managements should engage teachers and students in decision making for the matter of raising their problems for the purpose of improving school academic performance.

Poor Leadership Style of School Heads; it was found that majority of respondents accounted to 30% strongly agreed, followed by 24% agreed to some extent that the school heads are not aware on leadership styles means that they are using any style without considering the relationship between the work and the style to be applied on a certain task, also 17% of respondents were Neutral (undecided) then few accounted to 20% disagreed to some extent finally 9% strongly disagreed. The study revealed that there is a great relationship between leadership style and academic performance, if the leading style will be very systematic means the academic performance of students and school in general will be much impressive, though leadership style and academic performance they cannot be separated in any coast. The same results were presented in bar- graph on a Figure 6 below.

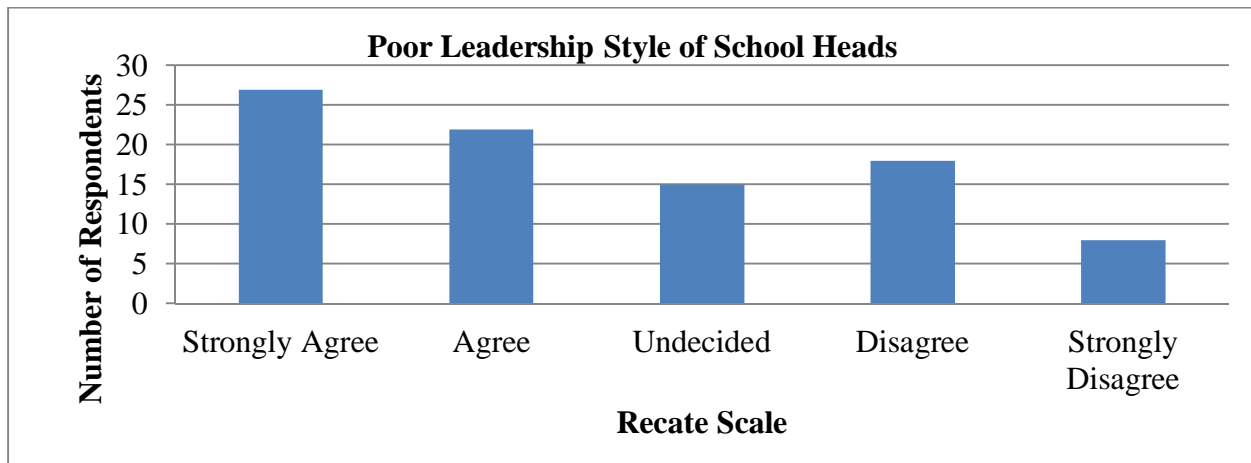


Figure 6 Poor Leadership Styles of School Heads

Source: Field Study, 2021

The results from Figure 6 shows that majority of respondents strongly agreed that leadership styles used by the head of schools are not satisfactory, in a sense that they cannot bring any improvements in academic. However, the study findings revealed that poor students' academic performance led by poor leadership styles of school heads. Therefore, it is essential to maintain leadership style for the benefits of school and students in terms of academic achievements. The study result is consistency with the findings of Nyongesa (2019) who argued that head teachers who used democratic leadership style posted high examination results, also he observed that there is no significant relationship was found between the autocratic leadership style and academic performance in public secondary schools. Therefore, the results from the respondents shows directly that there is a need of reminding the school head to practice different leadership styles for the betterment of students' academic achievements and school performance. Basing on the findings the study recommended that the mastery of leadership styles led to the improvements of leadership skills which accelerate to improvements of students' academic achievements.

Inadequate of Teaching and Learning Materials; the study sought to know the distribution of the teaching-learning materials i.e., reference books, teaching guides, charts and supplementary books as it plays a great role in simplifying teaching process in class which makes students understand well the lesson and can make them to perform well in their exams. It was found that majority of respondents accounted to 75% agreed that lack of teaching materials led to poor students' academic performance followed by 25%. The problem that faces our public secondary school is learning and teaching materials while the private schools are rich in teaching and learning materials. This situation gives a credit of good academic performance to private schools rather than public secondary schools. The similar results were presented on the Figure 7 below.

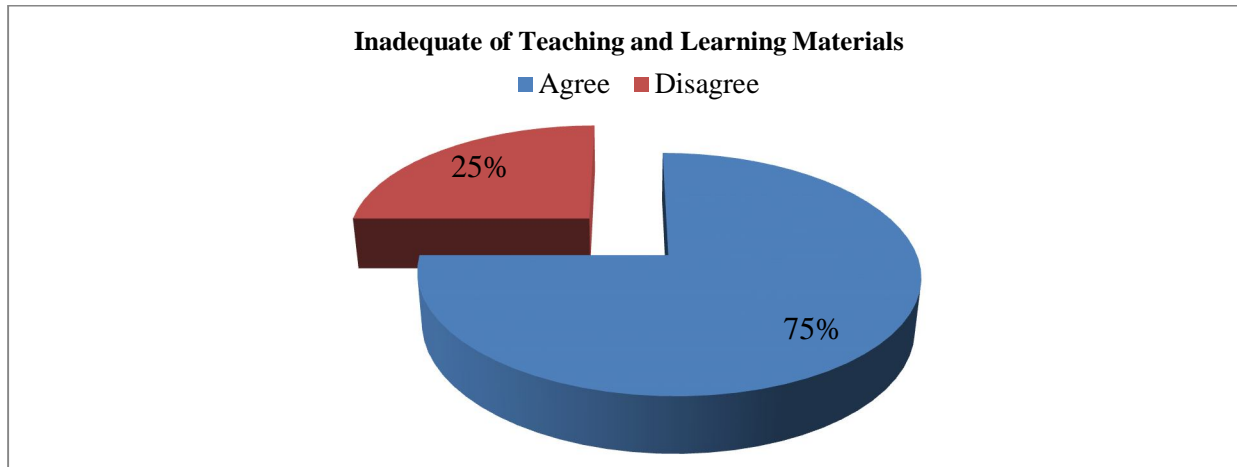


Figure 7 Inadequate of Teaching and Learning Materials

Source: Field Study, 2021

The majority about 68 of respondents accounted to 75% agreed that lack of teaching and learning materials led to poor performance of students. The study result implies that the poor performance of students is highly influenced by inadequate of teaching and learning materials. The study result is in line with the findings of various related studies (Johnson *et al.*, 2004; Singano, 2017; Kambambovu, 2018) who found that secondary schools have been suffering due to inadequate teaching and learning facilities for effective teaching and learning process to improve students' academic performance results into poor performance. Basing on the fact that there is a relationship between availability of teaching and learning materials and academic performance, teaching and learning materials simplify the work of teaching in the class and make students to understand what is being taught. Inadequate of teaching and learning materials make the teaching process hard and also affect the students on their learning. Therefore, the government should distribute teaching and learning materials to public secondary school for the purpose of increasing school performance.

4.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

Commonly the educational initiative goals in Tanzania is the challenge of achieving quality education. The challenges educational leaders face are the goals makes it necessary for governments in our country continue pursuing strategies for enhancing good students' academic achievements. Ensuring quality education is critical because the quality of the foundations laid at the educational level influences the quality of student's learning at the secondary education levels. In achieving quality education, there is the need for the government to define clearly quality indicators that will meet their developmental needs and at the same time fit into global indicators. Quality indicators should move beyond inputs governments provide in terms of infrastructures, teachers and materials. Basing on the study findings researchers recommended that the government through the ministry of education should introduce leadership courses for educational leaders to improve students and school achievements. Also, in order to improve students' academic achievement, the study recommends that educational leaders should create cooperative spirit with their staff members and students for the purpose of avoiding biasness and enhancing closeness for the improvement of the school academic achievements.

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