Shared Leadership and Students' Performance in Secondary Schools

Muturi Phyllis Muthoni

Dedan Kimathi University of Technology, School of Graduate Studies and Research

Abstract

Many institutions of our society are passing through a challenging phase of handling leadership. This is quite complex in schools, the way students are developed will determine the kind of society we shall have in future. The principal of a school has an important role in shaping the destiny of the school. As the administrative and academic head, principal has a unique leadership role which can be immensely challenging and highly rewarding, at the same time. "State and federal requirements to increase student learning, necessitate a shift in leadership, from managing orderly environments in which teachers work autonomously in their classrooms to one in which administrators, teachers, and others share leadership roles and responsibilities for student learning. Research and best practice indicate the value of collaborating on shared vision, goals, and work needed to ensure that every student learns at high levels" (Sanders and Kearney 2008). The paper examines briefly what is leadership; how sharing school leadership can improve students' achievement hence help the teachers and the principal to facilitate and appreciate the role of shared leadership. This paper will also seek to examine how shared leadership is facilitated by use of teams, strategies of facilitating shared leadership and collaboration; the role of the principal in student achievement and motivation of teams

Keywords: shared leadership, students' performance, motivation, teams

1.1 Leadership

There are various types of leadership styles namely; instructional, participative, democratic, transformational, strategic and transactional. Instructional leadership seeks to improve classroom practices by teachers while democratic and participative leadership focuses on decision making process in schools (Wallace Foundation, 2011). Duignan and Bhindi (1997) argued that "the quality of relationships greatly influences everything else that happens in organizations, including the quality of leadership". Schein (1992) reminded us that cultural understanding is essential for leaders if they are to lead effectively. He pointed out that leadership and culture are closely intertwined as leaders create cultures and culture in turn influences leaders and leadership. Yukl (2010) defines leadership as "the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives." There are various theories of leadership which include Traits theory, Behavioral Theory and Transformational Theories.

Traits theory identifies leaders with special features. According to Yukl (2010), these features are defined as "variety of individual attributes, including aspects of personality, temperament, needs, motives, and values. All these characteristics are very important for an effective leader and will assist him to help the teams to perform. Yaron (2009) observed that behavioral leadership theories are based on the assumption that great leaders are made - not born. Accordingly, they focus on the actions of leaders - not on their inherent traits. People can learn to become leaders through teaching and observation. Transactional leadership is a situation where the followers do specific tasks only in exchange for rewards. The leader is also free to punish the followers (Burns, 1978). Transformational Leadership is a situation where followers are enthusiastic and identify with their leader in accomplishing the vision of their leader. These followers are motivated, effective and efficient in the achievement of the final desired outcome or goal attainment. The leaders use chain of commands to get the job done (Burn, 1978).

1.2 Shared Leadership

Light body (2010) defines shared leadership as "the process where more than one person collaborates to provide direction, exercise influence so as to achieve common goals." Carson, Tesluk, Marrone (2007) defined shared leadership as "an emergent team property that results from the distribution of influence across multiple team members''. Pearce, Manz and Sims (2009) argued that "Shared leadership is a dynamic, unfolding, interactive influence process among individuals, where the objective is to lead one another toward the achievement of collective goals. Shared leadership entails broadly sharing power and influence among a set of individuals rather than centralizing it in the hands of a single individual who acts in the clear role of a dominant superior''. Gibb (1954) first suggested the idea of two forms of team leadership: distributed and focused. Focused leadership occurs when leadership resides within a single individual, whereas distributed leadership occurs when two or more individuals share the roles, responsibilities, and functions of leadership.

Sergiovanni (2000) argues that a shared approach to leadership is that leadership, in a school, that

needs to be widely distributed across key stakeholders. The more teachers know and the more skilled they are in teaching, the more successful schools will be, in advancing learning. Shared leadership has continued to increase in companies first because of competition (domestic or global) and teams are central to this end. A cross-functional team brings diverse set of functional expertise and expense altogether. Leadership in these cross functional team is not determined by positions but rather by individuals' knowledge and abilities of their peers. Pearce, Manz and Sims (2009) suggested that "Beyond the organizational demands for team based work arrangements, there is a parallel demand for leadership to be more equally shared up and down the hierarchy. This need for shared leadership is being driven by several forces.

- The first is the realization by senior-most leaders that they do not possess sufficient time or enough relevant information to make all of the decisions in a fast-changing and complex world. Individuals down the line, in many instances, are more highly informed, and therefore in a better position to provide leadership.

- Speed of response to environmental pressures that are today far more turbulent than in the past is now a striking organizational reality – especially since the global financial crisis. This demand suggests that organizations cannot wait for leadership decisions to be pushed up to the top.

- The final force driving the need for shared leadership has to do with the complexity of the job held by the senior-most leader in an organization – the managing director or chief executive officer.''

Carson et al (2007), proposed three dimensions of shared leadership which is facilitated by an overall team environment. These are: shared purpose, social support, and voice. The first dimension is shared purpose that exists when team members have similar understandings of their team's primary objectives and take steps to ensure a focus on collective goals. The second dimension is social support, which is defined as team members' efforts to provide emotional and psychological strength to one another. The third dimension is voice. This involves participation and input which results in increased engagement and involvement. According to Lambert (2003), shared leadership is based on the following assumptions:

• Everyone has the right, responsibility, and ability to be a leader.

• How leadership is defined influences how people will participate.

• Educators yearn to be more fully who they are—purposeful, professional human beings.

• Leadership is an essential aspect of an educator's professional life.

Elmore (2000) suggested that "standards-based reform efforts that emphasize instructional improvements and student achievement are the measures of leadership success that creates an impetus for change in the way schools are led". Kezar (2005) identified eight strategies of facilitating shared leadership and collaboration;

1. Develop a shared understanding of institutional mission and philosophy-

This is through commitment of faculty, staff, and students to the school's mission, vision, and philosophy. They also teach students how to succeed, academically and socially and new members of staff about the institution's mission and values.

2. Use celebrations to engage the campus community in conversations about student success This is done through major events that celebrate individual's and group accomplishments and recognize community achievements.-

This is done through major events that celebrate individuals and group accomplishments and recognize community achievements.

3. Advocate for shared governance

School should encourage participation by faculty, students and staff in institutional governance at all levels that will facilitate student success.

4. Ensure that students have a prominent voice in campus governance

Ensuring that students to participate in policy making band on committee, task forces and governance groups and in leadership roles

5. Alter structures to encourage cross functional activities focused on student success

There is need to incorporate programs that will help students to work in groups, teams teaching and interdisplinary research

6. Tighten the philosophical and operational linkages between academic and student affairs- The need for professionals to support the institutions academic mission and enriching educational opportunities for students like peer tutoring and mentoring

7 Empower and support faculty leadership- Encouraging reforms that help to pull together on a project that will enhance students experience.

8. Create and capitalize on cross-functional, boundary-spanning activities- Schools should encourage some tasks hence assessments, technology, planning, research to be done across the campus.

Pitner (1988) offered reciprocal-effects model-a theoretical model on link between school leadership and student achievement. This shows the interaction of leadership, intervening variables, and student

achievement, and suggests various interactions through which principals might exhibit leadership behavior in schools over time. This model gives provision for feedback that dictates the principal's future leadership actions.
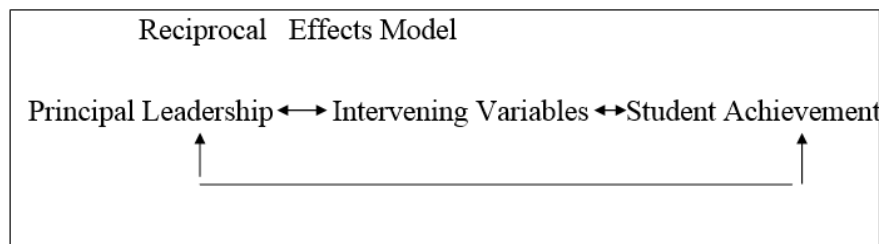
Figure 1: Modeling school leadership effects on student achievement
Source: Pitner, 1988

1.3 The Role of the Principal in Facilitating Shared Leadership

In 1980, a research carried out by California school of leadership Academy (CSLA) for school leadership teams showed that "the resulting changes in teaching and learning created statistically significant improvements in student achievement" Welhelm (2010). This was confirmed in a data analysis carried out on 100 schools. The principal needs to appreciate that no one person in school is most knowledgeable or experienced person, he/she should be "aware of the strengths of the staff and taps into each member's expertise to improve teaching and learning in the school" (Turning Points, 2001).The principal requires transformational leadership in order to succeed in enhancing student achievement. Leithwood and Janzi (1999) described six factors of transformational leadership namely;

- Building school vision and goals
- Providing intellectual stimulation
- Offering individualized support
- Symbolizing professional practices and values,
- Demonstrating high performance expectations,
- Developing structures to foster participation in school decisions.

Turning Points (2001) focuses on the role principal plays in schools:

1. Sharing decision-making power with staff and faculty.

The principal shares opportunities to teachers to participate in significant decision making in academic teams, discipline-based teams, study groups, and the leadership team.

2. Providing support for effective functioning of teams.

The principal ensures that teachers have the skills for defining a purpose, setting measurable goals, creating norms for operating, setting agendas, and assigning tasks. The principal receives feedback compliments and recognizes the team's efforts.

3. Being an instructional leader who prompts others to continuously learn and improve their practice.

The principal visits classrooms, works with teachers and students in order to improve learning, teaching, and assessment practices

1.4 Teams Performance

One way to improve team's performance is to establish agreed norms on how the team should operate. These norms will help to outline the roles of each individual, measurement of performance and how to work together. These norms will also indicate the motivating systems and how to relate to customers (Smircich, 1983).

The principal of a school has a major role in enhancing group cohesiveness. The form of management style of leadership used by the principal determines the relationship between the group and the school (Mullins, 2008). This is affected by guidance and encouragement offered by the principal, support, attempt to solve conflicts and attention given to both employees and task problems.

The principal has the role to ensure that human resource policies and procedures are well developed and fair to all members. These include appraisal systems, discipline, promotion, rewards and opportunities for personal development. The teams after accomplishment of tasks require motivation through praise; cooperative action and other benefits for example pay rise or group bonus incentive schemes (Mullins, 2008).

A principal of an institution is able to tell whether a team is effective by the spirit of cooperation in which members portray and harmonious support they give each other. Some of the characteristics the group portrays as outlined by (Mullins, 2008) are:-

- A belief in shared aims and objectives.
- A sense of commitment to the group
- Acceptance of group values and norms.

- A feeling of mutual trust and dependency.
- Full participation by all members and decision making by consensus

KESI (2011) outlined some of the strategies that the school principal needs to put in place to build, develop and maintain high performing teams. These are: - a) continuously enhance management and leadership skills b) selecting a balanced team with right technical skills

c) provide the team with a vision and direction d)outline the objectives and expectations e)facilitate development of the team members f) support and nurture team building activities g) encourage activities that involves teams' contribution h) facilitate constructive feedback i) encourage amicable conflict resolutions j)always recognize, reward and celebrate success of teams k) recognize the stages of team development l)help facilitate change transition m)continuously review team performance and n)helping the team to manage themselves.

Kezar (2005) suggested six conditions that matter to students' success

- living mission and lived educational philosophy
- unshakeable focus on student learning
- environment adapted for educational enrichment
- clear pathways to student success
- improvement-oriented ethos
- shared responsibility for educational quality and student success

1.5 Motivation

In order for teams to succeed the principal needs to motivate the group through appreciation and rewards. Mullins (2008) defines motivation as "the driving force within individuals by which they attempt to achieve some goals in order to fulfill some need or expectation." He suggests "that peoples' behavior is determined by what motivates them. Their performance is a product of both ability level and motivation performance = function (ability and motivation)".

Mitchell identifies four common characteristics which underline definition of motivation.

- Motivation is an individual phenomenon – every individual is unique in his/her own way.
- Motivation is intentional – each individual makes choices, on what to do or what effort to put into a task.
- Motivation is multifaceted – what grouses people to work? And what force does the individual put into a specific task?
- The purpose of a motivational theory is to predict behavior – motivation is not behavior or performance but it is an action and internal/external forces that influence a person's choice.

Kreinter et al suggested that other performance is not only enhanced by motivation but also other factors like skills, knowledge, feelings, emotions and conditions that facilitate or inhibit an individual.
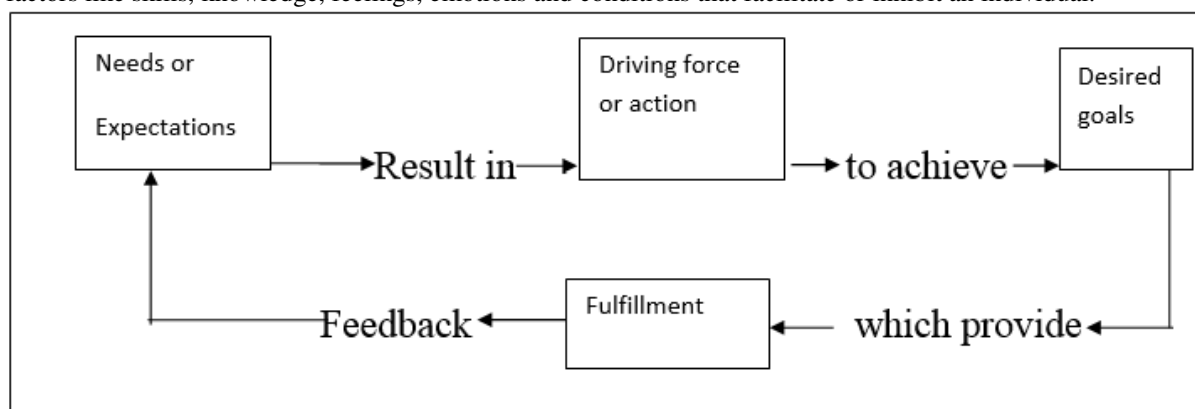

Figure 1.2: Basic Motivation Model   Source: Mullins 2008

Mullins (2008) classifies motivation into three:

- i) Economic rewards – these include pay, fringe benefits, pension rights, material goods and security.
- ii) Intrinsic satisfaction – this shows that an individual has some interest in the job, desire for personal growth and development.
- iii) Social relationships – each individual appreciates friendships from friends, group working and desire for affiliation.
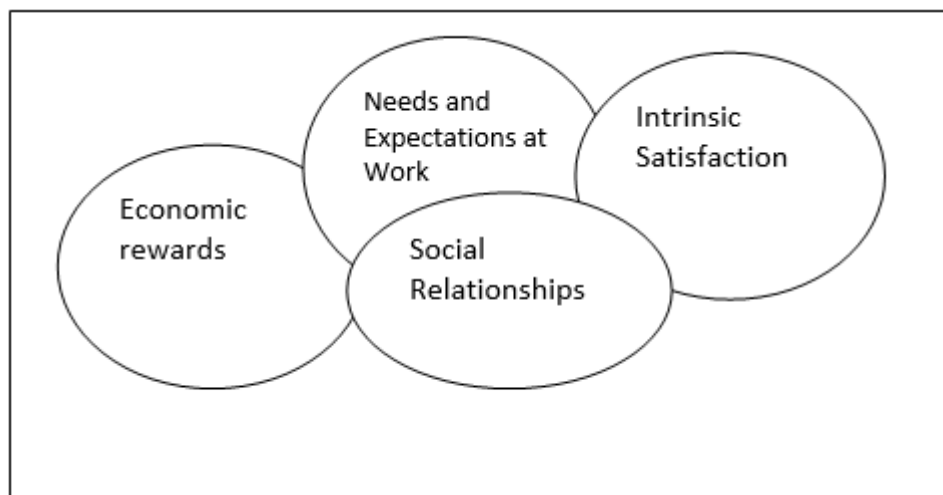
Figure1.3: Needs and expectations of people at work
Source: Mullins, 2008

Many individuals are not just motivated by money but mostly by recognition and value they get in their jobs. Kusin (2002) said that "work is about letting people know that they are important, their hard work and efforts matter and they are doing a good job and this kind of recognition, in fact, can sometimes be more important than money." Nyamor (2014) quoted the work done by John Adair on Leadership and Motivation who said that "leadership and motivation are like brothers and sisters, an individual who feels frustrated in a particular work environment will not make maximum contribution to either the common task or to the life of the group." a leader with highly motivated staff will produce good results.

1.6 Conclusion

Welhelm (2010) suggested "that if shared leadership becomes a norm for all schools, students, outcome will definitely improve. Achievement gaps will close. When teachers begin taking ownership, alongside administrators, for problems of poor achievement, they also gain ownership, of the solutions developed as a team." It is very clear that shared leadership will assist the principal to tap teachers' expertise, encourage high performing teams and assist the groups by providing support and appreciating their effort by rewarding them. This definitely transforms students' achievement. Teachers should not work autonomously in their classrooms but together with all stakeholders in the Education sector i.e. administrators, teachers and others should share leadership roles and responsibilities for students' learning. The principal has a major role in appreciation teams when tasks are accomplished through appraisal systems, promotion, rewards and opportunities for personal development. Individuals mostly motivated by recognition and value they get in their jobs and not just money. An environment which is conducive for high performance is also paramount.

1.7 Area for Future Research

In future, researchers may look at the role of each member in the team in shared leadership and the school community on group motivation.

References

Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership*, New York: Harper and Row Publishers

Carson J. B, Tesluk P. E, Marrone J.A (2007) *Shared Leadership In Teams: An Investigation Of Antecedent Conditions and Performance, Academy Of Management Journal* Vol. 50, No. 5, 1217–1234.

Coleman, D. (2000), "*Leadership that Gets Results*" Harvard Business Review. March-April 2000 pp 82-83.

Davis S., Hammond D.L, LaPointe M, Meyerson D., (2005),, *Review of Research School Leadership Study Developing Successful Principals,* Stanford Educational Leadership Institute Stanford Educational Leadership Institute (SELI).

Edvantia (2005), *Research Brief Shared Leadership and Student Achievement*; Appalachia Educational Laboratory (AEL

Egan, G. (1993), *the Shadow Side*, Management Today, September 1993, pp37.

Fleishman, E. A., Harris, E. F., & Burtt, R. D. (1955), *Leadership and supervision in industry*; Columbus: Ohio State University Press.

Ganey Kusin CEO, FedEx Kinko's "*Untapped Potential; the Barriers to Optimum Corporate Performance*", Proud Foot Consulting, October (2002)

Gibb, C. A. 1954. Leadership in G. Lindzey (Ed.), *Handbook of Social Psychology*, vol. 2: 877–917. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Kahn, R, & Katz, D. (1960), *Leadership Practices in Relation to Productivity and Morale*.

Cartwight & A. Zander (Eds.), *Group dynamics research and theory*, Elmsford NY: Row Peterson.

Kenya Education Staff Institute (2011), *Diploma in Education Management for Secondary Schools*, Nairobi, Kenya Literature Bureau.

Kezar, A. (2005), *Promoting student success: The importance of shared leadership and collaboration* (Occasional Paper No. 4). Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research

Kreitner et al as quoted by Drummond H. (2000*, Introduction to organizational Behavior*, Oxford University Press.

Lambert L. (2003), *Leadership Capacity for Lasting School Improvement*, Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

Leithwood, K & Janzi, D. (1999), *the Effects of Transformational Leadership on Organizational Conditions and Student Engagement with School,* Journal of Educational Administration 38(2), pp 112 – 129.

Levi, D. (2007), *Group dynamics for teams*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications

Lightbody, I. (2010), shared leadership in Queensland Schools, A collective case study thesis paper, Queensland University of Technology.

Locke E.A. (2003) – Leadership starting at the top, inc C.L. Pearce & J.A. Conger (Eds*), shared leadership and reframing the hows and whys of leadership* (pg 271 – 283).Thousand Oaks, C.A. Sage.

Mullins L.J. (2008), *Essentials of organizational Behavior;* (2nd Edition), Pearson Harlow Education Limited

Sanders N. M., PhD and Karen M. (2008) *Performance Expectations and Indicators for Education Leaders, Kearney* Editors

National Policy Board for Educational Administration (2001), *Recognizing and encouraging exemplary leadership in America's schools: A proposal to establish a system of advanced certification for administrators.* Washington, DC.

Nsubuga Y. K.K (2008), *Analysis of Leadership Styles and School Performance of Secondary Schools in Uganda*, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University

Nyamor E., (2014), for best results, a leader should work with highly motivated staff, Daily Nation, 21st January 2014

OECD (2009) Improving School Leadership: The Toolkit *www.oecd.org/publishing/corrigenda.*

Rosenholtz, S. J. (1985). *"Effective Schools: Interpreting the Evidence." American Journal of*

Schein, E H (1992), *Organizational culture and leadership (2nd ed.),* Jossey-Bass Publishers

Sergiovanni, T, 2000b, *The Life world of Leadership: Creating Culture, Community, and Personal Meaning in Our Schools,* Jossey-Bass Publishers   San Francisco.

Smircich L. (1983), *Concepts of Culture and organizational Analysis*, Administrative Science Quarterly, vol. 28, pp 339-58.

Turning Points (2001), *Transforming Middle Schools, Guide to Collaborative Culture and shared Leadership;* Center for Collaborative Education, Boston, Massachusetts

Pearce, C.L., Manz C.C. and Sims H.P. Jr (2009), *Where do we go from here? Is shared leadership the key to success?* Organization Dynamics volume 28: No. 3pn 234 – 238, 2009.

Porter A. C, Murphy J., Goldring E, S. N. Elliott, Morgan S. Polikoff and Henry May, *Assessment of Leadership in Education: Technical Manual*, Vanderbilt University, 2008.*Education* 93(3): 352-388.

Pitner, N. J. (1988), *the Study of Administrator Effects and Effectiveness*, in N. Boyan (Ed.), *Handbook of research in educational administration* (pp. 99-122). New York: Longman.

Wallace Foundation (2011); *the School Principal as Leader*: Guiding Schools to Better Teaching and Learning.

Welhelm T. (2010) Fostering shared leadership, Educational Leadership Services, River side County Office of Education.

Yaron J (2009) *Shared Leadership - Practice and Perceptions of Teachers in a Virtual Community*, Dissertation Submitted to the Senate of the Hebrew University

Yukl, G. A. (2010), *Leadership in organizations* (7th Edition) New York: Pearson.

The IISTE is a pioneer in the Open-Access hosting service and academic event management. The aim of the firm is Accelerating Global Knowledge Sharing.

More information about the firm can be found on the homepage:
http://www.iiste.org

CALL FOR JOURNAL PAPERS

There are more than 30 peer-reviewed academic journals hosted under the hosting platform.

Prospective authors of journals can find the submission instruction on the following page: http://www.iiste.org/journals/   All the journals articles are available online to the readers all over the world without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself. Paper version of the journals is also available upon request of readers and authors.

MORE RESOURCES

Book publication information: http://www.iiste.org/book/

Academic conference: http://www.iiste.org/conference/upcoming-conferences-call-for-paper/

IISTE Knowledge Sharing Partners

EBSCO, Index Copernicus, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory, JournalTOCS, PKP Open Archives Harvester, Bielefeld Academic Search Engine, Elektronische Zeitschriftenbibliothek EZB, Open J-Gate, OCLC WorldCat, Universe Digtial Library , NewJour, Google Scholar