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Task-Oriented Leadership Behaviour and Management of Curriculum Changes in Lower Secondary Schools in Uganda

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Task-Oriented Leadership Behaviour, Management of Curriculum Changes, Lower Secondary, Karamoja Sub-Region, Uganda.

This study examined the influence of headteachers' task-oriented leadership behaviours on the management of curriculum changes in secondary schools within the Karamoja sub-region, Uganda. Specifically, it sought to (1) establish the status of headteachers' task-oriented leadership behaviours, (2) assess the extent of curriculum change management, and (3) determine the effect of task-oriented leadership on curriculum change management. Guided by the Path-Goal Leadership Theory and underpinned by a pragmatic philosophical stance, the study employed a mixed-methods convergent design integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The sample size comprised 256 key education stakeholders, including headteachers, deputy headteachers, directors of studies, NCDC staff, MoES staff and teachers across 23 secondary schools. Participants were selected using purposive, stratified, and simple random sampling techniques. Data were collected through Self-Administered Questionnaires (SAQs) and interview guides. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative data were examined thematically. Findings revealed that headteachers' task-oriented leadership behaviour significantly influenced the management of curriculum changes ($r = .225$, $p = .000 < .05$), explaining 22.5% of the variance in effective curriculum change management. The results indicate that when headteachers adopt structured, goal-driven, and performance-focused leadership practices, curriculum changes are more successfully implemented in their schools. The study concluded that a strong and statistically significant relationship exists between task-oriented leadership and the management of curriculum changes in secondary schools in the Karamoja sub-region. It emphasised that headteachers' ability to plan, coordinate, and monitor tasks directly enhances curriculum reform implementation. The study recommends that educational authorities promote structured, goal-focused leadership training for school leaders, particularly in resource-constrained and change-sensitive contexts such as Karamoja. However, it also underscores the importance of balancing task orientation with stakeholder engagement and relational leadership to foster sustainable educational transformation.

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INTRODUCTION

Institutions of various ministries, departments and agencies are continually undergoing change, which is a worldwide phenomenon. One such change in educational institutions is the school curriculum change (Specht et al., 2018). Uganda implemented significant curriculum reforms in the late 1990s, early 2000s and 2020 with the goals of expanding educational opportunities, enhancing academic performance, and encouraging the development of vocational skills (Vickers & Xiaodong, 2017). The Competence-Based curriculum (CBC), also known as the new Lower Secondary Curriculum (LSC), was rolled out in a phased approach starting in February 2020 with Senior one students and put into use as a result of the curriculum reforms.

A curriculum is the sum of all the educational opportunities and desired learning results provided to students under the supervision of a school (Mulenga, 2018). McInnes (2019) defined curriculum as "a series of planned experiences, growing out of the social needs of a community that helps learners to attain the desired knowledge, skills, attitudes, and dispositions.

The process of changing a curriculum is complex and requires coordinated adjustments to a number of educational aspects, including classroom

dynamics, institutional rules, and larger educational frameworks (OECD, 2019). Changes in educational systems, program structures, educational objectives, and the general learning environment are all part of this transformative process, which eventually leads to changes in teaching and learning approaches. It can be difficult for change agents to successfully lead curriculum reform. The curriculum must be implemented with unshakable loyalty in order to guarantee the effectiveness of these adjustments (Nevenglosky, 2018). The efforts made during the development stage are in vain if the curriculum changes are not implemented and managed properly.

In Uganda, as students gain new information and abilities, the new curriculum is intended to inspire them to critically examine their thoughts and experiences. Both within and outside of the classroom, students must interact with real-world scenarios by evaluating diverse texts from several sources, statistics, and visual aids. The number of disciplines reduced from forty-three to twenty-one in the new curriculum, with some of these subjects emphasising fundamental knowledge and abilities. With a maximum of three electives available to students with specific learning needs, the curriculum covers both required and voluntary courses. The daily schedule has also been altered to

include eight periods per day and 40 periods per week, starting at 8:00 a.m. and ending at 2:55 p.m. (NCDC, 2020). Despite their potential, these reforms had a number of implementation difficulties, chief among them being problems with leadership.

When it comes to helping teachers navigate the complex process of curricular reform, leadership is crucial. Driving educational change and improving educational outcomes requires strong school leadership (OECD, 2019; UNESCO, 2018; World Bank, 2018). School leaders who provide direction to performing school tasks, positive work environments and offer management support have been shown in numerous studies to have a positive impact on teachers' motivation and abilities, which in turn improves the school environment as a whole and has a positive correlation with student performance (Click, 2019); this is precisely called task-oriented leadership.

Task-oriented leadership is essential for the effective implementation of curriculum reforms. Leaders who prioritise this approach provide clear direction, set specific goals, and monitor progress to ensure that changes are executed as intended. According to Applewhite (2018), task-focused principals are instrumental during the implementation phase, ensuring that teachers receive the necessary resources and guidance. This structured approach not only enhances accountability but also fosters a disciplined environment conducive to achieving educational objectives.

Research by Tusianah et al. (2019) supports the notion that task-oriented leadership can improve teacher performance and commitment to curriculum changes. When principals maintain high expectations and provide constructive feedback, teachers are more likely to engage actively in implementing new curricula. This aligns with Gül and Örs Özdil (2023), who emphasise the need for a balance between task-oriented and relational

leadership behaviours to create an effective curriculum management environment.

According to Molapo and Pillay (2018), who also stress the crucial role that leadership plays in mediating and influencing behaviours of curriculum implementation, this effect also extends to the field of curriculum management. But it's important to recognise that, as Arif (2019) argues, having the knowledge and abilities to handle curricular modifications alone does not ensure that the curriculum will be able to accomplish its intended objectives. Instead, as noted by Guzmán et al. (2020), effective leadership is defined by an emphasis on the fundamentals of teaching and learning. By concentrating their influence and fostering task performance with teachers in these areas, leaders have the potential to unlock the latent capacities within organisations, ultimately enhancing student outcomes.

Practically, the behaviour and actions of leaders are integral not only to the broader functioning of organisations but also to the successful management of curriculum changes, where effective leadership can lead to better educational outcomes. Several scholars assert that task-oriented leadership behaviour plays a pivotal role in enhancing school outcomes by shaping teacher motivation, capacity, and the overall school climate. These factors are instrumental in facilitating the successful implementation of curriculum changes (Tusianah, Sutoro & Karwan, 2019). In that regard, understanding the connection between leadership behaviour and the management of curriculum changes becomes essential in addressing these issues and improving the outcomes of curriculum reform efforts in Ugandan secondary schools.

Mugula et al. (2020) emphasise that effective management of curriculum changes within Uganda's lower secondary education system is contingent upon proficient leadership behaviour. In Karamoja, where educational infrastructure may be less developed and resources limited, the role of headteachers in providing clear direction and

support becomes even more critical. Task-oriented leaders can help navigate these challenges by setting specific goals, monitoring progress, and ensuring teachers are equipped with the necessary resources to implement new curricula successfully.

Despite the existing literature underscoring the importance of task-oriented leadership in various educational contexts, there remains a significant gap concerning lower secondary schools in Karamoja. Most research findings originate from different cultural settings that may not fully capture the complexities faced by schools in this region. This highlights the need for localised studies that consider the unique cultural dynamics and socio-economic factors influencing leadership practices in Karamoja.

Statement of the Problem

The education system in Uganda has undergone significant reforms, with the most recent being the adoption and implementation of a new lower secondary curriculum. Despite these efforts, secondary school leaders continue to encounter substantial challenges in effectively managing these curriculum changes. Key issues include the complex task of identifying 15 subjects for each school, allocating resources for curricular activities, implementing teaching and learning processes, and monitoring and assessing educational outcomes. Mugula (2020) emphasises that the effective management of curriculum changes within Uganda's lower secondary education system is contingent upon proficient leadership behaviour. Supporting this notion, Tusianah et al. (2019) argue that task-oriented leadership can significantly enhance teacher performance and commitment to curriculum changes. When principals maintain high expectations and provide constructive feedback, teachers are more likely to engage actively in implementing new curricula.

However, various systemic issues complicate this process, particularly in upcountry regions like Karamoja. These include inadequate support and

guidance for teachers, ineffective communication, poor teacher motivation, lack of teamwork, and insufficient professional development opportunities (UNEB, 2023). As articulated by Varga, Vican and Peko (2020), leadership behaviours can be categorised into task-oriented, relation-oriented, and change-oriented approaches. Task-oriented leadership specifically emphasises efficiency and meticulous planning qualities that are essential during the management of educational reforms.

While several studies (Musimenta, 2023; Atuhaire and Turyagyenda, 2023) have investigated various aspects of curriculum management in Uganda, there remains a notable gap in research specifically examining how task-oriented leadership behaviours influence the management of curriculum changes in secondary schools in the Karamoja sub-region.

Purpose

This study set out to investigate the effect of task-oriented leadership behaviour on management of curriculum changes in secondary schools in Uganda, using the case of secondary schools in Karamoja sub-region in North-eastern Uganda.

Objectives

- To examine the status of headteacher task-oriented leadership behaviour in the secondary schools in Karamoja sub-region.
- To assess the extent of management of curriculum changes in the secondary schools in Karamoja sub-region.
- To determine the effect of the headteachers' task-oriented leadership behaviour on management of curriculum changes in the secondary schools in Karamoja sub-region.

Significance of the Study

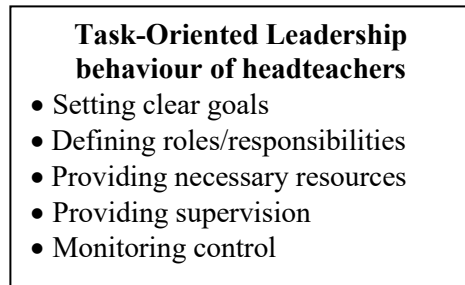
This study provides a wealth of knowledge to the school leaders and administrators on the effective task-oriented leadership practices that can enhance curriculum management. This enables them to

understand how to set clear objectives, allocate resources efficiently, and monitor progress to improve their ability to navigate the complexities of curriculum reforms. This knowledge will empower them to create structured environments that promote accountability and drive the successful implementation of educational changes.

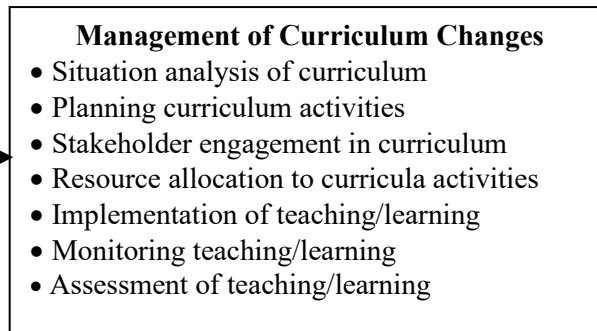
This study can also guide policymakers in creating frameworks that promote effective leadership behaviours conducive to successful educational reforms, ensuring that policies align with the practical realities faced by schools.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Independent Variable



Dependent Variable



Source: Adapted from the studies of House (1971), Downton (1973), Bass (1980).

THEORETICAL REVIEW

The study was grounded in the Path-Goal Leadership Theory, initially proposed by Evans (1970) and refined by House (1971). This theory posits that leaders should provide direction and support to their followers, clarifying the path to achieving goals and removing obstacles that may hinder progress. It emphasises the need for leaders to adapt their behaviours to situational demands and the needs of their followers. According to this theory, leaders can influence satisfaction, performance, and commitment through various leadership styles, including directive, supportive, participative, and achievement-oriented approaches.

Scope of Study

The study was carried out in secondary schools in the Karamoja sub-region in the north-eastern Uganda. Focused on the management of curriculum change (DV) and the task-oriented leadership behaviour (IV) of headteachers in the schools. In terms of time scope, the study commenced in 2023 and was completed by November 2024.

Conceptual Framework

In the context of Uganda's lower secondary curriculum reforms, the Path-Goal Theory was particularly relevant as it offered a framework for understanding how task-oriented leaders set clear goals, define roles for teachers, provide necessary resources, supervise effectively, and monitor the progress of curriculum changes. The theory provided a robust theoretical foundation that guided this study to establish the effect of task-oriented leadership behaviours on the management of curriculum changes in lower secondary schools in Uganda.

Empirical Review

Task-focused leadership plays a critical role in managing curriculum changes, particularly in lower secondary schools. Leaders who emphasise task

orientation are often associated with the efficient implementation of curriculum reforms. According to Bush and Glover (2024), task-focused leaders prioritise achieving specific objectives, such as aligning teaching practices with new curricular standards and ensuring the timely delivery of educational materials. This approach fosters discipline and accountability within the school environment.

However, Day et al. (2019) caution that while task-focused leadership can drive results, it may also lead to a lack of flexibility, which is essential for adapting to the nuances of curriculum reforms. They argue that an exclusive focus on tasks might overlook the importance of staff motivation and engagement critical factors for the successful adoption of changes. Therefore, effective leadership in curriculum management requires a balance between task-oriented and people-centred approaches to foster collaboration and innovation.

Task-oriented leadership involves setting performance standards and consistently evaluating outcomes to ensure that curriculum changes yield desired improvements in teaching and learning. Bush and Glover (2020) highlight that leaders who focus on tasks are adept at holding their teams accountable for meeting benchmarks, which is vital for the successful implementation of curriculum reforms. In lower secondary schools, this may include monitoring lesson plans, overseeing the development of new instructional materials, and ensuring assessments align with revised curricula. However, Day and Sammons (2019) note that while task orientation enhances short-term compliance and productivity, it may limit creativity and innovation among teachers, qualities essential for long-term success in curriculum change.

Moreover, research indicates that task-focused leadership can create a hierarchical, top-down approach to curriculum management that may stifle collaboration and teacher involvement. Avolio and Yammarino (2018) argue that while task-oriented leadership provides clarity and structure, it must be

balanced with participative elements to ensure that teachers feel ownership over curriculum changes. If task-oriented leadership becomes too rigid, it risks disempowering teachers, thereby reducing their engagement and willingness to innovate during the reform process.

Effective planning and organisation are critical components of task-focused leadership in managing curriculum changes. Principals who engage in thorough planning are better equipped to anticipate challenges associated with reforms. Govindasamy and Mestry (2022) emphasise developing comprehensive implementation plans that outline specific strategies, timelines, and resource allocations necessary for successful curriculum change. Stronge (2021) suggests that task-focused leaders prioritise aligning curriculum changes with school development needs, creating a sense of purpose among staff.

Additionally, research by Tusianah et al. (2019) indicates that effective leaders actively monitor progress and adapt strategies as needed to ensure the successful integration of curriculum changes into teaching practices. This aligns with Yukl's (2019) assertion that task-oriented leadership focuses on improving efficiency by clarifying expectations and providing structured guidance.

While planning is crucial for effective curriculum management, Bolden et al. (2023) argue that an overemphasis on rigid planning can stifle creativity among teachers, who are primary implementers of the curriculum. They advocate for adaptive planning models that allow real-time adjustments based on feedback from educators and students, ensuring that the curriculum remains responsive to learners' needs.

In conclusion, the literature demonstrated that task-focused leadership is essential for managing curriculum changes in lower secondary schools. By prioritising clear objectives, accountability, and structured implementation processes, leaders can create an environment conducive to successful

reforms. However, balancing task-oriented behaviours with relational approaches is vital for enhancing teacher performance, commitment, and overall school effectiveness during periods of significant change. Effective leadership behaviour in managing these transitions emphasises not only strong task focus but also strategic planning and organisation to support sustainable educational improvements.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a mixed convergent design, integrating both qualitative and quantitative approaches to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the research problem, consistent with Creswell and Creswell's (2018) pragmatic paradigm. This design facilitated triangulation of data sources, enhancing the validity and depth of the findings, as emphasised by Creswell and Plano Clark (2018).

The target population consisted of 715 individuals, including secondary school headteachers, deputy headteachers, teachers, directors of studies, and officials from NCDC and the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES). A sample size of 256 participants was determined using Slovin's formula with a 5% margin of error, a method commonly applied when population variability is unknown.

$$n = \frac{715}{1 + 715(0.05^2)} \approx 256$$

This sample size was considered adequate because it offered reliable statistical estimates while keeping

the number of respondents manageable for data collection. By minimising sampling error and ensuring proportional representation of the larger population, Slovin's formula enabled the study to obtain dependable data without the time and resource demands of surveying all 715 members.

Different sampling techniques were deliberately used to ensure that each category of participants was appropriately represented based on their role, expertise, and distribution within the population. Purposive sampling was applied to headteachers, deputy headteachers, directors of studies, NCDC staff, and MoES staff because these individuals possess specialised knowledge in leadership and curriculum management that is critical for addressing the research objectives. Their inclusion was therefore based on relevance rather than numerical representation.

On the other hand, teachers who form the largest subgroup (637 individuals) were selected using cluster sampling, ensuring equal representation across the selected schools. Since teachers belong to diverse subject areas and grade levels, stratified random sampling was also employed. This approach ensured proportional representation across disciplines, thereby capturing varied perspectives on curriculum implementation. To achieve this, the principle of proportional allocation was applied so that the proportion of teachers in the sample reflected their proportion in the overall population. This enhanced the representativeness and inclusiveness of the teacher subgroup in the study.

Table 1: Distribution of the Target Population, Sample Size, and Sampling Techniques

<i>S/N</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>No. Per schools</i>	<i>Popn</i>	<i>How the Sample was obtained</i>	<i>Sample size</i>	<i>Sampling techniques</i>
1.	Staff of NCDC		04	$04 \div 715 \times 256$	02	Purposive
2.	Staff of MoES in the Secondary Education Dept		05	$05 \div 715 \times 256$	02	Purposive
3.	Headteachers and Deputy Headteachers (DHT)	23 x 2	46	$46 \div 715 \times 256$	16	Purposive
4.	Teachers	23 x 27	637	$637 \div 715 \times 256$	228	Cluster
5.	Director of Studies (DOS)	23	23	$23 \div 715 \times 256$	08	Purposive
Total			715		256	

Source: DEO Statistical Database (2023)

Data collection for the study involved structured self-administered questionnaires (SAQs) and face-to-face interviews. The SAQ method was chosen for its cost-effectiveness, ease of use, and ability to standardise responses, making it suitable for gathering information from a large number of teachers and students across diverse geographic areas (Fraser, 2021). In contrast, interviews with headteachers and deputy headteachers provided detailed qualitative insights, allowing participants to share their experiences and perspectives (Dubey, 2022). The interview guide facilitated clarifying questions, enriching the data collected (Robinson, 2023). To ensure the validity and reliability of the instruments, a Content Validity Index (CVI) of 0.79 indicated good validity, while a Cronbach's reliability coefficient of 0.812 confirmed strong reliability (George & Mallery, 2018). Data analysis utilised descriptive and inferential statistics generated by the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), including frequencies, percentages, means, and simple linear regression. Qualitative data were transcribed, coded, and categorised to identify themes through content analysis. The narrative method was employed to

weave together insights from multiple participants, enhancing the clarity and accessibility of the findings related to curriculum management changes in secondary schools in the Karamoja sub-region of Uganda.

STUDY FINDINGS

The presentation of the study findings is organised systematically, beginning with the demographic characteristics of the respondents. This is followed by results addressing the three specific objectives of the study: (1) to examine the status of headteachers' task-oriented leadership behaviour in secondary schools in the Karamoja sub-region; (2) to assess the extent to which curriculum changes are managed in these schools; and (3) to determine the effect of headteachers' task-oriented leadership behaviour on the management of curriculum changes in the secondary schools within the Karamoja sub-region.

Demographic Data

To contextualise the study findings, the demographic information of the respondents was summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: Demographic Data of Respondents

Gender	Freq (f)	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	123	56.4	56.4	56.4
Female	95	43.6	43.6	100.0
Total	218	100.0	100.0	
Age-Bracket	Freq	Percent	Valid Percent	Cummulative Percent
Under 30 years	39	17.9	17.9	17.9
30-40 years	172	78.9	78.9	96.8
41-50 years	7	3.2	3.2	100.0
Total	218	100.0	100.0	
Educ. Qualification	Freq	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Diploma	86	39.4	39.4	39.4
Bachelor's Degree	132	60.6	60.6	100.0
Total	218	100.0	100.0	
Duration of Service in Schools	Freq	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than one year	39	17.9	17.9	17.9
1 - 3 years	179	82.1	82.1	100.0
Total	218	100.0	100.0	
Duration of Service in their lifetime	Freq	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than 5 years	72	33.0	33.0	33.0
6-10 years	15	6.9	6.9	39.9
Over 15 years	131	60.1	60.1	100.0
Total	218	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary data (2024)

The reliability of these findings is supported by the highly credible demographic profile of the 228 teacher respondents. The sample is composed of a professionally qualified staff (100% holding degrees or diplomas) who are mature and experienced. Specifically, 78.9% are in the 30–40 age bracket, and 82.1% have 1–3 years of service at their current schools. This longevity and professional standing ensure that the data reflects sustained observation and knowledge of headteacher behaviours and curriculum challenges,

lending strong credibility to the study's conclusions despite the noted 5:4 male-to-female gender imbalance (56.4% male) in the teaching staff.

Status of Headteacher Task-Oriented Leadership Behaviour

This was objective one, and the data in *Table 3* present the descriptive statistics on the status of headteacher task-oriented leadership behaviour in the secondary schools in Karamoja sub-region

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics on Task-Oriented Leadership Behaviour in Schools

Task-Oriented Leadership	SD (%)	D (%)	IND (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mean	Std. Dev
School leaders use a one-way communication method to clarify roles/objectives	3.7	0.0	21.1	64.2	11.0	3.79	.781
School leaders engage in close monitoring of individual performance/operations	3.7	3.7	10.1	75.2	7.3	3.79	.781
School leaders engage in short-term planning/scheduling of work-related activities	11.0	11.0	14.2	60.1	3.7	3.34	1.089
School leaders assign specific tasks to individual staff/groups	45.4	21.6	7.3	25.7	0.0	2.13	1.243
School leaders provide technical assistance for completing the tasks	45.4	21.6	7.3	25.7	0.0	2.13	1.243
School leaders provide an appropriate explanation for job responsibilities	7.3	7.3	25.7	59.6	0.0	3.68	.909
School leaders set performance expectations for each task	7.3	0.0	3.2	78.4	11.0	3.86	.887
School leaders engage in inspecting the quality of work	71.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	28.9	3.46	1.817
School leaders engage in determining staffing requirements for various tasks	7.3	0.0	3.2	85.8	3.7	3.78	.828
School leaders always decide on how to effectively use staff to reach the goals/objectives of the organisation	49.1	18.3	11.0	21.6	0.0	3.44	1.211
Overall Mean						3.34	

Source: Primary data (2024)

Legend

0.0 - 1.0 = Very poorly exercised; 1.01 - 2.0 = Poorly exercised; 2.01 - 3.0 = Fairly exercised; 3.01 - 4.0 = Well exercised; and 4.01 - 5.0 = Excellently exercised.

The analysis of data in Table 3 provides insights into the task-oriented leadership behaviours of school leaders in secondary schools within the Karamoja sub-region. Overall, the findings reveal a moderate exercise of task-oriented leadership, with an overall mean score of 3.34, indicating that while these behaviours are generally practised, there remain notable gaps in implementation and consistency.

A substantial majority of respondents (64.2%) agreed that headteachers often use one-way communication to clarify roles and objectives, supported by a mean of 3.79 and low variability (SD = 0.781). However, the 21.1% indifference suggests

that communication effectiveness could be improved. Similarly, 75.2% of respondents perceived strong monitoring of individual performance, reflecting positively on leaders' supervisory roles.

In contrast, responses on short-term planning and scheduling were mixed (mean = 3.34, SD = 1.089), with a significant proportion expressing dissatisfaction, indicating inconsistent or insufficient planning processes. The weakest leadership dimensions emerged in task assignment and technical assistance, both recording a low mean of 2.13 and high variability (SD = 1.243). Over 65% of respondents disagreed that leaders adequately delegate tasks or provide necessary technical support, an indication of systemic weaknesses in operational leadership.

Findings on clarifying job responsibilities (mean = 3.68) and setting performance expectations (mean =

3.86) were more positive, showing that leaders communicate expectations relatively well. However, quality inspection practices exhibited high variability (mean = 3.46, SD = 1.817), suggesting inconsistent standards across schools. While 85.8% agreed that leaders determine staffing requirements effectively, nearly 67% felt that staff utilisation strategies were inadequate (mean = 3.44, SD = 1.211).

In summary, while school leaders in Karamoja exhibit several strengths in communication,

monitoring, and goal setting, they need to improve on task delegation, technical support, quality inspection, and strategic staff utilisation to strengthen task-oriented leadership and enhance institutional performance.

Management of Curriculum Changes

Table 4 presents the descriptive statistics for management of curriculum Changes in the secondary schools in the Karamoja sub-region.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics on Management of Curriculum Changes in Schools

Management of Curriculum Changes	SD (%)	D (%)	IND (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mean	Std. Dev
The school has provided effective leadership to drive curriculum change	0.0	0.0	96.3	0.0	3.7	3.77	.377
The school has made curriculum change a high-priority issue	21.1	9.6	14.2	47.7	7.3	3.81	1.307
The school has provided support to achieve the success of the curriculum change	57.8	3.7	25.7	12.8	0.0	3.49	1.162
The school has provided resources for effective curriculum change	29.4	6.9	0.0	53.2	10.6	3.69	1.483
The school has ensured that all learners participate in work-related learning as part of their entitlement	42.7	7.3	18.3	25.2	6.4	3.45	1.414
The school has worked on its strength in fielding its best team to participate in new curriculum initiatives	49.5	7.3	0.0	32.6	10.6	3.87	1.593
The school has made use of external partners to achieve successful curriculum change	63.8	3.7	0.0	18.3	14.2	3.81	1.625
The school has created a shared approach as a vehicle for effective change	64.2	3.7	0.0	11.0	21.1	3.71	1.718
The school recognises/uses staff contributions towards effective curriculum change	67.9	3.7	7.3	11.0	10.1	3.92	1.450
The school has disseminated good practice in fostering curriculum change initiatives	67.9	0.0	3.7	0.0	28.4	3.71	1.802
The school has the confidence of staff in implementing curriculum change	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.76	.000
The school has provided strategies for dealing with negative perceptions of change	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.78	.000
The school has provided for the promotion of teamwork in managing curriculum change initiatives	33.0	0.0	13.8	53.2	0.0	3.87	1.358
The school has provided for staff ‘wants’ /‘needs’ in managing curriculum change initiatives.	0.0	0.0	13.8	86.2	0.0	3.86	.345
Overall Mean						3.75	

Source: Primary data (2024)

Legend

0.0 - 1.0 = *Very poorly managed*; 1.01 - 2.0 = *Poorly managed*; 2.01 - 3.0 = *Fairly managed*; 3.01 - 4.0 = *Well managed*; and 4.01 - 5.0 = *Excellently managed*

The analysis of findings in Table 4 presents respondents’ perceptions of how effectively curriculum changes are managed in secondary schools within the Karamoja sub-region. Overall, the results yielded an average mean score of 3.75, indicating that curriculum changes are generally perceived to be well managed. However, the data reveal significant inconsistencies across various aspects of implementation, leadership, and staff engagement.

While a small proportion (3.7%) of respondents strongly agreed that their schools provide effective leadership for curriculum change, a vast 96.3% remained indifferent (mean = 3.77, SD = 0.377), pointing to limited visibility or perceived effectiveness of leadership. Similarly, opinions were mixed regarding the prioritisation of curriculum change (mean = 3.81, SD = 1.307), with nearly half agreeing but notable portions expressing disagreement or indifference, suggesting uneven emphasis on reform initiatives.

A critical gap emerged in institutional support and resource provision for curriculum change. Over 61% of respondents disagreed that sufficient support was provided (mean = 3.49, SD = 1.162), and while 63.8% agreed resources were available (mean = 3.69, SD = 1.483), a substantial minority strongly disagreed, implying inconsistent resource distribution. Similarly, most respondents expressed dissatisfaction with learner participation in work-

related learning (mean = 3.45) and the utilisation of staff strengths in new curriculum initiatives (mean = 3.87, SD = 1.593).

The findings also highlight weaknesses in external partnerships, shared approaches, and recognition of staff contributions, all recording high disagreement levels (means ranging from 3.71–3.92). Alarming, 100% of respondents strongly disagreed that schools had staff confidence or strategies to address negative perceptions toward curriculum change, exposing deep concerns about trust, motivation, and change management culture.

Despite some strengths in teamwork promotion (mean = 3.87) and addressing staff needs (mean = 3.86), the results underscore a pressing need to enhance leadership effectiveness, communication, support systems, and staff engagement. Strengthening these areas is essential to achieving sustainable and inclusive curriculum change across secondary schools in the Karamoja sub-region.

Effect of Task-oriented Leadership Behaviour on Management of Curriculum Changes

To determine the effect of headteacher task-oriented leadership behaviour in the management of curriculum changes in the secondary schools in Karamoja sub-region, a linear regression was run using the transformed overall means in Table 4 (i.e. 3.75) for management of curriculum changes and that in Table 3 (i.e. 2.87) for the headteachers’ task-oriented leadership behaviour in the secondary schools. Therefore, the extent or magnitude of the effect of one variable on another, as measured by the results from the model summary from the regression analysis, is presented in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.475 ^a	.225	.222	.658

a. Predictors: (Constant), Task-Oriented Leadership

In interpreting the results in *Table 5*, the R-squared value, which is the coefficient of determination, is considered important. This represents the magnitude by which a change in the independent variable affects the dependent variable. From the results in *Table 5*, the R-squared value was .225, which can be converted to per cent (.225 x 100), giving 22.5%. In other words, according to data from the respondent teachers, headteachers’ task-oriented leadership behaviour accounts for 22.5% of the management of curriculum changes in the

secondary schools in Karamoja sub-region. This means that for every unit improvement in headteachers’ task-oriented leadership behaviour, there was a 22.5% improvement in management of curriculum changes in the secondary schools in Karamoja sub-region.

To determine whether or not such a change causes a significant effect (hypothesis testing), the ANOVA results in *Table 6* were considered.

Table 6: Effect of Task-Oriented Leadership Behaviour in Management of Curriculum Changes in the Secondary Schools in Karamoja (ANOVA)

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	27.159	1	27.159	62.766	.000 ^b
1 Residual	93.465	216	.433		
Total	120.624	217			

a. Dependent Variable: Management of Curriculum Changes

b. Predictors: (Constant), Task-Oriented Leadership

The data in *Table 6* revealed that the significance (Sig) value from respondent teachers’ data was found to be .000, which was less than 0.05 (the standard). Therefore, at .225; $p=.000 < .05$, implying that according to respondent teachers, headteachers’ task-oriented leadership behaviour has a significant effect on management of curriculum changes in the secondary schools in Karamoja sub-region. Therefore, the original hypothesis that “*there is no significant effect of task-oriented leadership behaviour in management of curriculum changes in lower secondary schools in the Karamoja Region*” was rejected and is now restated as “*there is a strong significant effect of task-oriented leadership behaviour in management of curriculum changes in lower secondary schools in the Karamoja Region.*”

Data gathered through face-to-face interviews revealed closely related information to that from the completed questionnaires. For instance, one of the participants (KI-04) said;

“The effect of task-oriented is that it will lead to the motivation of the implementers of the curriculum, and it will also enable the teachers to understand deeply the nature of the curriculum and what is expected of them at the end. So once somebody has been put into the right activities, into the right approach, and given the right environment, it will boost the achievement of the intended goals of this new curriculum.” (KI-04, 2024)

In another face-to-face interview, key informant KI-05 said;

“The effects of task-oriented would be to look at how best in managing the curriculum managed in terms of its implementation. That would be one effect. How far, what would be the outcome?” (KI-05, 2024)

Yet another key informant (KI-06) said;

“That effect at the end of it should be felt within the learners or the community at the end of it. Because if the task is already set, its outcome

should be felt at the end of it. If we are talking about project one, will our learners come out at the end, knowing how to do something?" (KI-06, 2024)

In another face-to-face interview, key informant KI-07 said;

"What happens is that as a leader, you are supposed to relate well with the people that you lead. If you are to succeed in a relationship, you, as a leader, should be sober. You should know what you want, and then assign tasks to your people." (KI-07, 2024)

Similarly, another participant (KI-08) said;

"The task-oriented leadership behaviour could be at the end of the term, the learners should have attained a given character or behaviour to which they have been directed, and they should be able to practice it." (KI-08, 2024).

The findings from the current study indicate that task-oriented leadership behaviour has a significant effect in the management of curriculum changes in secondary schools in the Karamoja sub-region, with a significance value of $p = .000$, which is well below the standard threshold of 0.05. This result leads to the rejection of the original hypothesis and the restatement that there is a strong and significant effect of task-oriented leadership behaviour in curriculum management. This finding aligns with some aspects of existing literature while presenting contrasts with others.

DISCUSSION

According to path path-goal theory, leaders are responsible for clarifying the path to achieving organisational goals, providing necessary support, and removing obstacles that hinder progress. Task-oriented leadership, characterised by a strong focus on setting clear goals, defining tasks, and monitoring progress, aligns well with the directive leadership style emphasised in the Path-Goal Theory. In the context of the Karamoja sub-region,

where curriculum changes involved significant challenges, task-oriented leadership likely played a crucial role in ensuring that these changes were effectively implemented. By providing clear guidance, setting specific objectives, and closely monitoring the progress of curriculum changes

The significant effect of task-oriented leadership in curriculum management is consistent with the emphasis on the importance of structured, goal-driven leadership in various organisational settings. For instance, Kiani et al. (2021) emphasised the importance of multidimensional sustainability attributes and stakeholder involvement, which parallels the need for comprehensive task-oriented leadership in managing curriculum changes. Task-oriented leaders in educational settings, much like in sustainability projects, must effectively engage all stakeholders, including teachers, students, and the community, to ensure successful curriculum implementation and sustainability. Moreover, the emphasis on active community and stakeholder involvement mirrors the importance of engaging teachers and other educational stakeholders in curriculum management, which is a key component of task-oriented leadership.

However, the study by Hong (2018) and Laffin (2019) suggests a shift in governance models towards more democratic and shared governance approaches, particularly in higher education contexts. This shift contrasts with the task-oriented leadership approach highlighted in the current study, which is more directive and structured. While shared governance emphasises trust-building and stakeholder involvement, task-oriented leadership focuses on achieving specific goals and outcomes, which may sometimes conflict with the more collaborative and participatory governance models. Additionally, the studies by Matthews and Dollinger (2023) point out the importance of the quality of relationships between students and instructors for engagement, suggesting that relational aspects of leadership might be more

critical in some educational contexts than task-oriented approaches.

Implicitly, the study highlights the strong impact of task-oriented leadership in the management of curriculum changes in the Karamoja sub-region's secondary schools. This finding emphasises the need for structured and goal-driven leadership to effectively manage educational changes, particularly in challenging environments. However, this focus on task orientation must be balanced with stakeholder engagement and relational aspects of leadership.

CONCLUSION

The study decisively concludes that task-oriented leadership significantly impacts the management of curriculum changes in secondary schools within the Karamoja sub-region. Headteachers' moderate engagement in task-oriented behaviours such as setting clear goals, defining tasks, and monitoring progress accounts for a substantial and statistically significant portion (22.5%) of the variance in effective curriculum change management. This finding strongly validates the application of the Path-Goal theory's directive style in challenging and change-intensive educational environments, like the implementation of the new lower secondary curriculum in Karamoja. While effective, the current leadership practices also suggest an implicit need to harmonise the goal-driven nature of task-oriented leadership with the relational and collaborative elements of shared governance to achieve holistic and sustainable curriculum success.

Recommendations

The study recommends that headteachers' focus on task orientation must be balanced with stakeholder engagement and relational aspects of leadership.

Ministry of Education to implement mandatory professional development for Headteachers focused on advanced goal-setting, effective task delegation, and constructing clear monitoring frameworks specific to the new curriculum requirements.

The National Curriculum Development Centre is to institute a standardised but adaptable Curriculum Implementation Monitoring Tool to clearly define and track measurable outputs expected from the task-oriented approach.

Further studies can investigate the impact of integrated task-oriented and relational leadership behaviours on curriculum outcomes over time in resource-constrained settings.

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