AN INVESTIGATION OF THE FACTORS INFLUENCING LEADERS' BEHAVIOURS AND PRODUCTIVITY AT LORDSVILLE SECONDARY SCHOOL FROM 2020 TO MARCH 2022

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ABSTRACT

Motivation: *According to the Grade 11 Namibia Senior Secondary Certificate (NSSC) national results over the past three years, Lordsville Secondary School has been one of the best-performing high schools in Karasburg and in the Kharas region, in the southern part of Namibia. Currently, there are many disciplinary issues like arguments and fights amongst learners on a daily basis. There are also a lot of arguments between parents, teachers, employees and management at the school. The morale of staff members is also very low at the moment. The behaviours of leaders towards their subordinates have an influence on the day-to-day running of an organisation and on the morale of workers and clients.*

Research Approach: *The researcher has made use of qualitative research approach to explore, recognise and define how leaders' behaviours affect productivity at the Lordsville Secondary School.*

Main results: *The study demonstrates the critical role that leaders' actions play in any organization and the impact they have, which may be either beneficial or bad. According to the research, leaders must ensure that their actions have a positive impact on everyone inside their organization for it to be effective.*

Conclusion: *The respondents indicated a few strategies that leaders might use to restore the organization's effectiveness. The interview subjects also acknowledged that some leaders' actions had a detrimental impact on the institution.*

KEYWORDS: *Leadership, Subordinates Autocracy, Accountability, Teamwork, Respect, Conducive environment*

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Leaders play a crucial role in all organisations; schools are no exception. Their behavioural patterns can influence a school negatively or positively. If the correct procedures are utilised in managing schools, productivity is likely to sky rocket and the environment will be conducive; thus, creating a great atmosphere rich for productivity and results attainment. In situations where leaders behave in a dictatorship manner, lacking initiatives and interpersonal skills, the morale among employees will be negatively affected, which can have great impact on school productivity and, therefore, affect results.

Lordsville Secondary School is a government school with one principal, two head of departments (HODs), 20 teachers, four institutional workers, two secretaries, two hostel superintendents, 18 hostel workers and 560 learners. The school teaches Grades 8 to 11. According to the Grade 11 NSSC national results over the past three years, Lordsville Secondary School has been one of the best-performing high schools in Karasburg and in the Kharas region, in the southern part of Namibia.

Currently, there are many disciplinary issues like arguments and fights amongst learners on a daily basis. There are also a lot of arguments between parents, teachers, employees and management at the school. The morale of staff members is also very low at the moment.

Lordsville Secondary School is a government school with one (1) principal, two (2) head of departments (HODs), twenty (20) teachers, four (4) institutional workers, two (2) secretaries, two (2) hostel superintendents, eighteen (18) hostel workers and five hundred and sixty (560) learners. The school teaches from Grades 8 to 11.

In the past, Lordsville Secondary School was acclaimed the honour of being among the top five schools and producing most of the learners who achieved the top 10 results in the region. Apart from excellent academic performances in the school, the interpersonal relationships among the staff have always been good. The disciplinary record in the school has been up to standard and the school has always had an open-door policy. It was, therefore, easy for parents from all over Namibia to flock to Lordsville Secondary School to register their children. Employees were proud to be associated with the school. Learners, teachers and administration staff members have all been treated as one huge family, striving to live up to the ideal of "Ubuntu".

The results of learners in the last few months have declined in comparison to those of the past. The current state of the school is no longer conducive like it used to be. Arguments and fights among learners and teachers are rife and have become the new norm. Learners are absconding classes on a daily basis and some are absent for weeks. Alcohol and drug abuse have become a habit amongst learners, both on school grounds and in the hostel. Teachers are divided and no longer have respect for each other nor for the management and vice versa.

The disagreements between management and teachers have led to a lack of assistance and support when it comes to school-related matters. Bullying has become the status quo in the school. The school environment is no longer conducive, and productivity has decreased.

The behaviours of leaders towards their subordinates have an influence on the day-to-day running of an organisation and on the morale of workers and clients.

It's against this background that, a study was conducted to investigate the influence of leaders' behaviours on the productivity of Lordsville Secondary School. Specific study objectives included:
- ➢ To identify the behaviours of leaders that can affect the productivity of Lordsville Secondary School
- ➢ To discover leaders' behaviours affecting the productivity of Lordsville Secondary School
- ➢ To explore the patterns of leaders' behaviours, affecting the productivity of Lordsville Secondary School
- ➢ To establish mechanisms that can be used by leaders to increase productivity at Lordsville Secondary School

2. LITERATURE REVIEW
The researchers have pondered more on the topics involving leaders in workplace environments. Themes such as leadership behaviours in organisations, leadership roles impacting organisations and leadership strategies to impact the organisational success have been visited and researched to shed more light on the issue pertaining leadership.

2.1 Leadership behaviour in organisations
De Beer, Le Roux, Ellis, Ward, Van Neuwenhuizen & Anderson (2020) state that leaders play an essential role within societies, as they help to guide their followers and organisations towards success. It is also made clear by De Beer et al. (2020) that leadership is about a set of behaviours and skilful actions that ensure the sustainability of an organisation. Leadership is the most vital component in an organisation and the most significant skill for its leaders, according to Kalsoom, Khan and Zubair (2018), because it has a direct and indirect impact on employee performance.

Leadership, according to Oyetunji, Adebiyi and Olatunde (2019), is a dynamic process in which one person motivates others to contribute to the completion of a task. Oyetunji, Adebiyi and Olatunde (2019) firmly believe that leadership exists on many levels in many sections of society, and that what motivates leaders is the achievement of the organisation's overarching purpose. Mehdinezhad and Sardarzhi (2015) note that leadership is defined as influencing subordinates through communication in order to achieve organisational goals, with an emphasis on interpersonal relationships.

Akdol and Arikboga (2015) strongly believe that employee personality traits and organisational climate have a substantial impact on employee innovation and creativity. Khan et al. (2020) define transformational leadership as leadership where leaders transform followers, inspire them, build trust, encourage them, admire their innovate ideas, and develop them. Strong job satisfaction is linked to a positive attitude and high performance at work, and it is a significant aspect of creating an innovative work environment (Akdol & Arikboga, 2015). Campos-Garcia and Zuñiga-Vicente (2018) believe that positive leader training may have a positive impact on employee motivation.

Good leadership behaviour has no effect on the positive and negative work climates, nor on team performance, according to Makaske (2015); however, counter-productive leadership behaviour has an effect on the negative work climate. Burn (2017) strongly believes that toxic leadership has even been found to have a negative impact on the targets' personal relationships, resulting in increased partner conflict and higher work-life conflict. Their actions also have a negative impact on the employees with whom they work, resulting in higher turnover intentions, drug and alcohol abuse, and lower job satisfaction, productivity and motivation. Cakir and Adiguzel (2020) state that it is critical for the strategic success of information sharing to be done in a healthy manner of the organisation. At the same time, they concluded that effective employee information sharing had a favourable impact on both performance and strategy.

The study's findings demonstrate how crucial leadership is to organizations. Depending on how they treat their subordinates, leaders' behavior either positively or negatively shapes an organization. If a leader behaves badly, that could potentially result in the organization's demise. The morale of an organization is greatly impacted by the actions of its leaders. Employees may leave their employment quickly and easily as a result of the behavior of their leaders, and others may turn to drugs and alcohol as a means of escaping. The behavior of leaders may also have a tendency to cause numerous disputes and physical altercations among workers.

Both the giver and receiver profit from sharing information. It may foster comprehension, a sense of significance, and even assist workers develop their leadership abilities (Carruthers, 2021). In order for an individual to function to their maximum capacity, information exchange and transfer within the organisation is crucial. The performance of the team members helps the leaders who share information with them. A high-performing team can benefit from information exchange. Knowledge management is also essential for corporate performance. In order to produce high-calibre work, a team must therefore possess a culture of knowledge management and information exchange (Bhatti, 2021).

According to the study, leaders who are unwilling to divulge knowledge to staff members or subordinates may find that they are unable to complete any work. The productivity of the organization depends heavily on information sharing. Everyone will just do what they want if information isn't provided, and nobody will actually know what to do. The ability of an organization's staff to collectively grasp client conditions, attitudes, and expectations is enhanced by knowledge sharing, which helps businesses make decisions that are centred on their customers. Sharing knowledge fosters innovation and growth. Sharing knowledge boosts productivity and reduces costs. Customer centricity is improved in the workplace by knowledge exchange. Sharing knowledge fosters teamwork, enabling teams to solve problems more quickly.

2.2 Leadership roles impacting businesses
According to Al-Malki and Juan (2018), it is thought that resolving role ambiguity and conflict improves job performance, and improving job performance has a favourable impact on boosting job cooperation. Asar-ul-Haq and Anwar (2018) report that most organisations' leadership development programmes place a high priority on national cultural values, which are seen as a cornerstone to effective leadership and, as a result, improve organisational performance.

Hao and Yazdaniford (2015) believe that when organisational leader's lead people in the right direction and push them to constantly improve and be innovative, the organisation's performance will undoubtedly improve and it will be able to survive in today's difficult business environment. Su et al. (2020) believes that individual identification with leaders moderates the association between servant leadership and intrinsic motivation, and regard the function of intrinsic motivation as having a major impact in mediating the relationship. Leaders must work in numerous directions, swap techniques, and integrate various types of leadership behaviour to be able to influence and facilitate, according to Van der Hoek, Groenewald and Beerkens (2021).

There is a lot of previous research that has been done on leadership and leadership behaviours which leaders can use in their organisations to help them lead, influence, motivate and understand their subordinates better.

The study demonstrates that in order to achieve goals, leaders should offer direction, inspiration, and motivation. It should be possible for leaders to consciously create a culture of trust thanks to their credibility and competence. Leaders should develop a common vision and strategy and persuasively present it to entice people to join them on the journey. Leaders should work closely with and through their staff members to carry out the organization's vision and plan. Through constant coaching and feedback, leaders should help their team members reach their full potential as leaders and enhance performance. Building a positive work environment, communicating with employees, handling disagreement within the organization, and boosting employee morale are all responsibilities of leaders.

2.3 Leadership strategies to impact the organisation's successes
Extraordinary leaders of organisations create an inspiring, strong and modest dream that strengthens the main drive of a business (Sateesh, 2020). Sateesh (2020) further states that leaders need to be linked with people, ideas, thoughts and apprehensions about the future of the organisation. Leaders should evaluate the group's current performance and competences for rivalry.

Gupta (2018) believes that there are factors that obstruct the effectiveness of leadership, therefore limiting productivity of organisations. These include the following: lack of communication, lack of group thinking, lack of creativity, lack of talent retention strategies, and lack of visionary leadership.

According to Ali (2018:15), effective leadership is a substantial driver for improving employee performance, upholding constructive leader-subordinate relationships, and accumulating organisational sustainability.

3. METHODOLOGY
The researchers have used a qualitative research approach to explore, recognise and define how leaders' behaviours affect productivity at the Lordsville Secondary School.The "specific objects or elements whose characteristics the researcher described and explained and whose data the researcher collected" was the units of analysis (Fouche et al., 2021:67). The units of analysis for this study was the leaders of Lordsville Secondary School.The variable was the behaviours of leaders or management at Lordsville Secondary School.

Furthermore, the researchers used exploratory research for this study. Du Plooy-Cilliers, (validityDavis & Bezuidenhoudt (2019) define exploratory research as a way to gather new information about a topic that has not been researched before. The goal was to gather information about the research topic and determine how to increase productivity at Lordsville Secondary School.

3.1 Population
Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout (2019:133) state that "everyone or everything that falls inside the population parameters" is the target demographic. The population targeted was the 26 employees of Lordsville Secondary School.

3.2 Sample and sample type
The sample frame used included three (3) male teachers, four (4) female teachers, three (3) institutional workers and one (1) female secretary. The researchers have used purposive sampling as a non-probability sampling type. This means the participants chosen were those that were inclined to participate and had the ability to communicate in a way that was articulative and expressive. The selection criteria had taken into consideration the different age groups and experiences. The sample size was eleven (11) participants, consisting of seven (7) teachers, three (3) institutional workers and one (1) secretary. The sample size was determined on the levels of experience and ability to communicate.

3.3 Research Instruments

In-depth interviews were used as a qualitative data collection strategy by the researcher. During the interviews, the researchers used open-ended questions in order to acquire a clear understanding of the participants' responses. In-depth interviews allowed the researchers to gain clarification on the answers of participants and for participants to supply more details. When participants answered questions, the researchers were able to observe their facial expressions and body language, which was a valuable source of data for the researchers to have a deeper understanding of their responses.

3.4 Trustworthiness of data collected

To ensure the study findings trustworthiness the following three measures were observed namely; credibility, Transferability and Confirmability.

3.4.1 Credibility

The researchers were non-judgmental to ensure that participants are open to sharing their experienced meaning. The researchers allowed enough time for the participants to explore and reflect on their felt meanings as that resulted in the appearance of more meaning and awareness of the participants. The researchers chose in depth interviews, knowing that not much information will be hidden, concealed or twisted to impress the researchers since the researchers can study the participant's face cues.

3.4.2 Transferability

Transferability concerns the aspect of applicability, enabling the reader to assess whether findings are transferrable to their own setting. The researchers developed transferability through a thick description of methodology that was used. The researchers described the participants in more details and included them in the sample size. The researchers also provided information about the research setting in order to provide the reader with a fuller and richer understanding of the setting. The detailed description of methods and analysis allowed for the replication of this study in other frameworks.

3.4.3 Confirmability

Confirmability was confirmed when the researchers described the research steps that were undertaken, from the start of the research to the development and research of findings. For confirmability purposes, the researchers made sure that the interpretation of data was not based on the researcher's own preferences and points of views. The researcher similarly abided by confirmability through the completion of the interviews, and kept records of raw data obtained through participant interviews, records of procedures, data generation and analysis. The interview sheet can serve as evidence of the methodology utilised. This was crucial for transparency of the research path.

3.5 Data Analysis

The researchers made use of content analysis to analyse the different viewpoints of all participants through the interviews. Qualitative content analysis is also well suited to the subjective interpretation of text data content via a systematic classification process of coding and pattern identification. In doing a qualitative content analysis, the researchers were working in an interpretative paradigm with the goal of providing a thick description of the social reality mirrored in the texts.

3.6 Ethical Guidelines

The following ethical procedures were realised and observed for the completion of the study.

3.6.1 Informed consent

The researchers obtained informed consent from the gatekeepers, namely: the inspector, the Director as well as the participants from Lordsville Secondary School. Participation was voluntarily.

3.6.2 Avoidance of harm

The primary ethical rule of the researcher was not to harm the volunteers. The researchers were responsible for ensuring that participants were not subjected to any type of bodily discomfort as a result of the research endeavour.

3.6.3 Confidentiality verses anonymity and privacy

The researchers did not infringe on any participant's privacy or breach confidentiality in any way. Throughout the research endeavour, no identities were utilised, and the researchers did not discuss any information or participants with anybody else other than the school administration and Circuit Inspector. Pseudonyms were used by the researchers.

3.6.4 Deception of subjects or respondents

Participants were not misled, facts were not misinterpreted, and no information were withheld from any participant. Participants were not purposely misled by written/verbal instructions, other people's actions, or certain characteristics of the setting in this study. All participants were given a clear and detailed explanation of the research's goal by the researchers.

3.6.5 Trustworthiness

The researchers were dependable. The interviews were conducted by the researchers themselves, and no interview questions were offered to anyone ahead of time.

3.6.6 Credibility

To ensure that participants were willing to discuss their experiences, the researchers were non-judgemental. The researchers gave the participants adequate time to investigate and reflect on their felt meanings, since this had led to a greater sense of meaning and awareness of their experience. The researchers had not discussed the responses of the participants with anyone.

3.6.7 Falsifying information

The researchers have not falsified information or change any data.

3.6.8 Distorting results

The researches have not distort interpretation or emphasise certain aspects of participants.

3.6.9 Bias and Misusing information

The researchers were not bias towards any participant or subject throughout the project. Neither, the researchers have not misused any data collected for the research project from participants.

3.6.10 Dealing with sensitive information

The researchers have not become emotionally involved and have not let their personal feelings interfere with the research. The researchers also have never revealed any sensitive information about the participants.

4. FINDINGS

According to participant's responses leaders should be personable, consistent in their leadership style, courteous of subordinates, and aware of their feelings. They claimed that effective leaders should be industrious, humble, and have good interpersonal communication abilities. They are adamant that leaders shouldn't be autocratic. Leaders need to be good listeners, receptive to new ideas, and eager to learn. Leaders' ought to be caring and collaborative. A strong leader should always involve their team in decision-making and avoid letting their personal opinions override organizational concerns. Leaders need to have vision and be responsible.

All of the respondents agreed that a leader's actions can affect an organisation because if a leader can relate to their team members well, employees will feel at ease and be able to express themselves freely, which will increase productivity. They believed that the absence of the aforementioned leadership behaviours could result in a lack of collaboration, disengagement, contributions, low morale, and group strife.

Some leaders, according to the respondents, are kind, encouraging, good listeners, honest, and approachable. Most participants also believed that certain leaders are autocratic and do not consider the feelings of their subordinates. They believed that some leaders are brash and unreliable. They continued to claim that some leaders lack cohesion and are very challenging to communicate with. They also believed that the leaders were inconsistent, haughty, stupid, rude, and uncaring about their issues and problems.

The participants claimed that these actions could impact the school. Some stressed that certain types of actions could have a positive impact on the school through increased teamwork, productivity, collaboration among co-workers, and an improvement in student pass rates. While the majority of interviewees reported feeling demotivated, afraid of being dominated, and worried that their confidence would decline. The participants established that if leaders don't encourage their staff, staff members are likely to rebel against management. They also contended that the root cause is mental illness, which has a significant impact on how well those in charge perform at work. High absenteeism and staff disunity caused by rebellious behaviour results in high absenteeism rates, which in turn cause students to misbehave or engage in other negative school-related behaviours.

While some participants noted that some leaders are motivating, supportive, and participatory, others believed that the change in leadership had ushered in a dictatorship. Some people believed that some leaders were overly sentimental, incapable of setting priorities, and more subjective than objective. Additionally, they felt that some leaders were "passively aggressive," irate, moody, and incapable of communicating with everyone in the organization. They claimed that it leads to dread, anxiety, and poor productivity since they are constantly perplexed.

According to several respondents, co-workers look up to their bosses for inspiration in the same way that kids look up to individuals as role models. Additionally, they claimed that they felt oppressed, unappreciated, and not held accountable for their actions. Some participants claimed that their colleagues don't trust them. Others said that the school could not run effectively without consistent leadership and that teachers who are divided or confused could not do their jobs well. They believed that leaders won't exhibit any sense of pride, self-worth, or confidence, and that their work would likely endure.

Some partipants recognised that the sudden change in leadership was the cause of all the autocratic issues they were experiencing. They said that the school was no longer a favourable environment as a result of these behaviours, particularly following the abrupt change in leadership. They believed that some employees even quit work due to the circumstances at the institution.

Yes, leaders can take action to boost school productivity, all participants agreed. Some believed that effective leaders needed to set a good example by being straightforward, open, sympathetic, kind, and good listeners. They also believed that they needed to treat all employees equally. They alleged that leaders should lead by example in promoting unity, encouraging cohesion, and fostering an environment where employees may express their opinions without fear of reprisal. They continued that in order to bring about significant reforms that would benefit everyone, freedom of speech and constructive criticism must be permitted. They demand that everyone's efforts should be recognized, regardless of age, teaching background, or position. They claimed that the division of labour should be done evenly and that authority should be shared by everybody.

According to the participants, leaders should foster a culture of professionalism and secrecy as well as refrain from allowing interpersonal conflicts and emotions to affect their ability to accomplish their jobs. They were certain that effort must be recognized and appropriately rewarded. Leaders, according to the participants, should be team players rather than merely delegating and distributing responsibilities. They also highly advise leaders to test out recommendations or ideas from subordinates rather than immediately dismissing them as useless. They want the leaders to foster an environment where the "Ubuntu" spirit may flourish. They want leaders to create objectives for bettering outcomes and being responsible. Leaders need to be task-focused and open-minded.

5. LIMITATIONS

During the research investigation, the researchers had not encountered certain restrictions, but these were beyond their control. The qualitative study depended largely on the participant's points of views, perceptions and sensitivities and participants can lie and exaggerate; Bias were therefore expected regarding the study. Participants also chose their own ways of answering interview questions and ignore instructions given. This was a challenge as it could affect the quality and accuracy of the data collected. The researchers were therefore patient and guided the participants to stay in the research area. The researchers gave clear instructions that were understood well by the participants.

6. CONCLUSION

The researchers believe that there are significant and vital issues faced by the staff at the school based on interviews with the staff members at Lordsville Secondary School. Employees lack motivation and are dissatisfied with their jobs. It appears that the shift in leadership affected both the staff and students' attitudes about the institution. Many staff members have already left the school due to the negative impact some leaders' behaviour is having on both the school and the students as a whole, and there are frequent conflicts between staff members, students, and parents. To establish a productive workplace for everyone, management or school leaders should collaborate with employees, students, and parents. They ought to be encouraging, kind, and receptive to their subordinates. Every employee will have an aura of pride and belonging if their leaders involve them in the decision-making process at the school.

Based on findings with regard to international and or Managerial implications, Managers and leaders of school institutions really did have a positive and negative impact on their subordinates. Their treatment and day to day interactions with the staff mattered a lot and influenced the productivity levels of the staff at the school institution. The change in leadership at the school had an impact on the environment where learners and school staff are found. It has also been found that communication skills, listening skills and approach matters as key skills of a leader.

It has been established that some leaders might have mental illness and poor interpersonal skills and that could be the reason they behave the way they do. That some leaders portray behaviour patterns that are toxic and creates an unfavourable working environments. There is also a lot that leaders can do to change their attitudes for the sake of creating positive mindsets and desirable work ethics that can positively impact on productivity.

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