

Assessing the Relationship between Female Head Teachers' Supportive Leadership Behaviours and Organizational Effectiveness of Secondary Schools in Rwanda, Nyagatare District.

Dr. Nuwatuhaire Benard¹, Dr. Rwabutogo Zogeye Marcel², Janan Mubehamwe³ & Dr. Phanual Murenzi⁴

^{1,3}Valley University of Science and Technology (VUST)

²Kigali Independent University-ULK

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the relationship between female head teachers' supportive leadership behaviors and organizational effectiveness of secondary schools in Rwanda, Nyagatare District. The study employed the correlational research designs on a sample of 120 using a questionnaire survey and an interview guide. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics that were means, and inferential analyses that included correlation and regression. Descriptive analysis revealed that organizational effectiveness through supportive leadership behaviors was fair. However, it had a positive and significant influence on schools organizational effectiveness. Therefore, it was concluded that supportive leadership behaviors are imperative for schools organizational effectiveness. Thus, it was recommended that the head teachers should be supportive to teachers to ensure schools' organizational effectiveness

Keywords: Supportive Leadership Behaviors and Organizational Effectiveness

INTRODUCTION

Education is of great importance to the development of individuals and countries (Duan, Du & Yu, 2018). This is why education systems and institutions are constantly under review to establish their effectiveness (D'Sa & Sheela, 2015). Improving school effectiveness is a fundamental aim for school teachers, leaders, and societies (Duan, Du & Yu, 2018). School Organizational effectiveness is commonly measured by overall satisfaction of stakeholders with schools finances, human resource quality, pedagogics, and investment and infrastructure (De Witte & Schiltz, 2018). Therefore, assessing the relationship between female head teachers' supportive leadership behaviors and organizational effectiveness is paramount.

Theoretical Review

The Path Goal Theory propounded by Martin Evans (1970) that was further developed by House (1996) informed this study. The Path Goal Theory States identifies a leader's most practiced style as a motivation to get subordinates to accomplish goals. The basic propositions of the Path-Goal Theory are that one of the strategic functions of the leader is to enhance the psychological states of subordinates that result in motivation to perform or in satisfaction with the job. In other words, leaders need to be cognisant of the necessary steps to clarify goals, paths, and enhance satisfaction through extrinsic rewards, which will in turn increase subordinates' intrinsic motivation. The second proposition is that particular situational leader

behaviour will accomplish the motivational function (Polston-Murdoch, 2013). The Path Goal Theory proposes that leaders are supposed to clarify and provide directions for followers, help remove obstacles, and provide encouragement and rewards for goal achievement to enhance performance motivation of employees (Farhan, 2018). According to Northouse (2016), the Path-Goal theory is a process in which leaders select specific behaviours that are best suited to the employees' needs and the working environment so that they may best guide the employees through their path in the obtainment of their daily work activities (goals).

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Supportive Leadership Behaviours and Organizational Effectiveness

Supportive leadership is a leadership style that focuses on concerns for the needs and well-being of followers and the facilitation of a desirable climate for interaction. Supportive encompasses expressing interest in individual followers and attending and responding to their personal needs. Supportive leadership focuses more on social and emotional support which is manifested in behaviours such as sympathising, caring, and listening (Shin et al., 2016). Supportive leadership is a behaviour that enhances some else's feeling of personal worth and importance. The leader ensures that the team members are provided with ample amount of resources and opportunities to achieve common goals. Personal welfare of team members is taken care of (Budhiraja & Malhotra, 2013). Rahiminejad and Golshani (2018) explain that supportive leadership behaviours give importance to the subordinates' satisfaction and meet their needs and preferences. Supportive leaders are concerned with the well-being of their employees. With supportive leadership, the concern of leaders is to meet the needs of subordinates and this issue is very important for leaders towards subordinates.

There are different scholars that have related supportive leadership behaviors to Organizational effectiveness. For example, Budhiraja and Malhotra (2013) investigated the relationship between perceived leadership style and Organizational effectiveness amongst middle level managers of two service sector industries in India. Leadership styles were studied in terms of submental, participative and supportive leadership. The findings of the study confirmed the relationship between leadership styles including supportive leadership and Organizational effectiveness. Derakhshandeh and Gholami (2012) investigated relationship between leadership styles and perceived Organizational effectiveness of directors and managers in organizations of the Agricultural ministry in one of the provinces of Iran. The results revealed that there was meaningful and positive relationship between leadership style including supportive leadership and perceived Organizational effectiveness. Golshani and Rahiminejad (2018) investigated the relationship between supportive leadership and oppressive styles with Organizational effectiveness undergraduate education students with general work experience and job tenure in a company. The results indicated existence of a positive and significant relationship between supportive leadership with organizational effectiveness in terms of effectiveness of individual results, effectiveness and efficiency of the overall structure and system.

In relation to the above, Nayak and Mishra (2005) examined the impact of leadership styles on organizational effectiveness using employee of Rourkela Steel Plant in India. The study revealed that leadership styles of managers including supportive leadership highly influenced the Organizational effectiveness. Rahiminejad and Golshani (2018) investigate the relationship between Organizational effectiveness, supportive leadership and oppressive styles with employees of a company in Iran as units of analysis. The study found out existence of a relationship between supportive leadership and Organizational effectiveness in terms of effectiveness of individual results, effectiveness and efficiency of the overall structure and system. Shin et al. (2016) explored the multilevel dynamics involving team leaders' supportive leadership and individual work outcomes using employees in teams of a large engineering company located

in South Korea. The results of multilevel structural equation modelling showed that supportive leadership was positively related to task performance.

Further, Sofi and Devanadhen (2015) sought to propose a conceptual model of the impact of leadership styles (transformational, transactional, participative, supportive and instrumental) on Organizational performance of selected banking organizations in Jammu and Kashmir, India. The findings revealed that supportive had an insignificant impact on organizational performance. Utrilla, Grande and Lorenzo (2015) analysed the effect of the supervisory role of coaching in both employees' development and Organizational performance using human resource managers of Spanish firms. Structural modelling results indicated that supportive leadership had an influence on both individual performance and organizational performance. The literature above shows that scholars have made significant effort to relate supportive leadership to Organizational effectiveness. However, contextual and empirical gaps emerged. At contextual level, the studies were skewed outside Rwanda. At empirical level, while all the other studies found a positive and significant relationship between the variables, Sofi and Devanadhen (2015) reported an insignificant relationship. These contextual and empirical gaps made it imperative for this study to further investigate the relationship between supportive leadership and Organizational effectiveness.

METHODOLOGY

The correlational research design was employed in carrying out this study. The correlational research design is used when testing relationships between variables of interest that is the independent and dependent variables (Curtis, Comiskey & Dempsey, 2015). The design is generally used because correlational studies are a quick and easy way of confirming whether there are relationships between two variables (Schober, Boer & Schwarte, 2018). This study adopted the correlational research design because a correlation coefficient is a simple and objective way to describe the strength of a relationship between two variables in a precise manner that makes it clear and easy to understand.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The sampling techniques used to select the respondents were census and purposive sampling. Census sampling involved the studying of whole population. The census sample offers detailed information on all or most elements in the population involving all the total of a small population. This allowed the use of a questionnaire to collect information (Lavrakas, 2008). Census sampling method was used to select the teachers because although a small population, they were sufficient for providing questionnaire survey data necessary for generalisation of the findings. With purposive sampling, this was used to select particular people to provide in-depth views since the study was both quantitative and qualitative. The method of purposive sampling used was intensity purposive sampling. Intensity sampling allows the researcher to select a small number of rich cases that provide in depth information and knowledge of a phenomenon of interest (Palinkas et al., 2015). The respondents selected purposively were head teachers.

The sample size comprised all the 127 teachers for the questionnaire survey and four female head teachers for the interview guide As shown in table 1 below.

Table 1: The Sample Size for responds

Category	Sample Size	Sampling Techniques
Teachers	127	Census
Head teachers	4	Purposive
Total	132	

DATA ANALYSIS

Data Analysis

Quantitative Data Analysis

Before analysing the data collected, all the data questionnaires were coded, entered into the computer using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS 24.0), summarised them using frequency tables and edited them to remove errors. Quantitative data were analysed at three levels, namely univariate, bivariate and multivariate levels. At univariate level, descriptive statistics specifically means were calculated. At bivariate level, the dependent variable (DV) was correlated and then regressed on the independent variables (IVs).

Qualitative Data Analysis

The processing of qualitative data collected involved coding and grouping following the study objectives and emerging themes. Analysis was done using content analysis. Through content analysis, it was possible to distil words into fewer content related categories. The aim was to attain a condensed and broad description of the phenomenon, and the outcome of the analysis was concepts or categories describing the phenomenon. Qualitative data supplemented quantitative data and help in providing explanations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Response Rate

The researcher planned to collect data from 131 participants that were 127 teachers for the questionnaire survey and four head teachers for the interview guide. Nonetheless, relevant data for the questionnaire was collected from 116 and interviews from all the four anticipated participants. Therefore, appropriate data were collected from 120 respondents. The response rate was as presented in Table 2

Table 2: Response Rate for the Study

Instruments	Targeted	Actual	Response Rate
Questionnaires	127	116	91.30%
Interviews	4	4	100,0%
Total	131	120	91.60%

The data in Table 2 shows that questionnaire survey data were collected from 116(91.3%) respondents out of the originally determined 127 and all the four chosen for interviews participated in the study. The overall response rate for both survey data and interview respondents was 120(91.6%). This response rate was considered satisfactory because Nulty (2008) posits that a response rate of 50% is acceptable in social research surveys.

Descriptive Analysis and Results for Schools Organizational Effectiveness

The self-administered questionnaire shows that the dependent variable (DV) namely, schools organizational effectiveness was studied using 16 items. The items were scaled using the five-point Likert scale where code 1 = Strongly Disagree (very low), 2 = Disagree (low), 3 = fairly agree (fair), 4 = Agree (high) and 5 = Strongly Agree (very high). For each of the items in the questionnaire, means are presented. The results are

presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive Results for Schools Organizational Effectiveness

Schools Organizational Effectiveness Items	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
The school administration is receptive to suggestions for change	4.01	High	4
The school has a variety of sources from which it acquires resources	2.26	Low	2
The school is financially healthy	2.14	Low	2
The school attracts satisfactory numbers of teachers	3.68	High	4
The school attracts satisfactory numbers of students	3.41	Fair	3
Academic performance of the school is good	3.07	Fair	3
The school enjoys stability	3.75	High	4
There is cohesion among the teachers	3.56	High	4
The school is successful at attracting stakeholder support	3.7	High	4
The school attracts quality professional staff	3.6	High	4
The school has adequate facilities for all for all its activities	2.72	Moderate	3
The school includes the views of all constituent groups or stakeholders	3.14	Fair	3
The school regularly evaluates performance of staff	3.09	Fair	3
The school has performance measures	3.82	High	4
The strategic plan of the school includes clear and attainable objectives	3.21	Fair	3
The school regularly engages in long-term strategic planning	3.01	Fair	3

The results in Table 3 shows that the respondents indicated that administrations of the schools were receptive to suggestions for change (mean = 4.01), there was cohesion among the teachers (mean = 3.56), the school was successful at attracting stakeholder support (mean = 3.70), attracted quality professional staff (mean = 3.60), the schools enjoyed stability (mean = 3.75) and had performance measures (mean = 3.82). This was because the means for items above were high close to code four corresponding with agree that is ranking at level four (4). However, fairly the schools attracted satisfactory numbers of students (mean = 3.41), academic performance of the schools was good (mean = 3.07), included the views of all constituent groups or stakeholders (mean = 3.14), regularly evaluated performance of staff (mean = 3.09), the strategic plans of the schools included clear and attainable objectives (mean = 3.21) and the schools engaged in long-term strategic planning (mean = 3.01). The results above indicated that the schools Organizational effectiveness on the items was fair because the means obtained were close to code 3 (fair or moderate) which corresponded with fairly agree.

The results nevertheless indicated that the schools lacked a variety of sources from which to acquires resources (means = 2.26), and the schools were not financially heathy (mean = 2.14) because the means on them were close to 2 (disagreed) which indicated low level school Organizational effectiveness on those items. To find out the overall view of how the teachers rated the schools Organizational effectiveness, an average index of schools Organizational effectiveness was computed for the 16 items measuring the same. The summary of the statistics on schools Organizational effectiveness were presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4. Summary Statistics for Schools Organizational Effectiveness

	Descriptives		Statistic	Std. Error
School Organizational Effectiveness	Mean		3.27	0.05
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	3.17	
		Upper Bound	3.36	

	5% Trimmed Mean	3.28	
	Median	3.31	
	Variance	0.29	
	Std. Deviation	0.54	
	Minimum	1.88	
	Maximum	4.5	
	Range	2.63	
	Interquartile Range	0.75	
	Skewness	-0.34	0.23
	Kurtosis	-0.15	0.45

The results in Table 4 show that the mean = 3.27 was almost equal to the median = 3.17. Hence, although the results were negatively skewed (skew -0.50), they were normally distributed. The mean and median close to three suggested that schools Organizational effectiveness was fair because basing on the scale used, three represented fairly agree (fair). The low standard deviation = 0.80 suggested low dispersion in the responses. The curve in Figure 1 indicated normality of the responses.

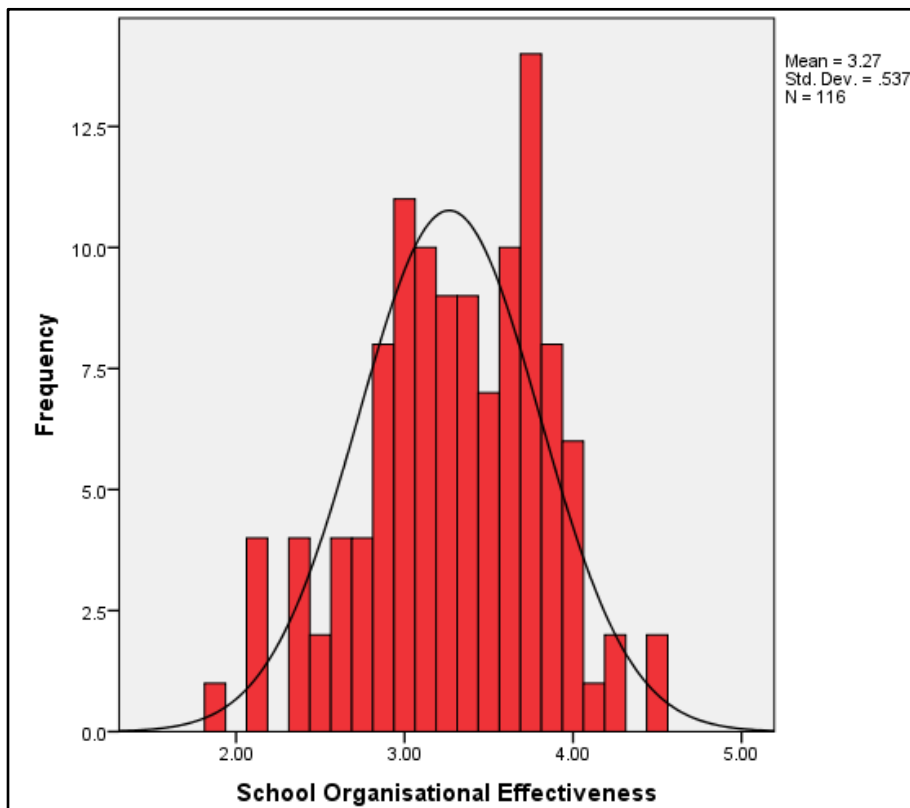


Figure 1: Histogram for Schools Effectiveness

Figure 1 indicate normal distribution of the responses obtained on schools Organizational effectiveness. This suggests that the data obtained on schools Organizational effectiveness could be subjected to linear correlation and regression and appropriate results obtained.

To have explanations on the state of schools Organizational effectiveness, in the interviews the head teachers were asked to give their assessment on the Organizational effectiveness of the schools. In their

responses, various related responses were given on schools. One head teacher said;

While I have been able to promote cohesion amongst my teachers, ensure stability with low staff turnover, attracted the support of parents and other community stakeholders, the students number in the school is low because lacks sufficient infrastructure because of low funding. The parents in the area are poor hence the fees collected cannot sufficiently cater the school needs such as establishing modern infrastructure. The school is largely dependent in government subventions.

On the other hand, another head teacher stated;

The academic performance of the school has improved over time because the school has been able attract quality teachers and facilities such school physical infrastructure including classes and the library have been established. The challenge is low school revenue and lack of other sources besides fees and government subventions to support the activities of the school. The development of the school is low because of limited resources.

In relation to the above, another head teacher remarked that; “School Organizational effectiveness is low because of lack of finances. However, while the numbers of students in the school are low, they have gradually been increasing because the school has been able to attract good teachers.” Lastly, another head teacher indicated that: “School Organizational effectiveness is fair because the numbers of students have improved over time, the school now has more infrastructures, the numbers of students are also increasing and the school virtually has all the teachers it needs. In general, the views above shows that while Organizational effectiveness of the schools has been improving there is a challenge of limited financial resources. Hence, the growth of the schools remains fair. This finding is consistent with the descriptive statistics results revealed that schools Organizational effectiveness was fair or moderate.

Female Supportive Leadership Behaviours

This section presents results on the second independent variable namely female supportive leadership behaviours. The concept was measured using 16 items. The results on the same follow in Table 4.

Table 5: Descriptive Results for Supportive Leadership Behaviours

Supportive Leadership Behaviours Items	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
My head teacher maintains a friendly working relationship with subordinates.	3.08	Fair	3
My head teacher does things to make it pleasant to be a member of the group	3.35	Fair	3
My head teacher says things that inspire subordinates	1.92	Low	2
My head teacher helps subordinates overcome problems that stop them from carrying out the tasks	4.01	High	4
My head teacher behaves in a manner that is thoughtful of subordinates' personal needs.	2.89	Fair	3
My head teacher tries to meet my needs	3.34	Fair	3
My head teacher knows me well enough to know when I have concerns bothering me	3.47	Fair	3
My head teacher tries to understand my point of view when I speak to them	3.57	High	4

My head teacher tries to meet my needs in such ways as informing me of what is expected of me when working	3.33	Fair	3
I can rely on my head teacher when I ask for help, for example, if things are not going well between me and my colleagues	3.27	Fair	3
I can rely on my head teacher to be open to any remarks I may make to him/her.	3.98	High	4
My head teacher encourages me even in difficult situations	3.54	High	4
My head teacher makes it a point to express appreciation when I do a good job	3.8	High	4
My head teacher respects me as a person	3.22	Fair	3
My head teacher makes time to listen to me	3.66	High	4
My head teacher recognizes my strengths and areas for development	2.78	Fair	3

The results in Table 5. show that the female head teachers helped subordinates overcome problems that stopped them from carrying out the tasks (mean = 4.01), tried to understand teachers point of view when speaking to them (mean = 3.57), could be relied on with respect to being to open to any remarks made them (mean = 3.98), encouraged teachers even in difficult situations (mean = 3.54), made it a point to express appreciation when teachers did a good job (mean = 3.80) and made time to listen to the teachers (mean = 3.66). However, the teachers indicated that fairly, the head teachers maintained friendly working relationship with subordinates (mean = 3.08), did things to make it pleasant to be a member of the groups (mean = 3.35), behaved in a manner thoughtful of subordinates’ personal needs (mean = 2.89), tried to meet teachers’ needs (mean = 3.34), knew teachers well enough to know when they had concerns bothering them (mean = 3.47), and tried to meet teachers needs in such ways as informing them of what was expected of them when working (mean = 3.33).

Further, the teachers revealed the fairly, the female head teachers could be relied for help, for example if things were not going well between teachers (mean = 3.27), respected teachers as persons (mean = 3.22), and recognised teachers strengths and areas for development (mean = 2.78). However, the female head teachers did not inspire the teachers (mean = 1.92). To find out the overall perception of teachers on how they rated how the head teachers’ supportive leadership behaviour, an average index for supportive leadership behaviour was computed for the 16 items measuring the same. The summary of the statistics on supportive leadership behaviour were presented in Table 5

Table 6: Summary Statistics for Supportive Leadership Behaviour

	Descriptives		Statistic	Std. Error
Supportive Leadership	Mean		3.33	7.07
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	3.19	
		Upper Bound	3.46	
	5% Trimmed Mean		3.35	
	Median		3.5	
	Variance		0.52	
	Std. Deviation		0.72	
	Minimum		1.75	

	Maximum	4.56	
	Range	2.81	
	Interquartile Range	1.31	
	Skewness	-0.44	0.23
	Kurtosis	-0.98	0.45

The results in Table 6 show that the mean = 3.33 was close to the median = 3.50. Therefore, despite the negative skew (skew -0.41), the results were normally distributed. The mean close to three suggested that supportive leadership behaviour of female head teachers was fair because basing on the scale used, three represented fairly agree (fair). The low standard deviation = 0.72 suggested low dispersion in the responses. The curve in Figure 4.3 indicated normality of the responses.

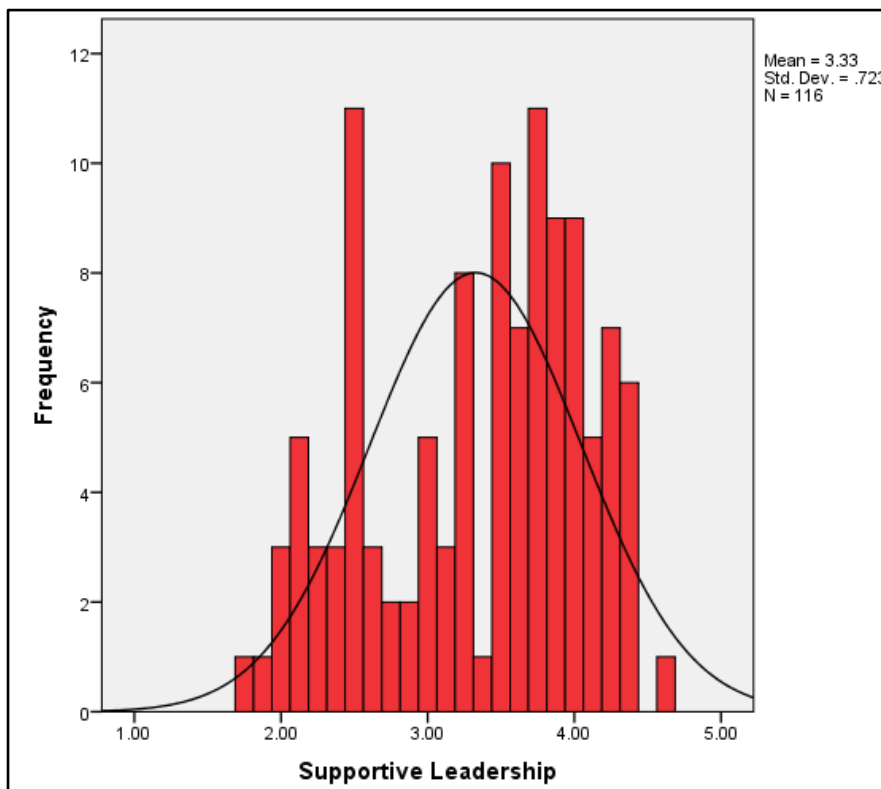


Figure 2: Histogram for Supportive Behaviour

Figure 2 indicate normal distribution of the responses obtained on supportive leadership behaviour. This suggests that the data obtained on supportive leadership behaviour of female head teachers could be subjected to linear correlation and regression and appropriate results obtained.

To have explanations on the state of directive leadership behaviour, in the interviews the head teachers, they were asked to comment to how they used support leadership behaviour in the schools. In their responses, several related responses were given on how they used support leadership behaviour schools. One head teacher said;

In handling of my teachers, ensure that teachers deliver effectively. Whenever teachers report problems they encounter as they carry out their duties, I come in to support them such that they carry out their work effectively. The problem is that the school lacks financial resources to support the teachers effectively.

In relation to the above, another head teacher stated that;

I help teachers to perform their duties within their job requirements and policies of the school and teaching

profession. Each teacher is appraised and feedback given about their level of performance as a way of making them improves their performance and encouraging them to continue the good work they perform.

Further, another head teacher remarked, “I make effort to motivate and mentor my teachers to enhance their performance. Nonetheless, because of lack of resources, I have not been able to provide training by organising workshops for the teachers. The school cannot manage to pay facilitators. Finally, another head teacher said, “I offer my teachers total support by helping them to execute their duties. The low resource envelop of the school is used to ensure that the teachers are able to carry out their work.” The responses above form head teachers showed that they made effort to support teachers as they carried out their work but were curtailed by finances. Therefore, this finding agrees with the descriptive statistics results which revealed that fairly, female head teachers exhibited supportive leadership behaviour.

Inferential Analysis

Correlation of Female Head Teachers’ supportive Leadership Behaviours and Schools Organisational Effectiveness

Table 7: Correlation Matrix for Female Head Teachers’ Supportive Leadership Behaviours and Schools Organisational Effectiveness

	School Organisational Effectiveness		Supportive Leadership
School Organisational Effectiveness	1		
Supportive Leadership	0.429**	0.093	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The results in Table 7 suggest that all the component of female head teachers leadership behaviours that is, supportive ($r = 0.429$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$), had a positive and significant relationship with schools organisational effectiveness. This means that hypotheses (H_1) was accepted.

Regression of Schools Organisational Effectiveness on Female Head Teachers supportive Leadership Behaviours

At the confirmatory level, to establish whether organisational effectiveness was influenced by female head teachers’ leadership behaviours which was supportive, a regression analysis was carried out. The results were as in Table 7.

Table 7: Regression of Organisational Effectiveness on Female Head Teachers supportive Leadership Behaviours

Female Head Teachers Supportive Leadership Behaviours	Standardised Coefficients	Significance
	Beta (β)	(p)
Supportive	0.236	0.000
Adjusted $R^2 = 0.716$		
$F = 29.116$, $p = 0.000$		

Dependent Variable: Schools Organisational Effectiveness

The results in Table 7 shows that female head teachers leadership behaviours which was supportive and

achievement oriented explained 71.6% of the variation in schools organisational effectiveness (adjusted $R^2 = 0.716$). This means that 28.4% of the variation was accounted for by other factors not considered under this model. Out of the four leadership behaviours, only three behaviours namely directive ($\beta = 0.528$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$), supportive ($\beta = 0.236$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$) and participative ($\beta = 0.208$, $p = 0.001 < 0.05$) had a positive and significant influence on schools organisational effectiveness. However, achievement oriented leadership behaviours ($\beta = 0.107$, $p = 0.292 > 0.05$) had a positive but insignificant influence on schools organisational effectiveness. This means that hypotheses one to three (H_1 - H_3) were accepted but hypothesis four (H_4) was rejected.

CONCLUSION

Supportive leadership behaviours are imperative for schools organisational effectiveness. Supportive leadership behaviours entail maintaining friendly working relationship with teachers, doing things that make work pleasant for teachers, helping teachers overcome problems that stop them from carrying out the tasks, and trying to meet teachers' needs. Also such behaviours include knowing teachers well enough to know concerns bothering teachers, understanding teachers point of view when they speak to them, meeting teachers' needs in such way as informing them what is expected of them when working, and positioning themselves as reliable to the teachers when they need their help.

RECOMMENDATION

Head teachers should be supportive to teachers to ensure schools organisational effectiveness. Therefore, head teachers should maintain friendly working relationship with teachers, should do things to make it pleasant for teachers, help teachers overcome problems that stop them from carrying out the tasks, and try to meet teachers' needs. Head teachers should also know their teachers well enough to know concerns bothering teachers, understand teachers point of view when they speak to them, meet teachers needs in such way as informing them what is expected of them when working, and position themselves as reliable to the teachers when they need their help.

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