

Delegation Practices and Staff Commitment in Adventist Secondary Schools in Zimbabwe Central Union Conference

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ABSTRACT

Delegation refers to the transfer of responsibility and authority to subordinates, encompassing tasks such as assigning responsibilities, granting discretion, and empowering decision-making. This study aimed to investigate the influence of delegation practices on the performance of Adventist secondary schools in Zimbabwe Central Union Conference (ZCUC). Specifically, it examined the impact of delegation on various performance dimensions, including academic, administrative, and overall institutional effectiveness. The study employed a cross-sectional survey design, targeting a population of 398 Adventist secondary schools registered under ZCUC. A stratified sampling technique was used to ensure representation across the country, with a final sample size of 398 institutions. Data was collected using a standardized questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics and regression analysis in SPSS 26. Regression analysis was applied to determine the relationship between delegation practices and institutional performance. The findings revealed mixed results. When analyzed independently, delegation practices showed a significant positive influence on institutional performance. However, in the multiple regression model, delegation practices were not statistically significant in predicting performance, suggesting that other factors may mediate or moderate this relationship. The study recommends empowering staff with adequate resources, providing clear guidelines and fair treatment, offering opportunities for professional growth, and improving awareness of institutional strategic plans. To enhance the effectiveness of delegation, it is essential to address challenges such as unequal distribution of responsibilities and inadequate supervision. Stakeholders are encouraged to adopt complementary strategies that support delegation as a leadership development practice.

Keywords: Adventist educational institutions, Career Development, Delegation, Performance, Practice,

INTRODUCTION

The Zimbabwe Central Union Conference (ZCUC) of the Seventh-day Adventist Church aims to implement policies that enhance the welfare of its stakeholders. Anderson Adventist Secondary School, established in 1950 under the ZCUC, has made significant contributions to education by offering academic, spiritual, and extracurricular programs. Its curriculum includes various disciplines, complemented by boarding, learning, and library facilities designed to foster holistic development. However, despite its robust educational framework, the school faces challenges in staff commitment, an issue that has persisted over the years. Recent reforms, such as the Competence-Based Curriculum and Continuous Assessment Learning Activities (CALA), aim to address gaps in learner skills development. However, the effectiveness of these initiatives depends heavily on the commitment and participation of teaching staff. Reports from the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE, 2022) and the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education highlight concerns about low staff commitment, especially during the 2008–2009 period. These reports identify poor human resource management and leadership practices as contributing factors.

Delegation is a critical leadership practice that has the potential to improve staff commitment. According to Kiiza and Picho (2015), delegation involves assigning authority and responsibility to subordinates while maintaining accountability. Kipengele (2020) emphasizes that effective delegation equips employees with new responsibilities and the authority to execute them. Similarly, Soo, Lee, Beyerlein, and Kolb (2017) describe

staff commitment as a psychological attachment to the goals and values of an institution, which is vital for organizational success. Despite this, there is limited understanding of how delegation practices influence staff commitment in educational settings, particularly in Zimbabwe. Many developing countries, Zimbabwe included, struggle to sustain initiatives aimed at improving education systems due to inadequate leadership practices. Leaders often face unpredictable situations, stress, and frustration, which can hinder their ability to foster employee commitment. In this context, Anderson Adventist Secondary School has experienced fluctuating levels of staff loyalty, yet no specific study has explored the impact of delegation practices on staff commitment within this institution.

This research aims to fill that gap by investigating how delegation practices affect staff commitment at Anderson Adventist Secondary School. The study seeks to provide insights into how leadership practices can be leveraged to enhance staff loyalty, thereby contributing to the overall performance and success of Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe. This introduction aligns the background of Anderson Adventist Secondary School with the study's focus on delegation and staff commitment, identifies a clear research gap, and establishes a strong rationale for the investigation.

Statement of the Problem

As the dynamics of educational leadership evolve rapidly, school leaders face growing challenges in maintaining staff commitment and effectiveness (Kipengele, 2020). Human capital is widely acknowledged as a critical factor in achieving institutional success, with employee commitment playing a pivotal role in this regard (Onesmo et al., 2022). Anderson Adventist Secondary School, as part of the Adventist Administration, aims to provide holistic education that addresses learners' spiritual, physical, social, and intellectual needs. However, the effectiveness of this mission is jeopardized by persistent challenges in staff commitment. The National Council for Higher Education (NCHE, 2010) reported that Anderson Adventist Secondary School was among the institutions experiencing low staff commitment, with the problem being particularly acute during the 2008–2009 academic years. Despite these findings, no empirical study has specifically explored the underlying factors contributing to low staff commitment within the school (Kiiza & Picho, 2015). Existing research suggests that leadership practices, including delegation of authority, significantly influence staff commitment. However, the role of delegation practices in shaping staff commitment at Anderson Adventist Secondary School remains unexplored.

Delegation of authority, as a leadership practice, entails the transfer of decision-making powers and responsibilities from leaders to subordinates while maintaining accountability (Kiiza & Picho, 2015). Ineffective delegation may contribute to feelings of disempowerment and disengagement among employees, which can, in turn, lead to low commitment. Conversely, effective delegation can foster a sense of ownership, motivation, and alignment with institutional goals. Despite the potential of delegation to address staff commitment challenges, there is limited evidence on how this practice is applied and its impact within the context of Anderson Adventist Secondary School. This study aims to address this gap by examining the relationship between delegation of authority and staff commitment at Anderson Adventist Secondary School, Gweru, Zimbabwe. By focusing on this specific leadership practice, the research seeks to provide actionable insights into how delegation can enhance employee engagement and support the school's mission of delivering holistic education.

Objective of the Study

To examine the relationship between delegation practices and staff commitment in Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe, with a specific focus on their impact on institutional efficiency, employee morale, and overall performance at Anderson Adventist Secondary School.

Research Hypothesis

H₀₄: There is no significant influence of delegation practices on staff commitment and institutional efficiency at Anderson Adventist Secondary School, Gweru – Zimbabwe.

Scope of the Study

The study was conducted at Anderson Adventist Secondary School, located under the Zimbabwe Central Union Conference (ZCUC) Division. This institution was specifically chosen due to its previously reported low levels of staff commitment, as highlighted in the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) report of 2010. The study focused on the administration and teaching staff at Anderson Adventist Secondary School to explore how delegation practices influence staff commitment and institutional efficiency. While the findings may offer insights relevant to other Adventist educational institutions, the scope of the study is limited to Anderson Adventist Secondary School, and the results may not be directly generalizable to other institutions within the ZCUC Division.

Theoretical Framework

Behaviourist Theory

According to Bakar, (2015) the Behaviourist Theory was developed in 1913 by John Watson. Dionisio et al., (2022) refers behaviourist theory as a psychological approach which emphasizes scientific and objective methods of investigation. These concentrate on what leaders actually do rather than on their attributes. Njue, (2017) argue that different patterns of behaviour are observed and categorized as 'styles of leadership' which according to Kipengele, (2020) is attracting most attention from practicing administration staff. Zhang et al., (2017) were of the opinion that behaviour, unlike traits can be learned, thus can follow that individuals trained in appropriate leadership behaviour would be able to lead more effectively. Ssegawa, D. and Matovu, M. (2020) supports that Behaviourist theory fits well with the study on leadership development practices due to practices such as coaching, empowerment, participation and delegation influencing the behavior of employee hence their performance in the organization. Leadership as a behavioural category has drawn attention to the importance of leadership style. Dionisio et al., (2022) defined leadership style as the behaviour exhibited by a leader during supervision of subordinates. On the other hand, Bakar, (2015) defines leadership style as the way in which the functions of leadership are carried out, the way in which the manager typically behaves towards members of the group.

Decisions are enforced using rewards and the fear of punishment while, full authority and responsibility are assumed by the leader (Bozkurt and Ergeneli, 2012). As such, when provided, Parikh, (2017) suggest that communication tends to be primarily downward, hence, if the authority of the autocratic leader becomes oppressive, subordinates may become insecure and afraid. Amos et al., (2021) highlighted that under conditions of stress, or when great speed and efficiency are required, autocratic leadership can yield positive outcomes. It can increase productivity and, more surprising, it can also enhance morale too. If the leader is weak and incompetent, this style possesses some advantage and certain disadvantages with advantages ranging from quick decision making and speedy accomplishment of the task (Parikh, 2017). According to Ondiba et al., (2019) a test (F-scale) is designed to measure authoritarianism as a personal syndrome characterized by involving political and religious conservatism, emotional coldness, quest of power, hostility towards minority groups, resistance to change, rejection of humanitarian values among others.

According to Ugoani, (2020), autocratic style permits quick decision making and hence can be applied with success in situations where: the subordinated lack knowledge of institutional goals; the subordinates are inexperienced and lack training; the company endorses the fear and punishment as accepted disciplinary techniques; the leader prefers to be active and dominant in decision making; and, there is little room for error in final accomplishment. According to Dionisio et al., (2022) benevolent autocracy is more realistic and is capable of making the most of a bad situation. Kipengele, (2020) argued that benevolent dictatorship is not only a faster moving but a more effective system of managing an enterprise. In democratic or participatory style, the focus of power is more with the group as a whole and there is greater interaction within the group Annan et al., (2015) Under this style, Onesmo et al., (2022) subordinates participate in goal setting and problem solving which encourages member commitment to the final decision. Accordingly, the democratic leader creates situations by which individuals can lean, enables people to chat their own performance, allows subordinates to set challenging goals, provides opportunities for improved work methods and job growth and recognize achievements and helps employees learn from error.

Managers practicing this style are labeled as 'Theory Y' leaders. The 'Y' according to Kiiza and Picho, (2015) in McGregor (1967) refers to people who like to work and accept responsibility and are liable to exercise ingenuity, creativity and imagination. Onesmo et al., (2022), found that participative leadership has a positive effect only on those individuals with strong non - authoritarian values or high need for independence. Basic problem with the participative leadership style is that it may not yield positive results when the subordinates prefer minimum interaction with the leader.

Theoretical Framework

Behaviourist Theory

The behaviourist theory, developed by John Watson in 1913, emphasizes observable actions over internal traits, focusing on behaviors that can be scientifically and objectively measured (Bakar, 2015; Dionisio et al., 2022). This approach is particularly relevant to leadership as it highlights what leaders do rather than their inherent attributes. As Njue (2017) suggests, leadership styles are patterns of behavior that influence subordinates' actions, and these behaviors can be learned and refined through training (Zhang et al., 2017). In the context of this study, delegation practices—a behavioral approach where leaders assign tasks and responsibilities—align with the principles of behaviourism. Ssegawa and Matovu (2020) note that practices like delegation influence employees' behavior and commitment, thereby impacting organizational performance. Delegation as a leadership behavior involves authority transfer, communication, and decision-making, which can shape staff commitment and overall performance when practiced effectively.

Leadership Styles within Behaviourism

Autocratic and democratic leadership styles, as behavioral categories, further illustrate the application of the behaviourist theory. Autocratic leadership, where leaders retain full authority and make decisions with minimal input, influences staff behavior through rewards and punishment (Bozkurt & Ergeneli, 2012). While this style can yield quick decisions and increased productivity under high-stress conditions, it may also result in insecurity among subordinates if overly oppressive (Parikh, 2017; Amos et al., 2021).

In contrast, democratic leadership emphasizes participative decision-making, where subordinates engage in goal setting and problem-solving. This style fosters commitment and creativity, as leaders create environments for employee growth and recognition of achievements (Onesmo et al., 2022; Annan et al., 2015). Under this approach, delegation becomes a collaborative process that enhances trust and commitment, as noted by Kiiza and Picho (2015).

Connecting Behaviourism to Delegation and Staff Commitment

Behaviourist principles highlight how specific delegation practices—effective communication, monitoring progress, and employee participation—can directly influence staff commitment. For instance, democratic leadership styles promote participatory delegation, where staff engagement leads to higher morale and productivity. Conversely, autocratic styles may result in compliance driven by fear rather than commitment. This study explores these dynamics to determine how delegation practices shape behavior and commitment within Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Delegation Practice

1. Effective communication

(Conversation)

2. Relationships

3. Progress monitoring

4. Delegation of authority

5. Participation in decision making

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Staff Commitment

This study adopted a quantitative survey design to collect information from a number of respondents at one point in time as Creswell, (2013) points that survey results can be generalized to a larger population within defined boundaries. The study employed quantitative research paradigm. The institution had a total of 45 employees of which 28 are teachers and 17 are non-teaching staff occupying various positions to keeping the flagship of Adventist Education. From the target population of 45 a sample of size of 20 was determined by the use of Krejcie & Morgan (1970) as cited by (Annan et al, 2015). The total number of questionnaires that were completely filled and returned was 78 respondents; this gave a high response rate of 80.5 percent. Due to the heterogeneous nature of the population, the researcher used stratified sampling; proportionate sample from two strata (teaching staff and non-teaching staff) was obtained in order to ensure that all Adventist education staff members were fairly represented in the study. Random sampling was then used because of the advantage it has in avoiding bias in that each member in the target population had an equal opportunity of being chosen (Annan et al, 2016).

The research used both primary and secondary methods of data collection. For the case of primary methods of data collection, field data pertaining to the objectives of the study was collected with the help of a self-administered questionnaire. Literature review revealed that most of organization commitment researches have used questionnaires as an instrumental of data collection. Thus, questionnaire survey was selected because it was specifically developed to reach several respondents at the same time while ideal to explore the correlation between leadership practices and staff commitment in an academic setting. The questionnaire included statements that elicited information under the five delegation practices namely: Effective communication (Conversation), Relationships, Progress monitoring, Delegation of authority and Participation in decision making.

Similarly, items on the dependent variable (staff commitment) were also formulated. Specifically, this research used a closed-ended questionnaire based on a five point Likert scale responses that ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree with codes ranging from 1 to 5. Subsequently, overall scores for each respondent were computed from the results of the raw data by obtaining the average of all valid responses intended to obtain each respondent's opinion in relation to each of the five independent variables and the dependent variable ranging from 1.0 to 5.0. The closed-ended questionnaire was particularly preferred because they are easy to quantify and analyze (Annan et al, 2016).

Data quality was ensured by checking the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. Critical validation of the instrument was done by the supervisors who rated the degree to which the instrument actually measures the traits for which it was designed to measure (Annan et al, 2016) as per the study objectives. The reliability coefficient was computed using Cronbach's alpha formula coefficient to assess the reliability of the questionnaire. This method was considered appropriate due to the closed ended questionnaire items as argued by Zhang et al., (2017) that Cronbach's alpha coefficient provides the average correlation of all items in the questionnaire, thus, considered more suitable to compute the overall reliability of the instrument. Therefore, the average correlation between the items in the questionnaire was .894 which was above 0.7 the normal degree for accepting reliability of instruments (Creswell, 2013) implying that the questionnaire was reliable.

Data was coded and entered into computer using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for analysis. Descriptive analysis was done involving the presentation of findings in form of frequency tables with their respective mean, standard deviation. Statistical analysis involved the use of the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient for inferential statistics. Consequently, regression analysis was done to test the relationship between the delegation practices variables and staff commitment variable. Ssegawa and Matovu, (2020) supports that regression is conducted to analyze the nature and the strength of relationship between

each of the independent variables and the dependent variable. The analyzed data was interpreted and presented in frequency tables. A hypothetical multiple regression model based on conceptual relation was constructed as follows;

$$Y = BO + B1X1 + e$$

Where,

Y Performance of Adventist educational Institution

X1 Delegation

BO Intercept

e Stochastic term (error term)

Research Findings and Discussion

From the study, 391 respondents filled-in and returned the questionnaires making a response rate of 98.24%. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2012) a response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting; a rate of 60% is good and a response rate of 70% and over is excellent; therefore, the response rate obtained in this study was excellent for analysis and reporting.

Influence of Delegation Practice on Staff Commitment of Adventist Educational Institutions

The researcher wanted to find out from the respondents how official tasks are delegated to them. Descriptive statistics were read to describe the influence of delegation practice on staff commitment. Table 1 below shows descriptive statistics of minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation.

Table 1

Descriptive

N Minimum Maximum Mean Std. Deviation

Reversed DP item 1	20	1	3	1.95	.686	Reversed DP item 2	20	1	3	2.10	.788	Reversed DP item 3	20	1	3	2.05	.686
Reversed DP item 4	20	1	4	2.15	.813	Reversed DP item 5	20	1	4	2.10	.788	Reversed DP item 6	20	1	3	2.00	.649
Reversed DP item 7	20	1	3	1.95	.686	Reversed DP item 8	20	1	3	1.75	.639	Reversed DP item 9	20	1	3	2.05	.887
Reversed DP item 10	20	1	3	2.00	.795	Reversed DP item 11	20	1	5	2.10	1.071	Reversed DP item 12	20	1	4	2.05	.887
Reversed DP item 13	20	1	3	1.95	.759	Reversed DP item 14	20	1	3	1.85	.745	Reversed SC item 1	20	1	3	1.75	.786
Reversed SC item 2	20	1	3	1.65	.745	Reversed SC item 3	20	1	3	1.70	.657	Reversed SC item 4	20	1	3	1.55	.686
Reversed SC item 5	20	1	3	1.65	.745	Valid N (listwise)	20										

Table 1 above shows that most of the respondents moderately agree on the delegation practices of *The delegated duty/responsibility are not over-burdened and are fairly distributed* (M = 1.75, SD = 0.639); *Those who successfully complete delegated tasks are highly recognized* (M = 1.85, SD = 0.745); *I allow my subordinates to represent me in training and meetings when am on leave, sick or attending some other official duties.* (M = 1.95, SD = 0.759); *Delegation is used in the institution frequently* (M = 1.95, SD = 0.686); *I maintain an open line of supportive communication on the delegated tasks that I undertake* (M = 2.00, SD = 0.649); *I occasionally select my most comfortable delegable tasks.* (M = 2.00, SD = 0.795); *I am given challenging tasks to improve my skills and competences* (M = 2.05, SD = 0.686); *I delegate 50% of my daily tasks to others* (M = 2.05, SD = 0.887); *I receive reward/recognition on all successful delegated tasks that I undertake* (M = 2.05, SD = 0.887); *Administration encourages me to initiate tasks on my own* (M = 2.10, SD = 0.788); *I normally call my staff for a consultations/meetings/briefs where they are given the opportunity to freely express their views and opinion* (M = 2.10, SD = 0.788); *More than 50% of my daily tasks are delegated* (M = 2.10, SD = 1.071); *Select is based on the ability, knowledge, experience, interest and enthusiasm for*

responsibilities/duties delegated ($M = 2.15$, $SD = 0.813$).

Similarly, most of the respondents moderately agreed on staff commitment regarding *being allowed to analyse and make decisions accordingly subordinates are prepared for problem solving process when they reach the executive level* ($M = 1.35$, $SD = 0.587$); *Delegation gives the administration more time for strategic planning and policy making* ($M = 1.65$, $SD = 0.745$); *Delegation gives the administration more time for strategic planning and policy making* ($M = 1.65$, $SD = 0.745$); *Subordinate respond to delegated authority with favourable attitude which creates a sense of responsibility and dedication through pride and morale boosting* ($M = 1.70$, $SD = 0.657$); *Delegation results in quick decisions* ($M = 1.75$, $SD = 0.786$)

Having obtained the responses from both questionnaires and interviews, it was important to establish whether the ratings on delegation of authority had any association with the responses on staff commitment. This hypothesis was tested using a Pearson correlation coefficient and the results are given in Table 2.

Relationship between Delegation Practice and Staff Commitment

Table 2 below shows the correlation between delegation practice and staff commitment.

Table 2 Pearson Correlation

Delegation Practice Staff Commitment

Delegation Practice Pearson Correlation 1 .783** -Sig. (2-tailed) .000

N 20 20

Staff Commitment Pearson Correlation .783** 1 Sig. (2-tailed) .000

N 20 20

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

The summary statistics of the correlation in Table 2 show the computed value of the relationship between the two variables equal to 0.783 and significant at 0.00 ($P < 0.01$).

Effects of Delegation Practice and Staff Commitment

A significant overall regression indicates that a linear combination of delegation practice predicts staff commitment. Table 3 below illustrate the model summary, the ANOVA table and Coefficients.

Table 3 Regression Equation Model, ANOVA and Coefficients

Model Summary^b

Model R R Square Adjusted R Square Std. Error of the Estimate 1 .783^a .613 .591 .429

ANOVA^a

Model Sum of Squares df Mean Square F Sig. 1 Regression 5.248 1 5.248 28.458 .000^b-Residual 3.320 18 .184

Total 8.568 19

Coefficients^a

Model Unstandardized Coefficients

Standardized Coefficients

T Sig. 95.0% Confidence Interval for B

B Std. Error

Beta Lower Bound

Upper Bound

1 (Constant) -.041 .333 -.124 .903 -.741 .659 Delegation Practice .849 .159 .783 5.335 .000 .515 1.183

The regression results in Table 4.25 show that the association between delegation practices and staff commitment was statistically significant at, $F_{1,18} = 28.458$, $p < 0.000$ (the p value is less than 0.05). The results indicated that delegation practices positively and significantly influenced staff commitment of Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe ($B=0.849$ $p<0.000$) indicating that every unit increase in delegation, there was a corresponding increase in staff commitment by about 0.849. With $R^2 = 0.613$, the model implies participation explained 61% of the variation in staff commitment. Therefore, the model failed to explain 39% of the variation, meaning that there are other factors associated with staff commitment which were not fitted in the model. The model equation is therefore,

$$Y = -0.041 + 0.849X_4$$

Where, Y is staff commitment and X_4 is delegation.

Since the p-value was less than 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected and it was concluded that there is a statistically significant relationship between delegation practices as a leadership development practice on staff commitment of Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe. The empirical findings of this study indicated that delegation statistically and significantly influenced staff commitment of Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe. When an Adventist educational institution in Zimbabwe considered delegation as a leadership development practice the staff commitment would increase. These results are consistent with previous studies investigating the impact of delegation practices on overall staff commitment. The findings of a study conducted by Ssegawa and Matovu., (2020) who stated that delegation was an aspect of corporate governance which can improve the performance of Adventist education especially those which are growing rapidly. Therefore, the overall influence of delegation is increased leadership development and increased staff commitment. This confirms that essentially there is a strong relationship between delegation and leadership development in Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe.

Following the pearson coefficient and regression analysis, the findings led the researcher to reject the null hypothesis in favour of the research alternative or research hypothesis that delegation practices of authority significantly relates to staff commitment. In other words, when leaders at Anderson Adventist Secondary School relinquish some of their powers to their subordinates, this will significantly raise the latter's level of commitment to the institution. Therefore, it is of the view that delegation as a leadership development practice should be aligned with the expectations and needs of Adventist educational institutions in Zimbabwe, since the study has established that those who were satisfied with the fair distribution of delegated duty at the institution influencing staff commitment of the Adventist education.

DISCUSSION, SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section entails the discussion of the findings in relation to the research objectives that guided the research. The discussion is followed by conclusions, recommendations and areas for further research.

In the research objective, the results revealed that in addition to effective communication and participation in decision making, delegation was related to staff commitment. This was given by the value of the correlation equal to 0.783 with a sig-value of 0.000. This indicates that in the Anderson Adventist Secondary School, staff commitment of individuals was positively enhanced by delegation. The results further align with Kiiza and Picho, (2015) whose results revealed that delegation of authority to staff contributes to employees' allegiance to institutional goals and values. Similarly, the findings reduce credibility to one of the earlier studies such as

Kipengele, (2020) who demonstrated delegation of authority as one of the significant factors in shaping institutional commitment. Additionally, Onesmo, (2022) cited in Njue et al., (2017) report similar findings that delegation of authority to subordinates increases the level of commitment among staff. In this regard that Manfredi et al., (2019) points out that management should delegate to sales people the authority needed to make local decisions about pricing, delivery, and service. This is because effective delegation helps supervisors to pay close attention to employees to strengthen them (Ondiba et al., (2019).

In light of the findings, future research may need to examine the relative utility of the self-concept and the job characteristics as mechanisms through which delegation influences employee work outcomes. As delegation motivates employees to behave in ways and/or hold attitudes that are consistent with their positive self-image within Anderson Adventist Secondary School. From an administration perspective, administrators in Anderson Adventist Secondary School cannot be experts in all fields. In such situations, the school principal delegates full or partial responsibility of decision making for a particular area of concern, to the expert on the team for best administration outcomes. Advantages of this type of decision making process makes the group members feel engaged in the process, more motivated and creative.

Delegation of authority motivates a subordinate to perform the tasks with dedication and commitment. When authority is delegated, the subordinate knows that his superior has placed faith and trust in him. Administration staff who delegate effectively also receive several personal benefits; including more time to do their own jobs when they assign tasks to others. Given the hectic nature of administration work, time is a valuable service. Effective delegation frees the Administration staff to focus on administration tasks such as planning and control. Administration staff also benefit from the development of subordinates' skills. With a more highly skilled workforce, they have more flexibility in making assignments and are more efficient decision makers. Therefore, administration staff who develop their workforce are also likely to have high personal power with their staff and to be highly valued by the school.

With delegation, every member of staff expected to show increased commitment to the school and in the context of Anderson Adventist Secondary School. To achieve this, the behaviour of the staff is very important. Their behaviour is influenced by the environment in which they find themselves. If they are not given opportunities to utilize all of their skills, then the employer may never have the benefit of their total performance. However, improper delegation can cause a host of problems, primary of which is an incorrectly completed task, which may hurt the overall productivity of the school. Thus, the process of delegation is as critical as the planning, because a poor process can reduce the effectiveness of the delegation in several ways. First, it can lower the teachers' motivation to perform the task. A qualified teacher who is not motivated to complete the assignment is not likely to produce the desired results. Second, lack of proper communication of standards for the task may lead to less than desirable outcomes. Finally, the delegation process may create some artificial barriers or fail to eliminate others barriers to performance. The failure to share information and discuss real or perceived problems can reduce efficiency and may lead to failure.

Effective leadership practices are those approaches that bring about quality awareness in all institutional processes. In this study, it was envisaged that for staff commitment to occur, the leadership of Anderson Adventist Secondary School should among other factors improve their leadership. Specifically, the findings necessitated the rejection of the null hypotheses. Consequently, the rejection of the null hypotheses implied that there was reasonable proof to believe there was a significant relationship between the three basic leadership practices and staff commitment. Therefore, following the research findings and subsequent discussion, the following conclusions were made. There is a positive relationship between delegation of authority and staff commitment in the Anderson Adventist Secondary School in Zimbabwe Central Conference Division.

From the results of the investigation, it was evident that leaders in Anderson Adventist Secondary School should put much emphasis on their leadership practices in order to elicit their staff commitment. Following the study findings, it is suggested to achieve the loyalty and devotion of the staff to their work and the entire school as a whole. Additionally, it is also important for Administration staff of Anderson Adventist Secondary School to delegate some of their authority to their subordinates. According to Bozkurt and Ergeneli, (2012) delegating authority helps to free administration staff from focusing on administration tasks such as planning and control but will also go a long way in benefiting from the development of subordinates' skills. However,

while delegating decision making to their staff, administrators in Anderson Adventist Secondary School should provide the necessary support to the staff in form of coaching, guiding and advising them. Therefore, in a nutshell, the Adventist schools must become a learning institution in which the staff are assisted to persevere and eventually succeed.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A: Ethical Clearance Letter

APPENDIX A
LETTER OF REQUEST

Anderson High School of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church
P.O Box 833
Gweru
Zimbabwe
30 January 2023
The School Principal

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT YOUR INSTITUTION

I am a student in the School of Postgraduate Studies at the Adventist University of Africa in Nairobi, Kenya. I am pursuing a Ph.D. in Leadership. As part of the program requirements, I am currently undertaking research leading to the production of an article on the topic: *Delegation Practice as a Factor Influencing Staff Commitment of Adventist Secondary Schools in Zimbabwe Central Union Conference Division.*

I am therefore seeking permission to conduct my research. The objective is to gather data on the relationship between determinants of educational leadership styles and attributes on student development and how they affect Adventist secondary schools operations and activities. The information obtained from this research study will be solely for academic purposes and will be treated with confidentiality.

Regards

Machila Jalabani 

Approved / Not Approved (circle one)

For and on behalf of your organization

Name..... Kumana E

Signature..... 

Designation..... D/Head Date 30/01/23

THE DEPUTY HEAD
ANDERSON ADVENTIST HIGH SCHOOL
30 JAN 2023
P.O. BOX 833, GWERU
ZIMBABWE

Appendix B: Questionnaire for Anderson Advenstist High School Member of Staff Participants

Introduction

This questionnaire is intended solely for academic research purposes and the research topic is entitled "DELEGATION PRACTICE AS A FACTOR INFLUENCING STAFF COMMITMENT OF ADVENTIST SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ZIMBABWE CENTRAL UNION CONFERENCE DIVISION." I would appreciate it if you could take time out of your already busy schedule to answer the questions below honestly. The information you provide in this questionnaire will **not** be held against you in any way as any information provided will be treated as highly confidential.

General instructions:

There are two sections. Kindly answer all the items by ticking the appropriate answer. Please do not write your name anywhere.

Section A: Genreal Information

Tick where appropriate

	<i>Please tick where appropriate</i>	
1	Title	Administration staff [] Teaching staff []

Section B: Effects of Delegation Practices on Staff Commitment

To what extent do you (dis)agree with the following statements relating to your perceptions on how factors *Delegation of Authority, Effective Communication, Participation in Decision Making*; lead to effective delegation in Selected Seventh-day Adventist Secondary Schools in Zimbabwe Central Union Conference? Indicate your response on a scale of 1- 5 where: 5-Strongly agree; 4-Agree; 3-Neutral; 2-Agree; 1- Strongly Disagree

No	Delegation Practices	5	4	3	2	1
1	Delegation is used in the institution frequently.					
2	Administration encourages me to initiate tasks on my own.					
3	I am given challenging tasks to improve my skills and competences.					
4	Select is based on the ability, knowledge, experience, interest and enthusiasm for responsibilities/duties delegated					
5	I normally call my staff for a consultations/meetings/briefs where they are given the opportunity to freely express their views and opinion.					
6	I maintain an open line of supportive communication on the delegated tasks that I undertake.					
7	The duties/responsibilities delegated are precise and clearly defined in writing.					
8	The delegated duty/responsibility are not over-burdened and are fairly distributed.					
9	I receive reward/recognition on all successful delegated tasks that I undertake.					
10	I occasionally select my most comfortable delegable tasks.					
11	More than 50% of my daily tasks are delegated.					
12	I delegate 50% of my daily tasks to others.					
13	I allow my subordinates to represent me in training and meetings when am on leave, sick or attending some other official duties.					
14	Those who successfully complete delegated tasks are highly recognized					

No	Staff Commitment	5	4	3	2	1
1	Delegation results in quick decisions					

2	Delegation gives the administration more time for strategic planning and policy making.					
3	Subordinate respond to delegated authority with favourable attitude which creates a sense of responsibility and dedication through pride and morale boosting.					
4	By being allowed to analyse and make decisions accordingly subordinates are prepared for problem solving process when they reach the executive level.					
5	Delegating authority equal to results expected.					