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Managing for Learning: Head Teachers' Communication, Leadership, and Labour Relations in Ubungo Public Primary Schools, Tanzania

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Abstract : Effective headship coordinates instruction, people, trust, and organizational conditions, yet evidence from Tanzanian public primary schools remains limited. This study examined the perceived influence of head teachers' managerial practices on teaching and learning in Ubungo District. Its main objective was to assess how communication, leadership, and labour relations jointly support classroom work. A mixed-methods approach and convergent parallel descriptive design were employed. The sample comprised 179 respondents: 170 teachers and nine head teachers. Schools and teachers were selected randomly, while head teachers were purposively selected. Structured questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and documentary review generated data. After official access and informed consent, both strands were collected concurrently and integrated during interpretation. Frequencies and percentages summarized questionnaires, while interview and documentary evidence were analysed thematically. Objective-based instrument development, expert review, piloting, standardized questioning, and triangulation supported validity, reliability, and credibility; the achieved reliability coefficient was not reported. Confidentiality, voluntary participation, withdrawal rights, and academic-only data use were observed. Findings showed strongest approval for instructional supervision (71.7%), participation in decision-making (70.6%), teamwork (68.2%), and professional-development support (67.7%). Weaker areas included clear communication of school goals (43.5% positive), fair conflict management (41.2%), fairness in leadership (47.1%), and a supportive working environment (47.7%).

Keywords: head teachers; managerial practices; instructional leadership; communication; labour relations; teaching and learning; Tanzania..

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INTRODUCTION

School leadership matters because it shapes the conditions in which teachers plan, collaborate, teach, and improve. Contemporary understanding has moved beyond the heroic administrator toward leadership that is instructional, relational, and distributed: leaders establish direction, develop people, organize supportive conditions, and keep attention on learning (Hallinger, 2011; Leithwood et al., 2020; Robinson et al., 2008). UNESCO's 2024/5 Global Education Monitoring Report similarly identifies effective leadership as a key influence on teaching practice while

emphasizing selection, preparation, trust, feedback, and appropriate autonomy (UNESCO, 2024). Managerial routines therefore matter, but their value lies in whether they make high-quality teaching more coherent and sustainable.

Across African school systems, head teachers often work under constrained staffing, finance, infrastructure, and professional-support conditions (Bush & Oduro, 2006). These pressures intensify the importance of communication, participatory decision-making, instructional supervision, conflict management, and fair treatment. Tanzanian research reports that school leadership culture is associated with performance, while school heads may still lack adequate preparation for instructional supervision, action planning, and technology-supported management (Mulokozi & Mwemezi, 2024; Urio & Manase, 2024). This evidence suggests that organizational efficiency and human relationships are not competing priorities; schools need both.

In Ubungo District, the everyday practices through which head teachers coordinate goals, motivate teachers, supervise instruction, and manage working relationships have received limited integrated analysis. Earlier studies commonly isolate leadership style or administrative functions, and fewer triangulate teachers' ratings with head teachers' accounts across communication, leadership, and labour relations. This study therefore examined the perceived influence of managerial practices on teaching and learning in selected public primary schools. Its main objective was to assess how these three dimensions jointly create—or constrain—the organizational conditions for teaching, while identifying the specific practices most in need of development.

Literature Review

1. Theoretical Review

Scientific Management Theory, associated with Taylor (1911), emphasizes clear tasks, coordination, standard procedures, supervision, and efficiency. Applied cautiously to schools, it illuminates the value of timetables, role clarity, record keeping, resource allocation, and systematic monitoring. These practices can reduce ambiguity and protect instructional time. However, the theory's mechanistic assumptions are insufficient for professional organizations because teaching involves judgment, motivation, collaboration, and adaptation rather than standardized output alone.

Instructional and distributed leadership provide a necessary contemporary extension. Instructional leadership directs managerial attention toward curriculum, classroom practice, teacher learning, and evidence of student progress (Hallinger, 2011; Robinson et al., 2008). Distributed leadership recognizes that expertise and influence are shared through formal and informal interactions rather than located only in the head teacher's office (Gronn, 2002; Spillane, 2006). Communication and teacher participation are therefore not optional interpersonal qualities; they are mechanisms

through which goals become collective practice and local knowledge informs decisions.

A relational perspective further foregrounds organizational justice, trust, voice, and conflict resolution. Research on organizational justice links fair procedures and respectful treatment with trust, commitment, and constructive workplace behaviour, while school research identifies relational trust as an important resource for improvement (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Colquitt et al., 2001). Teachers are more likely to commit to decisions and share problems when procedures are transparent and respectful (Greenberg, 1990; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). The integrated framework used here consequently treats managerial effectiveness as three mutually dependent capacities: operational coordination, instructional direction, and relational legitimacy. It predicts that strong supervision or teamwork may be undermined when goals are unclear, decisions are perceived as unfair, or conflict is poorly managed.

2. Empirical Review

International reviews identify several recurring leadership practices associated with improved school conditions: setting direction, supporting teacher development, redesigning the organization, and leading instructional programmes (Hallinger, 2011; Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Leithwood et al., 2020; Robinson et al., 2008). The 2024/5 GEM Report adds that effective principals influence teaching through observation and feedback, yet many systems do not require management experience or provide sufficient preparation (UNESCO, 2024). These findings support a multidimensional assessment rather than treating leadership as a single style.

African evidence shows that participatory leadership, teacher motivation, instructional supervision, and positive school culture can support performance, but implementation is shaped by workload, resources, authority, and preparation (Bush & Oduro, 2006). The balance is particularly important in primary schools, where head teachers often combine administrative demands with close responsibility for instructional quality. Tanzanian evidence also identifies the importance of school-based opportunities for teachers' continuing professional learning (Komba & Nkumbi, 2008). Studies warn that formal meetings or supervision can become compliance routines if they do not produce useful feedback, shared problem-solving, or follow-up.

Recent Tanzanian studies sharpen this contextual picture. Mulokozi and Mwemezi (2024) found leadership culture central to performance in high-performing public secondary schools. Urio and Manase (2024) reported weaknesses in communicating school visions, action planning, record-related capacity, resourcing, and classroom supervision. These studies concern secondary schools and do not fully explain how teachers in public primary schools experience communication, leadership, and labour relations together. The current study addresses that gap in

Ubungo by integrating teacher response distributions with head-teacher interviews and documentary evidence.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a mixed-methods approach within a convergent parallel descriptive design, enabling quantitative teacher perceptions and qualitative head-teacher accounts to be collected during the same phase, analysed separately, and integrated for interpretation (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Fetters et al., 2013). It was conducted in selected public primary schools in Ubungo District, Tanzania. From a target population of 324, the study included 179 respondents: 170 teachers and nine head teachers. Simple random sampling was used to select participating schools and teachers from available sampling frames, while head teachers were purposively selected because their roles gave them direct knowledge of managerial practice. Structured questionnaires collected teachers' assessments of communication, leadership, labour relations, and teaching-and-learning conditions. Semi-structured interviews elicited head teachers' explanations of practice and constraints, and documentary review provided contextual corroboration. Following authorization from relevant education authorities and school leaders, the researcher informed participants, secured voluntary consent, administered questionnaires, conducted interviews, and reviewed available records. Quantitative data were edited, coded, and summarized using frequencies and percentages; qualitative data were organized into themes, and convergence, complementarity, and divergence across sources were examined during integrated interpretation. Content validity was supported by aligning instruments with the objectives and literature, obtaining expert review in Educational Management and Planning, and piloting in a non-participating public primary school. Reliability was addressed through piloting and consistent questionnaire administration, although the source manuscript does not report an achieved coefficient; credibility was strengthened through a standardized interview guide and methodological triangulation. Ethical safeguards included permission, informed consent, voluntary participation, withdrawal rights, confidentiality, anonymity in reporting, and restricted academic use of information. The design captures perceptions and organizational patterns but cannot establish causal effects on student learning.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The central finding is that head teachers' managerial practices were most convincing when they involved concrete instructional coordination and collective work, but less convincing when they required clarity, fairness, and conflict resolution. All 179 targeted participants took part. Among the 170 teacher respondents, 58.2% were women and 41.8% men; 52.9% were aged 41-50 years and 31.8% were aged 31-

40 years. This experienced teacher profile is relevant because respondents were positioned to judge recurring management practices rather than isolated events.

The profile also affects how the response pattern should be interpreted. Teachers in the two largest reported age groups are likely to have experienced several management cycles and changes in school leadership, which may give them a practical basis for comparing routine managerial conduct. Their assessments may therefore reflect accumulated expectations about communication, supervision, participation, and treatment at work. At the same time, the descriptive design did not test whether perceptions differed by age, sex, school, years of service, or prior leadership experience. The demographic information establishes who responded, but it does not show that all groups experienced management in the same way.

Complete participation among the targeted respondents strengthens the descriptive account by avoiding non-response within the selected sample. It does not, however, remove the limits of a study conducted in selected schools within one district. Teachers are also nested within schools and may share experiences of the same head teacher, rules, resource conditions, or staff culture. The percentages should consequently be read as a detailed account of the participating schools rather than as district-wide causal estimates. This caution is important when interpreting differences of a few percentage points across items.

Communication was uneven. Listening, staff meetings, timely information, and transparency received more positive than negative assessments, but the communication of school goals was weak: only 43.5% responded positively, while 47.7% responded negatively. Table 1 consolidates the original categories into positive, neutral, and negative responses because the source table stored strongly agree/agree and strongly disagree/disagree as combined groups.

Table 1.
Teachers' Perceptions of Head Teachers' Communication Skills (N = 170)

Communication indicator	Positive n (%)	Neutral n (%)	Negative n (%)
Clear communication of school goals	74 (43.5)	15 (8.8)	81 (47.7)
Listening to teachers' concerns	100 (58.8)	30 (17.6)	40 (23.5)
Effective staff meetings	99 (58.2)	30 (17.6)	41 (24.1)
Timely sharing of information	90 (52.9)	30 (17.6)	50 (29.4)
Transparent communication	100 (58.8)	29 (17.1)	41 (24.1)

The communication pattern suggests that head teachers were relatively accessible but less successful in converting school direction into shared

understanding. Interviews supported the value of meetings and information exchange, yet clarity of goals remained contested. From a distributed-leadership perspective, participation without a shared instructional direction can fragment effort; from Scientific Management Theory, unclear goals weaken coordination. Urio and Manase (2024) reported a related Tanzanian challenge in translating school vision into communicated action plans, lending contextual support to this interpretation.

The communication results distinguish accessibility from direction. Positive responses for listening to concerns and transparent communication were both 58.8%, while effective meetings reached 58.2% and timely information 52.9%. These figures suggest that many head teachers maintained channels through which teachers could speak and receive operational information. Yet only 43.5% responded positively about clear communication of school goals, and 47.7% responded negatively. A school can therefore have meetings and interpersonal access without a sufficiently shared account of what staff are trying to improve. Communication frequency and communication usefulness are related, but they are not the same managerial achievement.

Goal clarity matters because teachers make many daily decisions that cannot be directed from the head teacher's office. When a small number of instructional priorities are understood, teachers can connect lesson planning, assessment, resource requests, and collaboration to the same purpose. When goals remain general or contested, meetings may concentrate on schedules, reporting requirements, or immediate problems without aligning classroom practice. Scientific Management Theory explains the coordinating value of explicit tasks and expectations, while instructional leadership adds the requirement that those expectations concern teaching and learning rather than administration alone. The weak goal-communication result suggests that this connection was inconsistent.

The neutral responses also deserve attention. Between 8.8% and 17.6% selected the neutral category across communication items. Neutrality may reflect mixed experiences, limited information, or reluctance to judge a supervisor, although the present data cannot determine which explanation applies. Its size means that a simple positive-versus-negative reading would miss a group of teachers who did not endorse either position. For school improvement, these respondents matter because clearer examples, documented priorities, and opportunities to confirm understanding may move communication from passive receipt toward shared interpretation.

Distributed leadership provides a useful explanation for why listening and meetings are necessary but insufficient. Teacher participation can bring classroom knowledge into school decisions, yet participation produces coherence only when staff understand the decision to be made, the evidence that matters, and how their contributions will be used (Spillane, 2006). A meeting that invites comments but ends without a clear decision or assigned follow-up may feel participatory while leaving

practice unchanged. Leithwood et al. (2020) emphasize direction setting alongside developing people and redesigning organizational conditions. The Ubungo pattern shows why these practices need to operate together.

Leadership practices were generally stronger (Table 2). Instructional supervision recorded the highest positive response (71.7%), followed by teacher participation in decisions (70.6%), support for professional development (67.7%), and motivation (64.7%). Fairness was the outlier: 47.1% responded positively and 40.6% negatively.

Table 2.
Teachers' Perceptions Of Head Teachers' Leadership Skills (N = 170)

Leadership indicator	Positive n (%)	Neutral n (%)	Negative n (%)
Motivation of teachers	110 (64.7)	22 (12.9)	38 (22.4)
Support for professional development	115 (67.7)	24 (14.1)	31 (18.2)
Teacher participation in decision-making	120 (70.6)	22 (12.9)	24 (14.2)
Effective instructional supervision	122 (71.7)	28 (16.5)	20 (11.8)
Fairness in leadership	80 (47.1)	21 (12.4)	69 (40.6)

Note. The source table reports 166 responses for the decision-making item; four responses were not classified. Percentages are reproduced as reported rather than imputed.

Interview evidence reinforced the survey pattern by describing motivation, consultation, professional support, and supervision. The strength of supervision is encouraging because contemporary leadership research locates much of a principal's educational influence in the improvement of teaching conditions and practice (Day et al., 2016; Hallinger, 2011; Leithwood et al., 2020; Robinson et al., 2008; UNESCO, 2024). Yet the fairness result qualifies the positive picture. Supervision can support learning only if teachers experience criteria, decisions, and follow-up as credible. Perceived unfairness may reduce openness, encourage compliance, and discourage teachers from disclosing difficulties - the very information required for developmental supervision (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Colquitt et al., 2001).

The strong ratings for instructional supervision and participation in decision-making are important because they concern two routes through which head teachers can influence classroom work. Supervision can bring attention to lesson preparation, teaching methods, assessment, and learner progress. Participation can improve the practical quality of decisions by drawing on teachers' direct knowledge of pupils and classroom constraints. When combined, they can create a feedback loop in which school priorities inform observation and teacher experience informs subsequent

action. The percentages suggest that this loop existed for many respondents, although the study did not examine its frequency, content, or documented outcomes.

A positive rating for supervision should therefore be interpreted as evidence of perceived practice, not proof that observation consistently improved instruction. Developmental supervision requires clear criteria, relevant evidence, timely feedback, an agreed action, and later review. If supervision focuses mainly on checking documents or compliance, teachers may report that it occurs without experiencing meaningful instructional support. UNESCO (2024) identifies observation and feedback as important mechanisms of school leadership, but their influence depends on leader preparation and the quality of follow-through. Future assessment should separate the presence of supervision from the usefulness of feedback and subsequent changes in practice.

Support for professional development, rated positively by 67.7%, reinforces the instructional interpretation. Head teachers can identify needs, encourage peer learning, share opportunities, and organize school-based support even when external training is limited (Komba & Nkumbi, 2008). However, encouragement alone may not guarantee access, relevance, or sustained application. The study did not report the type, duration, or reach of professional-development activities. The result is best understood as a perceived leadership strength that could support teaching when linked to evidence from supervision and when teachers have time and resources to act on what they learn.

The decision-making item also requires careful reading because the source table classified only 166 of the 170 teacher responses. Among the reported categories, 70.6% of the full teacher sample were positive, 12.9% neutral, and 14.2% negative, while four responses were not classified. Reproducing the reported figures protects the integrity of the evidence, but the omission prevents the percentages from summing to 100%. This data-quality issue is small and does not reverse the dominant positive pattern. It does illustrate the importance of complete category checks before results are interpreted or compared.

Fairness is the principal qualification to the leadership strengths. Positive responses reached 47.1%, while 40.6% were negative and 12.4% neutral. This near division suggests that teachers did not experience leadership decisions uniformly. Fairness may concern how opportunities, workloads, recognition, discipline, or information are allocated, but the aggregated item does not identify the specific source of concern. Organizational-justice research distinguishes the fairness of outcomes, procedures, and interpersonal treatment, underscoring the need to identify which aspect is contested (Colquitt et al., 2001; Greenberg, 1990). The result should therefore prompt diagnosis rather than assumption. Head teachers and municipal supervisors need evidence about which decisions generate doubt, whether reasons are

communicated, and whether teachers have a credible way to question or appeal a decision.

Fairness also affects the meaning of participation and supervision. Teachers may attend meetings or accept observation because these are expected practices, while withholding disagreement if they believe consequences are unpredictable. In that setting, participation records can overstate genuine voice and supervision can generate surface compliance. Transparent criteria, consistent procedures, and explanations for consequential decisions make it safer for teachers to discuss weaknesses and propose alternatives (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Colquitt et al., 2001). Relational legitimacy thus supports instructional leadership by improving the quality of information available to the head teacher.

Labour relations showed the sharpest contrast (Table 3). Teamwork was strongly positive (68.2%), suggesting useful collegial capacity. Good working relationships were positive for 53.6%. However, fair and professional conflict management received only 41.2% positive responses and 43.5% negative responses. Respect for rights and a supportive environment were also mixed.

Table 3.
Teachers' Perceptions of Head Teachers' Labour-Relations Practices (N = 170)

Labour-relations indicator	Positive n (%)	Neutral n (%)	Negative n (%)
Good working relationships	91 (53.6)	27 (15.9)	52 (30.6)
Fair and professional conflict management	70 (41.2)	26 (15.3)	74 (43.5)
Respect for teachers' rights	84 (49.4)	36 (21.2)	50 (29.4)
Teamwork among staff	116 (68.2)	14 (8.2)	40 (23.5)
Supportive working environment	81 (47.7)	31 (18.2)	58 (34.2)

This combination-strong teamwork but weak conflict management-is theoretically informative. It suggests that routine collaboration may function well until interests differ or a contested decision arises. At that point, procedural justice becomes decisive. Scientific Management Theory helps explain the benefits of coordination, but a relational lens better explains why formal authority cannot substitute for fair process. The findings therefore broaden the original theoretical frame: effective headship is not merely the efficient allocation and monitoring of work; it is the legitimate coordination of professional relationships around learning.

The labour-relations results show that collegial activity and relational security can develop unevenly. Teamwork received 68.2% positive responses, substantially

higher than good working relationships at 53.6% and a supportive working environment at 47.7%. Teachers may collaborate effectively on familiar tasks because routines, professional norms, or immediate pupil needs require cooperation. That functional teamwork does not necessarily mean that staff feel consistently supported or that difficult disagreements are handled well. The distinction is useful because an organization can complete shared tasks while carrying unresolved tensions that weaken trust over time.

Conflict management was the only labour-relations item for which negative responses, at 43.5%, exceeded positive responses, at 41.2%. The difference is modest, and 15.3% were neutral, so the result describes a divided experience rather than a unanimous judgement. Even so, the item identifies a serious vulnerability. Conflict tests whether rules are applied consistently, parties are heard, reasons are explained, and outcomes are proportionate - core concerns in procedural and interpersonal justice (Colquitt et al., 2001). Weakness at that point can change how teachers interpret later communication or supervision, because ordinary managerial actions may be viewed through the memory of an unresolved dispute.

Respect for teachers' rights also produced a mixed distribution: 49.4% positive, 21.2% neutral, and 29.4% negative. The comparatively large neutral group may indicate uncertainty about procedures or limited exposure to situations in which rights become visible. Tanzania's employment framework provides for core labour rights and the prevention and settlement of disputes, making knowledge of applicable rules and procedures a practical management requirement (United Republic of Tanzania, 2023). Rights are most credible when teachers know the relevant rules, understand complaint channels, and can use them without fear of retaliation. The study did not investigate particular rights or cases, so it cannot determine the source of uncertainty. It nevertheless shows that respect for rights was less firmly established than teamwork and should be included in management development.

The working-environment item provides a broader summary of these experiences. With 47.7% positive, 34.2% negative, and 18.2% neutral responses, no overwhelming consensus emerged. A supportive environment may depend on workload, resources, interpersonal conduct, recognition, safety, and access to professional help, some of which may lie beyond a head teacher's direct control. The survey grouped these influences into one perception, so the result should not be attributed entirely to individual leadership. It indicates that managerial practice operates within organizational constraints and that improvement may require both school-level action and municipal support.

Scientific Management Theory helps explain the strong teamwork result because clear roles, schedules, and supervision can coordinate collective activity. Its limit becomes evident in the weaker findings on fairness, rights, support, and conflict. Professional work depends on judgement and cooperation that cannot be secured

through formal authority alone. Teachers need to regard procedures as legitimate and communication as trustworthy, especially when decisions affect workload, recognition, or discipline. The relational perspective therefore does more than add a desirable interpersonal quality; it explains a condition under which coordination remains sustainable.

Across the three dimensions, the data form an enabling chain. Clear goals give direction; participation and professional support build ownership and capability; supervision keeps attention on instruction; teamwork supports implementation; and fair conflict resolution sustains trust when problems emerge. Weakness at any link can erode the others. This integrated reading is consistent with research that treats leadership for learning as an interaction among direction, instructional focus, people development, and organizational conditions (Hallinger, 2011; Leithwood et al., 2020; Robinson et al., 2008; UNESCO, 2024). It is also more cautious than a causal claim: the study measured perceptions and did not directly model student outcomes, so managerial practices should be understood as reported conditions for teaching and learning.

The enabling-chain interpretation also clarifies why the strongest practices cannot be evaluated in isolation. Instructional supervision may identify a teaching need, but professional-development support must help the teacher respond. Participation may improve a decision, but goal communication must connect that decision to a shared priority. Teamwork may carry out the agreed action, but fair conflict management is needed when implementation produces disagreement. The value of each practice therefore depends partly on what happens before and after it. This interdependence is consistent with the integrated framework and suggests that improvement should address routines as a connected sequence.

The convergent mixed-methods design adds interpretive depth by placing teacher response distributions beside head-teacher accounts and documentary evidence. Integration across sources can reveal convergence, complementarity, and divergence that would remain less visible within a single strand (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Fetters et al., 2013). Agreement across sources strengthens confidence that meetings, consultation, motivation, support, and supervision were recognizable features of management. At the same time, head teachers' explanations cannot substitute for teachers' assessments of fairness or conflict because the two groups occupy different positions in the same process. Divergence is therefore informative: it can identify practices that leaders believe they provide but that teachers experience inconsistently. The current article reports this integration at a broad level, and future studies could present more explicit joint comparisons of each source.

Several limitations narrow the conclusions. The questionnaire captures perceptions at one time and may be influenced by recent events, expectations, or reluctance to evaluate a supervisor. The study did not directly observe classroom

practice or connect managerial measures with pupil learning. The achieved reliability coefficient was not reported, leaving uncertainty about the internal consistency of the dimensions. Because the analysis is descriptive, it cannot estimate whether communication, leadership, or labour relations independently predict an outcome after school and teacher differences are considered. These constraints support cautious language about contribution and perceived influence rather than causal effect.

School-level clustering is another issue for later research. Teachers working under the same head teacher are likely to share policies, meetings, resource conditions, and organizational history, so their responses are not fully independent observations of management. Reporting results by school, while protecting confidentiality, could show whether the overall pattern reflects common moderate ratings or strong differences between schools. Multilevel analysis with a larger number of schools could then distinguish teacher-level perceptions from school-level managerial conditions. Such analysis would be more suitable for testing whether combinations of practices relate to classroom or student outcomes.

For practice, the findings support a focused sequence of managerial development. Head teachers first need to translate broad school plans into a few measurable learning priorities and confirm that staff understand them. Supervision should collect evidence related to those priorities and end with timely feedback and an agreed support action. Decisions about workload, opportunities, recognition, or discipline should use stated criteria and documented reasons. A predictable process for raising and mediating concerns should protect working relationships when disagreement occurs. This sequence directly addresses the weaknesses found while building on existing strengths in participation, supervision, development support, and teamwork.

Municipal follow-up is important because a workshop alone is unlikely to change recurring management behaviour. Coaching can review examples of goal communication, feedback notes, meeting decisions, and conflict procedures. Peer-learning groups can allow head teachers to compare cases and practise responses to difficult situations. Follow-up observation can determine whether a new procedure is being used consistently and whether teachers understand it. Monitoring should therefore examine the quality of routines, such as the timeliness of feedback or clarity of recorded decisions, rather than counting meetings or supervision visits alone.

The study contributes a differentiated account of headship in Ubungo. The results do not present management as uniformly strong or weak. They show substantial approval for practices closest to instructional coordination and collective action, alongside divided assessments of fairness, goal clarity, rights, support, and conflict management. Reading these findings together prevents the positive indicators from obscuring relational risks and prevents the weaker indicators from erasing

existing capacity. The practical task is to use the established strengths as channels through which clearer direction and fairer procedures can be developed.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concludes that head teachers in the selected Ubungo public primary schools displayed meaningful strengths in instructional supervision, participatory decision-making, professional-development support, motivation, and teamwork. These practices can create the coordination and collective capacity needed for effective teaching. However, weak communication of school goals, contested leadership fairness, uneven respect for rights, and poor conflict management threaten the trust through which those strengths operate. The evidence therefore supports a contemporary model of management for learning: operational efficiency is valuable, but it must be joined to instructional purpose, teacher voice, and relational justice.

The Ministry responsible for education and PO-RALG should strengthen preparation and continuous development for head teachers using practice-based modules on goal communication, instructional feedback, transparent decision-making, employment rights, and conflict mediation. Research on African principal preparation and Tanzanian teacher development supports sustained, context-responsive learning rather than reliance on appointment alone (Bush & Oduro, 2006; Komba & Nkumbi, 2008). Ubungo Municipal Council should provide coaching, peer-learning clusters, and follow-up observation so that training is translated into routines. Head teachers should communicate a small set of measurable learning priorities, involve teachers in implementation decisions, use supervision developmentally, document reasons for consequential decisions, and establish predictable grievance and mediation processes consistent with the national labour-relations framework (United Republic of Tanzania, 2023). Teachers should use participatory spaces responsibly by sharing evidence, proposing solutions, and engaging in peer support. Further studies should link managerial-practice measures with classroom observation and student learning data, use longitudinal designs, and compare schools across districts to test whether the patterns reported here persist.

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