



The linkage between youth participation and leadership in secondary schools in Iringa municipality, Tanzania

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Abstract

The status of youth participation in leadership activities has attracted the global community. However, few studies have tried to explain the linkage between youth participation and leadership in secondary schools in Tanzania. This situation has reduced confidence, communication skills, leadership skills, team working, and social participation among the students who are supposed to participate in youth leadership. Therefore, the study examined the linkage between youth participation and leadership in secondary schools in Iringa Municipality in Tanzania. The study adopted explanatory research design to cover a sample of 300 respondents drawn from a target population of 1400 students of secondary schools in Iringa Municipality. The study used both qualitative and quantitative data using questionnaires and interview guide. The quantitative data was analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics. The study found that youth participation namely the social influence, social media, and civic education have a positive and weak relationship with leadership in secondary schools in Iringa Municipality. The study concluded that social influence and social media have significant influence in leadership although the influence was very little, while civic education has insignificant contribution on youth leadership in secondary schools. Therefore, the study recommended that the schools should encourage youth to participate in leadership by improving their leadership skills. Also, secondary schools should prepare free trainings to advance leadership skills and youth participation.

Keywords: leadership, social influence, civic education, youth leadership, participation

Introduction

It is not possible to improve social and economic development without participation of youth and effective leadership. According to Sisk (1993), leadership is defined as the dynamic procedure developed by means of appropriate interventions. Nevertheless, youth participation in leadership refers to the act of engaging youth in social activities, teamwork, building self-esteem, planning and organizing community welfare issues (Bruce *et al*, 2004) ^[4]. According to Tanzania National Youth Policy (2007), youth are young men and women from the age group of 15 years to 35 years. Inline to this the secondary school student have the ability to develop leadership skills and participate in decision-making bodies within the community (Brandt and Klein, 2016) ^[3]. Therefore, it is important to promote youth participation and improve leadership skills at school because the skills imparted to students have significant impacts in social and economic development of the society (Bobek *et al*, 2009) ^[1]. This means that youth participation in leadership activities builds leaders in the future and enables the community to attain sustainable developments (Camino and Zeldin, 2002) ^[6].

Nevertheless, the government authorities across the world recognize the importance of youth participation in leadership activities (Flynn *et al*, 2009) ^[11]. Following this situation different governments have developed various initiatives to promote youth participation in leadership activities and society development. For instance, youth organizations have played important roles in creating early leadership opportunities for youth to attend free leadership training and chance to be engaged in leadership activities in United State (União dos Escoteiros do Brasil, 2011; World Scout Bureau, 2008).

Similarly, in Tanzania, more than 59,242393 youth enjoy their rights including the right to be educated and to contribute into the development of their society. However, the government of Tanzania has been working to increase leadership opportunities to youth in order to increase number of youth who participate in decision making bodies (World Bank, 2014) ^[30, 31]. Following the presence of low number of youth in decision bodies it has been difficult to promote youth agenda and youth participation in Tanzania (Go T 2007; UNICEF, 2012).

Therefore it is necessary to prepare youth and to encourage them to participate in leadership activities because this will enable the community to have committed leaders and attain sustainable development. For example, the Iringa municipality promotes youth participation in leadership even though the factor for youth leadership participation is still questionable. Despite this situation there are limited research findings which justify the youth participation and youth leadership in Secondary school. For that reason, this study intends to assess the linkange between youth participation and leadership in secondary schools in Iringa Municipality in Tanzania.

Statement of the problem

Youth participation and leadership in the society have been a global agenda for decades (Pearce, 2008) ^[20]. However, different countries struggle to increase the number of youth who participate in the leadership. This is because youth hold a majority of global population and the roles of youth in leadership still expand day after day (Wergin, 2007; Sadler, 2003) ^[28, 24]. Therefore, there is a need to understand the linkage between youth participation and leadership in secondary schools. Nevertheless, several studies have tried

to explain the linkage between youth participation and leadership in secondary schools in various contexts out of Tanzania and have expressed the need of much concern on youth participation and leadership. Also, several studies on youth participation and leadership have recommended that African governments should take some steps to increase young people’s participation and leadership in Africa (UK Aid, 2016).

Furthermore, promoting youth participation has yet to become a common practice in Tanzania even though youth participation and leadership studies have grown significantly (UNICEF, 2012). According to Macneil (2006), more studies should be conducted in youth participation and leadership studies to assess the factors contributing to youth participation and leadership in education sector. This suggests that there are limited studies which have been conducted in the field of youth participation and leadership in secondary schools in Tanzania. Therefore, this study intended to explain the linkage between youth participation and leadership in secondary schools in Iringa Municipality in Tanzania.

Research purpose

The aim of this study was to explain the linkage between youth participation and leadership in secondary schools in Iringa municipality in Tanzania. Specifically, the study sought to explain how the influence of social influence, social media and civic education relates with youth leadership in secondary schools in Iringa Municipality.

Research method

The study research adopted an explanatory research design covering the sample of 300 respondents drawn from a target population of 1400 students of secondary schools in Iringa Municipality. The primary data was collected using questionnaires and interview tools. Also, data analysis was done by using descriptive and inferential statistics where frequencies, percentages, mean correlation and multiple regressions were used to present the findings.

Results and analysis

The impacts of social influence on leadership in secondary school

The effect of social influence on leadership in secondary school was measured by four attributes namely discussion, persuasion, teamwork and delegation of power. On discussion, 64.4% of the respondents agreed that the presence of discussion on the leadership matters mean while 8.2% disagreed and 27.2% of the respondents were neutral. On social persuasion 60% of respondents agree that social persuasion influence leadership in secondary school and 14% disagree and only 25.9% were neutral. On teamwork 54.8% of respondents agree that there is teamwork between students and teachers which assist them to acquire leadership skills while 13.1% disagree and 32.1% were neutral. On delegation only 40.3% of respondents agreed that there is delegation of power from teachers and parents while 22.6% of respondents disagree and only 36.6% was neutral as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Impacts of Social Influence

Item	Strong disagree		Disagree		Mean(F)	Neutral		Mean (F)	Agree		Strong agree		Mean (F)
	F	Per	F	Per		F	Per		F	Per	F	Per	
Leadership conversation	2	0.8	18	7.4	0.08	66	27.2	0.27	121	49.8	36	14.8	0.65
Social Persuasion	15	6.2	20	8.2	0.14	63	25.9	0.26	120	49.4	25	10.3	0.6
Teamwork	4	1.6	28	11.5	0.13	78	32.1	0.32	110	45.3	23	9.5	0.55
Delegation of power	12	4.9	43	17.7	0.23	89	36.6	0.37	73	30.0	25	10.3	0.4

Outcome of social media on leadership in secondary schools

The outcome of social media on leadership in secondary schools was measured by four attributes namely the access to sharing information, transparency, facilitating conversation and content-sharing. The findings indicated that 53.3% of respondents agreed that students preferred social media for sharing leadership information, 9.5% disagreed and only 14.4% were neutral. On transparent, most of respondents agreed that they were able to use social media for transparency on learning various matters such as

leadership whereby 60% of respondents agreed that they were using social media for transparency matters effectively and efficiently while 13.6% disagreed and only 26.7% were neutral. 45.7% of respondents agreed that social media facilitated conversations and learning about leadership while 20.2% didn’t agreed and 34.2% were neutral. 39.2% of respondents agreed that they were able to share leadership content through social media and learn leadership skills while 15.6% were not able and only 28.8% were neutral as indicated in Table 2.

Table 2: Outcome of social media on leadership in secondary schools

Item	Strong disagree		Disagree		Mean (F)	Neutral		Mean (F)	Agree		Strong agree		Mean (F)
	F	Per	F	Per		F	Per		F	Per	F	Per	
Sharing Information	12	4.9	23	9.5	0.14	71	29.2	0.29	117	48.1	20	8.2	0.56
Transparency	11	4.5	21	8.6	13.1	65	26.7	0.26	116	47.7	30	12.3	0.6
Facilitating conversations	32	13.2	38	15.6	0.29	78	32.1	0.32	82	33.7	13	5.5	0.39
Content-sharing	16	6.6	33	13.6	0.2	83	34.2	0.34	94	38.7	17	7.0	0.46

Effect of Civic Education on Leadership in Secondary Schools

Four attributes were used to analyze the effect of civic education on leadership in secondary schools in Iringa municipality. These attributes included the civic knowledge, civic skills, and mentoring and citizen participation. The findings indicated that 38.3% of respondents agreed that

they were knowledgeable about leadership and youth participation while 25.1% disagree and 36.6% were neutral. On civic skills about 32.9% of respondents agreed that students were learning civic skills much on leadership participation from parents and teachers while 41.1% disagreed and 25.9% were neutral. On mentoring, 41.1% of

respondents agreed that teachers were mentoring students on leading and managements by using various methods and 25.1% disagree and only 28.8% were neutral. On citizen

participation, 60% of respondents agreed that students were involved in community activities while 14.5% were not and only 25% were neutral as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Effect of Civic Education on Leadership in Secondary School

Item	Strong disagree		Disagree		Mean (F)	Neutral		Mean(F)	Agree		Strong agree		Mean (F)
	F	Per	F	Per		F	Per		F	Per	F	Per	
Civic Knowledge	26	10.7	35	14.4	0.25	88	36.6	0.36	83	34.2	10	4.1	0.38
Civic Skills	45	18.5	55	22.6	0.41	63	25.9	0.26	63	25.9	17	7.0	0.33
Mentoring	36	14.8	25	10.3	0.25	70	28.8	0.29	89	36.6	23	9.5	0.46
Citizen Participation	15	6.2	20	8.2	0.14	63	25	0.26	120	49.4	25	10.3	0.6

Correlation analysis

The study conducted the collection analysis to explain the linkage between independent variables and dependent variable as shown in Table 4. The study found that social influence (SI) has positive correlation with youth leadership in secondary schools in Tanzania (YLPSS) with $r = .159^*$, $p = 0.035$. On social media and youth leadership in secondary

school in Tanzania the study revealed that social media (SM) has positive correlation with youth leadership in secondary school (YLPSS) with $r = .139^*$, $p = 0.037$. On the correlation between civic education and youth leadership in secondary school the study found that civic education (CE) has positive correlation with youth leadership in secondary schools (YLPSS) with $r = .099$ $p = .134$.

Table 4: Correlation between Independent and Dependent Variable

Variable	Correlation	SI	SM	CE	YLPSS
SI	Pearson Correlation	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
	N	242			
SM	Pearson Correlation	.431**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000			
	N	242	243		
CE	Pearson Correlation	.324**	.471**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		
	N	242	243	243	
YLPSS	Pearson Correlation	.159*	.139*	.099	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.035	.037	.134	
	N	243	243	243	243
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).					
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).					

Conclusions

Following the study findings the study concluded that social influence and social media have important influence on youth leadership in secondary school despite the influence was very little, while civic education has insignificant influence in youth leadership in secondary school.

Recommendations

The study recommends that youth should be encouraged to participate in meaningful conversations that raise understanding about leadership in secondary schools. Also, the ministry of education and vocational training should allocate the resources to facilitate the proper usage of social media for the youth in secondary schools. Further, schools should encourage youth to acquire leadership skills intended to advance youth participation and to increase self-confidence and voice of youth in the society.

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