



LEADERSHIP STYLES AND QUALITY AUDITS IN TEACHER TRAINING INSTITUTIONS IN WEST NILE, UGANDA

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Abstract:

This study sought to assess the levels of leadership styles and quality audits in teacher training institutions (TTIs) in West Nile, Uganda. Furthermore, assess the influence of leadership styles on quality audits in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda. It was hypothesized that there was no significant influence of leadership styles on quality audits in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda. The study was guided by a pragmatic stance and a mixed-methods research design. Data was collected from 246 respondents using a questionnaire and an interview guide. The research findings revealed that the overall level of leadership styles used (autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire) was high at a mean of 3.60 (72%), the level of quality audits was moderate at a mean of 2.94 (59%), and the overall influence of leadership styles on quality audits was a weak uphill positive with an R-value of 0.419 and coefficient of determination (R^2) at 17.6%, implying that leadership styles influenced quality audits by 17.6% in TTIs. The study rejected the null hypothesis, which stated that there was no significant influence of leadership styles on quality audits in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda, because the P-value was 0.000, which was smaller than the 0.01 level of significance, and adopted an alternative hypothesis that leadership styles significantly influenced quality audits in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda. It was recommended that the democratic leadership style be greatly used to improve quality audits in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda. Laissez-faire and autocratic leadership styles ought to be cautiously used in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda, for quality audits because an increase in the use of laissez-faire and autocratic leadership styles reduces the level of quality audits. Formal quality audits should be done at least biannually in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda.

Keywords: leadership styles, quality audits, teacher training institutions, West Nile Uganda

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1. Introduction

The concept of quality audit, as explained by Kooli (2019), is a process of checking or examining what goes on in an educational institution to ensure compliance with quality assurance procedures, integrity, standards, and outcomes. According to Jelic (2012), quality auditing is widely regarded as a primary technique for diagnosing management system performance. Therefore, a quality audit is conceptualized in terms of infrastructure, academic staff, and curriculum and research audits. Infrastructure auditing concerns checking learning spaces, furniture, playgrounds, parking spaces, and buildings that are the most essential components of teaching and learning (Australia, 2019). Academic staff audits assess the worthiness of personnel whose primary task is instruction, research, or public services, which covers staff that hold teaching ranks with titles such as professor, associate professor, instructor, tutor, lecturer, and non-teaching ranks such as librarians, estate officers, etc. (Shah & Stanford, 2011). A curriculum audit is about the evaluation of academic content taught in institutions or in a specific course or program. A curriculum audit model helps measure whether the curriculum is followed, reviewed, and jointly designed by the stakeholders and has a responsible person for monitoring the implementation process and whether curriculum resources and activities are timely financed or not (Armstrong, Stahl, & Kantner, 2015). Research auditing is about checking the quality of research by students and staff in institutions of learning, which focuses on the percentages of the budget devoted to research and publication, the number of research projects completed, won, and published, and the funds earned through research and publications by teacher training institutions. Research audits help to ensure trustworthiness and evaluation of research output (Carcary, 2009).

Quality audit has been a concern of teacher training institutions (TTIs) since the founding of medieval universities and colleges as self-directed and self-governing communities in Europe (Brookes & Becket, 2008). Countries all over the world have implemented formal quality audits to regulate and improve the quality of teacher education systems. According to Hayward (2006), the history of quality audit in African higher education can be traced back to the establishment of the first African universities: Fourah Bay College in Sierra Leone in 1827, which was affiliated with Durham University in England from 1876; Liberia College in 1852; the University of Cape Town in South Africa, established in 1829 and affiliated with the University of London; Makerere University in 1922, also affiliated with the University of London; and the University of the West Indies. The University of Dakar, now Cheikh Anta Diop University, was regarded as part of the French higher education system as late as the 1960s. In these early days, the quality of university education was a function of their governing boards, faculty, and, for some, the affiliating institution. With affiliation, the institutions became part of the British, French, Portuguese, or other systems of quality assurance through their partner universities and usually gave the degree of the affiliating institution. These African institutions underwent the same types of quality audits as British or other European universities, including external examiners and other aspects of these systems.

To date, different actors, such as institutional leaders, the World Bank, UNESCO, international networks, regional organizations, governments, and professional associations, have played significant roles in the introduction and spread of quality audits in teacher training institutions across the globe (Ambreen & Afzal, 2017). However, Jackson and Bohrer (2010) reported concerns about quality audits and standards in United Kingdom (UK) English higher education and recommended the need for improvement of quality audits. In Africa, countries such as Nigeria, Kenya, and Ethiopia, among others, have endeavored to adopt quality audits in their teacher education structures in an attempt to uphold quality. Very little research has been carried out about quality assurance and audits in Africa. Information about accreditation, audits, and institutional academic reviews was limited; little was known about their operation, goals, and financing practices; the relationship between quality assurance and national needs; the role of professional organizations in quality assurance and accreditation; issues about the autonomy of quality assurance agencies; or the costs involved in setting up and operating a quality audit system (Hayward, 2006). In Uganda, the NCHE (2014) report revealed that quality audits in TTIs are mainly spearheaded by institutional leaders, with overall supervision by the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE), established under the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act, 2001. The report further showed that quality audits have been inadequate in Ugandan universities and tertiary institutions, especially in the national teachers' colleges and primary teachers' colleges, among others. Therefore, quality audits are among the most complicated problems facing higher education in Uganda because they touch on almost every aspect of the system. It is much more than meeting some minimal standard measures of inputs, such as the number of faculty members with PhDs, the number of books in the library, and the ratio of computers to students. Therefore, for effective quality auditing all stakeholders, such as tertiary institutions, employers, the public, the international higher education community, and other international actors, must be involved (Hayward, 2006).

In the context of the West Nile region of Uganda, quality audits have been done in TTIs to ensure effective teaching and learning. However, the TTIs have been facing challenges with the quality of infrastructure, academic staff, curriculum, and research. The quality audit has remained an interesting area that requires further study. But then, the ESA (2015) report revealed the inadequacy of quality audits towards academic staff, and overdue curriculum reviews, especially in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda. Similarly, due to inadequate quality audits, Azikuru, Onen, and Ezati (2017) reported persistent stakeholder concerns regarding the declining quality of teaching and learning in educational institutions, especially in West Nile, Uganda, which has occasionally culminated in student strikes and different kinds of protests. This indicates that all is not well with quality audits. Previous studies basically established that internationally recognized leadership styles like autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire influence quality audits in areas of infrastructure, quality of staff, curriculum, and research (Bustamante, 2006; NCHE, 2014). Nevertheless, the researcher did not come across a study that assessed the influence of leadership styles on quality audits in TTIs in West

Nile, Uganda. In light of this, the purpose of this study was to evaluate how leadership styles affected quality audits in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda.

2. Study Objectives

This study specifically (1) assessed the levels of leadership styles used in teacher training institutions in West Nile, Uganda. (2) Examined the status of quality audits in teacher training institutions in West Nile, Uganda. Furthermore, (3) assessed the influence of leadership styles on quality audits in teacher training institutions in West Nile, Uganda.

2.1 Hypothesis

There is no significant influence of leadership styles on quality audits in teacher training institutions in West Nile, Uganda.

3. Literature Review

This section presents the theory that underpins this study and the review of related literature. The theory describes the linkage between leadership styles and quality audits, while the related literature shows the influence of leadership styles on quality audits while identifying gaps that were filled by this study.

3.1 Theoretical Review

This study adopted the systems theory developed by Ludwig Von Bertalanffy in 1940, which reasoned that a system consists of various components or sub-systems that must function together for the system to work; if a sub-system fails, the whole system is put in jeopardy (Bukhuni & Iravo, 2015). Systems theory explicates that institutional success relies on synergy, interrelations, and interdependence between different systems and is used to measure performance, control, and calculate interaction among entities of each subsystem, which helps in the growth and development of the whole institution (Kumar & Anbanandam, 2020). Although the systems theory is a general theory that is not specifically focused on leadership style and its influence on quality audit, it does suggest the importance of paying attention to the entire system. As a result, based on systems theory, this study investigated the impact of leadership styles as a system component and how they influence quality audits.

3.2 Leadership Styles in Teacher Training Institutions

3.2.1 Autocratic Leadership Style

Different studies have been carried out on autocratic leadership styles. In autocratic leadership, all decision-making powers are centralized in the leader, according to Iqbal, Anwar, and Haider (2015). The leader chooses to make the majority of decisions on his or her own and prefers to maintain control over the project to which he or she is assigned (Harms et al., 2018). Autocratic leaders rarely consult with others and are uninterested in

developing their own or their employees' skills in schools. According to Nkirote (2013), several leaders in Uganda mostly use an autocratic leadership style, which is considered old-fashioned but still exists because there are times when it still works best. The researcher wants to agree with the above view that there are benefits associated with autocratic leadership styles for the leader, which include a reduction of stress because he or she is in full control of activities and the ability to make decisions quickly because there is no need to have long consultations. According to Wilson and Wright (2017), autocratic leadership has a number of risks associated with it, especially when decisions in an institution are made entirely by the leader. Other stakeholders will not have a chance to develop their decision-making skills and other leadership skills. Although the autocratic style of leadership reduces stress in the short run, it has been known to increase it in the long run among leaders in teacher training institutions. Fiaz et al. (2017) stated that the use of an autocratic leadership style enables staff to stop feeling devoted to the institution, which reduces their motivation and morale for work. This study agrees with Fiaz's report that staff morale at teacher training institutions in West Nile, Uganda, seems to be low, and much of the blame goes to the use of an autocratic style of leadership. Leaders can embrace an autocratic style during the implementation of some key policies that need no compromise. Akor (2014), Tedla, and Redda (2021) stated that leaders in most institutions in Africa, including West Nile, use autocracy and believe that staff need to be controlled closely or they are not likely to perform their tasks. The implication of this belief is that leaders see themselves as bosses instead of servants, resulting in a rift between leaders and other staff members. This has also affected quality audits at the institutions. Hence, there is a need to further assess the level at which an autocratic leadership style is used in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda.

3.2.2 Democratic Leadership Style

A number of scholars have studied democratic leadership styles. According to Ray et al. (2012), a democratic leadership style is a very open and collegial style of running a team; ideas move freely among the group and are discussed openly; everyone is given a seat at the table, and discussion is relatively free-flowing. Ray further reported that a democratic leadership style is needed in a dynamic and rapidly changing environment where very little can be taken as a constant and every option for improvement has to be considered to keep the group from falling out of date. The style means facilitating the conversation, encouraging people to share their ideas, and then synthesizing all the available information into the best decision. The democratic leader must also be able to communicate that decision back to the group to bring unity to the plan that is chosen. Devi et al. (2021) ascertained that when situations change frequently, democratic leadership offers a great deal of flexibility to adopt better ways of doing things. Though it is somewhat slow to make a decision in this structure, it may embrace newer and better methods, but it might not do so very quickly. A democratic leadership style can bring the best out of an experienced and professional team. It capitalizes on their skills and talents by letting them share their views rather than simply expecting them to conform. If a

decision is very complex, it is important to have different areas of expertise represented and contribute input; this is where a democratic institutional leader shines (Deal & Peterson, 2011).

Additionally, Jones et al. (2012) pointed out key positions on how to be effective with a democratic leadership style, such as keeping communication open, having prearranged discussions so as to keep everything on topic, respecting the ideas of members, and pointing out that democratic leadership styles require a strong individual, and it's not recommended for leaders or managers who feel threatened by the flexibility and the enthusiasm it requires. However, for those who can wield it effectively, this style of leadership can create a lively working environment filled with motivated employees who are eager to succeed. According to Allafchi (2017), it is ascertained that the democratic leadership style is a very open and friendly style of running institutions and enables thoughts to move freely among the leaders, staff, and students; issues are discussed openly; everyone is given a seat at the table. The researcher is in support of this view that, to allow fast and friendly running of TTIs, especially in West Nile, Uganda, a democratic leadership style has to be considered to keep the institutions from falling out of date. According to Idris (2008), democratic leadership entails facilitating discussions, encouraging people to share their thoughts, and then combining all available materials into the best possible decision, which the democratic leader must be able to communicate back to the staff and other stakeholders in order to bring unity to the institutions. The study agrees that democratic leadership is important and allows group discussions and collaborative decision-making, which are ideal for effective quality audits. Although the democratic leadership style is used in TTIS in West Nile, there is scanty information on the levels at which this style is used to improve the quality audits in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda. Hence, there was a need to further assess the level at which the democratic leadership style is used in TTI in West Nile, Uganda.

3.2.3 Laissez Faire Leadership Style

Several studies have been conducted to investigate the laissez-faire leadership style. For example, Skogstad, et al. (2014) described the laissez-faire leadership style as a situation where leaders are uninvolved with their followers and associates; in an actual sense, laissez-faire leadership is an absence of leadership style. Leaders of this style make no policies or group-related decisions; instead, group members are responsible for all goals, decisions, and problem-solving. Within their group organization, laissez-faire leaders have little to no authority. The functions of laissez-faire leadership include trusting their members or followers to make appropriate decisions and bringing in highly trained and reliable members into the group or organization. The responsibilities of laissez-faire followers include self-monitoring, problem-solving, and producing successful end products. Laissez-faire leaders are most successful in environments with extremely trained and self-directed followers. Laissez-faire leadership is appropriate in particular settings, such as science laboratories or established companies with long-term employees.

Laissez-faire leadership is not suitable for environments in which the members require feedback, direction, oversight, flexibility, or praise (Haile, 2017).

Furthermore, Muga et al. (2017) reported that the conventional term for a laissez-faire leadership style means a completely hands-off approach; however, many leaders still remain open and available to group members for consultation and feedback. In this style, the leader allows the employees to make decisions. However, the leader is still responsible for the decisions that are made. This is not a style to use so that a leader can blame others when things go wrong, especially in teacher training institutions in West Nile, Uganda; rather, this is a style to be used when a leader fully trusts and has confidence in the people he or she leads. Also, Nielsen et al. (2019) proposed that laissez-faire leadership is not ideal in situations where group members lack the knowledge or experience they need to complete tasks and make decisions; some people are not good at setting their own deadlines, managing their own projects, and solving problems on their own. In such situations, institutions can go off-track and deadlines can be missed when staff and other members do not get enough guidance or feedback from leaders. Laissez-faire leaders are often seen as uninvolved and withdrawn, which can lead to a lack of cohesiveness within the group. Since the leader seems unconcerned with what is happening, followers sometimes pick up on this and express less care and concern for the project. If group members are unfamiliar with the task or the process needed to accomplish the task, leaders are better off taking a more hands-on approach. Eventually, as followers acquire more expertise, leaders might then switch back to a more delegated approach that gives other members of the institution more freedom to work independently. Much as the laissez-faire leadership style has been used in TTIs in West Nile, the levels at which it is used have remained unknown. Therefore, there is a need to further assess the level at which the laissez-faire leadership style is used in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda.

3.3 Quality Audits in Teacher Training Institutions

According to NCHE (2014), quality audits in education institutions are a cornerstone of the quality assurance framework, which encourages higher and tertiary institutions such as national teachers colleges, primary teachers colleges, and nursery teacher training institutions to cultivate and maintain a culture of continuous performance improvement and validate self-evaluation reports. This study looked at quality audits in the areas of:

3.3.1 Infrastructure Audits

Scholars have studied infrastructure audits. For example, Australia (2019) revealed that an infrastructure audit involves checking buildings and facilities against the set standards. The audit covers facilities such as library buildings and services, lecture rooms, laboratories, catering services, sanitation facilities, and sports fields, among others. Similarly, Kipchuk et al. (2021) identified infrastructure audits as specifications regarding set standards. Some of the standards followed in infrastructure audits are: sufficient space per child, usually guided by standards set by a country's ministry of

education; sufficient space for 40 learners per classroom, to permit efficient use of the lecturers and tutors; construction methods that ensure the safety of learners in institutions, suited to the natural hazards of the region; adequate separate sanitary facilities for learners and staff; increasing electricity and internet connectivity. Alija (2014) indicated a lack of adequate infrastructure audit at the National Teachers' College Muni and noted that the colleges' infrastructure was seriously interrupted by the liberation war and civil strike of 1979. Since 1985, the college has been operating in inadequate buildings, creating a desperate need for more facilities such as lecture rooms, staff quarters, furniture, equipment, and tools. This is in line with Katahoire and Kirumira (2008), who reported that the National Teacher's College Muni lacks adequate infrastructure audits and maintenance framework. Furthermore, the college is in need of good sports facilities with modern equipment to enable effective teaching and learning of sports science. The state of infrastructure in other TTIs in West Nile still remains unknown. The studies above suggested that scholars had already examined infrastructure audits, but contextual gaps still existed. The contextual gap was that the previous studies did not cover the infrastructure audit situation in all the TTIs in the West Nile sub-region of Uganda, thereby creating a missing link that demanded further assessment of the level of infrastructure audit in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda.

3.3.2 Curriculum Audits

A number of scholars (Hales & Phi, 2021; Nyagah, 2013; Stahl & Armstrong, 2022) have already looked at curriculum audits. For example, Nyagah and Gathumbi (2017) argued that curriculum is audited to develop the needed knowledge and skills in planning, implementing, and evaluating curriculum in various leaders and to gain insight into the concept of curriculum. Furthermore, besides appreciating the philosophy of the curriculum audits, Yates (2010) suggested that understanding the levels of the curriculum audit process by the institutional leaders is crucial. Because once the leaders do not understand the levels of curriculum audit in detail, they will not be able to productively spearhead the curriculum audit process in their institutions. Lieber et al. (2009) assert that leaders' personalities have a great impact on determining the level of curriculum audits in their institutions. According to Lieber, leaders characterized as motivated, open to changes, and willing to try new learning opportunities score highly in spearheading curriculum audits compared to leaders described as unmotivated and not open to changes. A study by Hoover (2012) also revealed that curriculum development, implementation, evaluation, and processes require constant audits. This will ensure the quality and sustainability of teaching and learning. The researcher wants to agree with the above scholars that curriculum auditing can guarantee the quality of teaching and learning. However, the contextual gap is that the previous studies did not assess the level of curriculum audits in TTIs in West Nile, hence the missing linkage that demanded further assessment to ascertain the level of curriculum audits in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda.

3.3.3 Academic Staff Audits

Several studies have been done on academic staff audits globally. For example, Faeq (2020) observes that academic staff performance is an important factor in the TTIs success. Based on this, TTIs are using different criteria to audit the academic staff's performance. In the same way, Kirby and Hurst (2014) revealed that academic staff audits involve checking staff performance against set standards. This was to ensure the quality of academic staff. Some of the key standards cover staff qualification, staff motivation, and participation in institutional activities. According to Nwagwu (2018), it becomes imperative that the academic staff be audited regularly to give a verdict on the quality of the staff. In this study, academic staff audit will be measured using the following indicators: professional competence based on training and mastery of the course; communication skills and ability to impart knowledge; lecturers' attitude to the job and accessibility to students; the lecturer's usage of instructional materials; leadership roles and quality of students' supervision; and methods of teaching. Chineze (2012) reported that the level of academic staff audits is high in Nigerian higher and tertiary institutions. This has helped to improve staff professional competence, improve staff communication skills, and improve staff preparations for their lectures, content delivery, and assessment of learning. Further, Ployhart (2006) in Columbia revealed that modern organizations struggle with staffing challenges stemming from increased knowledge work, labor shortages, and competition for applicants (workforce diversity). Yet, despite such critical needs for effective staffing practices, staff audits continue to be neglected or misunderstood by many institutional decision-makers. Solving these challenges requires staffing scholars to expand their level of academic auditing. The researcher is in agreement with the above scholars; it is vital to regularly carry out academic staff audits. This will help in easily identifying and filling staffing gaps, improving the quality of teaching and learning. While the preceding investigations were conducted on academic staff audits in other countries, there is a gap in the same from the perspective of TTIs in West Nile, Uganda, necessitating this study.

3.2.4 Research Audits

A few scholars have already investigated research auditing in higher and tertiary institutions (Alles et al., 2016; Ellis, 1993; Tinkler & Jackson, 2014). In the majority of these studies, research audits were conceptualized in different ways. For example, Aust, Diedenhofen, Ullrich, and Musch (2013) carried out a study in Germany on the topic "*seriousness checks are useful to improve data validity in online research.*" And they discovered that research audits and checks are central to having quality research. They advocated for consistency checks, unique IP checks, completion time checks, instructional manipulation checks, and seriousness checks. Rosemann and Vessey (2008) also carried out a study in the area of research audits focusing on improving the relevance of information systems research to practice: the role of applicability checks. Their findings revealed that there are institutional gaps in research audits, and researchers need to improve the relevance of their research to practice. Their study recommended that

information system researchers examine the research they develop or use for practitioner applicability.

Another study by Taylor, J. (2011) revealed that in UK universities, research audits have been ongoing and have generated an intense debate for over two decades about how best to measure and audit the research produced by the university sector. To achieve this aim, several governments have developed mechanisms for auditing the quality of research produced by their universities. The primary purpose of these mechanisms is to assess the quality of research across the entire university sector so that scarce research funds can be optimally allocated. The UK, for example, has now conducted six Research Assessment Exercises (RAEs) since 1986, the last five of which were used to determine the allocation of block research grants to universities. Similar assessments have been introduced in the Netherlands (Observatory of Science and Technology), Italy (Triennial Research Evaluation), Australia (Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA), and New Zealand (Performance-based Research Fund). So far, assessment mechanisms have been based primarily on peer review. In the UK, for example, peer assessment has been used since the late 1980s. Responsibility for measuring research quality has been delegated to the higher education funding councils, which in turn have appointed subject experts to audit the quality of research submitted for assessment. But while several scholars have pointed out issues with research audits, many of these studies were carried out in the context of developed nations, unlike the current study, and none of the studies directly linked leadership styles to quality audits in TTIs. The researcher identified these as gaps requiring further investigation, hence the need to assess how leadership styles influence quality audits in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda.

4. Methodology

This study was based on a pragmatic philosophical stance and adopted a mixed-methods research design. The qualitative approach provided a full description of the respondent's attitudes and emotions, while the quantitative approach provided numerical information. Data was collected from a sample of 246 participants, comprising inspectors of schools, principals, deputy principals, lecturers, academic registrars, research coordinators, and accountants from all the TTIs in West Nile, Uganda (mainly Arua Core PTC, Lodonga PTC, NTC Muni, and Arua Nursery Teachers' College). The respondents were purposively sampled; this was done because these categories of people had particular knowledge of the research objectives and would yield high information satisfaction. Purposive sampling saved time and money, was flexible and met multiple needs and interests, and enabled researchers to select samples based on the purpose of the study and knowledge of the population (Mujere, 2016). The researcher used self-administered questionnaires because they were more practical and enabled large amounts of information to be collected from a large number of people in a short period of time. A five-point Likert scale was used: (SA) Strongly Agree = 5; (A) Agree = 4; (NS) Not Sure = 3; (D) Disagree = 2; (SD) Strongly Disagree = 1 response model. The reliability

of the questionnaire was attained using Cronbach's alpha (α), which was 0.819. This made the questionnaire reliable since the result was above the recommended minimum score of 0.7 (Creswell, 2014). Additionally, the validity of the questionnaire was 0.860, which made the instrument valid (Drost, 2011). The collected data were coded, entered into a computer using SPSS, and displayed in tables with frequencies, mean, and standard deviation.

The researcher also used unstructured interviews because they were flexible, cheaper, and encouraged face-to-face encounters, which allowed the possibility of modifying and rephrasing questions that were not clear to the respondents, and they achieved a high response rate. According to Eppich, Gormley, and Teunissen (2019), with structured and unstructured interviews, incomplete answers are followed up easily and can yield much richer data. Seven respondents were interviewed, consisting of an inspector of schools, a deputy principal, an academic registrar, two lecturers or tutors, a research coordinator, and an accountant. To ensure an effective response, the researcher established a good rapport with the respondents. Raw data were transcribed, and a thematic method was used to analyze the data from the interviews. The qualitative approach revealed a respondent's attitudes and emotions, whereas the quantitative approach revealed numerical data.

5. Results and Discussions

The results of the study were presented firstly at a descriptive level and later at an inferential level as below;

5.1 Demographic Information of the Respondents

Table 1: The demographic information of the respondents

Items	Category	Frequency	Percentages
Gender	Male	138	58
	Female	101	42
	Total	239	100
Highest education level	Certificate	05	02
	Diploma	44	19
	Bachelors	108	45
	Postgraduate	39	16
	Masters	41	17
	Doctorate	02	01
	Total	239	100
Age bracket	18 – 35 years	85	36
	36 – 53 years	121	50
	Above 53 years	33	14
	Total	239	100

Source: Primary data (2022).

The modal percentages of respondents were males (58%) in relation to gender, bachelor's degree (45%) concerning highest education qualification and 36 – 53 years (50%) in relation to age bracket as shown in Table 1 above.

5.2 The Degree at which Leadership Styles Were Used in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda

Leadership style is a collection of strategies or steps a leader consciously chooses to reach and interact with his or her subordinates (Hardman & Brenda, 2011). More specifically, the dimensions of leadership styles depict the way in which a leader attempts to influence the behaviour of subordinates; makes decisions regarding the direction of the group; and maintains a balance between the goal attainment function and the maintenance function of the group's tended outcomes. This study looked at autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership styles.

5.2.1 Autocratic Leadership Style

Table 2: Descriptive results for the degree at which autocratic leadership style is used in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda (N = 239)

Items	Mean	SD	Interpretation
The leader believes staff in TTI need to be authoritatively controlled, or they are not likely to perform their task.	3.69	1.12	High
Leader rarely consults the staff in TTI and believes that most of them are incompetent and lazy.	3.26	1.21	Moderate
The leader believes staff in TTI must be given rewards or punishments in order to motivate them to achieve institutions' ideas.	3.46	1.07	High
The leader makes the majority of the staff in TTI feel uncertain about their duties.	3.33	1.12	Moderate
The leader is the main judge of the activities in the TTI and does not delegate decision making.	3.36	1.23	Moderate
The leader believes in giving commands and instructions to the staff and other subordinates in the TTI.	3.47	1.18	High
Aggregate mean & Std. Deviation	3.43	1.16	High
Legend 1: 1.00 – 1.79 = Very Low, 1.80 – 2.59 = Low, 2.60 – 3.39 = Moderate, 3.40 – 4.19 = High and 4.20 – 5.00 = Very High			

Source: Primary data (2022).

In respect to Table 2, the result showed that the level of autocratic leadership style used in teacher training institutions in West Nile, Uganda, was high, with a mean of 3.43 (69%) and a standard deviation (SD) of 1.16, which was far from zero, indicating that the views of the respondents on the use of autocratic leadership style were highly varied, but it did not explain the degree of the variation. The findings of this current study also agree with Hamiza et al. (2020), who observed that a lack of modern-day leadership and autocracy are killing institutions in Arua and West Nile. Leaders impose their decisions on the subordinates, creating the feeling that subordinates do not know anything and that they cannot do anything except follow a person in authority; communication is thus limited to a single channel. The finding of this study is further supported by Atama's (2021)

assertion that there are poor leadership styles and that many leaders suppress followers' ability to initiate new ideas in colleges and schools today; he reiterates that if this continues, then the whole education system will continue to be affected. This finding, however, supported data collected through interviews, where some respondents revealed that autocratic leadership styles are mainly used in several teacher training institutions in West Nile.

5.2.2 Democratic Leadership Style

Table 3: Descriptive results for the level at which democratic Leadership style is used in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda (N = 239)

Items	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Leader ensures staff in TTI are part of the decision-making process.	4.38	.75	Very high
Leader provides guidance without force to staff in TTI.	4.14	.80	High
Leader promotes participatory communication with staff in TTI.	4.20	.75	Very high
Leader supports staff in TTI to take responsibility and delegates work.	4.12	.88	High
Leader supports staff in TTI to realize their passion for work and seeks continual feedback from them.	4.02	.84	High
Leader trusts the staff in TTI and promotes social equality.	3.87	.99	High
Aggregate mean & Std. Deviation	4.13	.84	High
Legend 2: 1.00 – 1.79 = Very Low, 1.80 – 2.59 = Low, 2.60 – 3.39 = Moderate, 3.40 – 4.19 = High and 4.20 – 5.00 = Very High			

Source: Primary data (2022).

As can be observed in Table 3, the result showed that the level at which democratic leadership style was used in teacher training institutions in West Nile, Uganda, was high, at a mean of 4.13 (83%) and a standard deviation (SD) of 0.84, implying that there was a lesser deviation in the views of the respondents from the mean value, indicating that there was a bigger degree of consistency in the answers. Therefore, democratic leadership is highly used in institutions in Arua. He argues that leaders involve lecturers and tutors in all institution activities, decisions are collectively made, and lecturers are knowledgeable and capable of making contributions to the institutions. The study results also relate to Patrick's (2014) report, who reported that effective school leadership is linked to the proper management of discipline by teachers, which improves the teaching and learning of students. Therefore, leaders in teacher training institutions should be vastly democratic and allow multiple channels of communication between learners, lecturers, and themselves.

5.2.3 Laissez Faire Leadership Style

Table 4: Descriptive results for the level at which Laissez Faire leadership style is used in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda (N = 239)

Items	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Leader allows staff in the TTI to have complete freedom in working and solving their own problems.	3.41	1.03	High
Leader considers staying out of the way of staff in TTI as they perform their teaching duties.	3.06	.95	Moderate
Leader in TTI gives liberty for the staff and other subordinates to make decisions on their own to improve education quality.	3.32	1.00	Moderate
Leader in TTI allows staff and other subordinates to initiate what they need to perform.	3.33	1.03	Moderate
Leader provides the necessary tools and resources needed in TTI and leaves staff alone to respond to their duties.	3.12	1.04	Moderate
Leader in TTI provides very little guidance to staff and believes people excel when they are left alone to respond to their responsibilities.	3.10	1.09	Moderate
Aggregate mean & Std. Deviation	3.23	1.03	Moderate
Legend 3: 1.00 – 1.79 = Very Low, 1.80 – 2.59 = Low, 2.60 – 3.39 = Moderate, 3.40 – 4.19 = High and 4.20 – 5.00 = Very High			

Source: Primary data (2022).

In respect to Table 4, the result showed that the level at which laissez-faire leadership style was used in teacher training institutions in West Nile, Uganda, was moderate at a mean of 3.23 (65%) and a 1.03 standard deviation (SD), which was far from zero, suggesting that the views of the respondents on laissez-faire leadership style were significantly varied towards the mean, which is the central location. This result is consistent with Anyodo (2019), who emphasizes that a laissez-faire leadership style should be used discreetly or even less in institutions because giving subordinates extraordinary freedom to do whatever they want without providing guidance and supervision can lead to ineffectiveness and low performance.

The findings of this study also agreed with Oboshi and Okoli (2021), who argued that a laissez-faire leadership style should be reasonably used since it is not perfect in circumstances where group members lack the information or experience they need to complete tasks and make decisions. Some people are not good at setting their own deadlines, managing their own projects, and solving problems on their own. In such situations, institutions can go off-track and deadlines can be missed when team members do not get enough guidance or feedback from leaders. Given the findings of the current study and the views expressed by other scholars, it can be concluded that the laissez-faire style should be used cautiously since it leads to ill-defined roles within teacher training institutions in West Nile, Uganda. Since subordinates receive little to no guidance, they might not really be sure about their role and what they are supposed to be doing with their time.

When the researcher inquired about the general level at which leadership styles were used in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda, the results indicated in Table 8 below were revealed.

Table 5: General level at which leadership styles were used in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda (N = 239)

Item	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Autocratic leadership	3.43	1.16	High
Democratic leadership	4.13	.84	High
Laissez faire leadership	3.23	1.03	Moderate
Grand Mean & Std. Deviation	3.60	1.01	High
Legend 4: 1.00 – 1.79 = Very Low, 1.80 – 2.59 = Low, 2.60 – 3.39 = Moderate, 3.40 – 4.19 = High and 4.20 – 5.00 = Very High			

Source: Primary data (2022).

In general, the level at which leadership styles were used in teacher training institutions in West Nile, Uganda, was high, which revealed that autocratic leadership style produced a mean of 3.43 at 1.16 standard deviation (SD), democratic leadership style at 4.13 at 0.84 SD, and laissez-faire leadership style at 3.23 at 1.03 SD, generating a grand mean of 3.60 at 1.01 SD, which was far from zero, meaning that the views of the respondents on leadership styles were significantly varied towards the central location of the mean. This study result revealed that the democratic leadership style was used most within teacher training institutions in West Nile, Uganda, which was worthy. Dulewicz and Higgs (2005) observed that a good institutional leader will use at least many styles, with the democratic leadership style dominating; terrible leaders are inclined to only one autocratic leadership style. He went on to say that all leadership styles are good because different situations necessitate different styles of leadership, and the style used should be the one that most effectively achieves the objectives of the group or institution while balancing the interests of its individual members. He also said that democratic leadership style was good to use as a leading style, which is consistent with the study findings.

In interviews with the seven respondents, it was discovered that democratic leadership was significantly more prevalent than other styles in teacher training institutions in West Nile, Uganda. This was evident by the joint decision-making during top management, academic board, and academic staff meetings, besides involving the student guild in decision-making on issues relating to students' affairs in the institutions. The respondents identified advantages of the democratic leadership style in the teacher training institutions in West Nile, Uganda, as it makes the staff get engaged in the decision-making process, which makes them feel content since they know what is happening in the institutions, they take interest in working extra hard, and the staff are able to exploit their full competences. A respondent warned that the use of a democratic leadership style has always resulted in delayed decision-making since more than one person is involved and may not work out during an emergency.

5.3 The Levels of Quality Audits

The second objective of this study was to find out the level of quality audits within teacher training institutions in West Nile, Uganda, in the areas of infrastructure, curriculum, academic staff, and research. This objective was analyzed using descriptive statistics, then presented as means and standard deviations and interpreted using the ranges on a 5-point Likert scale.

5.3.1 Infrastructure Audits

Table 6: Descriptive results on the level of infrastructure audits in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda (N = 239)

Items	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Library infrastructure is audited regularly in TTI in West Nile, Uganda.	3.36	1.03	Moderate
Lecture halls and halls of residence are audited regularly in TTI in West Nile, Uganda.	3.06	1.06	Moderate
Science laboratories and equipment are audited regularly in TTI in West Nile, Uganda.	2.87	1.12	Moderate
Computer rooms and facilities are audited regularly in TTI in West Nile, Uganda.	2.96	1.10	Moderate
Sports fields are audited regularly in TTI in West Nile, Uganda.	2.88	1.24	Moderate
Road networks are audited regularly in TTI in West Nile, Uganda.	2.54	1.19	Moderate
Staff offices and staffroom facilities are audited regularly in TTI in West Nile, Uganda.	2.94	1.12	Moderate
Aggregate mean & Std. Deviation	2.95	1.13	Moderate
Legend 6: 1.00 – 1.79 = Very Low, 1.80 – 2.59 = Low, 2.60 – 3.39 = Moderate, 3.40 – 4.19 = High and 4.20 – 5.00 = Very High			

Source: Primary data (2022).

In respect to Table 6 above, the result showed that infrastructure audits in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda were moderate, at a mean of 2.95 (59%) with a 1.13 standard deviation (SD), which was far from zero, indicating that the views of the respondents on quality audits of infrastructure were significantly varied towards the central location of the mean. The finding of this study is interrelated to that of NCHE (2014), which observed that audits of infrastructure in institutions and colleges in Uganda have not improved over the years, leading to unsatisfactory available space per student in the lecture room, libraries, science laboratories, computer rooms, and recreational facilities. Given the results of the current research and the opinions stated by other scholars, it was established that the level of quality auditing of the infrastructure was moderate. Though leaders explained that the exercise was very expensive, deliberate efforts should be made by them to have regular quality audits of infrastructure in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda. This finding, however, contradicted the data collected through interviews, where some respondents revealed that infrastructure audits are still low in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda.

5.3.2 Curriculum Audits

Table 7: Descriptive results on the level of curriculum audits in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda (N = 239)

Items	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Curriculum design processes are audited in TTIs in West Nile.	3.00	1.24	Moderate
The curriculum implementation process is audited in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda.	3.16	1.07	Moderate
The curriculum evaluation process is audited in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda.	2.79	.99	Moderate
Curriculum audits are regularly done in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda.	2.50	1.09	Low
Labour market participates in curriculum development process in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda.	2.55	1.15	Low
Curriculum audits are done by qualified professionals in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda.	3.14	1.02	Moderate
Curriculum audit processes are timely financed in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda.	2.81	1.25	Moderate
Aggregate mean & Std. Deviation	2.85	1.12	Moderate
Legend 6: 1.00 – 1.79 = Very Low, 1.80 – 2.59 = Low, 2.60 – 3.39 = Moderate, 3.40 – 4.19 = High and 4.20 – 5.00 = Very High			

Source: Primary data (2022).

In respect to Table 7, the result showed that curriculum audits in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda were moderate at a mean of 2.85 (57%) with 1.12 standard deviation (SD). This result is similar to that of Hales and Phi (2021) who identified curriculum audit as average in most institutions of learning across the world. For countries in Africa especially Zambia, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda to date there is very limited research on the status of curriculum auditing in business schools. This is due to poor conditions of service to curriculum implementers and limited funding capacities of education systems. This is in line with Bhatti's (2015) assertion that curriculum audits are inadequately conducted within institutions in Uganda due to a number of variables, including the limited funding set aside for audit exercises and the lack of dedication among the auditors and institutional officials. This was further supported by the NCHE (2014) report on the state of higher education in Uganda which recommended that curriculum issues need to be looked into seriously and there is a need to review in greater detail the curricula of all the higher and tertiary education institutions with a view of making the curricula more relevant and practical with appropriate content since the curriculum review had been performing poorly in these institutions.

This finding, however, contradicted the data collected through interviews where some institutional leaders revealed that quality audits are highly effective, especially in TTI's in West Nile. Hence, need to be further studies in this area.

5.3.3 Academic Staff Audits

Table 8: Descriptive results on the level of academic staff audits in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda (N= 239)

Items	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Academic staff qualifications are audited annually.	4.43	.80	Very high
The lecturer-student ratio are regularly audited to ensure.	3.28	1.07	Moderate
Audits are annually done to ensure that academic staff recruitment and promotions are based on academic merits.	3.30	1.13	Moderate
The audit is done annually to ensure duty allocation to lecturers is appropriate to their qualifications, experience and skills.	3.22	1.11	Moderate
Audits are done annually to ensure staff development programs are in place to improve quality of lecturers.	2.94	1.09	Moderate
Audits are done annually to ensure lecturers follow the terms and conditions of service.	2.83	1.06	Moderate
Audits are done regularly to ensure lecturer's properly using credit/ contact hours in class.	3.04	1.02	Moderate
Aggregate mean & Std. Deviation	3.30	1.04	Moderate
Legend 7: 1.00 – 1.79 = Very Low, 1.80 – 2.59 = Low, 2.60 – 3.39 = Moderate, 3.40 – 4.19 = High and 4.20 – 5.00 = Very High			

Source: Primary data (2022).

In respect to Table 8, the result revealed that academic staff audits in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda was moderate at a mean of 3.30 (66%) with 1.04 standard deviation which was far from zero, showing that the views of the respondents on quality audits towards academic staff skills and experiences were significantly varied towards the central location the mean. The findings of this research are comparable to Dill (2000) who stated that "Academic Staff Audit," adopts a capacity-building approach to reform. Academic audits, first implemented in the UK, attempt to assess the processes that universities have in place for assuring the quality of student learning and the standards of their degrees. These audit processes were moderate and not directly tied to funding, but evaluate and provide public reports on the academic staff quality in the colleges and universities to ensure academic standards and improve the quality of their teaching and learning. As observed in Sweden, the focus of academic audits is not on the quality of measured outcomes, but on "quality work", how a university satisfies itself that its chosen academic standards of staff are being achieved. The principal goal of academic staff audits is an institutional improvement. Upon the results of the study and the opinions stated by other researchers, it was accepted that the level of quality audit towards academic staff skills and experiences was moderate. Therefore, higher efforts should be made by leaders to have regular quality audits towards improving academic staff skills and experiences in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda.

5.3.4 Research Audits

Table 9: Descriptive results on the level of research audits in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda (N= 239)

Items	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Audits are done annually to ensure bylaws and regulations relating to research supervision are followed.	3.30	1.05	Moderate
Audits are done to ensure the institution has at least 5 research books published internationally as recommended by NCHE.	2.28	1.07	Low
Audits are done always to ensure the institution wins at least 5 international funds and Projects from research publications.	2.26	1.09	Low
Audits are done annually to determine if the research supervisory knowledge and skills of lecturers is current.	2.71	1.11	Moderate
Audits are done to ensure research are peer-reviewed in TTI's.	2.87	1.19	Moderate
Audits are done annually to ensure grants are adequately allocated to TTI's for research and publications.	2.33	1.21	Low
Aggregate mean & Std. Deviation	2.63	1.12	Moderate
Legend 8: 1.00 – 1.79 = Very Low, 1.80 – 2.59 = Low, 2.60 – 3.39 = Moderate, 3.40 – 4.19 = High and 4.20 – 5.00 = Very High			

Source: Primary data (2022).

In respect to Table 9, the result showed that research audits in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda were moderate, at a mean of 2.63 (53%) with a 1.12 standard deviation (SD), which was far from zero, indicating that the views of the respondents on quality audits towards research were significantly varied towards the central location of the mean. The results of this study mean that research and publications were not fully explored in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda, which explains the reason for the moderate levels. This study's findings are comparable to those of Angualuga (2015), who stated that audits toward research and publication are low in TTIs due to stakeholder reluctance and insufficient funding; Angualuga also stated that audits of the research process in institutions must be closely monitored to reduce increased cases of lecturers illegally collecting money from students for supervision and plagiarism of research reports. According to NCHE (2014), research is a major occupation of a higher education academic institution, but it is still problematic and requires serious evaluation. In his view, an institution that does not conduct research is no better than high schools. Universities and tertiary institutions are required to teach, produce, and disseminate knowledge, but it is research and a commitment to doing research that distinguishes higher institutions from the lower levels of education. As of now, few education institutions have met the standard set by the NCHE, which stipulates that 10% of the institution's budget should be devoted to research, which is sad, and every effort should be made to move towards that standard.

When the researcher inquired about the general level of quality audits in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda, the results were shown in Table 10 below.

Table 10: General level of quality audits
in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda (N = 239)

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Infrastructure audit	2.95	1.13	Moderate
Curriculum audit	2.85	1.12	Moderate
Academic staff audit	3.30	1.04	Moderate
Research audit	2.63	1.12	Moderate
Grand Mean & Std. Deviation	2.94	1.11	Moderate
Legend 9: 1.00 – 1.79 = Very Low, 1.80 – 2.59 = Low, 2.60 – 3.39 = Moderate, 3.40 – 4.19 = High, 4.20 – 5.00 = Very High			

Source: Primary data (2022).

In respect to Table 10, the general level of quality audits in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda, was depicted as moderate. Infrastructure audit at a mean of 2.95 (59%) at 1.13 standard deviation, curriculum audit at 2.85 (57%) with 1.12 standard deviation, academic staff audit at 3.30 (66%) with 1.04 standard deviation, and research audit at 2.63 (53%) with 1.12 standard deviation, generating a grand mean of 2.94 (59%) at 1.11 standard deviation, which was far from zero, indicating that the views of the respondents towards quality audits were significantly varied towards the central location of the mean. This study result meant that much effort needed to be put in place by all shareholders to strengthen quality audits in areas of infrastructure, curriculum, academic staff, and research in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda.

6.4 Influence of Leadership Styles on Quality Audits in Teacher Training Institutions in West Nile, Uganda

The third objective of this study was to ascertain the influence of leadership styles on quality audits in teacher training institutions in West Nile, Uganda. The results are in Table 11.

Table 11: Influence of leadership styles
on quality audits in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda

Model	r	r ²	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.419 ^a	.176	.160	.71749

a. Predictors: (Constant), laissez faire, democratic, autocratic

The results in Table 11 show that leadership styles explained 17.6% of variations in quality audits ($R^2 = 17.6$), leaving 82.4% being contributed by other factors at the same time, which still needs to be researched.

However, an examination of the degree to which each of the variables of leadership styles influenced quality audits in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda, as shown in Table 12, showed that democratic leadership style was topmost in influencing quality audits with a beta value of 0.245 at .001 significance, followed by laissez-faire leadership style at a beta value of 0.122 at .125 significance. It was discovered that the autocratic leadership style had a beta value of .106 at a significance level of .000, which had a negative

influence on quality audits, implying that as autocratic leadership increases, quality audits will decrease.

Table 12: Multiple regression analysis test for influence of leadership styles on quality audits in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.439	.455		5.364	.000
	Autocratic leadership	.380	.074	.106	5.142	.000
	Democratic leadership	.334	.103	.245	3.251	.001
	Laissez faire leadership	.128	.083	.122	1.542	.125

Source: Primary data (2022).

Al-Maqbali (2017) observed that good use of leadership styles was a cornerstone and vital factor in influencing quality audits. According to Sethuraman et al. (2014) and Maloş (2012), the most effective style of leadership is the democratic style. However, the use of different leadership styles depends on the qualities of the leader, the characteristics of followers, and the nature of the situation. This is similar to Gardner's (2013) contention that all styles of leadership are important, but for the effective running of organizations, democratic leadership should be used most, a view that agrees with the finding of this study.

6. Testing Study Hypothesis using Pearson Correlation Analysis

This study hypothesized that there was no significant influence of leadership styles on quality audits in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda. To test the null hypothesis, a Pearson correlation analysis was carried out. The null hypothesis was rejected because the p-value of 0.000 was found to be less than the significance level of 0.01. Therefore, an alternative hypothesis that there was a significant influence of leadership styles on quality audits in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda, was adopted. This meant that leadership styles are instrumental and, if used rightly, will increase quality audits in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda.

7. Conclusions

From the findings of the study, the researcher concluded that, generally, the use of leadership styles was high in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda. Furthermore, it was concluded that, despite the statement that there were inadequate quality audits in TTIs in West Nile and Uganda, the level of quality audits was found to be moderate. Finally, it was concluded that generally there was a weak upward (positive) influence of leadership styles on quality audits in TTIs in West Nile, Uganda.

8. Recommendations

As a result, this study suggests that leaders use a more democratic leadership style because it promotes quality auditing more than other styles. Laissez-faire and autocratic leadership styles ought to be used cautiously by leaders in the TTIs in West Nile, Uganda. Furthermore, the researcher recommends that formal quality audits of the TTIs be done quarterly in West Nile, Uganda.

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