

Zambia School Leadership: Towards Developing an Assessment Model

Oliver Mubita Kalabo

PhD Student, Department of Education, University of Africa, Box 35440, Thorn Park, Lusaka, Zambia

Abstract: *The purpose of this paper is to examine research conducted on head teacher leadership in Zambia and tease out possible inclination towards developing an assessment model that will be capable of identifying leadership behaviours and practices that are most likely lead to school performance and student achievement. The paper proposes the development and establishment of an assessment model in Zambia in line with the learning-centred leadership framework while taking into account local context as a basis. The Kalabo Assessment of Leadership in Education (KALE) model is proposed as an alternative framework for Zambian standards.*

Keywords: School leadership, Learning-centred leadership, Assessment Model, Kalabo Assessment of Leadership in Education (KALE).

1. Introduction

School leadership has been the focus of intense scrutiny for many years in Zambia as parents, local communities, and politicians try to understand what makes one school perform better than the other. Among other factors, it is important to identify leadership behaviours and practices that are most likely to improve school performance.

Research informs us that principal leadership can indeed affect student achievement, but the effect is indirect [1], [22], [23], [27], [41], [45]. Research also informs us that appropriate assessment tools have been developed to mainly measure school leadership effectiveness with regards to their behaviours and practises [33], [10]. A better understanding of these desired behaviours may lead to the development of appropriate intervention programs [4], [14], [45].

The Education National Policy [29] identifies the vital role that the school head must play in the pursuit of excellence and quality education through the identification of the head teacher as an instructional leader. What is lacking in Zambia is a research-based assessment model that can be used to identify instructional head teachers. Most research conducted in Zambia has not delved into the instructional role of the head teacher but tended to focus mainly on their administrative and managerial practices [17], [19].

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2. Review of Literature

This paper, in consideration of the literature, introduces the construct of learning-centred leadership as a combination of instructional leadership and transformational leadership to provide a framework for the proposed assessment model. The culture and context of leadership are explored as it has a

bearing on the cross-culture articulation and use of any framework developed elsewhere.

2.1 Learning-Centred Leadership

Researchers have in recent reviews of the empirical research on the relationship between school leadership and student outcomes [1], [4], [11], [23], [27], [41], [45] considered both the traditional instructional leadership approach that was developed in the 1980's and the transformation leadership model of the 1990's [11]. The current conceptualisations of instructional leadership include transformational leadership components [15], [24], [26]. Researchers now suggest the term learning-centred leadership for the construct of instructional leadership most recently surfacing in the literature [6], [10], [12], [33], [40], which conceptualizes leadership for learning or learning-centred leadership as a combination of elements from traditional instructional leadership and from transformational leadership.

The Combination. Robinson et al. [41] conducted a meta-analysis of 27 published studies on the relationship between principal leadership and student outcomes. They found effect sizes three to four times greater for behaviours traditionally associated with instructional leadership than for those of transformational leadership. However, they noted the motivational, collaborative, and interpersonal skills related to transformational leadership embedded in the construct and practices of instructional leadership. This conceptualisation of instructional leadership integrates task and interpersonal leadership behaviours. This finding is supported by additional research considering the impact of transformational leadership compared to instructional leadership [24], [26]. Consequently, effective instructional leadership is assumed to include behaviours that directly affect instruction but also those transformational behaviours that indirectly impact students' learning by changing the conditions, people, and factors in schools that encourage their academic achievement. This new conceptualisation of instructional leadership considers recent research about ways effective principal leadership may impact student learning.

Conceptual foundation. Murphy et al. [33] in developing a theoretical foundation for learning-centred leadership suggested that two leadership strands have emerged as especially prevalent in high-performing schools over the past three decades: (a) leadership for learning or instructional focused leadership, and (b) change-oriented leadership or transformational leadership. The authors suggested that these two strands are most useful when combined and have conceptualised this combination as learning-centred leadership. Building on the work of Murphy et al. [33], Goldring et al. [10] provided a rationale for their conceptual framework. This frame became the blueprint for their instrument to assess leadership performance—the Vanderbilt Assessment of Leadership in Education (VAL-ED), a theoretical framework that is aligned with professional standards and current practices in the United States of America.

2.2 The School Leadership Assessment Model

In Zambia, how can we measure the most important indicators of effective school leadership related to school performance? Cravens [5] asserts that if leadership is one of an essential element of school performance, naturally a key question to ask, is what types of leadership behaviours lead to effective schools? An assortment of practitioners and academics over the last three decades has helped us see that not all leadership is equal, that particular types of leadership are especially visible in high-performing schools [9], [10], [33].

Focusing on the measuring leadership job performance—that is, leadership behaviours and practices, the core of the VAL-ED assessment system is an instrument that measures leadership behaviours. The conception is aligned with a research-based definition of educational leadership that is rooted in school improvement [9], [10]. Significantly, the use of the Learning-Centred Leadership Framework and its assessment instrument the VAL-ED is that it measures leadership behaviours and practices. This instrument can be used for head teacher evaluation, coaching, and professional development. This kind of measurement instrument is currently lacking in the Zambian educational leadership assessment system.

The Learning-Centred Leadership Framework [34] defines leadership as “the process of influencing others to achieve mutually agreed upon purposes for the organisation” [37, p.3]. “First, leadership is a process; it is not a personal trait or characteristic of an individual. Second, leadership involves influence; it requires interactions and relationships among people. Third, leadership involves purpose; it helps organisations and the people affiliated with them, in our case schools, move toward reaching desired goals. This definition of leadership highlights the fact that leadership can be shared amongst multiple actors and relies on complex, organic interrelationships between “leaders and followers” [34, p. 1-2].

The focus of leadership efforts, according to Learning-Centred Leadership Framework, is learning. Here two aspects define learning: academic and social [34], [38]. The impacts

of leader behaviours in terms of a number of valued outcomes at three periods are: indicators of in-school achievement (e.g., grades on common final exams), measures of performance at exit from school (e.g., graduation), and more distal indices of accomplishment (e.g., college graduation) [34]. The model also posits that outcomes be viewed using “a tripartite perspective—high overall levels of student achievement (quality), growth or gain (value added), and consistency of achievement across all subpopulations of the student body (equality)” [35, p. 154].

The leadership assessment instrument focuses on two critical dimensions of leadership behaviours: core components and key processes. The frame states that school leadership assessment should include measures of the intersection of these dimensions. The instrument measures effective school leadership indicators as they relate to school performance. Effective learning-centred leadership is at the intersection of the two dimensions: core components created through key processes [18].

The VAL-ED assesses the intersection of what principals must accomplish to improve academic and social learning for all students (core components), and how they create those core components (the key processes). Kalabo [18] states that a substantial research base supports the constructs of the core components and key processes [9], [20], [23], [34]. The core components of learning-centred leadership represent the extent to which the principal ensures the school has [18]: high standards of student learning, rigorous curriculum (content), quality instruction (pedagogy), a culture of learning and professional behaviour, connections to external communities, and performance accountability [26], [38], [42].

Key processes are leadership behaviours, which refer to how leadership, individually, and collectively, influence organisations such as schools to move toward achieving the core components [2], [3], [34], [38]. The processes are planning, implementing, supporting, advocating, communicating, and monitoring [18].

2.3 Cross-Culture Issues in Leadership

The issue of culture and context in which research into leadership is articulated and enacted has emerged as a contentious issue in contemporary leadership studies [8]. Leadership scholars hold three main points of view about culture and context namely: the essentialist or universal, the cross-cultural and critical constructions according to Eyong [8]. The archetypical mainstream account of leadership tends to advance a theory of universalization, staying blind to cultural diversity and contextual differences. Mainstream scholars argue that there are such global brands as McDonalds and Disneyland which are collectively enjoyed across the world suggesting that cultures may be converging and consolidating creating cultural and human universality [8].

Eyong [8] states that contrary to the above mainstream ideas; cross-cultural leadership theorists and researchers emphasise cultural differences between countries. For example,

Hofstede in 1980 presented five dimensions of culture that distinguished one national culture from the other. These were power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism-collectivism, masculinity versus femininity and long-term versus short-term orientation. Also, the GLOBE leadership project subsequently added four more cultural dimensions to Hofstede's five bringing the total of nine dimensions. These were assertiveness, gender equality, human orientation and performance orientation. Nevertheless, concerns have been raised about the methods employed in both research works. The main argument according to Eyong [8] is that the quantitative methods used have reduced such complex phenomenon as leadership and culture by placing them into boxes under a few sets of variables [8]. Another critique Eyong [8] adds, have been that these studies conceptualise culture at a country level, suggesting countries and regions to be homogenous when they are not.

Eyong [8] further argues that contrasting the above mainstream disregard for cultural specificity but complementing cross-cultural recognition of cultural difference is the more recent anti-essentialist critical argument. Culture and context are key determinants of leadership 'knowing' and 'doing'. The argument is founded on the consideration that leadership is fundamentally a cultural activity infused with values, beliefs, language, artefacts and rituals. Constructions and meanings of leadership are mainly representations of local realities of the immediate worlds in which people live and experience life on a daily basis [8]. It follows from the pro-cultural argument that globalisation cannot be denied and that there are behaviours and practices within the leadership that will always be common amongst human beings wherever they are. However, even such standard features would not yield precisely the leadership narratives or practices.

2.4 School Leadership in Zambian Context

School leadership efforts in Zambia can be traced through the various policy documents starting with the Educational Reforms of 1977 [29], Focus on Learning of 1992 [30], Educating Our Future in 1996 [29], and the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals [43] as well as Education for All [44]. As the result of all these policy documents, the agenda to enhance the effectiveness and quality of education in schools is brought to the fore.

As for the role of the school head, two points emerge from the indicators of excellence within a school. One, the head should be an 'instructional leader' who can enthuse teachers and pupils, and who can fire them with interest and satisfaction in their teaching and learning tasks, and who can establish an atmosphere that is conducive to the whole purpose of the school. The second point is that they have a clear vision of what they are supposed to be doing. They have developed a coherent set of attitudes, values, beliefs, expectations and goals. There is an apparently determined school culture, which influences the entire in-school life and activities of all members of the community, above all, the pupils [29].

To operationalize the National Policy document, the Ministry of Education provided guidelines, which specified the responsibilities, authority and powers of education institutions, and those who work in them [31]. The Standards and Evaluation Guidelines give indicators as to what type of a person a head teacher or principal amongst others should be; a) a person of sober habits, exemplary manners, dress and speech and should be communicative, b) a person of balanced interest and is always found at the school to give guidance in all sectors of the school life, c) a person who is not desk bound but should supervise school work of heads of departments and other teachers, d) the chief administrator of the school, e) a person who must always lead other staff and efficiently guide board members, parent-teachers association members and the community, and f) a person who gives responsibilities to all teachers without bias.

The National Policy document, Educating Our Future [29], also identifies characteristics of effective schools as:

- They have a strong leader who pays unremitting attention to the quality of teaching.
- They have high expectations for the performance of every pupil. No pupil is written off. Standards that are both challenging and attainable by all are set and maintained.
- They have a clear focus on learning, with school time being productively used in a systematic approach to teaching and learning. The school's instructional tasks take precedence over all other activities.
- They have an orderly, controlled atmosphere, with a clear set of general rules. School discipline, which is definite but not rigid, establishes a predictable framework within which the essential teaching and learning tasks of the school can be carried on.
- Evaluation and assessment are used systematically. Learning is monitored carefully so that teachers and the school head are always aware of pupil progress concerning established goals.

The keywords and concepts which are recurring in the Education National Policy documents and guidelines with regards to effective head teachers and quality schools teaching and learning are; vision, mission, communication, guiding, monitoring, planning, community participation, curriculum development, supervision, distribution of work, school culture, goals, focus on learning, assessment and evaluation. The Education National Policy [29] identifies the vital role that the school head must play in the pursuit of excellence and quality education through the identification of the head teacher as an instructional leader. What is lacking in Zambia is a research-based assessment model similar to the VAL-ED that can be used to identify instructional head teachers. This is critical as the key processes, and core components of the VAL-ED are also reflected in the key concepts in the National Policy Documents.

Even though the National Policy documents do not explicitly project a particular theoretical/conceptual framework, upon which pupil achievement in the education system in Zambia is inclined, following reports provide some indication. The National Assessment Survey (NAS) project provides a conceptual framework for learning achievement, which the

Examination Council of Zambia (ECZ) are currently using [7]. In the framework, the Learning Achievement that is the dependent (outcome) variable is a result of interactions with the head teacher, teacher, school and home backgrounds factors (independent variables) into learners (mediating) factors. In an attempt to further understand the learning achievement, an analysis of the school and head teacher characteristics concerning personal demographic data, perceptions on issues that deal with decision-making, school supplies, teaching staff details and the learners were included in the 2012 NAS. This is hoped will provide the basis and rationale for understanding learning achievement as well as school performance.

The assessment functions are performed through school inspections using monitoring instruments at the teacher, head of a department/section, head teacher, and institutional levels. The head teacher monitoring tool evaluates the head in all areas of the school, i.e. staffing and establishment, school routine, school committees/functions, board sub-committees, meetings, records management, pupils security, infrastructure/facilities, school projects, user fees, and guiding principles. The head has to provide evidence as to whether the particular aspect has been done to the satisfaction of the inspector [18](Kalabo 2017). The instruments are interrelated in such that the teacher tool feeds into the departmental/section which in turn feeds into the institutional and finally into the heads. Therefore, for the head teacher to have been judged to have performed efficiently, it assumes that the teachers and heads of departments/sections would have performed equally well. Even though the individual items in the respective monitoring tools may seem to stand alone, collectively they add up to the determination of the characteristics of effective head teachers. However, as much as this assessment process is useful, it does not account for the individual behaviours and practises of effective head teachers concerning school performance.

2.5. Leadership and School Performance Studies on Zambia

An electronic search of the literature on educational leadership studies in Zambia shows little footprint of works by scholars and researchers [19]. The following works explored to some extent the relationship between school leadership and school performance and student achievement. In a study on 'effective schools' by Kunkhuli [21] using the Organisational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ) and interview schedule, findings were not consistent in all the five schools investigated with the literature on effective schools. No school covered was perceived favourable in all the five dimensions tested. In another study, Mbozi [28] found that some factors affected the quality of education in the schools studied. The factors were related to four players: the teacher, the pupil, the communities from where the children came from, and the Government. The study found out that classroom interaction between the teacher and the pupils led to the biggest influence on the performance of the pupils. The study was an attempt to investigate the effects of the training program designed for the head teachers with the view to establish whether the learning opportunity provided by the program enabled the head teachers to improve their

leadership practices. The researcher utilised Kouzes' and Posner' (2003) Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) to examine the leadership practices of the head teachers.

In a study of in-service training for head teachers and its effects on their leadership practises [25], results revealed that the greater majority of the head teachers who had taken in-service training in the area of educational management and those who had not received the training demonstrated the practices associated with the leadership practices that were included. On the question as to whether a significant difference existed between the head teachers who had taken in-service training and those who had not received the training, from the data that was obtained through questionnaires, the results generally revealed that there was no significant difference in the leadership practices of the head teachers who had taken in-service training and those who had not taken the training. However, from the data that was obtained through interviews, the results revealed overwhelming evidence that there had been improvements in the head teachers' leadership practices as a consequence of the training they had taken. In another study by Mulundano [32] on the relevance of pre-service teacher education programmes to school leadership and management in Zambia found out that the programmes were relevant to school leadership and management as a foundation.

A study in the Central Province of Zambia, by Kabeta, Manchishi and Akakandelwa [17] on instructional leadership and its effects on the teaching and learning process, it was established that instructional leadership would have a positive effect on the teaching and learning process. However, the inadequate provision of instructional leadership by the head teachers impacted negatively on the teaching and learning process and consequently led to poor pupil performance. The instrument, Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) was used to collect quantitative data.

The studies cited so far on school leadership in Zambia did not delve into the alignment and applicability of the assessment tools under use to the local context. As a result, there was no data that could speak to the reliability, construct and criterion validity. Therefore, further consideration of the assessment tools was rendered difficult.

In a recent study [18] that evaluated head teacher' leadership in Lusaka district to determine the alignment and applicability of the learning-centred leadership framework and its assessment model with Zambian school leadership, the findings indicated a discrepancy between the theoretical framework of the VAL-ED and Zambian standards, despite demonstrating reliability, construct and criterion validity. The VAL-ED tool which incorporates aspects of instructional leadership, a term used in Zambia policy documents to refer to a head teacher, was therefore considered appropriate for further examination as a possible basis for developing a localised tool.

3. Limitations and Implication: An Opportunity for an Assessment Model

Kalabo [18] study encountered challenges in the use of the VAL-ED tool. The tool required of teachers to assess their head teachers honestly without bias. In the Zambian cultural setting, leadership is held in high esteem and without blemish, therefore evaluating a leader or supervisor (and especially communicating it to a third party), some individuals would find it very difficult. On the other hand, teachers were suspicious that the head teachers would access their comments. This is because the process of distribution any assessment tool in a school has to go through the head teacher's office [18].

The study [18] established that the assessment tool faced challenges not only from the cultural beliefs but also from the technical angle. Respondents needed to understand the items despite some terminologies and questioning style being different. This is because the researcher had to maintain strict construct equivalent for the VAL-ED to be subjected to a comparative analysis. For example, the core component of rigorous curriculum would have been dropped or altered, as it did not apply entirely to the local context. Also, the key process of monitoring with regards to systemic performance accountability would have been altered. The Zambian standards refer to evaluation and assessment and the head teachers are charged with the responsibility of 'ensuring evaluation and assessment are used systematically, while

learning and pupil progress is monitored concerning established goals'.

The study [18] observed that respondents would have found a lot of repetition with regards to monitoring and systemic performance accountability, thereby threatening the integrity of data collection. This echoed one of the concerns raised by the panel of specialist that the instrument was repetitive in some instances. These issues and concerns pointed to the complex nature of trying to import a theoretical framework from another culture. The study [18] suggested significant adjustments before VAL-ED could align and be used in a different setting.

These limitations and challenges provided an opportunity for considering the development of an assessment model that would respond to the local context.

3.1. From VAL-ED to KALE – Kalabo Assessment of Leadership in Education

Arising from the VAL-ED alignment issues and concerns in Kalabo [18] study, a modified framework is being proposed for the following reasons: (1) to re-align the components and processes to the Zambian standards, (2) to redefine the framework in order to provide better understanding in the local context, and (3) while maintaining the two-dimension original VAL-ED structure. Figure 1 below is the proposed modified framework.

<i>Pupil Centred Components</i>	<i>Head Teacher Leadership Processes</i>					
	Planning	Implementing	Supporting	Advocating	Communicating	Monitoring
Vision (Sets pupil centred goals & objectives)						
School Culture (Integrates school-community activities)						
Learning (High standards for Pupil learning)						
Teaching (Effective teaching practises)						
Curriculum (Implements relevant content)						
Evaluation & Assessment (Learning & pupil progress)						

Figure 5.1: The KALE Construct of Pupil Centred Components and Head Teacher Leadership Processes

*Adaptation from LCL Framework. Source: [38].

The KALE framework has kept the six components by six processes structure. The six key processes are maintained with only additions to the definitions to make them specific to the Zambian setting and will be referred to as 'Head Teacher Leadership Processes'.

Significant changes are on the components side of the framework. The new elements are stated explicitly to the Zambian setting as indicated in table 1 below. The core

components will be referred to as Pupil Centred Components. Two of the six pupil centred components (Vision and School Culture) deals with the environment that surrounds the pupil with the school and community. The rest four pupil centred components (Learning, Teaching, Curriculum, Evaluation & Assessment) distinctively addresses the areas of pupil academic and social learning.

Table 1: Definitions of Pupil Centred Components and Head Teacher Leadership Processes

Pupil Centred Components	
<i>Vision</i>	Setting a clear vision/mission and developing a coherent set of attitudes, values, beliefs, expectations, and goals for the school.
<i>School Culture</i>	Establishing a clearly determined school culture atmosphere, which influences entire in-school life and activities of the communities.
<i>Learning</i>	Ensuring maintaining of high standards of pupil learning are by all.
<i>Teaching</i>	Paying unremitting attention to the quality of teaching by members of staff.
<i>Curriculum</i>	Promoting implementation of a curriculum that is comprehensive, balanced, integrated, diversified and relevant to real needs of both the pupil and community.
<i>Evaluation &</i>	Ensuring evaluation and assessment are used systematically, while learning and pupil progress is monitored in relation

Assessment	to established goals.
Head Teacher Leadership Processes	
Planning	Articulate shared direction and coherent policies, practises and procedures for realising high standards of pupil learning.
Implementing	Engage people, ideas and resources to put into practise the activities necessary to realise high standards of pupil learning.
Supporting	Create enabling conditions; secure and use the financial, political, technological, human and social capital necessary to promote academic and social learning.
Advocating	Act on behalf of the diverse needs of pupils within and beyond the school.
Communicating	Develop, utilise and maintain systems of exchange among members of the school and with its external communities.
Monitoring	Systematically collect and analyse data to make judgements that guide decisions and actions for continuous improvement.

*Adaptation from LCL Framework. Source: [38].

The design for KALE pupil centred component and head teacher leadership processes intersect with each other giving a total of 36 cells. In response to the concern that the instrument was too long, KALE will comprise of one item per cell. Also, six specific questions (one against each pupil centred component) will address the issue of ‘sources of evidence’. Respondents will be required to provide at least one source of evidence. In this way, the assessment instrument will have a minimum of 42 responses, or as high as 54 if they choose to provide three responses with each of the sources of evidence. This will reduce the number of responses from the VAL-ED minimum of 144 to KALE – 42. The challenge, however, will be in ensuring that the 36 effectiveness items capture the essence of the cell.

KALE will be subjected to the validity and reliability process to establish its psychometric properties. The empirical study design (Porter et al., 2010) for KALE will follow a strict protocol: (1) instrument development, (2) sorting study, (3) cognitive interviews, (4) item bias study, (5) first school pilot test, (6) instrument modification, and (7) second school pilot test. If the overall result of the second pilot test were satisfactory, then the KALE would be considered ready to use in the field (see Figure 2 below).



Figure 2: KALE Empirical Study Design

Source: [39]

KALE will be designed and developed to be both reliable and valid for use in pre-schools, primary, and secondary schools located in rural, peri-urban, or urban settings. KALE will seek to provide accurate measurements of head teacher leadership behaviours that lead to improved pupil achievement.

KALE will be constructed to (1) work in a variety of settings and circumstances, (2) provide accurate and useful reporting results, (3) yield diagnostic profiles for formative purposes, (4) measure progress over time in the development of head teachers leadership, (5) unbiased, and even (6) predict important outcomes.

A research team using a multistage development process will be set up preferably anchored at one of the universities for continuity and comprehensive technical support. In this digital era, it will be important that an on/offline version assessment instrument is developed concurrently. This will enable easy, simplified, and secure administration of the assessment even on smartphones. The technology for developing such software is readily available off the shelf and could be adapted to the particular local environment. The use of smartphones will also address the fear of teachers that some head teachers could view their responses.

KALE will still be anchored on the learning-centred leadership framework. The noticeable change will be the emphasis on expanding the input from the ‘precursors’ with regards to the values, beliefs, and customs to the school leadership behaviours (see figure 3 below). The development stage will place a premium on research concerning the context requirement of studies on leadership. It is hoped that this approach will contribute to the alignment and eventually validate KALE. Given the complex nature of developing a psychometrically validated assessment tool, the process will require a minimum of three to five years to reach the first stage of established KALE.

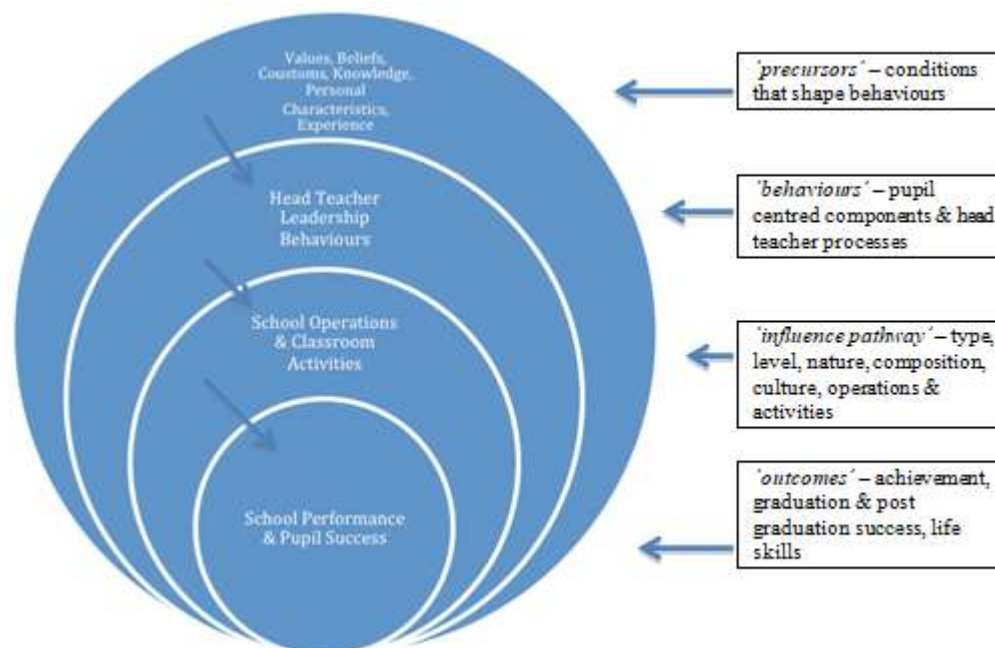


Figure 3: Conceptual Framework for the Kalabo Assessment of Leadership in Education

*Adaptation form Murphy et al. [34]

The KALE conceptual model shows that values, beliefs, customs, knowledge, personal characteristics, and experience informs the actual head teacher leadership behaviours exhibited in the performance of their responsibilities. These head teacher leadership behaviours (components and processes), which focus on KALE construct instrument, lead to school performance on pupil-centred components. In turn, school performance leads to pupil success defined by achievement, graduation, after-school life skills. KALE model posits that the national, provincial, district, city, town, village context or environment under which the leadership assessment is conducted have a bearing on the quality of head teacher leadership. This is consistent with the empirical research [13], [23], [36].

4. Conclusion

There is need to have an integral head teacher assessment and evaluation system for school improvement in Zambia. There is need to design an appropriate tool that can be implemented easily to enhance leadership quality and improve organisational performance. The Zambian teacher accreditation (licensure) system will benefit from the development and adoption of some form of research-based national standards for the head teacher. This is so because the assessment system can be used as a benchmarking tool for head teacher annual review, continuous learning and development for both formative and summative feedback to the head teacher, as well as collective accountability for the school improvement. It is therefore important that the National Assessment Survey (NAS) develops further the head teacher assessment component to provide a basis and rationale for understanding learning achievement and school performance. Local scholars and researchers will benefit and be complemented by longitudinal psychometric studies that the NAS is well positioned to commission. This may just induce some impetus in the research on educational

leadership in Zambia, which seems to be in its infancy at the moment [19].

The implications arising from this paper concerning theory development, research, practice, education and training, and public policy are bound. There is a need for scholars and researchers to challenge the current position on public policy and practice as to whether the intended objectives are being realised and if not propose an alternative course of action as appropriate based on research findings. Education and training will be a beneficiary of increased scholarly and research activities that lead to public policy changes.

Of importance to the Zambian context is that researchers are now conceptualising the construct of instructional leadership to include behaviours beyond traditional instructional leadership behaviours focused directly on aspects of teaching and learning. Transformational leadership behaviours, once considered a separate conceptualisation of effective head teacher leadership, are now regarded as part of the current conceptualisation of instructional leadership. Also important is that learning-centred leadership has an indirect effect on student achievement. Learning-centred behaviours affect organisational, personnel, and other factors that influence student achievement. Therefore, research on learning-centred leadership needs to expand beyond defining a particular set of behaviours to consider how leaders create conditions in schools that promote increased student achievement. In other words, how does leadership affect school-level factors that in turn affect student performance?

Research is also urgently needed which unpacks [23], more specifically, how successful leaders create the conditions in their schools that promote student learning. School-level factors other than leadership that explain variation in student achievement include school mission and goals, culture, participation in decision-making and relationships with parents and the wider community [23]. These are variables

over which school leaders have considerable potential influence [40], and there is need to know more about how successful leaders exercise this influence [23].

It is clear that research on the effects of school leadership is becoming increasingly sensitive to the contexts in which leaders work. Also, to be successful, school leaders need to respond compliantly to their contexts. Therefore, research should be less of the development of particular leadership models and more at discovering how leaders should compliantly exercise various leadership roles. Of key to this process is the developing of an appropriate assessment model that will evaluate head teacher leadership. Kalabo Assessment of Leadership in Education (KALE) is one such proposal that tries to respond to the need for a localised instrument. KALE also responds to the contemporary and contentious leadership issues that culture and context matter into how research is articulated and enacted.

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Author Profile



Oliver Mubita Kalabo is Chairman and Managing Partner of Brand-Line Africa a communication and media consulting company. He received a Bachelor of Arts with Education and Master of Education from the University of Zambia. He worked as a teacher, lecturer at the National Institute of Public Administration, Performance System Specialist, Director Human Resources and Administration, and Permanent Secretary in charge of Administration at Cabinet Office, Zambia.