Mechanisms employed by heads of public secondary schools to control teaching and learning activities in Bukombe District, Geita, Tanzania

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Abstract

School management mechanisms play a crucial role in the education sector since they influence students' behavior and academic performance. School administration mechanisms are of paramount importance to the education sector enhancement. The study aim was to explore the Mechanisms employed by heads of public secondary schools to control teaching and learning activities. The research employed the Transformational Leadership Theory developed by Downton in 1973. It utilized a mixed research approach with an embedded design. A sample of 75 participants was used for data collection. The research instruments included questionnaires and interview. Quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS version 23, while qualitative data was subjected to thematic analysis, involving coding, categorization, and theme development. The study revealed that the mechanisms applied by heads of schools appeared to be ineffective in enhancing academic performance. study recommends that the Ministry of Education, Vocational Training, and the Prime Minister's Office - Regional Administration and Local Government (MOEVT and PO-RALG) should reconsider and enhance the managerial abilities of school heads, particularly in strategies for controlling teaching and learning activities, in order to improve performance in secondary schools.

Keywords— Education, Leadership, Management, Monitoring, Motivation

I.   INTRODUCTION

School management strategies play a crucial role in the education sector worldwide since they influence students' behavior and academic performance. School administration strategies are of paramount importance to the global education sector. Management is described as a social process that involves accountability for the economical and efficient planning and regulation of an enterprise's operations to fulfill stated goals. According to Koontz and O'Donnell (1959), there are primarily five managerial functions: planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling. According to Jengo (2016), school leaders in Tanzania who focus on quality control in teaching and learning activities, dedicate a significant portion of their time to academic matters. They reinforce school rules and regulations, assign responsibilities, and foster a sense of collegiality among teachers. Such leaders are more likely to witness improvements in students' academic performance. Jacobson (2011) argues that school administration should be a collective effort shared by teachers and other staff members, fostering connections between them, rather than being limited to formal job titles. In other words, when management practices provide instructors with greater autonomy in areas they value highly, it can lead to improved academic performance. Students' academic performance serves as a benchmark for the effectiveness of school administration, which is crucial in motivating teachers and other staff to be effective in their instruction, ultimately impacting students' achievements. The level of managerial accountability among heads of public secondary schools has been questioned due to persistently poor academic performance among students over several decades since independence.

Head of schools play a critical role in a school's performance and the system's efficiency (Clarke, 2007; Van Deventer & Kruger, 2007). Palestini (2005) explains their critical function by stating that school managers

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should provide plans, goals, and effective leadership for good school governance, which is the lifeblood of academic performance for students. Clarke (2007) noted that schools must establish a system for monitoring and assessing students' learning outcomes to measure the school's effectiveness in delivering quality education. To achieve this goal, schools must have competent management that ensures practical and mutually agreed-upon internal processes for optimizing performance. However, these features appear to be lacking in the majority of ward public secondary schools, especially those in Bukombe rural District. According to Harune (2018), persistently poor academic performance among students is mainly attributed to poor school management, as it is a crucial aspect in achieving school goals. Looking at the results of the CSEE (Certificate of Secondary Education Examination) in Tanzania over the last five years (2014-2019) as reported by NECTA (the National Examinations Council of Tanzania), concerns have been raised about the effectiveness of school internal management structures in achieving high performance expectations. These concerns also extend to the methods used for controlling internal procedures for successful teaching and learning in Tanzanian secondary schools. This trend raises doubts about the accountability of heads of schools regarding their daily responsibilities, with a particular focus on the control aspect of school management. Thus, this article aimed to explore the mechanism used by head of school to ensure effective teaching and learning process in secondary school.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Riesman (2000) one of the most effective approaches used by head of school to ensure effective teaching and learning process the creation and improvement of an evaluation system while maintaining a focus on feedback and support. Fuchs et al. (1989); Hattie (2011) and Walberg (1999) underscores that school administrators should not solely assess teachers' in-class performance but should also utilize data and information gathered from classroom observations. The study revealed various methods employed by school administrators to communicate performance review findings to teachers, including conversational, reinforcement, relational, introspective, technological, and appropriately located methods. Gichobi (2012) indicated that Heads of Departments (HODs) were increasingly expected to take on additional duties and responsibilities, such as serving on panels for hiring and disciplining teachers. Policy changes had expanded the administrative and financial responsibilities of HODs. Karisa (2015) identified a link between student academic

performance and the administrative skills of school administrators.

Mosha (2018) found that schools implementing regular internal assessments, rewarding high-performing teachers, conducting frequent internal exams for students, and adhering rigorously to rules and regulations contributed to increased academic performance. High-performing schools conducted exams monthly, provided timely feedback to students, and allowed revisions. Monthly and term-end exams constituted ongoing evaluations. Parents received feedback on their children's progress every three months. In contrast, low-performing schools utilized internal exams alongside tests and homework, with feedback identifying weak students who could benefit from remedial programs. Teachers' comments during focus group discussions highlighted these practices (Mosha, 2018). Akhtar and Iqbal (2017) noted that motivation plays a critical role in enhancing staff performance and efficiency, ultimately influencing the quality of education. Motivated teachers are more focused on educational improvement and are less likely to create obstacles for school management in their efforts to enhance academic performance. Akpan (1999) highlighted that educational management activities include monitoring to assess the extent to which school goals and objectives are being implemented and to provide corrections when issues arise. Issues that require correction may involve unacceptable behaviors such as truancy, tardiness, or failure to attend or engage actively in classroom activities.

Heads of schools are responsible for monitoring employees' behavior and ensuring that teachers attend school regularly and actively participate in teaching and learning activities, working collaboratively with their colleagues and other school staff. Peregrino et al. (2021) emphasized that school leaders should ensure that all employees work effectively, efficiently, and collaboratively, overseeing various aspects of school affairs. Effective school leaders focus on critical issues related to learning, teaching, and the continuous improvement of schools. Monitoring teaching and learning, firm heads of schools use teaching and learning like schemes of work, lesson plans, subject log books and others of the kind to ensure that academics improves. However, the literature indicates that schemes of work, lesson plans do not always reflect the reality but they are filled just for formality as Manaseh (2016) noted that heads of secondary schools stood firm on the filling of schemes of works, lesson plans and subject logbooks not for the aim of ensuring timely coverage of syllabuses, but just for formality because such documents among others, are regarded as school inspection documents that are

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required to be available when school inspectors come for inspection, punishing students and sometimes teachers.

Clark et al. (2009) suggested that schools led by qualified head teachers are more likely to exhibit better performance. Ngwako (2001) ability of school management to create a clear vision and purpose for their institution and collaborate effectively significantly influences the school's ability to implement them. These studies collectively emphasize the critical role of school leaders in inspiring their institutions to achieve better outcomes. Building the leadership skills of school leaders is crucial and should be integrated into established programs and workshops within schools. The leadership styles adopted by school heads have a significant impact on students' academic performance and the overall school environment. John and Mkulu (2020) highlights the importance of systematic planning in academic operations, collaboration between instructors and school administrators on issues like discipline, and the analysis of test results. Decisions made at staff meetings are crucial in shaping school policies and practices, which can have both positive and negative effects on students' academic performance.

The Ministry of Education, Vocational Training, and Technology (MOEVT) in Tanzania has acknowledged that training programs provided by the Agency for Development of Education Management (ADEM) have positively impacted school administration. This training has led to improvements in school administration practices. However, MOEVT (2010) also noted that access to this capacity-building program was limited for many school heads. MOEVT (2010) further highlighted that weak leadership behaviors among school administrators and teachers persist, resulting in insufficient management skills and oversight of educational initiatives, especially in Tanzania's secondary schools. The consequences of this include poor academic performance.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher used a triangulation design in which quantitative and qualitative data were collected at the same time and given equal weight or importance. The form of triangulation used was an embedded mixed method design, whereby qualitative data were embedded in quantitative data. The study involved a population from three categories: five (5) heads of schools, five (5) academic teachers, and 186 teachers from the field, whereby the total number of the population is 196. The study was conducted in Tanzania, specifically in Bukombe. The study focused on five secondary schools from five wards respectively. The researcher used convenience sampling in selecting 65 teachers. Five (5) heads of secondary schools and five (5) academic teachers in the area were selected deliberately using purposive sampling because the researcher believed that they have the right information required for the study.

Findings of the Study

Figure 1 indicated that the majority of the teacher respondents, 14.36 percent, identified 'provision of motivation' as one of the mechanisms applied by heads of public secondary schools for controlling teaching-learning activities, followed by 'monitoring,' 14.08 percent; 'instructing,' 13.78 percent; 'checking,' 13.22 percent; 'correcting,' 11.49 percent; 'warning,' 11.21 percent; 'advising,' 10.93 percent, and 'punishment,' 10.93 percent. This implies that heads of public secondary schools use motivation, instructing, checking, and correcting students' notes, provision of warnings to teachers and students, punishing students, advising both teachers and students as mechanisms in controlling teaching-learning activities.
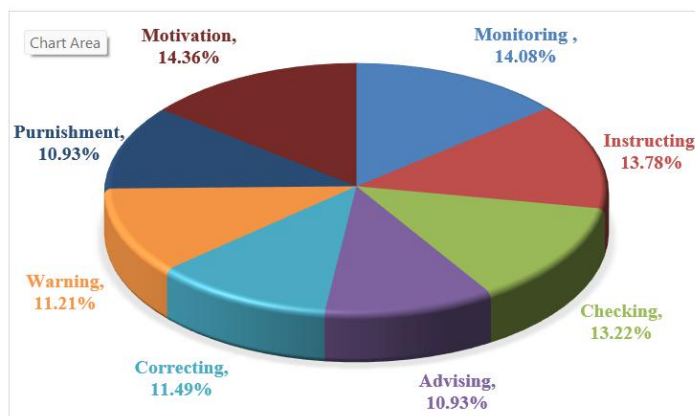

Fig.1: Mechanisms Applied by Heads of Public Secondary Schools (n=65).

Source: Field data, (2023)

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Motivation

Furthermore, the quantitative and qualitative findings indicated that another mechanism applied by heads of public secondary schools in controlling teaching-learning activities is motivation. This is also confirmed by quantitative findings presented in Figure 1, which indicates that 14.36 percent of the respondents agreed that heads of secondary schools use motivation as a mechanism in controlling teaching and learning activities.

One of the respondents from school 5 had the following views to say:

> "*Motivation is a critical aspect in enabling teachers and students to improve their performance. Motivation is one of the mechanisms that enable teachers and students to raise interest and morale for work and learning, respectively. As a result, they make efforts to improve performance, first of all being motivated by the results and also the rewards provided to them*" (AC5 August, 2023).

Another respondent also added,

> "*I have come to realize that motivation is a vital mechanism in controlling teaching and learning activities without the need for excessive efforts. When you motivate your teachers fairly, you will witness how they work diligently without the need for coercion. Similarly, when students are motivated, they become more competitive in their classes, striving for higher performance to attain the rewards. I have personally implemented this approach, and the majority of both teachers and students work very diligently. No time is wasted, and it is this control mechanism that has significantly contributed to the improvement of our overall performance*" (HoSS5 August, 2023).

These findings highlight the significance of motivation as a crucial mechanism for controlling teaching and learning activities. It plays a vital role in boosting teachers' morale and significantly contributes to their improved performance. This is in line with the observations of Akhtar and Iqbal (2017), who stress the critical role of motivation in educational institutions, as it enhances staff performance and overall efficiency. They emphasize that motivation is a determining factor in the quality of education, as motivated teachers are more focused on educational improvement, which, in turn, reduces constraints on control due to their willingness to excel. Moreover, Analoui (2000), as cited in Mbwana (2015), reveals that low teacher motivation is associated with declining standards of professional conduct, leading to improper behavior both at and outside the workplace, as well as poor professional performance.

Regarding monitoring, both quantitative and qualitative research findings point to it as a key mechanism employed by heads of public secondary schools to control teaching and learning activities. The quantitative data, presented in Figure 1, indicate that 14.08 percent of the 65 teacher respondents acknowledged monitoring as a mechanism used by school heads to ensure effective implementation of teachers' responsibilities. This suggests that a majority of school heads closely monitor teachers to ensure compliance with the timetable, classroom entry for teaching, and adequate preparation for teaching and learning activities. Qualitative findings from the interview sessions further support these quantitative results.

For instance, one of the respondents shared the following insights:

> "*Monitoring is a crucial strategy employed by our school heads to ensure that both teachers and students attend their scheduled teaching and learning activities. It's a common sight to see the head of the school moving from one classroom to another right after students have entered their classrooms, checking which teacher is present and teaching, and identifying any classrooms without a teacher. This practice encourages teachers to be punctual and conduct their lessons as scheduled. Simultaneously, it also helps in monitoring students' attendance to prevent truancy, which can adversely affect the learning and performance of students*" (AC1 August, 2023).

Additionally, another respondent also had the following to say:

> "*As the head of the school, conducting monitoring as a strategy to control teaching-learning activities is essential. I personally*

oversee teaching and learning by implementing a system where each class has a class journal. After teaching, every teacher is required to sign in the journal and the class monitor or monitress also signs as a witness for the class. All class journals are collected every Friday after class hours for inspection, a process carried out by the head of the school, with assistance from the Internal School Quality Assurance Team. This practice encourages the majority of the teachers to make the most of their teaching periods and not waste them" (HoSS4: August, 2023).

Further, another respondent also had the following to say,

"One of the first actions I take to control teaching-learning activities is to ensure teachers' attendance at work. I check the teachers' attendance book and take measures against those who do not attend work without permission or a valid reason. Subsequently, I monitor classroom attendance to ensure effective

teaching is taking place. However, our efforts don't stop there. In collaboration with teachers, the Ward Education Officer, and the Ward Executive Officer, we also address student truancy to ensure that every student attend school daily. Through these efforts, we have succeeded in encouraging some students to attend school consistently" (HoSS2: August, 2023).

These findings highlight the significance of monitoring in ensuring teachers' punctuality, proper classroom attendance, and students' regularity in attending school. Without effective monitoring, these issues can persist and negatively impact the teaching and learning environment. Akpan's report further underscores the importance of monitoring in schools to assess goal implementation and address undesirable behaviors like truancy and tardiness, which can hinder the achievement of educational objectives. To gain a deeper understanding of how monitoring is implemented, the 65 teacher respondents were asked to identify the monitoring tools employed by heads of public secondary schools in controlling teaching-learning activities. Figure 2 displays their responses:
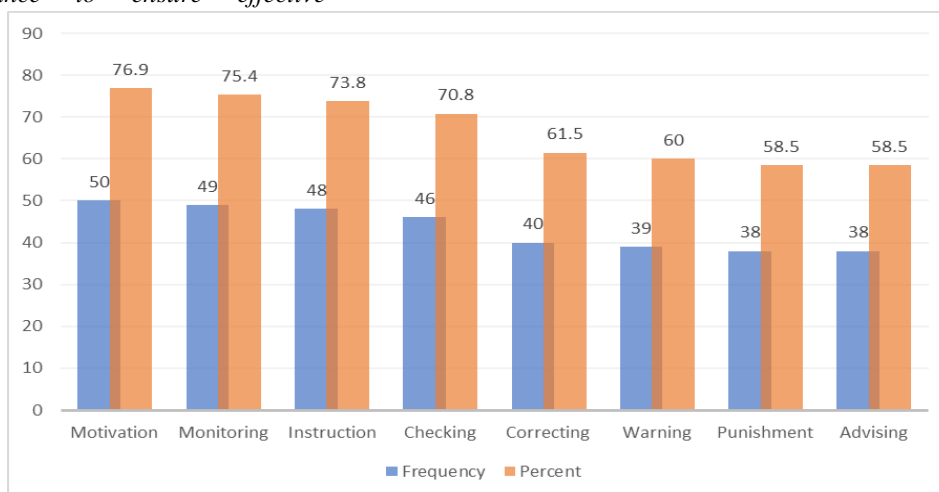

Fig.2: Monitoring Tools Used by Heads of Public Secondary Schools (n=65)

Source: Field data, 2023

Figure 2 demonstrates that the teacher respondents reported several monitoring tools used by heads of public secondary schools to control teaching-learning activities. These tools include teachers' attendance books, lesson plans, schemes of work, rules and regulations, class journals, letters of delegation of power, notice boards, and lesson notes. Teachers' attendance books were the most

commonly mentioned tool, with 100 percent of the respondents confirming their use. These findings suggest that heads of public secondary schools employ a variety of tools to monitor and manage teaching and learning activities effectively. The qualitative data further validate the quantitative results, emphasizing the importance of teachers' attendance books as a monitoring tool. Teachers'

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school attendance is closely monitored through these books, ensuring punctuality and regularity.

Teachers' attendance book is a valuable tool for identifying teachers who are absent from work or arrive late. It allows school administrators to track teachers' attendance and take appropriate action if a teacher is consistently absent or tardy. This tool plays a crucial role in ensuring that teachers are punctual and regularly present for their duties. The use of lesson plans as a monitoring tool is an essential aspect of ensuring the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning activities. However, as mentioned by one of the respondents, the inspection and checking of lesson plans must be conducted diligently and accurately to yield meaningful results. The feedback provided by this respondent highlights an important issue regarding the monitoring of lesson plans. It emphasizes that monitoring should extend beyond the mere inspection of prepared lesson plans and should also involve observing their actual use in classrooms. This more comprehensive approach to monitoring can provide a more accurate reflection of teachers' performance in teaching and learning activities.

Schemes of Work as a Monitoring Tool

Quantitative and qualitative findings indicated that schemes of work are another monitoring tool used by heads of public secondary schools to control teaching-learning activities. This is supported by the quantitative findings in Figure 2, where 100 percent of the respondents acknowledged the use of schemes of work as monitoring tools. Schemes of work provide a structured plan for what content should be covered during a specific time period. The schemes of work ensure that teachers are following the prescribed curriculum and teaching the necessary content to students. The 100 percent agreement from the respondents indicates that schemes of work are rigorously monitored by heads of schools in Bukombe District to ensure that teachers adhere to the curriculum.

Rules and Regulations as a Monitoring Tool

Quantitative and qualitative findings also indicate that heads of public secondary schools use rules and regulations as a monitoring tool to control teaching-learning activities. Figure 2 show that 100 percent of the respondents recognized rules and regulations as a monitoring tool. Qualitative findings further highlight the significance of rules and regulations in maintaining discipline and order within schools.

For example, one respondent stated:

> *"We have rules and regulations that guide the teaching and learning process. For instance, there are rules for punctuality, dress code, and*

> *classroom behavior. These rules and regulations help in maintaining discipline, and teachers are expected to enforce them. If a teacher is not adhering to these rules, it becomes a concern, and we use the rules as a basis for monitoring their teaching activities. The rules and regulations serve as a framework for maintaining order in the school"* (AC2 August, 2023).

The use of rules and regulations as a monitoring tool not only ensures that teachers and students follow established guidelines but also contributes to a conducive and disciplined learning environment. This section highlights that while heads of public secondary schools inspect lesson plans as part of their monitoring procedure, this approach does not always provide an accurate reflection of the teaching practices in classrooms. The quantitative and qualitative findings both indicate that lesson plans are sometimes prepared for the purpose of inspection rather than for actual classroom use. This finding resonates with Manaseh's study (2016), which suggests that certain school documents, including lesson plans, are often seen as formalities required for school inspections and not necessarily tools for improving teaching and learning.

Regarding the use of rules and regulations as a monitoring tool, the study found that all heads of public secondary schools employ this method. However, the qualitative data revealed that excessive emphasis on rules and regulations can lead to teacher discouragement and potentially impact their performance negatively. Thus, while rules and regulations play a crucial role in maintaining discipline and order within schools, they should be applied judiciously to strike a balance between maintaining control and fostering teacher motivation. The findings in this section emphasize the need for monitoring practices to be more reflective of actual teaching and learning processes and for rules and regulations to be applied in a way that motivates rather than discourages teachers. This balance between control and motivation is crucial in school management.

One of the respondents had this to say:

> *"The use of rules and regulations is a monitoring tool that greatly assists in the process of monitoring teaching-learning activities if used effectively. However, at times, it can lead teachers to despair and consequently affect their performance. Therefore, when*

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> *employing rules and regulations, heads of public secondary schools should exercise caution to avoid overemphasis"* (HoSS August, 2023).

This implies that rules and regulations are used by all heads of public secondary schools as monitoring tools in controlling teaching-learning activities. However, an overemphasis on these rules and regulations can harm teachers' morale, leading to a decline in their performance. They should, therefore, be applied with great care.

Schemes of Work as a Monitoring Tool

Once again, the quantitative and qualitative findings indicate that heads of public secondary schools use schemes of work as monitoring tools to control teaching-learning activities. Quantitative findings presented in Table 4.2 also confirm this, as it shows that 100.00 percent of the respondents agreed that heads of public secondary schools use schemes of work as a monitoring tool for controlling teaching-learning activities.

One of the respondents, for example, expressed the following opinions:

> *"A scheme of work is another monitoring tool we, heads of schools, use to control teaching-learning activities. Heads of schools should ensure that each teacher provides updates on their schemes of work once they have finished a certain topic. By doing so, when inspecting the performance of teachers regarding their schemes of work, the head of school can identify teachers who are falling behind in covering the syllabus and can provide assistance to help them catch up and ensure the syllabus is covered on time"* (HoSS August, 2023).

This shows that checking schemes of work is another monitoring tool used by heads of public secondary schools in the process of controlling teaching-learning activities. It is conducted because of the importance of schemes of work in the preparation for teaching and learning. Okai (2010) as cited in Kaseke et al. (2015) in their study about planning to teach: interrogating the link among the curricula, the syllabi, schemes, and lesson plans in the teaching process, reported that the scheme of work is of great importance to the teacher because it guides them in preparing instructional content and, as a result, daily lessons with respect to the available time for each topic during the term.

Additionally, Kaseke et al. (2015) argued that the scheme of work also functions as a guide for school supervisors in assessing school efforts and teachers in meeting the societal demands placed on teachers. They added that the scheme of work serves the following purposes: "guide to the teacher; organizational convenience; and record-keeping of what is taught and what should be taught (Kaseke et al., 2015, p. 58). This implies that schemes of work are very important for teaching and learning, and therefore, heads of schools should ensure that teachers prepare them to improve school academic performance. Schemes of work, lesson plans, class journals, notice boards, and teachers' lesson notes are monitoring tools also used by heads of public secondary schools in monitoring teaching-learning activities. This concurs with Manaseh (2016), whose study found that heads of secondary schools depended on schemes of work, lesson plans, subject logbooks, and class journals to monitor classroom teaching.

However, depending on these documents does not necessarily lead to improved performance, as some teachers fill them out merely as a formality to present them for inspection by the head of school or academic office in preparation for school evaluation by School Quality Assurance Officers. This aligns with Manaseh (2016), who suggested in his study that, despite the constant review and checking of schemes of work, lesson plans, class journals, and subject logbooks by heads of secondary schools, such efforts did not necessarily result in the timely coverage of the syllabus.

Class Journals as Monitoring Tools

Class journals and letters of delegation of power are used as monitoring tools, and they play a major role in controlling teaching-learning activities. This is supported by the quantitative findings indicating that 89.20 percent of the respondents agreed that class journals are used, while 86.20 percent agreed that letters of delegation of power are used by heads of public secondary schools as monitoring tools. For example, one of the respondents said: Class journals are considered highly effective as monitoring tools because they provide detailed records that help the head of the school identify the periods taught and those lost each day. Moreover, they offer insights into the subjects that were not taught and specify the class where certain subjects were not taught and the responsible teachers. This information simplifies the process of follow-up and enables efficient monitoring.

However, it is unfortunate that many heads of schools delegate this important task to the academic office, which, in turn, may delegate it to the class monitor. As a result, many class journals in schools are not well-maintained and

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may provide inaccurate or incomplete information, making them less effective for monitoring teaching and learning activities. This issue underscores the importance of proper oversight and management of class journals to ensure they serve their intended purpose effectively.

Another respondent had the following opinions:

> *"Delegation of power is another monitoring tool in the activity of controlling teaching-learning activities. First, it plays the role of motivating delegates, which causes them to work hard and ensure the implementation of activities assigned to them. Secondly, it assists the head of schools in getting information about the performance of teachers in various subjects and activities within a short time. By doing so, it also simplifies making a follow-up"* (AC5 August, 2023).

These findings indicate that heads of public secondary schools check class journals to monitor teachers' classroom attendance and to identify lessons that were taught and those that were not. This highlights the critical role of lesson plans in the teaching and learning process. Kaseke (2015) emphasizes the importance of lesson plans in teaching, describing them as organized structures outlining subject content and learning activities that teachers use to guide instruction within a lesson period. A lesson plan is considered a fundamental tool in the implementation of teaching. Taruvinga and Moyo (2000), as cited in Kaseke (2015), argue that lesson plans offer valuable guidance to teachers and instill confidence in the teaching process. A well-prepared lesson plan simplifies both the learning and teaching processes. According to Okai (2010), as cited in Kaseke (2015), there are several reasons why lesson plans are useful:

> *"The teacher follows correct steps and procedures in teaching, ensuring that time is not wasted during the lesson. Each lesson period is dedicated to covering the day's topic. The lesson plan helps in pursuing meaningful objectives, aligning activities with the content and objectives, and making appropriate use of instructional materials. It also includes proper evaluation procedures and tools. In case a substitute teacher needs to take over the class, the lesson plan serves as a*

> *guide. Additionally the lesson plan helps to identify the most important content for learners"* (Kaseke, 2015, pp. 58-59)

This implies that teachers use lesson plans in order to employ teaching systematically such as proper utilization of time and steps subject division; lesson plans play a great role for teachers in teaching process.

Notice Boards and Students' Notes as Monitoring Tools

Lastly, quantitative and qualitative findings indicated that heads of public secondary schools use notice boards and students' notes as monitoring tools. This is also confirmed by quantitative findings, which indicated that heads of public secondary schools use notice boards (55.40 percent) and lesson notes (54.00 percent) as monitoring tools in monitoring teaching-learning activities. However, the use of notice boards and lesson notes as monitoring tools is minimal, as shown by quantitative findings in Figure 2 above.

One of the respondents said,

> *"Another monitoring tool is the use of a notice board through announcements placed there. However, the majority of public secondary schools nowadays do not have notice boards. Through announcements placed on notice boards, teachers become aware of what is supposed to be done at a particular time, thus simplifying the process of controlling teaching-learning activities"* (AC5 August, 2023).

Another respondent commented

> *"Inspection of students' notes is a good strategy in ensuring academic performance. This is because, if this is not done, the majority of the teachers cannot provide notes, and due to the shortage of books, they may miss notes for self-study when they are at home. Furthermore, checking students' notes helps in correcting mistakes and errors made by learners in terms of content and spelling. By doing so, students are assisted in improving the quality of their notes, thereby helping them enhance their academic performance"* (AC2 August. 2023).

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This indicates that checking students' notes can indeed help improve their academic performance. This is consistent with the findings of Alimi and Akinfolarin (2012), who reported a significant positive impact of checking students' notes on their academic performance in English Language in senior secondary school certificate examinations. Alimi and Akinfolarin's results align with the findings of Hallinger and Heck (1998), who also observed a significant impact of checking students' notes on academic performance in English Language in U.S. elementary schools. Their findings further support the results of Williams (2003), who noted a significant impact of checking students' notes on academic performance in English Language in secondary schools in New York City. However, it is worth noting that these findings are in contrast to the perspective of Firestone and Riehl (2005), who suggested that checking students' notes does not have a direct effect on students' performance in English Language but rather serves as a mediating influence on teachers, curriculum, instruction, community, and school organization.

Instructing

Quantitative and qualitative findings from the study identified instructing teachers as another mechanism employed by heads of public secondary schools to control teaching-learning activities in their schools. Quantitative results, as shown in Figure 1, confirm this aspect, with 73.80 percent of the respondents stating that heads of public secondary schools use instructing as a mechanism for controlling teaching-learning activities. Qualitative findings obtained during the interview sessions support this perspective.

One of the respondents shared the following insight:

> *"Heads of schools must assist teachers in fulfilling their responsibilities by providing instructions. Firstly, teachers need guidance to adhere to the code of conduct for the teaching profession. Secondly, they require direction on how to enhance their professional development and performance in the classroom. This proactive approach helps teachers carry out their teaching and learning activities without the need for external pressure"* (AC3 August, 2023).

This suggests that heads of schools can consider instruction as a self-directed approach to enhancing their teachers' professional development. It may involve utilizing educational materials and instructional manuals provided by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology or other relevant institutions to improve teachers' performance. This aligns with Mushaandja (2013), who emphasizes that school principals should engage in independent self-development techniques, such as studying government-issued documents and instruction manuals, learning through on-the-job experience, and informal interactions with stakeholders. These strategies can help them develop professionally and enhance their own performance. However, qualitative findings revealed that only a limited number of heads of schools actively employ this approach to assist their subordinates in improving their performance.

As one respondent expressed:

> *"In reality, very few of us, if any, provide instruction in that manner with the aim of assisting teachers in their professional development to enhance their performance. This situation is compounded by the teachers themselves, who often appear to be self-reliant and reluctant to seek help in this manner, unless there is a seminar or workshop that includes financial incentives".*

The mechanism of instruction is therefore implemented by very few heads of schools and in most cases the mechanism is not well implemented and thus being less effective.

Checking and Correcting Students' Activities

Once again, both the quantitative and qualitative findings identified checking and correcting students' activities as mechanisms for controlling teaching-learning activities. The quantitative findings, as presented in Figure 1, confirm this, with 70.80 percent of the teacher respondents stating that heads of public secondary schools check students' work and 61.50 percent mentioning that corrections are ensured. Qualitative findings obtained during interview sessions with the five heads of schools and the five academic teachers further support the quantitative results.

For example, one of the respondents stated:

> *"Through checking and correcting students' work, teachers identify their weaknesses in teaching and improve their teaching, while students also enhance their learning. This assists students in learning, ultimately leading to improved performance. If*

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students' work is not checked, sometimes teachers may not take notes, provide exercises and homework, and mark them seriously, which can make learning ineffective. Ineffective learning ultimately results in poor student performance" (AC5 August, 2023).

This is an indication that checking and correcting students' work assist in the improving of teaching-learning activities and performance of learners. Warning for Teachers and Students: According to the study's quantitative and qualitative findings, providing warnings for both teachers and students is an effective mechanism for controlling teaching and learning. This is further supported by the quantitative data presented in Figure 1, where 60.0 percent of the teacher respondents reported that heads of public secondary schools' issue warnings to both teachers and students to regulate teaching and learning activities.

The qualitative findings collected during interview sessions also align with the quantitative results. Qualitative data reveals that warnings serve as corrective measures for teachers and students who exhibit misbehavior.

For instance, one of the respondents shared the following perspective:

"Warnings are issued exclusively to teachers and students who engage in misbehavior, and they prove to be highly beneficial. Teachers receive warnings for a range of misbehaviors, including absenteeism and other unacceptable behaviors that run counter to the standards of the teaching profession, especially those that disrupt teaching and learning activities" (AC1 August, 2023).

Provision of warnings to both teachers and students serves to correct behavior and enables them to focus on teaching-learning activities. This aligns with the findings of Arigbo and Adeogun (2018), who argued that consistent warnings for teachers and students help steer them away from improper deviations, thereby contributing to the overall teaching and learning process.

Guidance for Teachers:

Furthermore, the study's quantitative and qualitative findings identified advising as a mechanism for controlling teaching and learning activities by the heads of public secondary schools. According to both the quantitative and qualitative data, advising is akin to mentoring, and this is

reinforced by the quantitative findings, where 58.50 percent of the respondents reported that heads of public secondary schools provided teachers with advice that proved beneficial in improving their teaching and learning processes. The qualitative findings obtained during interview sessions echo the agreement with the quantitative results presented earlier.

One of the respondents shared the following insight during the interviews:

"Based on my experiences and observations in various secondary schools where I have worked, I've noticed that some school administrators choose to offer guidance in the form of mentoring, particularly to teachers who may be struggling or feeling disheartened. In one instance, I worked with a school head who was determined to prevent some of his teachers from undermining their own work, which could potentially lead to their dismissal. Consequently, he provided them with advice and mentoring, resulting in a positive transformation for many of them, as they transitioned into dedicated and hardworking educators" (AC4 August, 2023).

Advising as a Mechanism for Control:

It is evident that some school administrators choose to provide advice as a mechanism for controlling teaching and learning activities. Advising can be likened to mentoring, where teachers are guided to enhance their approach to fulfilling their responsibilities. This perspective is in line with Petrovska et al. (2018), who assert that mentoring, as an activity aimed at bolstering teachers' competencies, is an essential component of the education field for enhancing the quality of teaching and retaining educators.

Utilizing Punishment

The study's quantitative and qualitative findings reveal that heads of public secondary schools employ punishment as another mechanism to control teaching and learning activities. The quantitative data in Figure 1 affirms this, with 58.50 percent reporting that school administrators use punishment as a means of regulating teaching and learning activities. While punishment is primarily applied to students, teachers may also face various forms of discipline, particularly when they do not consistently adhere to the standards of the teaching profession.

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The qualitative findings obtained from interview sessions align with and further support the quantitative data discussed above.

For instance, one respondent was quoted as saying:

> *"Punishment administered to students is deemed a necessary measure to ensure school attendance and proper learning. Without such disciplinary measures, a significant portion of our students tend to become complacent and fail to take their education seriously. Therefore, it becomes imperative to apply corrective measures, including punishments, to motivate those students who perform below the school's average to become more focused on their studies"* (HoSS4 August, 2023).

This suggests that the fear of potential punishment motivates students to exert more effort in their studies, with the goal of improving their performance and consequently avoiding disciplinary actions.

Furthermore, another respondent offered the following perspective:

> *"The implementation of punishment has significantly contributed to the improvement of our school's overall performance. This is largely due to the fact that many students, who wish to avoid being subjected to disciplinary actions, invest more time and effort in their studies to enhance their performance in tests and examinations. It's not that they necessarily enjoy studying, but their motivation to evade punishment drives them to improve their learning and excel in tests and examinations"* (AC2 August, 2023).

However, research has shown that punishing students can lead to the development of fear, which, in turn, can have negative consequences on their school attendance and academic performance. This fear can also cause students to develop a dislike for their teachers and the subjects they teach. This perspective aligns with the findings of Muthoga (1997), as cited in Arigbo and Adeogun (2018), who revealed that certain forms of punishment, such as caning, can create psychological issues among students, making them fearful of attending school for fear of being punished again. Ultimately, this can undermine the core objectives of education and have adverse effects on students' academic performance.

Hogan and Pressley (1997) also concurred with Muthoga (1997), highlighting that some types of punishment can instill fear in students, leading to truancy and early dropout from school. Such premature attrition from school can result in social exclusion, as affected students may not acquire the necessary skills to benefit themselves and society. Nevertheless, it's worth noting that punishment, to some extent, can incentivize certain students to put in more effort to avoid disciplinary measures. The increased effort in studies, driven by a desire to evade punishment, can lead to improved academic performance. Over time, this practice may become a motivation for the learner to consistently excel in their studies.

In summary, this study has identified various mechanisms employed by school administrators to control teaching and learning activities. These mechanisms encompass monitoring, using tools like teachers' attendance records, lesson plans, rules and regulations, schemes of work, class journals, letters of delegation of power, notice boards, and lesson notes. Additionally, other mechanisms applied by heads of public secondary schools to regulate teaching and learning activities include instructing, checking, advising, correcting, warning, punishment, and motivation.

IV. CONCLUSION

Heads of public secondary schools employ a variety of mechanisms to control teaching-learning activities. These mechanisms encompass monitoring, using tools such as teachers' attendance books, lesson plans, rules and regulations, schemes of work, class journals, letters of delegation of power, notice boards, and lesson notes. Additionally, other mechanisms include instructing, checking, advising, correcting, warning, punishment, and motivation. However, it is worth noting that while warning and punishment may contribute to improved teaching-learning activities, they can negatively affect the motivation and morale of both teachers and students, ultimately leading to subpar teaching-learning performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and the President's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG) should prioritize the enhancement of the managerial abilities of school heads, especially concerning strategies for controlling teaching and learning activities to improve secondary school performance. Additionally, heads of schools should actively seek opportunities to

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improve their knowledge and skills in school management, fostering creativity to effectively manage schools for improved students' academic performance.

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