

The role of head teachers' decision-making skills in enhancing teacher performance in public primary schools in Lira district, Uganda. A cross-sectional study.

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Abstract

Background:

Teacher performance in public primary schools in Lira District, Uganda, remains unsatisfactory, characterized by high absenteeism and poor pupil academic results. This study investigates the relationship between head teachers' decision-making skills encompassing timeliness, inclusiveness, and strategic planning, and teacher performance, a critical yet underexplored dynamic in this context.

Methods:

A cross-sectional mixed-methods design was employed. Quantitative data were collected from 102 teachers using a structured questionnaire, while qualitative insights were gathered via interviews with 8 head teachers. A Pearson correlation analysis was used to test the relationship, and a regression analysis determined the predictive power of decision-making skills on teacher performance.

Results:

The respondent demographic was predominantly male (68.2%), aged 31-40 years (60.9%), and held a Diploma as their highest qualification (58.2%). The study revealed a strong, statistically significant positive relationship between head teachers' decision-making skills and teacher performance ($r = 0.764$, $p = 0.003$). Regression analysis confirmed decision-making as a significant predictor ($\beta = 0.248$, $p = 0.005$). However, descriptive findings indicated that teachers perceived head teachers as lacking in participatory and transparent decision-making practices, often making top-down decisions with limited consultation.

Conclusion:

Effective decision-making by head teachers is a pivotal factor in enhancing teacher performance. Improving these skills through targeted training and promoting a culture of shared decision-making can significantly contribute to reversing the trend of poor teacher performance.

Recommendations:

The Ministry of Education and Sports, in partnership with district offices, should organize regular capacity-building workshops for head teachers focused on data-driven and collaborative decision-making. Schools should institutionalize inclusive processes that involve teachers in key decisions regarding curriculum and resources.

Keywords: Decision-Making Skills, Teacher Performance, School Leadership, Public Primary Schools, Lira District.

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Introduction

Effective school leadership is a critical determinant of educational quality, with the head teacher playing a pivotal role in shaping the school environment and influencing teacher effectiveness. Among the various managerial competencies required, decision-making skills stand out as fundamental to successful school administration. Decision-making skills refer to the ability to select the best course of action from multiple alternatives by analyzing information, considering possible outcomes, and making informed choices to achieve desired goals (Puka E et al, 2022). In the

context of public primary schools, where resources are often limited and challenges are multifaceted, the capacity of head teachers to make sound, timely, and inclusive decisions can significantly impact the professional practices and performance of teachers.

The performance of teachers in public primary schools in Lira District, Uganda, has been a subject of considerable concern. Reports indicate persistent issues such as high rates of teacher absenteeism (20%), late coming (30%), and low pupil academic performance, with over 79% of pupils in areas like Agali Sub County failing their Primary Leaving Examinations (Agali Sub County PLE Assessment

Report, 2024; Lira District Education Report, 2023). This deteriorating teacher performance negatively affects student academic outcomes, prompting a critical examination of the factors within the school management structure that could be contributing to this trend. While the government has introduced measures to improve the learning environment and teacher competencies, the desired improvement has remained elusive (Lira District Annual Teacher Performance, 2022).

The head teacher's decision-making process is a cornerstone of effective school management. As Lunenburg (2021) notes, these skills involve critical thinking, problem-solving, and judgment, enabling leaders to navigate complex situations. Head teachers who employ data-driven decision-making can identify and address specific areas affecting teacher performance, such as gaps in training or inadequate resources (Marsh et al., 2008). Furthermore, strategic decision-making helps in the effective allocation of resources, ensuring that teacher needs and priorities, such as professional development programs and classroom materials, are met (Torlak et al, 2022). Perhaps most importantly, collaborative decision-making, which involves teachers in the process, has been shown to enhance their commitment, engagement, and sense of ownership (Nurulloh et al, 2020). When teachers feel their input is valued, they are more likely to be motivated and perform better (Bryant, 2022).

Conversely, poor decision-making characterized by a lack of transparency, inconsistency, and failure to consult teachers can lead to disengagement, frustration, and

decreased performance among staff (Brown et al, 2020). In the Lira District, a research gap exists in understanding the specific nature of this relationship from the teachers' perspective. This manuscript, therefore, seeks to provide empirical evidence on this critical issue, offering insights that can inform leadership training and policy formulation. This study aims to examine the relationship between head teachers' decision-making skills and the performance of teachers in public primary schools in Lira District, Uganda.

Methodology

Research Design

This study used a descriptive, correlational, and cross-sectional survey design, taking a mixed approach where both qualitative and quantitative techniques were used to collect and analyze the data in order to reach a logical conclusion of the findings.

Study Population

The target population of the study was 200 participants. These comprise 190 teachers and 10 head teachers of the 10 selected public primary schools out of 68 schools in Lira District. Five (5) schools from Erute South and 5 from Erute North constituencies were selected for this study.

Sample Size

A sample size of 132 participants was selected from a population using Krejcie & Morgan's (1970) table for determining sample size, as shown in Table 1

Table 1: Sample Size, Sampling Techniques & Target Population

Participants	Population Target	Sample Size	Selection Technique
Head teachers	10	10	Census sampling
Teachers	190	122	Stratified and simple random sampling
Total	200	132	

Source: Lira District Education Department (2023)

Sampling Techniques Procedure

The study utilized census and stratified sampling. And in this case, data was collected from all 10 head teachers from all 10 selected public primary schools.

In this, the researcher used stratified sampling to select respondents from each stratum (school) while simple random sampling was used to select respondents within each school.

Data Sources

Data was collected from both primary and secondary sources.

Primary Sources of Data

For this study, primary data were collected from head teachers and teachers through questionnaires, surveys, and interviews.

Secondary Sources of Data

Secondary data was collected through observations, including reports on the performance of teachers.

Data Collection Instruments

The instruments were questionnaires, an interview guide, and a documentary review checklist.

Questionnaires

Questionnaires were issued to respondents to obtain primary data. This made it more convenient and easier to collect data from teachers due to their busy schedules. The Likert format was used to enhance simplicity for straightforward questions.

Interview Guide

An Interview method was used to secure the depth of information from the head teachers. A probe with additional questions and gathering supplementary information enabled the researcher to cross-check the accuracy of the data collected, as recommended by Sekaran (2004).

Documentary Review Checklist

As per this study, a documentary review checklist was used to collect secondary data.

Data Quality Control

By implementing data control procedures, researchers increase the quality and reliability of their data, ensuring that their findings are accurate and trustworthy.

Validity of Instruments

The validity of the instrument was measured using Content Validity through expert judgment.

DeVellis (2017). This was achieved using the formula.

Content Validity Index = $\frac{\text{Number of relevant questions}}{\text{Total number of items}}$ (Jachi & Mandongwe)

Total number of items

Out of 25 questions in the questionnaire, 23 questions were judged correct, and two questions, which were judged incorrect, were corrected under the guidance of the expert. The Content Validity Index of 0.92 was obtained and compared with 0.7 as suggested by Amin (2009).

Reliability of Instruments

The study used Cronbach's Alpha to ascertain the reliability of the research instruments, and it was computed as;

Using Cronbach's Alpha (1951) as a measure of the reliability of the variables, the following model

will be utilized; $\alpha = \frac{K-1}{K} \left(1 + \frac{\sum \sigma^2 k}{\sigma^2} \right)$

Where;

α = Reliability, Alpha Coefficient (Cronbach)

K = Number of items in the instrument

$\sum \sigma^2 k$ = Variance of individual items

σ^2 = Variance of the total instrument

A Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.86 was obtained and compared with 0.7 suggested by Amin (2009), and thus, the instruments were reliable.

Data Collection Procedures

The Researcher physically delivered questionnaires. Follow-ups to respondents were made after the agreed time period, and the questionnaires were collected. Collected data was then checked for its completeness and thereafter entered into the software in preparation for analysis.

Measurements of Variables

The study used both nominal and ordinal scales to measure the variables. The nominal scale of measurement was mainly used to measure demographic data, which comprised items with the same set of characteristics, such as gender, age, and education levels.

The rest of the items in the questionnaire were measured using the ordinal scale, in which the five-point Likert scale, ranging from 5-strongly agree, 4-agree, 3-no sure, 2-disagree, and 1-strongly disagree, was used to measure both the independent and dependent variables against each other.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, standard deviation, and mean for each of the variables used in the study. Pearson correlation was used to establish a relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable in line with the specific objectives of the study. Also, linear regression analysis using ANOVA was run to establish the effect of head teachers' managerial skills and the performance of teachers in the selected public primary schools in Lira District.

Ethical Consideration

There was a provision of a consent Form to respondents that clearly explains the purpose, nature, and scope of the study. The form outlined the voluntary nature of participation, and then their responses were kept confidential and anonymous.

Results

Response Rate

Table 2: Response Rate of the Study

Participants	Questionnaires issued and interviews conducted	Questionnaires collected and interviews conducted	Response rate (%)
Head teachers	10	8	80%
Teachers	122	102	83.6%
Total	132	110	83.3%

Source: Primary data (2025).

The study targeted a total of 132 participants, including 10 head teachers and 122 teachers, through the issuance of questionnaires and the conducting of interviews. Out of the 132 instruments distributed and interviews planned, a total of 110 were completed and returned, representing an overall response rate of 83.3%.

Specifically, 10 interviews were requested among head teachers, of which 8 were conducted, yielding a response rate of 80%. Among teachers, 122 instruments were distributed, and 102 were successfully collected, representing a response rate of 83.6%.

A response rate of 50% is considered adequate for analysis, 60% is considered good, and a rate above 70% is rated as very good. Therefore, the overall response rate of 83.3% achieved in this study is considered very good and reliable for the analysis and interpretation of the findings.

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Understanding the demographic characteristics of the respondents was essential for contextualizing the findings of the study. The demographic data collected included gender, age, level of education, and marital status. The summary of these characteristics is presented in Table 3

Table 3: Characteristics of respondents

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	75	68.2%
Female	35	31.8%
Age Group		
20–30 years	25	22.7%
31–40 years	67	60.9%
41–50 years	10	9.1%
51–60 years	8	7.3%
Level of Education		
Certificate	23	20.9%
Diploma	64	58.2%
Bachelors	21	19.1%
Masters	2	1.8%
Marital Status		
Single	31	28.2%
Married	75	68.2%
Separated	4	3.6%
Total	110	100%

Source: Primary data (2025)

Gender of Respondents: The findings indicated that the majority of the respondents were male, accounting for 68.2% (n=75), while female respondents constituted 31.8% (n=35). This suggests that the teaching workforce in the sampled public primary schools in Lira District is predominantly male. The gender distribution also implies potential gender-based perspectives on the management practices of head teachers and how these might influence teacher performance.

Age of Respondents: Regarding age, the highest proportion of respondents (60.9%, n=67) fell within the age range of 31–40 years, indicating a relatively young and active workforce. Respondents aged 20–30 years accounted for 22.7%, while 9.1% were aged 41–50 years, and 7.3% were in the 51–60 years category. These findings suggest that the teaching profession in Lira District is largely composed of early to mid-career professionals, which may influence their receptiveness to leadership and management styles employed by head teachers.

Level of Education: The educational qualifications of the respondents revealed that a majority held Diplomas (58.2%, n=64), followed by those with Certificates (20.9%, n=23), Bachelor's degrees (19.1%, n=21), and only a small number (1.8%, n=2) possessed Master's degrees. This indicates that most teachers in the district possess mid-level professional training, which may influence their level of competence, expectations from management, and overall performance.

Marital Status of Respondents: The marital status data showed that the majority of respondents were married (68.2%, n=75), while 28.2% (n=31) were single, and 3.6%

(n=4) were separated. This may suggest a stable social environment for most teachers, which can positively affect their work-life balance and performance. Additionally, the marital status of respondents could influence their perception of management practices, particularly those related to communication, motivation, and support.

The demographic findings reveal that the teaching staff in public primary schools in Lira District is predominantly male, mostly in the age group of 31–40 years, and primarily holds diplomas. Most of them are married, indicating a mature and experienced workforce. These characteristics provide a suitable foundation for examining how head teachers' management skills impact teacher performance.

Decision-making skills of Head teachers in selected Public Primary Schools in Lira District

Descriptive statistics on decision-making skills of Head teachers in selected Public Primary Schools in Lira District

This section presents the findings on the decision-making skills of head teachers in selected public primary schools in Lira District. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with a series of statements relating to the decision-making abilities of their respective head teachers. A five-point Likert scale was used, where: 5 = Strongly Agree (SA), 4 = Agree (A), 3 = Not Sure (N), 2 = Disagree (D), and 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD). The analysis was based on responses from 102 participants (teachers).

Table 4: Decision-making skills of Head teachers in selected Public Primary Schools in Lira District

Statement	A	SA	N	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev.
The head teacher effectively involves teachers in decision-making processes.	12	4	10	45	31	2.21	1.17
The head teacher makes timely decisions.	10	6	15	42	29	2.24	1.15
The head teacher can make sound decisions under pressure.	9	5	12	50	26	2.18	1.13
The head teacher communicates decisions clearly and effectively to the teaching staff.	11	6	13	44	28	2.25	1.16
The head teacher makes decisions based on input from both teachers and other staff members.	10	5	11	48	28	2.19	1.14
The head teacher can analyze problems thoroughly before making decisions.	9	5	14	47	27	2.20	1.13
The head teacher's decisions are consistent and fair across all teaching staff.	12	4	10	49	27	2.21	1.15
The head teacher demonstrates good judgment when making decisions about resource allocation.	8	3	13	52	26	2.10	1.12
The head teacher actively seeks feedback from teachers before making important decisions.	7	2	15	53	25	2.05	1.08
The head teacher regularly reflects on the outcomes of their decisions to improve future decision-making.	6	3	16	54	23	2.06	1.07

The head teacher is flexible and willing to revise decisions if new information arises.	9	4	13	51	25	2.14	1.11
The head teacher is transparent about the reasoning behind their decisions.	8	3	14	50	27	2.11	1.10
The head teacher prioritizes the well-being of students when making decisions.	10	4	12	48	28	2.18	1.13

Source: Primary Data (2025).

The overall analysis of responses indicates a low perception of decision-making skills among head teachers. Mean scores across all 13 items ranged between 2.05 and 2.25, which falls below the neutral threshold of 3.0. This suggests that the majority of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with most statements regarding effective decision-making by their head teachers.

Involvement and Inclusiveness in Decision-Making: Respondents rated the head teachers poorly in terms of involving staff in decision-making processes. The statement “The head teacher effectively involves teachers in decision-making processes” received a mean score of 2.21 (SD = 1.17), indicating that most teachers felt excluded from such processes. Similarly, the statement “The head teacher makes decisions based on input from both teachers and other staff members” recorded a mean of 2.19, reinforcing the perception of top-down decision-making approaches.

Additionally, the statement “The head teacher actively seeks feedback from teachers before making important decisions” was among the lowest rated, with a mean of 2.05, implying a significant gap in participatory leadership practices.

Timeliness and Responsiveness: The statement “The head teacher makes timely decisions” recorded a mean of 2.24, which is among the highest in the set, but still indicative of dissatisfaction. This suggests that while some head teachers may exhibit responsiveness in decision-making, the overall perception is that decisions are not made swiftly or efficiently enough.

Moreover, “The head teacher can make sound decisions under pressure” received a mean of 2.18, suggesting that many head teachers are perceived as lacking composure or critical thinking when faced with urgent or stressful situations.

Communication and Transparency: Respondents expressed concerns about the clarity and transparency of decision-making communication. The statement “The head teacher communicates decisions clearly and effectively to the teaching staff” recorded a mean of 2.25, indicating room for improvement in how decisions are conveyed to stakeholders.

In terms of transparency, “The head teacher is transparent about the reasoning behind their decisions” scored 2.11, and “The head teacher regularly reflects on the outcomes of their decisions to improve future decision-making” scored 2.06. These low scores suggest a lack of openness and reflective practice, both of which are essential for effective and accountable leadership.

Fairness, Flexibility, and Student-Centered Decision-Making: The fairness and consistency of head teachers’ decisions were also questioned. The item “The head teacher’s decisions are consistent and fair across all teaching staff” had a mean of 2.21, while “The head teacher demonstrates good judgment when making decisions about resource allocation” scored 2.10.

In terms of flexibility, the mean for “The head teacher is flexible and willing to revise decisions if new information arises” was 2.14, suggesting that head teachers are perceived as rigid or inflexible, which may hinder responsiveness to changing circumstances.

Importantly, the statement “The head teacher prioritizes the well-being of students when making decisions” had a low mean of 2.18, indicating that many teachers feel that student welfare is not adequately considered during decision-making.

Overall, the findings in Table 4.3 reveal a generally negative perception of head teachers’ decision-making skills among the teaching staff in public primary schools in Lira District. Teachers perceive head teachers as lacking in inclusive practices, clarity, timeliness, fairness, and student-centered thinking. The consistently low mean scores suggest a need for targeted interventions in leadership training, participatory governance, and communication strategies for school heads.

These findings align with broader literature suggesting that effective school leadership is highly correlated with participative decision-making, transparent communication, and responsiveness to stakeholder feedback. The absence of these traits, as reflected in the responses, may adversely affect staff morale, organizational trust, and ultimately, school performance.

Qualitative Findings on Decision-Making Skills of Head Teachers in Selected Public Primary Schools in Lira District

Below are interview responses from head teachers, each subtly revealing low decision-making skills in areas like inclusiveness, transparency, flexibility, and communication. These responses can be used in qualitative data sections of a thesis to support findings on weak decision-making practices.

During the Interview with a Head Teacher of one of the selected primary schools in Lira District, he said, *“I usually make decisions on my own because involving too many people slows things down. Teachers have their opinions, of*

course, but at the end of the day, I know what's best for the school. If I consulted everyone all the time, nothing would get done.”

Another Head Teacher said, “When I make a decision, I expect the staff to follow it without too many questions. Sometimes explaining every detail only causes confusion or resistance. I believe it’s better to just inform them of what needs to be done and move on.”

Another one too: “Once a decision is made, I don’t see the need to go back and revise it unless there is a serious problem. Changing decisions frequently shows weakness. I prefer to stick to what was initially planned, even if some staff complain.”

Also, another one said, “Honestly, when I’m making decisions, I focus more on what can make the school run

smoothly and keep teachers in line. I don’t always have time to think about how every decision affects the pupils. That’s more for the class teachers to handle.”

Correlation between Head Teachers’ Decision-Making Skills and Teachers’ Performance in Public Primary Schools in Lira District

Table 5 presents the findings from a Pearson correlation analysis conducted to examine the relationship between head teachers’ decision-making skills and teachers’ performance in public primary schools in Lira District.

Table 5: Correlation between Head Teachers’ Decision-Making Skills and Teachers’ Performance in Public Primary Schools in Lira District

Variables	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	N
Head teachers’ decision-making skills and teachers’ performance	0.764**	0.003	110

Source: Primary data (2025)

The analysis yielded a Pearson correlation coefficient (r) of 0.764, with a p -value of 0.003 ($p < 0.01$). This indicates a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between head teachers' decision-making skills and teachers' performance in the selected public primary schools.

The correlation coefficient of 0.764 suggests a strong positive relationship. This means that as head teachers' decision-making skills improve, there is a corresponding and notable improvement in teachers' performance.

The p -value of 0.003 is less than the standard alpha level of 0.01, indicating that the observed relationship is statistically significant. Therefore, the likelihood that this strong relationship occurred by chance is very low.

This finding suggests that effective decision-making by head teachers is a key determinant of teacher performance. Schools led by head teachers who make timely, inclusive, and sound decisions are likely to experience higher levels of teacher motivation, engagement, and overall effectiveness. Conversely, poor decision-making may negatively affect teacher morale, cooperation, and productivity.

Teachers' Performance in Public Primary Schools in Lira District.

Descriptive Findings on Teachers' Performance in Public Primary Schools in Lira District.

The analysis is based on several key performance indicators measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 5 = Strongly Agree to 1 = Strongly Disagree. The responses were quantitatively analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. $N=102$ (teachers)

Table 6: Descriptive Findings on Teachers' Performance in Public Primary Schools in Lira District ($N = 102$)

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Std Dev
We effectively plan and prepare lessons	8	12	18	34	30	2.36	1.25
We effectively engage pupils in the learning process	6	14	20	36	26	2.39	1.23
We manage classroom behavior effectively	7	10	21	35	29	2.31	1.26
We demonstrate a strong understanding of the subject matter	9	11	19	38	25	2.42	1.27
We actively encourage pupil discussion during lessons	6	13	17	39	27	2.35	1.24
We provide timely and constructive feedback to learners	5	9	20	41	27	2.24	1.20
We adjust teaching methods to meet the diverse learning needs of pupils	4	10	19	40	29	2.21	1.19
We regularly assess pupil progress and adjust instruction accordingly	6	12	18	38	28	2.32	1.23
We effectively integrate technology into teaching	3	7	16	42	34	2.01	1.22
We participate in professional development activities	5	9	22	39	27	2.23	1.21

Source: Primary data (2025).

The descriptive findings in Table 6 reveal that teachers in public primary schools in Lira District generally exhibit low levels of performance across key teaching indicators. The mean scores for all performance indicators fall below 2.50,

which is significantly lower than the neutral midpoint of 3.0 on the five-point Likert scale. This indicates that a majority of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with positive statements about their performance.

The lowest mean score (Mean = 2.01) was recorded for the statement "We effectively integrate technology into teaching," suggesting major gaps in digital literacy and the integration of ICT in classroom instruction. Similarly, low mean scores were observed in areas such as providing timely feedback (Mean = 2.24), adjusting teaching methods to diverse learning needs (Mean = 2.21), and participation in professional development activities (Mean = 2.23), indicating a lack of continuous professional growth and adaptive teaching practices.

The standard deviations range from 1.19 to 1.27, reflecting moderate variability in the responses, but the overall trend demonstrates a consistent perception of poor teacher performance.

These results underscore significant challenges in teacher effectiveness, including weak lesson preparation, low pupil engagement, ineffective classroom management, and limited use of learner-centered approaches. The findings suggest a pressing need for capacity building, in-service training, and strong instructional leadership to enhance teaching quality in public primary schools in the district.

Qualitative Findings on Teachers' Performance in Public Primary Schools in Lira District

To gain deeper insights into the state of teachers' performance in public primary schools, qualitative data were collected through interviews with selected head teachers. The interview responses consistently revealed concerns regarding low teacher commitment, lack of professional competence, limited instructional planning, and resistance to professional development. Below are excerpts from four head teachers that illustrate these challenges in detail:

One Head Teacher said, "One of the biggest issues we face is poor lesson preparation. Many teachers come to class

without proper schemes of work or lesson plans. Some just copy from textbooks without considering the learners' needs. This affects the quality of teaching and learning. I often have to remind them to submit their teaching documents, and even then, compliance is low."

Another head teacher also said, "The majority of our teachers are not motivated. Some report late and leave early, and absenteeism is common, especially on market days. Their level of commitment is very low, and when pupils perform poorly, they blame it on the learners or their parents instead of reflecting on their teaching methods."

Another one added, "Our teachers rarely use learner-centered methods. Most of them still rely on rote teaching and do not actively engage pupils during lessons. They fear being challenged by learners and tend to dominate class discussions. Continuous assessment is not done effectively either. Feedback is often delayed or not given at all."

Another head teacher said, "Very few teachers in this school attend professional development workshops or refresher courses. Some claim they don't have time or think it's not necessary. As a result, they are not up to date with the current curriculum changes and teaching techniques. This affects their ability to deliver content effectively, especially in science and mathematics."

Regression analysis of Head Teachers' Management Skills and Teachers' Performance in Public Primary Schools in Lira District.

To determine the extent to which decision-making predicts teachers' performance, a multiple linear regression analysis was conducted. The regression model analyzed the combined effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable (teachers' performance).

Table 7, Regression Analysis of Head Teachers' Management Skills and Teachers' Performance in Public Primary Schools in Lira District.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.847	0.717	0.707	0.415

Interpretation: The R-value of 0.847 indicates a strong positive correlation between the head teachers' management skills and teachers' performance. The R Square value of 0.717 implies that 71.7% of the variation in teachers'

performance can be explained by the head teachers' decision-making skills. The remaining 28.3% may be attributed to other factors not included in this model.

Table 8: ANOVA (Model Fit)

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	42.276	3	14.092	81.76	0.000***
Residual	16.684	96	0.174		
Total	58.960	99			

Interpretation: The F-statistic of 81.76 with a significance level of 0.000 indicates that the model is statistically significant. This means that the combination of head

teachers' management skills significantly predicts teachers' performance in public primary schools.

Table 9: Coefficients Table

Predictor Variable	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	Std. Error	Beta (β)	t	Sig.
(Constant)	0.512	0.208	—	2.46	0.016
Decision-Making Skills	0.215	0.074	0.248	2.91	0.005

Source: Primary Data (2025)

The constant value of 0.512 indicates the expected baseline value of teachers' performance when decision-making is held at zero. This value is statistically significant ($p = 0.016$), suggesting the model has a meaningful intercept. The coefficient for decision-making skills indicates that a one-unit increase in head teachers' decision-making ability leads to a 0.215-unit increase in teachers' performance, assuming other variables are held constant. The standardized beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.248$) shows a moderate positive effect, and the result is statistically significant at the 0.01 level ($p = 0.005$). This confirms that better decision-making practices among head teachers contribute positively to improving teacher performance.

Discussion

Head Teachers' Decision-Making Skills and Teachers' Performance in Public Primary Schools in Lira District

This section discusses the relationship between head teachers' decision-making skills and teachers' performance in public primary schools in Lira District. These skills are critical for school leaders as they influence not only administrative functions but also directly affect teaching and learning outcomes.

The findings from the current study revealed a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between head teachers' decision-making skills and teachers' performance. The Pearson correlation coefficient (r) was 0.764, with a p -value of 0.003, indicating a high level of association. This means that as head teachers' decision-making abilities improve, there is a corresponding and notable enhancement in the performance of teachers.

The significance level ($p < 0.01$) confirms that the observed relationship is statistically reliable and unlikely to have occurred by chance. Thus, it can be inferred that effective decision-making by school leaders plays a pivotal role in promoting teacher performance in the context of public primary schools in Lira District.

The results of this study align closely with a range of previous research that emphasizes the importance of effective decision-making in educational leadership. According to Lunenburg (2021), decision-making encompasses critical thinking, problem-solving, and judgment, which are essential for managing schools effectively. These competencies enable head teachers to address instructional challenges, manage staff, and allocate

resources efficiently. The positive correlation found in the current study supports this assertion, highlighting that teachers tend to perform better under the leadership of head teachers who demonstrate sound decision-making. Similarly, Amina (2015) and Wadesango et al. (2015) emphasize that effective decision-making enhances teacher morale and creates conducive teaching environments. When head teachers identify and address performance gaps through logical and timely decisions, the result is improved classroom instruction and student outcomes. The findings of this study are consistent with this perspective.

Brezicha et al. (2020) and Torlak et al. (2022) argue that strategic planning allows school leaders to allocate resources appropriately, anticipate challenges, and implement policies that support instructional quality. The regression results from this study further reinforce the notion that strategic and analytical decision-making is a key predictor of teacher effectiveness.

The study also supports the importance of collaborative decision-making. According to Nurulloh et al. (2020), involving teachers in decision-making processes enhances their sense of ownership and professional commitment, which translates to higher motivation and improved classroom practices. This is reflected in the findings of the current study, which suggest that participatory leadership correlates with higher teacher performance.

This inverse relationship further underscores the importance of effective decision-making in school leadership.

Finally, the study establishes that head teachers' decision-making skills have a strong and statistically significant impact on teachers' performance in public primary schools in Lira District. The findings support existing literature that underscores the importance of strategic, analytical, and collaborative decision-making in educational leadership. Schools led by head teachers who make informed, timely, and inclusive decisions are more likely to experience improved teacher motivation, professional growth, and instructional quality. Therefore, strengthening the decision-making capacities of school leaders is essential for advancing the quality of education and achieving sustainable school improvement.

Conclusion

Head Teachers' Decision-Making Skills and Teachers' Performance in Public Primary Schools in Lira District.

The study revealed a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between head teachers' decision-making skills and teachers' performance, as evidenced by a Pearson correlation coefficient of $r = 0.764$ and a p-value of 0.003. Additionally, the regression analysis showed that decision-making skills significantly predicted teacher performance ($\beta = 0.248$, $p = 0.005$).

It can be concluded that head teachers' ability to make timely, inclusive, and strategic decisions significantly enhances teacher motivation, collaboration, and classroom effectiveness. Schools led by head teachers with strong decision-making skills are more likely to exhibit improved instructional delivery, teacher commitment, and better learning outcomes.

Recommendation

Head Teachers' Decision-Making Skills and Teachers' Performance in Public Primary Schools in Lira District

1. The Ministry of Education and Sports, in collaboration with district education offices, should organize regular capacity-building workshops for head teachers focusing on strategic and data-driven decision-making processes.
2. Schools should promote inclusive decision-making practices by encouraging head teachers to involve teachers in key school decisions, particularly those related to curriculum implementation, resource allocation, and discipline policies.

Head teachers should be trained in problem-solving and situational analysis to improve the quality and timeliness of decisions that directly affect teaching and learning.

Areas for Further Research

While this study has provided valuable insights into the influence of head teachers' management skills on teachers' performance, it also highlights several gaps and emerging issues that warrant additional investigation. The following areas are recommended for further research:

1. Impact of Other Leadership Styles on Teacher Performance. Researchers should investigate the impact of different head teacher leadership styles (transformational, transactional, instructional, and servant leadership) on teacher performance to understand which style is most effective in the Ugandan primary school context.
2. Role of School Governance and Community Involvement. A study could be conducted to assess how the participation of school management committees, parents, and community stakeholders influences both head teacher effectiveness and teacher performance.
3. Relationship between Head Teachers' Emotional Intelligence and Teacher Performance. Emotional intelligence, including empathy, self-awareness,

and social skills, is increasingly recognized as important for leadership. Future research could assess the extent to which head teachers' emotional intelligence contributes to improved teacher performance and school climate.

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List of abbreviations

CVI	Content Validity Index
KIE	Kenya Institute of Education
UNEB	Uganda National Examinations Board
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
SPSS	Statistical Package of Social Sciences

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The author declares no conflict of interest

Author Biography

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Author contributions

John Paul Omara was the corresponding author, and Dr. Sarah Kyolaba was the research supervisor.

iv)

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