

Exploring management styles of university department chairpersons in improving the quality of education in Zimbabwe

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A b s t r a c t

The effectiveness of higher education institutions (HEIs) in delivering quality services is influenced by management theories and practices of chairpersons. This paper aims to explore management styles of department chairpersons of state and church universities in improving the quality of education as specified by Agenda 2030 and Education 5.0. Forty chairpersons from two HEIs in Zimbabwe participated in this mixed methods study by responding to a randomly distributed structured questionnaire. Four chairpersons participated in face to face interviews and documentary analysis to understand their management styles. Statistical Product and Service Solutions were used for quantitative analysis. Qualitative data was analysed thematically. The paper demonstrated that chairpersons applied management approaches resembling Authoritarian, Participative and Delegated leadership depending on leaders and situations. The study found limited resources, lack of leadership training, role conflict and work overload militating against chairpersons' effectiveness. Professional training in management practices for chairpersons was recommended for organisational effectiveness.

Keywords: leadership, management styles, management practices, higher education institutions, HEIs, Education 5.0, ZIMCHE, Zimbabwe