

Leadership Skills in ODL: Perceptions of Lecturers at Masvingo Zimbabwe Open University

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Abstract

Distance and Open education is a kind of constantly evolving business which needs effective leaders. Leadership is known for its unique responsibility for people. In managing Open and Distance Learning (ODL) programmes group activities are required and the emergence of a leader becomes imminent. People work effectively where there is a leader to guide them and keep them motivated on their way to success. As much as it is necessary to have leaders in ODL, it is also essential that leaders have the right qualities and skills. To inspire one's workers in ODL there are certain things a leader must be, know and perform. A case study was conducted at Masvingo Zimbabwe Open University to investigate worker/lecturer opinions on what makes an effective leader in an ODL institution. One general opinion expressed by participants was that good leadership requires deep human qualities such as fairness and that good leaders in ODL are an enabling force helping institutions and people to perform and develop. Some lecturers felt that effective leaders were aggressive evolutionists who introduce shifts according to student needs. The study recommended that leaders in ODL should continue to study and upgrade their qualities.

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