

Instructional Leadership Effectiveness in Preparatory Schools of Hadiya Zone in Southern Nation Nationalities and Peoples Regional Government, Ethiopia.

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Abstract: *The purpose of this study was to assess the status and determinants of instructional leadership effectiveness in preparatory school of Hadiya zone in South Nation Nationalities People Regional Government. According to the Education and Training Policy of Ethiopia (1994) the main objective of the teaching learning in our country enable the learners impart knowledge and skills necessary to solve the problem of the society. These objectives may be realized only if students' get quality education that makes them competent in this world of competition and one of the measures by which this quality is assured through effective leaders besides clearly identified their school roles. The study used descriptive survey design along both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative data were collected through questionnaires from 140 teachers and 19 school leaders selected through random and purposive sampling respectively. Semi structured interviews were also held with 6 woredas education office inspectors. Using SPSS version20, quantitative data were analyzed with statistical tools such as: frequency distribution, mean scores, standard deviation and t-test while qualitative data were analyzed using contents analysis methods. The study indicates that, the status of school leadership effectiveness generally was low. The study also indicated that school leaders' practices on instructional leadership were unsatisfactory. The; lack of knowledge in giving constructive feedback for the staff; lack of participatory decision making capacity were major factors that hinder leadership effectiveness. Based on major findings facilitating the implementation of school mission, vision and goals and staff development experience sharing; providing updating and upgrading trainings were recommended.*

Key words: *Instructional leadership, Leadership, Leadership effectiveness and Principals.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

1.1 Background of the study

Leadership and the study of it has roots in the beginning of civilization Egyptian rulers, Greek heroes and Biblical patriarchs all have one thing in common leadership. There are numerous definition and theories of leadership; however, there are enough similarities in the definition to conclude that leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal (Rowe, 2007). Leadership in an organization has been defined differently by different scholars. Nutshell, Leadership as "the behavior of an individual that direct activities of a group toward a shared goal." Leadership is also explained as influential role over and above mechanical compliance with the routine directives of the organization (Katz and Kahn, 1987). It is also been as strategy of mobilizing institutional, political, psychological and other resources so as to arouse, engage and satisfy the motives of followers (Burns, 1978). On the other hand leadership can be expressed as the process of influencing the activities of group individuals to ward achievement organizational goal (Rauch and Behling, 1984). As a concept it is an act of articulating visions, embodying values and creating the environment within which things can be accomplished (Richards and Engle, 1986). It can also be equated as a process meaningful direction to collective effort and creating effort to be expanded willingly to achieve some prescribed purposes (Jacobs and Jaques, 1990). This implies it is the ability of individuals to step outside the culture, initiate and manage evolutionary changes (Schein 1992) by influencing, motivating and enabling followers committed to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organization (Drath and Palus, 1994). Similarly, a school system which is made up of departments, teaching and non teaching staff and students requires effective Principals. Principals are considered to be the key player for creating and sustaining well-run schools and for developing high standard achievement of students result. Principals' major role is to help provide the focus and support system to enable teachers to develop their classrooms for greater instructional effectiveness. The work effectiveness of the school depends on the co-operation between these people and the principal (Ibukun, 2011).

The importance of school principal in leadership responsibilities is becoming very significant particularly in promoting students achievement. Often times, principals seem too busy with all the day to day responsibilities of running their schools that they do not seem to have enough time to practice leadership as expected. Adedoyin (2013; p: 64) states that “the school system is riddled with series of problems which include shortage of funds and materials, poor academic performance, cultism and drug addiction among students, examination malpractices students and staff indiscipline and so on”. The solution to these problems cannot be guaranteed where school leaders fail to use the appropriate leadership style for specific situations in the process of achieving the aims and objectives of the schools. To this end, the need for smooth running of the school system calls for effective leadership. The principal as the head of the school works together with other members of staff in setting objectives of the school. He/she in co-operation with teachers work towards the achievement of objectives. However, the principals’ effectiveness as a leader is measured in the school system by how far he/she carries out tangential duties which often reflect personal effectiveness (Ibukun, 2011). Work effectiveness of the school system requires atmosphere of mutual trust, understanding and cooperation between the school head and the subordinates. Similarly leadership is an important aspect of an organization. This is due to the fact that the degree of accomplishment of organizational goal by large lies on the degree of effectiveness of its leadership (Bolden, 2003). Effective leader results in higher performance where as an ineffective leadership results in cripple organization. This is the reason that when the leaders are effective, the subordinates are motivated and do their best to achieve their organizational objectives. Hallinger and Heck (1998) argue that educational leadership has a substantial effect on education organization. It is heart and soul of an educational institution and crucial for well achievements of an organizational objectives. Leadership in Educational institutions is a process of giving direction and instructional leaders are identified on the basis of their relationship with their followers (Chima, 2007; Rogers, 2006). Effective successful instructional leadership must have a clear vision that shows how all components of a school will operate together. Similarly, work effectiveness of the school system requires an atmosphere of mutual trust and understanding between school heads their subordinates (teachers) in developing school mission, vision and goals, creating a unity of purpose facilitating communication and managing instruction (Biech,2010). Schools are increasingly under public inspection, supervision at regional level are established for visiting schools to monitor the effectiveness of school management, teachers’ performance and students’ achievement and principals are becoming more accountable to expectations of school improvement (MoE, 2008:11). In addition, leadership cannot be separated from the socio political, cultural, historical, or ideological environments in which it exists. Now school leaders are facing the challenge of educating a growing diversity of students; of being responsive to the needs of students and society; and are accountable for effective teaching and learning processes. Effective school leaders are able to utilize the skills of all in the schools to reach school goals within a minimal time. Good school leaders are those who are able to maximize the diverse leadership qualities of others, enabling them to take on leadership within their areas of expertise. School principals are being effective when they are visionary and clear about their mission. Such principals can achieve school success by motivating teachers and creating a collaborative community in schools. If schools lack effective leadership seldom they can reach their own articulated goals. Lack of effective leadership is a vital issue in education. Leadership must include positional leaders but it should also stimulate and comprise the leadership activities of others. Harris’ (2003) study examines the essentials of effective leadership in schools facing challenging contexts in terms of achievement rates in public examination and socio economic status. This study explains that to be successful a range of leadership styles is needed; no one style is perfect for all situations Harris found that factors affecting success include the school’s vision and values, distributing leadership, investing in staff development, developing and maintaining relationships, and community building. This implies that successful leaders are people centered and those who give importance to human needs rather than to organizational needs according to personal and professional values. They also distribute their leadership to other teachers. They extend the boundaries of participatory leadership and are able to combine a moral purpose with a willingness to promote collaboration amongst colleagues through investing in teacher development. This study suggests that school leadership is a collective endeavor which succeeds by involving all teachers in leadership and tapping their skills. Under different challenging circumstances, leaders could be successful by building the community of the school through developing relationships and involving others, and providing best opportunities for teaching and learning. Harris believes that success cannot be achieved by the heroic leadership practices of a single principal alone. Effective leadership is developed through collaborative professional learning and aims at purposeful change in schools. All teachers have potential to contribute to leadership for school improvement, but need scope for engaging themselves. The positional leader is designated to develop organizational procedures; build the cultural climate; and provide support for all teachers to be able to contribute their knowledge and skills to leadership that helps to build leadership capacity. This concept of leadership puts school leaders in a position where their leadership roles become more fluid and distributed than any other forms of leadership. School effectiveness has emphasized the relevance of instructional leadership (Hallinger and Murphy, 1985). Most aspects of school leadership actions are concerned on the learning progress of the pupils. These include management oriented as well as leadership oriented activities like a suitable application of resources for teaching, agreement on school goals, the promotion of cooperative relationships between

staff and specially giving continuous professional developments through updating and upgrading of teachers. According to Silns and Mulford (2002a&b) found four factors defined organizational leadership in schools:- A trusting and collaborating climate, a shared and monitored goals; taking initiatives and risks ;and ongoing relevant professional development. The importance of school leaders in determining school and students' performance and the problems facing them in their school leadership, school leadership effectiveness on communicating school goals and assessing continuous professional development are key issues for study. Therefore, from the actual challenges of instructional leadership and the need to have effective schools, which provide quality education, an effectiveness of principal Instructional leadership in preparatory school of Hadiya zone have a significance from the perspective of policy and the need of the society. The main purpose of this study is to Instructional Leadership Effectiveness in Preparatory Schools of Hadiya Zone in Southern Nation Nationalities and peoples Regional Government, Ethiopia.

1.2. Research Questions:

To achieve the aforementioned purposes, the following research questions were designed:

- To what extent do school principals communicating and setting school mission, vision and goals with stakeholders?
- Have the school principals made attempts to promote teachers' continuous professional development (CPD)?

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

School Principals' as Instructional Leadership

According to Hallinger (2003), the principal's function in a school is a complex one consisting of "managerial, political, instructional, institutional, human resource, and symbolic leadership roles in school". Therefore, the principal's role as instructional leader is one of the many duties a principal has. Instructional leadership role is the premeditated process to improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools. Therefore, the roles of principals as instructional leaders are to provide guidance to teachers on curriculum and pedagogy, encourage students analyze weaknesses and guide teachers and students. Leithwood et al., (2006) state that principals' working condition has both direct and indirect effects on teaching and students' achievement respectively. The literature suggests that principals of effective schools are those who devote more time to the coordination and control of instruction, perform more observations of teachers' work; discuss work problems with teachers; are more supportive of teachers' efforts to improve (especially by distributing instructional materials or promoting in-service training activities); and are more active in setting up teacher evaluation procedures.

The Effectiveness of Principal in Developing Mission and Shared Vision

Creating a learning organization requires a deep rethinking of the leader's role. Principals and superintendents must see themselves as 'learning leaders' responsible for helping schools develop the capacity to carry out their mission. A crucial part of this role is cultivating and maintaining a shared vision which provides focus, generating questions that apply to everyone in the organization. According to Day, et al. (2010) successful school leaders have very strong and clear vision and set of values for their school, which heavily influenced their actions and the actions of others and established a clear sense of direction and purpose for the school. These were shared widely, clearly understood and supported by all staff. They were a touchstone against which all new developments, policies or initiatives were tested.

The Effectiveness of Principal in Promoting Professional Skill Development

Promoting teacher professional development, according to Sheppard (1996) is the most influential instructional leadership behavior at both the elementary and high school levels. To strengthen this; according to Hallinger(cited in Wossenu 2006) the key role of instructional leadership is the promotion of teachers' professional growth with respect to teaching methods by taking definite steps and collegial interactions about teaching and learning. So that School leaders can play a key role in providing and promoting in-service professional development programs for teachers. To enhance school leaders' capacity to promote staff development, policy makers should emphasize the core responsibility of teacher professional development and consider devolving discretion over training and development bud gets to the school level so that school leaders can offer and coordinate meaningful professional learning opportunities for all their teachers (Leithwood et al., 2006).

3. RESEARCH METHODS:

Based on a research question, cross sectional descriptive survey design were used in this study. This is because this design is relatively inexpensive and takes up little time to conduct. Moreover, it was recommended when gathering data about respondents' perceptions, beliefs, opinion scores, and outcomes (Creswell, 2003). Cohen, Manion and

Morrison (2001) asserted that many scientific disciplines, especially social science and education, use cross-sectional descriptive survey design. For Creswell (2003), such design also used to obtain general overview of the subject, and to generalize study findings from sample to population. Utilizing mixed methods approach through collecting and analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data. The target populations of the study were preparatory school teachers, principals and woreda (district) level general education inspectors. In the sample selected schools, there are 433 teachers and 19 school leaders (both principals and vice principals). The sample of this study was 159 respondents which comprises 140(33.3%) teachers and 19(100%) of principals were selected through proportionate stratified and purposive sampling respectively. Moreover out of 8 woreda general education inspectors 6(75%) were selected by simple random sampling.

4. DATA ANALYSIS:

The data collection instruments were questionnaires and interview. A five point Likert scale was used to measure quantitative data and semi-structured interview were held to qualitative data which is gathered from four woreda education office. The data was analyzed using mean, standard deviation and t-test through the help of statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 20.

5. DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS:

5.1 Role in areas of Setting Mission, Vision and goals of school

Principals are expected to concentrate on setting goals and developing a vision in order to direct the operations of their schools, share leadership with teachers, and influence schools to operate as learning communities (Stronge, 2008). School leaders are responsible and accountable to develop a clear vision and mission which focus on students' academic achievements. Their activity inspires and leads new and challenging innovations. According to Day, et al. (2010) successful school leaders have very strong and clear vision and set of values for their school, which heavily influenced their actions and the actions of others and established a clear sense of direction and purpose for the school. These were shared widely, clearly understood and supported by all staff. Therefore, the visionary instructional leadership particularly school principal; provides teachers and learners with an overall sense of purpose and what responsibility is expected of them. Since developing mission, shared vision and goals is also one of the instructional role of principals in the school for the success of teaching learning process effectively. To identify this instructional leadership role, the researcher prepared 8-items for school leaders and teachers. So, all the prepared items that describe this dimension of role of school principal as instructional leaders were presented to the respondents. All items were set to elicit the instructional leadership effectiveness on developing the mission, shared vision and goals of the preparatory schools. They were asked to rate their level of agreement to which these roles really practiced in their schools using a five point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagreement (1) to strongly agreement (5). The mean value, and standard deviation of the respondents were used for the sake of interpretation as follows:

Table 1: Responses on Setting Mission, Vision and goals of school

NO	Items	Teachers		School leaders		T-test	P-value
		Mean values(M)	Standard deviation(SD)	Mean values(M)	School Leaders		
1	School leaders develop vision based strategic direction.	3.42	1.29	4.05	0.84	2.06	0.040
2	Articulating clearly the strategic goals of the school	3.49	1.19	4.05	0.22	2.03	0.043
3	Aligning school goals with the national educational planning	3.49	1.33	3.94	1.12	3.74	0.002
4	Implements the vision through strategic planning.	3.57	1.24	3.36	1.38	0.66	0.5
5	Creating consensus with stakeholders and staff about the school's goals	2.94	1.24	3.84	1.16	2.94	0.004
6	Clearly state the mission of school	2.86	1.37	3.26	1.32	1.04	0.29

7	Collectively establish school goals and revise goals annually with all stakeholders.	2.57	1.21	3.21	1.47	2.06	0.040
8	Clearly understand all stakeholders about the mission of school	2.81	1.28	3.15	1.46	2.07	0.041
	Grand mean	3.14	1.26	3.61	1.12		

Key: Mean value below 3.00 as “low” or low practiced, 3.00-3.99 as “moderate” or good practiced, and above 4.00 as “high” or very good practiced

Goals and visions always show the destiny of an organization. In any organization, they are too crucial in showing the direction towards future success. Appropriately setting goals and vision is one indicator for the presence of effective leadership in an organization. With regard to the role of school principals in the dimension of setting Mission, Vision and goals of the school on Table-1 items 1 and 2, Accordingly teachers with mean value of 3.42, and 3.49, shows moderately performed where as school leaders mean value of 4.05 and 4.05 shows “high” or very good practiced. This implies school leaders were found to be effective with regard to these aspects of school operations. The calculated t-value for school leaders develop vision based on strategic direction ($t=2.04$, $p=0.04$) indicates that there is statistically significant difference between the two groups on the item. On the other hand on item 2 the calculated t-value ($p<0.05$) this showed that there is statistically significant difference between the two groups on the performance. On the same table item 3, regarding school leaders aligning school goals with the national educational planning, the mean value of both teachers ($M=3.49$, $SD=1.33$) and school leaders ($M=3.94$, $SD=1.12$) indicated that their performance on this leadership dimension is moderate. The calculated t-value ($t=3.74$, $p=0.002$) showed that there is statistically significant difference between the two groups on the performance. Additionally, as indicated in item 4 of Table-1, as far as school leaders implementing the vision through strategic planning, the mean value of both teachers ($M=3.57$, $SD=1.24$) and school leaders ($M=3.36$, $SD=1.38$) and the t-value ($t=0.66$, $p=0.50$) showed that there is no statistically significant difference between the two groups on the issues. As showed in items 5, regarding school leaders creating consensus with stakeholders and staff about the schools’ goals, teachers reported that ($M=2.94$, $SD=3.84$) their perform on this leadership dimension was low while school leaders perform this moderate, the calculated t-value ($t=2.94$, $p=0.004$) showed that that there is statistically significant difference between the two groups on the performance. On Table -1 item 6, concerning school leaders clearly state the mission of school, the mean value of teachers ($M=2.86$, $SD=3.26$) their performance on this leadership was low where as school leaders performed better. The t-value ($t=1.04$, $p=0.29$) showed that there is no statistically significant difference between the two groups on the performance. On the other hand items 7 and 8 of Table- 1, as far as school leaders collectively establishing school goals and revise goals annually with all stakeholders and clearly understanding all stakeholders about the mission of school teachers with mean value of 2.57 and 2.55 showed low practiced where as school leaders with mean value of 3.84 and 3.36 indicated moderately performed, the t-value of the two items(7,8) indicated that there are statistically significant difference between the two groups on the performance. The overall mean score of both teachers’ ($M=3.14$, $SD=1.26$) and school leaders ($M=3.61$, $SD=1.12$) this showed that the school leaders performance on setting mission, vision and goals of school were better performed. Accordingly the interview results of the WOEIs respondents, indicates that school leaders were using different mechanisms to provide vision based strategic direction (as they indicated the vision of the school were provided with in the 3to4 individuals what he/she has skillful persons in school). This may imply that yet significant number of teachers and others staff members were not observed how their school leader provided with vision based strategic direction, In addition to this, articulating clearly the strategic goals, aligning school goals with the national educational planning, implements the vision through strategic planning, clearly state the mission of school, collectively establish school goals and revise goals annually with all stakeholders, clearly understand all stakeholders about the mission of school were low preformed. The reason they mentioned are; leaders they do not have participatory which means most stakeholders were not add their ideas on issue , lack of knowledge, skill gap of the school leaders occurs on how the goal and visions of the school were effectively implemented, and lack of training on the issue are the reasons indicated. But even though the mission, vision and goals of the school were clearly stated they do not helps to clarify the themes in terms of its practical implications and do not keeps the work of the school under review and account for its improvement. Therefore, as indicated by results obtained from most teachers and the data gained through interview (WEOIs) above; it is possible to conclude that the effectiveness of school leaders in the dimension of setting mission, vision and goals in the school is low performed in preparatory school of Hadiya zone.

5.2 Promoting Teachers’ Professional Development

Teacher’s professional development is the result of the learning opportunities organized for teachers in the school system. The best way to help staff members change and update their practices, learn new skills and approaches, and function more productively to plan and implement professional development programs. Besides well designed and

executed staff development should leave an impact on teachers with learning becoming more exciting and significant for students. The staff development program should result in new teaching competencies, broader and deeper skills, up date knowledge of the education and instructional skills. So, to identify whether the role is practiced or not, the researcher prepared 7-items for teachers and school leaders under the dimension of promoting professional development program. These were collected, adapted and modified from literature review and previous research work for which the respondents are required to rate their level of agreement to which these roles really practiced in their schools using a five point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). Both the mean value and standard deviation of the teachers and school leaders were used for the sake of interpretation as follows:

Table 2; Responses in the area of Continuous Professional Development (CPD).

NO	Items	Teachers		School leaders		T-test	P-value
		Mean values(M)	Standard deviation(SD)	Mean values(M)	Standard deviation(SD)		
1	Empowering action research in the school	3.51	1.31	3.15	1.46	1.09	0.276
2	Encourage teachers to cooperative work with surrounding schools for experience sharing.	3.57	1.26	3.47	1.43	2.01	0.046
3	Encourage to practice curriculum and program development	2.62	1.29	3.36	1.25	2.33	0.021
4	Facilitate skills development programs (workshops ,coaching) for teachers	2.62	1.38	3.42	1.42	2.35	0.020
5	Organize continuous professional development program (CPD)in school.	2.41	1.18	3.57	1.30	3.96	0.000
6	Together with colleagues, identifying issues for consideration as CPD priorities	2.35	1.17	3.42	1.30	3.65	0.000
7	Ensuring that all teachers in school take part in sixty hours of CPD activities each year and giving constructive feedback.	2.15	0.99	3.05	1.35	3.52	0.001
	Grand mean	2.75	1.22	3.35	1.35		

Key: Mean value below 3.00 as “low” or low practiced, 3.00-3.99 as “moderate” or good practiced, and above 4.00 as “high” or very good practiced.

As indicated in items 1 of Table-2, concerning school leaders empowering action research in the school, teachers reported that (M=3.51, SD=1.31) perform on this leadership dimension was low while school leaders (M=3.15, SD=1.46) showed moderate. The computed t-value (t=1.09, p=0.276) showed that there is no statistically significant difference between the two groups on the performance. On the same table items 2 the mean value of teachers with 3.57 and school leaders mean value of 3.47 shows moderately performed, the computed t-value (p<0.05) showed that there is statistically significant difference between the two groups on the performance. As showed Table-2 items 3,4,5,6 and 7, regarding school leaders encouraging to practice curriculum and program development, facilitating skills development programs (workshops ,coaching) for teachers, organize continuous professional development program (CPD)in school, together with colleagues, identifying issues for consideration as CPD priorities, ensuring that all teachers in school take part in sixty hours of CPD activities each year and giving constructive feedback, teachers responded with mean value below 3.00 while school leaders perform these moderate. The computed t-value of items 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 respectively showed that below alpha level 0.05 (there is statistically significant difference between the two groups on the performance). The overall mean score of teachers’ reported that (M=2.75, SD=1.22), this showed that the school leaders performance on continuous professional development (CPD) were unsatisfactory where as school leaders with (M= 3.35, SD=1.35) were better performed. In order to triangulate the contravening responses of teachers and school leaders the data gathered through interview were consulted. Accordingly the interview results of X,Y,Z woreda education offices inspectors respondents with a feeling of depression indicated roles of school leaders in the area of continues professional development(CPD) were held by woreda education office teachers and educational leadership development core process with in collaboration of zonal education department are give current year for both teachers and school

leaders but, most of them lack of skill issues related CPD and even if the module which prepared were the same copies in all school and they perceive as wastage of time and resources. As a general what we observe from the respondents of teachers, and individual interviewees reports the effectiveness of preparatory school leaders in the areas of teachers professional development program were poor practiced. Unlike this, Dufour and Berkey (1995) who assert that the principal needs to create opportunities for professional development and growth of the staff.

6. CONCLUSIONS:

Based on the findings of the study the following conclusions were drawn: Successful school leaders have very strong and clear vision and set of values for their school, which heavily influenced their own actions and the actions of others and established a clear sense of direction and purpose for the school, place high priority and consistent emphasis up on improving classroom teaching and learning process, an advocate school environment and instructional program conducive to students' learning are low besides, continuous professional development which is arranged through principal for teachers are low and unsatisfactory. Therefore, it is suggested that School leaders need to facilitate the implementation of their school mission, vision and goals through creating effective communication channels such as sending letters to parents, arranging meetings, and displaying the mission vision and goals of the school in a visible place on the school compound, on other hands the principals facilitating developmental programs based on gaps of teachers in order to arrive at their full potentiality but also continuous professional development workshops should be conducted by upper level education bodies(Woreda and Zone), and these workshops must be practical and during this workshops training materials should be fully utilized (handouts, pamphlets, and journals). Finally similar study needs to be conducted on large scale data which are not focusing on parts of instructional leadership effectiveness dimensions of current study.

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