

School Leadership: Integrated School Leadership Practices in Secondary Schools of Harari Regional State

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Abstract: *The main purpose of this study is to assess the integrated leadership practices of school principals in secondary schools of Harari Regional State. The study employed a mixed research design by using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The quantitative data were collected using a questionnaire from 160 (61 %) of teachers and 80 (100%) of school leaders which includes: school principals, vice principals, unit leaders and department heads. The qualitative data were collected using an in-depth interview from 4 district education experts. The sampling technique used to select teachers was simple random sampling technique. School leaders and district education experts were selected using available sampling technique. The quantitative data collected were analyzed using percentages, frequency counts and means while the qualitative data obtained from interview was analyzed using narration and description in the way it supplement the quantitative data. The findings of the study revealed that school principals lacked knowledge and skill of recent school leadership theories to lead their school on recent philosophies. The core causes of school principals not to practice integrated school leadership model identified in the study were: lack of support from educational authorities at different levels, lack of professional trainings on educational leadership, low stakeholders engagement in school activities and the inefficiency of school principals to share leadership among stakeholders. Based on the finding, it was recommended that educational leaders at different levels (district and region) should provide technical support and prepare training and experience sharing activities for school principals to practice school leadership effectively and efficiently in their schools. Moreover, School principals need to share leadership among stakeholders. Finally, the study recommended that school principals should strengthen the relation of the school with stakeholders to accomplish tasks collaboratively.*

Keywords: Integrated leadership, School leader, School leadership, Shared leadership, Stakeholders

1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

School leadership has become a priority in education policy agendas in a global context. It plays a great role by improving school outcomes by influencing the motivation of teachers, parents, community and stakeholders in education (Pont, Nusche & Moorman, 2008).

As secondary schools are a place where students prepare themselves to join their further education in Universities, Colleges, Technical and Vocational trainings, the school should work hard to realize this objective through collaborative efforts of stakeholders. On this issue, Conley (2007) suggests that high schools and teachers must set college-ready expectations for students; teach rigorous content so that students can apply knowledge in new situations.

School leaders have a great role in working with all stakeholders to formulate a vision for the academic success of all students. Developing a shared vision around standards is an essential element of a school leader. Regarding the role of school principal Ethiopian Ministry of Education (2012) emphasizes that:

The school principal is the leading professional of the school. The major role of the school principal is providing professional leadership and management for the school. This

will promote a secure foundation from which to achieve high standards in all areas of the school's work.

The researcher argues that effective leadership practices of school principals play a great role in making school effective, Bush, (2008) as emphasizes the quality of school principal's leadership has a positive effect to improve student's achievement and to make school effective.

Day & Sammons (2009) described that school principals carry the leadership activities through practicing their knowledge and the required skills to influence followers to achieve common goals. Therefore, school principals are expected to improve the overall schools performance and student's achievement through effective school leadership practices.

Therefore, school leadership is one of the most complex processes that help to influence people to achieve common goals. To be an effective leader, school principals need to have a better knowledge and the required skills of more than one leadership theory to serve their customers effectively and efficiently.

Additionally, when school principals have an adequate knowledge and skill on school leadership they are able to choose which leadership theory, model or style is appropriate to their environment. Moreover, as the major notion of leadership is to influence followers, school leaders should develop the skill of influencing others and the ability of engaging stakeholders to achieve common objectives.

Marks and Suzan (2003) summarize from their findings of the study, integrated leadership approach which integrates instructional and transformational leadership highlights the synergistic power of leadership eliciting the teacher's capacity in classroom teaching for improvement of students achievement and overall school improvement through the collaborative and shared leadership activities of the stakeholders.

The theoretical framework selected in this study was an integrated school leadership model that integrates both instructional and transformational leadership models described by Hallinger. According to Hallinger (2007), by employing integrated leadership creating a shared sense of purpose, developing high expectation for students achievement and school culture, organizing a wide range of activities among stakeholders, modeling the desired values and reflect sense of ownership among staff are the major ones.

Therefore, conducting this research on integrated school leadership practice of Harari region secondary schools is timely and helps to solve the problems seen in the research area.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

As New Leaders for New Schools (NLNS) (2009), School leaders' effectiveness is measured through three major areas: improving student's achievement, promoting their effectiveness and practicing effective leadership by actively involving all stakeholders to achieve common goals and objectives.

To achieve the goal of education in general and the goal of school in particular, then school leaders need to be instructional leaders to effectively run the teaching and learning process and to act as transformational leaders to engage stakeholders on different school activities. However, to use only one of the upper mentioned leadership practices do not help to realize the objectives as planned. In relation to this, Lambert (2002) outlined the advantage of using an integrated approach rather than using one approach as follows.

The days of the lone instructional leader are over, no longer has one believes that one school leader can serve as the instructional leader for the entire school without the substantial participation of other educators.

The key challenges of school improvement today is for school principals to become leaders who develop and raise high-level of achievement by working with, learning from and influencing the behaviors of others within and beyond their schools. Regarding this, Workineh (2012) described as:

Until recently, school management and organization were not given due attention in education policy formulation, education practice and academic research in Ethiopia. Instead policy documents tend to focus mainly on access and equity.

From the above statement the researcher views, the attention given for the strengthening of school leadership is inadequate. Similarly, Ethiopian Ministry of Education (2005) as outlined, the weak school management and the low capacity of schools to implement programs was one of the great challenges to achieving access, quality, and equity in education.

To this end, from the above statement the researcher views, the traditional assumption of school leaders roles and responsibilities cannot serve for the generation of 21st century. School leaders' role is not simply to accomplish administrative tasks, rather to lead all the required school resources with shared leadership to bring quality education with improved student's achievement.

Heroic leadership by which school leaders working alone are tends not to meet the leadership capabilities of today. From the observation of the researcher during the practicum sessions, living in the area for a long time and informal discussions with teachers and parents, the practice of secondary school leaders in Harari Regional State as integrated leaders is ineffective.

Moreover, the researcher is motivated to investigate the challenges of school leaders in practicing integrated leadership empirically and to suggest possible solutions to solve the problem under the study. Additionally, the study conducted by Tadesse and Maeregu (2014) on the Harari Region and East Hararge Zone schools as showed the leadership role of school leaders in managing school resources is inefficient. However, the study does not show the practice of school leaders in terms of their leadership models as instructional or transformational. Therefore, this study fills the gaps of the former study in relation to the practice of school leaders as integrated leaders.

To this end, the research attempted to answer the following basic research questions.

1. What is the current status of integrated leadership practices of secondary school leaders in Harari Regional State?
2. What are the major challenges encountered secondary school leaders in Harari Regional State to practice integrated school leadership?
3. How to improve the practice of secondary school leaders in Harari Regional State?

1.3. Objective of the Study

1.3.1. General objectives of the study

The major objective of the study is to assess the practice of secondary school principal's integrated leadership in Harari Regional state.

1.3.2. Specific objectives of the study

1. To identify the current practice of secondary school leaders integrated leadership in Harari Regional State.
2. To identify the major challenges encountered secondary school leaders in practicing integrated leadership.
3. To suggest alternative strategies to improve the practice of integrated leadership for secondary school leaders in Harari Regional State.

2. Research Design and Methodology

2.1. Description of the Study Area

The Harari People Regional State is one of the nine Regional states of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDREPCC, 2007). Geographically, Harari Regional State is located in the Eastern part of Ethiopia. It is 525 K.M from the capital city of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa. The total geographical area of the region is about 343.21 km².

Administratively, Harari Peoples Regional State is divided in six urban and three rural administrative districts (main kebeles). These administrative kebeles are further divided into 19 sub-kebeles (in urban) and 17 sub-kebeles (in rural). In Harari region there are seven secondary schools, from these six of them are from grade 9-10 and one is preparatory school (grade 11-12).

2.2 Research Method

The research method used in this research was the mixed research approach which includes quantitative and qualitative approach. The purpose of using a mixed research method approach is to build the strong connection between quantitative and qualitative methods and to fully understand the issue under investigation (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2006). In this study a descriptive survey method was employed, because a descriptive survey method is appropriate to investigate the actual status of integrated leadership practices of secondary school leaders in Harari Regional State.

2.3 Sources of Data

The primary sources of data are school leaders, teachers and district education experts. Additionally, to substantiate the result secondary sources such as reports were consulted.

2.4 Target Population, Sample and Sampling Techniques

This study included teachers, school leaders (secondary school principals, vice principals, unit leaders, department heads) and education experts. In the region there are 262 teachers and among these 178 (68%) of them are selected using simple random sampling technique. For school leaders and education experts, all of them 80(100%), 4(100%) of them respectively were selected using available sampling technique due to their small number and manageable.

2.5 Data Collection Tools

The data collection tools employed in this research were questionnaire and interview. The questionnaire was prepared for teachers and school leaders and the interview was for district education experts. The questionnaire included a closed-ended question items which has three parts: the cover page, the characteristics of respondents and questions related to the challenges and practices of secondary school leaders as integrated leaders.

2.6. Method of Data Analysis

The method of data analysis used in this study was both quantitative and qualitative in nature. The quantitative data were organized, tabulated and analyzed using percentage, frequency and mean. Additionally, the qualitative data collected through interview was analyzed using narration in the way it supplement the quantitative analysis.

3. Result and Discussion

In this part presentation, analysis and interpretation of data collected through questionnaire and interview were employed. A total of 178(100%) questionnaires were distributed and out of these 160(89.8%) of them were returned.

3.1 Characteristics of Respondents

In this part there were two groups of respondents such as teachers and secondary school leaders. For two of the respondents four personal information were collected through a questionnaire. The characteristics such as sex, age, educational level and year of service were presented.

Table 1: Characteristics of Respondents

No	Characteristic	Respondents			
		Teachers(N= 160)		School leaders(N=80)	
		No	%	No	%
1	Sex				
	Male	129	75	68	85
	Female	31	25	12	15
	Total	160	100	80	100
2	Age				
	20-30	30	18.6	20	25
	31-40	48	30	30	37.5
	41-50	52	32.5	20	25
	Above 50	30	18.6	10	12.5
	Total	160	100	80	100
3	Education level				
	Diploma	39	24.3	5	6.25
	Degree	113	70.6	70	87.5
	Masters	8	5	5	6.25
	Total	160	100	80	100
4	Total Service year				
	1-5 years	28	17.5	10	12.5
	6-10 years	37	23.1	33	41.25
	11-15 years	40	25	17	21.25
	Above 15 years	55	34.4	20	25
	Total	160	100	80	100

As item 1 of Table 1 indicates, the 129 (75%) of them are males and 31(25%) of them are females. In the sample schools the number of male teachers was more than the number of female teachers. In the same way the numbers of male school leaders were greater than the number of female school leaders. This shows that the number of females in teaching and management position is low. In addition to this the interview held with district education office heads as indicated, all secondary school principals are males. Therefore, Harari Regional Education Bureau should give attention to bring females to leadership positions to increase their participation.

As depicted in item 2 of Table 1, concerning the age of respondents, most of the teachers 52(32.5%) are under the age range of 41-50 and 48 (30%) of them are under the age range of 31-40. This shows that they were matured enough and experienced to teach and support students as needed. In relation to school leaders 30 (37.5%) were at the age range of 31-40 and 20(25%) of them were from 41-50 years. This shows that they were also matured and experienced to manage schools and to communicate with teachers.

Regarding the educational level of teachers 113(70.6%), 39(24.3%) and 8(5%) of them are degree, diploma and masters degree holders respectively. However, as the policy of the country, Ethiopia allows teachers at the secondary education first cycle (grade 9-10) needs to have first degree and for the second cycle (grade 11-12) needs to have a master's degree. Therefore to meet the policy standard the region should upgrade the educational level of teachers and school leaders by employing different mechanisms.

As indicated in item 4 of Table 1, concerning the service year of teachers 55(34.4%), 40(25%) and 37(23.1%) were under the age range of above 15 years, 11-15 and 6-10 years respectively. This indicates they are experienced to teach and participate in management activities. On the other hand, school leaders year of service as depicted in the table, most of them were 33(41.25%) under the age range of 6-10 years. This also shows they are experienced to lead and manage schools by adopting their reach experiences.

3.2. The Practice of Integrated School Leadership

On the practice of integrated school leadership in Harari Region Secondary schools about six questions were raised for teachers and secondary school leaders (principals, vice-principals, unit leaders, department heads) to rate on the issue saying: very low (1), low (2), moderate (3), high (4), and very high (5). The analysis is assumed as ≤ 1.49 very low, 1.50-2.49 low, 2.50-3.49 moderate, 3.50-4.49 high and 4.50-5.00 very high. Therefore, the mean and average mean values for variables is computed and presented in Table 2 here under.

Table 2: Integrated School Leadership Practices

No	Integrated leadership practices of the school	Mean		
		Teach. N= 160	Sc. leaders N= 80	Average
1	Participation of stakeholders in implementing shared vision	1.4	3.2	2.3
2	Participation of stakeholders in planning activities	2.4	2.4	2.4
3	Sharing leadership among stakeholders	1.5	2.5	2.0
4	Staff engagement on school management activities	3.2	3.4	3.3
5	Responding to school, community and societal changes and issues	3.4	3.4	3.4
6	Attention on improving students achievement and overall school improvement	2.4	3.0	2.7
	Average Mean	2.3	3.0	2.65

As item 1 of Table 2, indicates the participation of stakeholders in implementing a shared vision is rated by teachers 1.4 which is very low and rated by school leaders 3.2 which is moderate. This shows that the stakeholder's involvement in implementing the shared vision is low. As integrated leadership practice, stakeholders should be first identified and communicated to collaboratively work with the school on the vision of the school.

Regarding the involvement of stakeholders in a shared vision Mulfold (2008), emphasizes the school should work hard with stakeholders including the whole staff by communicating the vision of the school through establishing a strong sense of overall purpose to implement the vision and mission of the school collaboratively. However, the practice of the school towards communicating the vision of the school to stakeholders is inadequate. Therefore, school leaders should give a great emphasis to actively involve stakeholders to realize the shared vision.

As it is indicated in item 2 of Table 2, teachers and administrators rated 2.4 similarly for the question raised on the participation of stakeholders in planning activities. This shows that the stakeholder's participation in participatory planning activity is insignificant. Planning is the base for programmed activities to take place. It has also a great benefit in accomplishing tasks with in specified time and resources. However, the stakeholders participation in planning activities is low that needs a great attention for its improvement.

Regarding sharing of leadership among stakeholders, teachers and administrators rated 1.5 and 2.5 respectively. Teachers responded as very low while administrators rated low. In both responses the extent of sharing leadership among stakeholders is weak. This shows that the [practice of secondary school leaders in sharing leadership among stakeholders is very low.

Regarding sharing of leadership to stakeholders, Lambert, Walker, Zimmerman, Cooper, Lambert, and Gardner (2002) summarize from their findings of the study, integrated leadership approach which combines instructional and transformational leadership highlights the synergistic power of leadership eliciting the teachers capacity in classroom teaching for students improving achievement and the overall school improvement through the collaborative and shared leadership activities of the stakeholders.

However, the school's practice in relation to providing equal emphasis for both teaching – learning process and working with stakeholders by sharing leadership is inadequate. Therefore, school leaders as integrated leadership practices should give equal emphasis to teaching and learning activities and to share leadership among stakeholders to actively involve them on different school management activities and issues.

Generally, as Table 2 indicates school leaders practice as integrated leader is low. However, schools leadership activity by giving priority only for teaching and learning activities or school improvement through stakeholder's involvement as an instructional leader or transformational

leader do not bring the overall sustainable improvement in both student's achievement and school improvement. Therefore, school leaders should give equal attention for teaching –learning activities and sharing leadership among stakeholders for sustainable improvement of their school through accomplishing tasks collaboratively.

3.3 Challenges of Schools to Practicing Integrated Leadership

In terms of challenges in practicing integrated school leadership eight variables were presented to Harari Region, secondary school teacher and school leader respondents (school principals, vice- principals, unit leaders, department heads) to rate on the issue saying: very low (1), low (2), moderate (3), high (4), and very high (5). The analysis is assumed as ≤ 1.49 very low, 1.50-2.49 low, 2.50-3.49 moderate, 3.50-4.49 high and 4.50-5.00 very high. Therefore, the mean and average mean values for variables is computed and presented in Table 3 as follows.

Table 3: Challenges in practicing Integrated School Leadership

No	To what extent the following challenges in practicing integrated school leadership affect the school?	Mean		
		Teacher N= 160	School leaders N= 80	Average
1	Less autonomy of school principals in leading schools	4.3	4.5	4.4
2	Low commitment of stakeholders in addressing the mission of the school	3.3	3.7	3.5
3	Lack of necessary knowledge and skill in recent leadership theories	4.6	4.8	4.7
4	Low participation of stakeholders in school activities	3.3	2.7	3.0
5	The belief that school management activities are done by only school principals	4.4	4.6	4.5
6	Less support from educational authorities at different levels	4.4	4.6	4.5
7	The school leaders fail to participate the stakeholders	3.6	2.4	3.0
8	Lack of training for school administrators and stakeholders on shared leadership activities	3.0	2.8	2.9
	Average Mean	3.9	3.8	3.85

As Table 3, indicates from eight expected challenges encounter schools in practicing integrated school leadership approach, both teachers and school leaders rated as most serious problems on item number 1, 3, 5, and 6 with ranked mean value of 4.3, 4.6, 4.4, 4.4; and 4.5, 4.8, 4.6, and 4.6 respectively. This implies that less autonomy of school principals in leading schools, lack of necessary knowledge and skill in recent leadership theories, the belief that school management activities are done by only school principals and less support from educational authorities at different levels are the major challenges that encountered schools not to practice integrated school leadership approach.

Concerning less autonomy of school principals in leading schools, both teachers and school administrators rated 4.3

and 4.5 respectively. This shows that school leaders are forced to accomplish tasks only with the structure and have no autonomy to lead their school according to the situation. Ableidinger and Hassel (2010) discuss the importance of school leader's autonomy to improve schools and put seven areas of autonomy that school administrators need to exercise as follows.

- Freedom to develop a great team;
- To manage teachers as professionals;
- Freedom to change (not to change) curriculum d classroom structures;
- Autonomy in scheduling;
- Financial freedom;
- Board freedom to focus on education, and
- Freedom to discuss a unique school culture.

The interview held with the district office heads as shows, school leaders can not able to form partnership with any organization unless they notice for district education offices about the issue. This practice inhibits schools to communicate and get help and support from other organizations freely. Therefore, the region should give attention in the way autonomy of schools is enhanced to widen the schools opportunity to communicate with others and to get more support and resources to accomplish school activities.

Concerning knowledge and skill of school leaders about recent school leadership theories and philosophies, Lambert (2000) as emphasized, leadership capacity of school leaders is the ability of broad-based knowledge and skill that enables them to lead schools effectively. In addition to this, Schlechity in Bolanle (2013), states school leaders who influence others have the required knowledge and skill that help them to lead and manage schools effectively and efficiently. Moreover the knowledge and skill school leaders develop should be built on global context to serve students based on technology and to help them to be competent in the world of work.

However, the knowledge and skill of school leaders in the region are inadequate. Therefore, to raise the knowledge and skill of school leaders, the region should prepare trainings on school leadership and other related issues to improve their capacity to lead and manage schools.

As item number 6 of Table 3, less support from educational authorities at different levels has a serious negative effect on the practice of integrated leadership. Regarding this, Workineh (2012) in his research on Ethiopian schools, concluded that a critical decision making at the school level faces a great challenge due to the lack of support and coordination from district education offices. Additionally, he argues that the gap between district education offices and the school communities (school principals, teachers, parent teacher associations) is also highly responsible for the loose communication between the government structures and the institutions.

The interview held with district education experts also supports the response of teachers and school leaders, supports provided to school administrators is inadequate. One of the district education expert as told: “our supervisors at district level lacks knowledge and skill to support schools

as needed. In the future we have a plan to enhance their capacity through trainings.” Therefore, to support school leaders, Harari Regional Education Bureau should build the capacity of experts at regional and district level by creating different mechanisms such as strengthening partnership with colleges and universities, governmental and non-governmental organizations working on education.

The other challenge that inhibits the integrated school leadership practice is the belief that school management activities are done by only school principals. The mean value result 4.4 and 4.6 respectively for teachers and school leaders show this belief. Therefore, it is important to change this attitude by employing continuous awareness raising programs to actively involve stakeholders on various school management activities.

3.4. Conclusion and Recommendation

The practice of integrated school leadership employs the integration of instructional leadership that mostly focuses on teaching and learning activities and transformational leadership that focuses on sharing of leadership among stakeholders. Using only one of the approaches cannot bring sustainable improvement of the school (Hallinger, 2007). However, secondary schools in Harari Region do not practice integrated school leadership and focuses only on teaching and learning activities. Therefore, to lead their school effectively by improving student’s achievement and by sharing of leadership among stakeholders they have to practice integrated leadership approach for sustainable improvement of the school.

Sharing leadership among stakeholders; strengthening school community relationships, involving the community in planning and decision - making activities help schools to accomplish tasks collaboratively and to mobilize resources to satisfy the needs and interests of their customers. However, as the data collected from teachers and school leaders revealed the practice of secondary schools in the region in terms of these activities low. Therefore, the regional education bureau with district education offices and schools should do together to strengthen stakeholders involvement in all school affairs and activities.

The knowledge and skill of school administrators towards recent school leadership theories and up to date school leadership philosophies is inadequate. In the 21st century one cannot lead schools traditionally and secondary schools are more challenging compared with primary schools. However, the data revealed showed that school leaders have no adequate knowledge and skill on recent leadership theories and practices. Therefore, regional education bureau with district education offices should prepare regular programs to upgrade their educational status, preparing short term trainings, workshops, seminars and experience sharing programs to update the knowledge and skill of school administrators, teachers, supervisors and educational authorities at region and district levels.

Schools need autonomy to smoothly run their activities freely as the situation of their schools. As Rodriguez and Hovde (2002), school autonomy is a developing school

approach which aims to increase the power and responsibilities of school administrators in areas of budget, personnel, education, communication with stakeholders and training programs. Similarly, as Goksoy (2014), autonomy is the right to set targets and make decisions without the violation of other individual, groups, organizations, state and others. However, the status of school leaders in practicing autonomy in the region is inadequate. Therefore, Harari regional bureau should support school leaders to practice their autonomy s needed.

One of the serious challenges not to practice integrated school leadership is lack of support from educational authorities at different levels. This shows that school leaders provided less support from regional education bureau and district education offices. As MOE (2010), many educational institutions in Ethiopia at different levels *do not yet* have the required capacity to exercise their responsibilities and to support schools as needed. Therefore, Harari Region Education Bureau with district education offices should exert a strategy to support schools to build their capacity to satisfy their customer’s interest.

The other serious problem is the belief that school management activities are done by only school principals. This attitude is dangerous to get the involvement of stakeholders on school activities. Therefore, secondary school administrators with district education offices should prepare trainings to create and raise awareness for teachers and the community to enhance their participation in school activities.

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