

Principals' Leadership Behavior and Teachers Commitment in Adama Town Public Secondary Schools of Oromia Regional State, Ethiopia

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Abstract

The intent of this paper was to examine the impact of Secondary School Principals Leadership Behavior on Teachers Commitment in Adama City Administration of Oromia Region, Ethiopia. To achieve this purpose, researcher used concurrent triangulation mixed approach research paradigm. By using simple random sampling technique 120 (68.4%) secondary school teachers were selected. Moreover, 29 leaders from different echelons were purposely selected for qualitative data and included in the study. To this end two different but complementary instruments: Questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were employed to solicit data from key informants in the study setting. Data were analyzed both through qualitative and quantitative analysis methods. The study result showed that almost all school principals were from non-management or leadership educational background, they lack knowhow on how to influence and get teachers to perform beyond expectation, develop sense of school citizenship and work for unifying purpose. Hence, the study recommends the importance of setting structures to promote change, as well as opportunities for individual learning and appropriate means for monitoring progress toward improvement; endorse visions that embody the best thinking about teaching and learning.

Keywords: Leadership Behavior, Principals, Secondary School, Teachers, Teachers commitment

1. Introduction

Leadership would mean different things to many people. Some writers have given the impression that leadership is synonym for management. This assumption is not correct, because leaders are not found in the managerial hierarchy but also in informal work groups. Nonetheless, a working definition can provide a useful frame of reference. In this regard, Kouzes and Posner (2002) defined leadership as 'the process of influencing the activities of an individual or a group in efforts towards goal achievements in a given situation'. A more comprehensive definition of leadership was offered by North house (1997). According to him leadership is the process of influencing people so that they will strive willingly and committed towards the achievement of group goals.

The importance of employees' organizational commitment has been reflected in research in the leadership area. Organizational commitment reveals complex employee attitudes, including affective commitment involving emotional attachment to the organization, continuance commitment emphasizing the perceived investments versus costs, and normative commitment concerning obligation-based considerations (Allen & Meyer, 1991). The multiple types of commitment consist of an employee's belief in the organization, willingness to work hard for it, and the desire to continue to work for it (Porte, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974). In the view of the fact that organizations, whether business, government, non-government or educational institutions are established for the sake of achieving a set of organizational goals, leadership behaviour and employee's affective commitment are the most important factors for achieving organizational goal.

According to Porte, Steers, Mowday, and Boulian (1974), employees' commitment is a strong believe in and acceptance of the organizational goals and values, a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization and a definite desire to maintain organizational membership. At this point, the major question, therefore, is what kind of leadership behavior is appropriate (enable) leaders to get employees' effort and affective commitment? It is agreeable that traditional way of managing and leading in today's work place take us nowhere. Transformational leadership behavior is believed to ensure employees commitment to the achievement of organizational goal. To this end, the full range leadership model developed by Bass and his colleagues provides theories and instrument for measuring the leadership behavior in organizations (Bass, 1985, 1998; Bass & Avolio, 1997; Bass & Riggio, 2006). The model encompasses three leadership styles in a line continuum (transformational, transactional, and laissez faire). The major distinguishing element of these three leadership styles is their relative effect on employees' commitment. In this regard, it

is established fact, through several researches that transformational leadership has greater effect on employees' commitment.

The researchers' motive for conducting research on influence of leadership behavior on Employees Organizational Commitment aroused from the researcher personal fifteen years work experience and observation of public organizations non-managerial employees low level of affective commitment to organizational goals. Moreover, according to 2012 annual Adama City Administration Education Department school principals evaluations report, most school principals found in the city are not competent enough in bringing school effectiveness. Correspondingly, Oromia Education Bureau also agrees with the report. In view of this fact, the purpose of this research, therefore, was to investigate the influence of leadership styles (transformational, transactional & laissez-fair leadership) on employees' level of affective commitment in public secondary school in Adama City Administration of Oromia Regional State. To achieve this purpose, the study was guided by the following basic research questions: (1) what style of leadership do principals in Adama town public secondary schools predominantly apply to get their teachers affectively committed to school missions? (2) What dimension of teachers' commitment is evident in Adama town public secondary schools?

2. Research Methodology

The research approach used by the researcher was mixed methods research paradigm (qualitative and quantitative) predominantly the quantitative research method. Specifically, the quantitative method employed for the study was cross-sectional descriptive survey method. Quantitative data were collected from 120 (68.4%) teachers and interviews were held with one school board chairperson, one parent teachers student association (PTSA) chairperson, six student representatives, six school principals and two Adama town education department process a total the 149 participants. The tools used to gather relevant data on leadership behaviour from the research participants were standardized MLO developed by Bass and Avolio in 1997; while OACQ developed by Allen and Meyer (1990) was used for collecting data concerning employees' affective organizational commitment.

3. Results and Discussions

Table 1: Transformational Leadership Behaviors of Leaders

No	Leadership Behavior	Respondents (N=120)	
		M	SD
1	Idealized influence attitude (IIA)	1.8	0.6
2	Idealized influence behavior (IIB)	1.4	0.7
3	Inspirational motivation (IM)	1.0	0.6
4	Intellectual stimulation (IS)	1.2	0.6
5	Individual consideration (IC)	1.0	0.7
Cumulative Transformational Leadership		1.3	0.6

As the tables 1 portrays, the mean score for leaders individualized influence attitude (IIA) was (M=1.8, SD=0.6) which is below expected average (M=2). This indicates that leaders are not instilled pride in teachers' for being associated with them and are not going beyond self-interest for the good of teachers'. The mean score for individual consideration (IC) was (M=1.0, SD= 0.7) is also below expected average. This, therefore, meant that leaders tends to exhibit once in a while that they care for teachers'. But practically leaders were not showing supports, listening to teachers' idea, care for the fate of teachers' and help individual achieve goals and grow personally. Additionally, they are not spending time teaching and coaching or facilitating the mechanism by which teachers' will get training so that they will perform better. More importantly, leaders are not helping teachers' to develop their strength.

With regard to intellectual stimulations (IS), the mean score was (M =1.2, SD=0.6). Thus, it can be inferred that, leaders are not encouraging and supporting teachers' to be creative and innovative, to try new approach and challenge their own believe and values frequently. Above all leaders themselves are strongly advocate of routine procedure of accomplishing task and tell teachers' to accomplish task in the usual way. The fifth competencies of transformational leadership is inspirational motivations (IM) and its mean score (M=1.0, SD=0.6) which indicate leaders were not inspiring and motivating teachers' to demonstrate commitment to the shared organizational goals on regular bases. It also indicates that leaders are not communicating high expectations and effort from teachers. Besides, leaders are not expressing their confidence that the organization goal will be achieved through teachers' unlimited effort and affective

commitment.

Table 2: Transactional Leadership Behavior of Leaders

No	Leadership Behavior	Respondents (N=120)	
		M	SD
1	Contingent reward (CR)	1.1	0.7
2	Management by exception active (MBEA)	2.1	1.2
3	Management by exception passive (MBEP)	1.0	0.2
Cumulative Transactional Leadership		1.4	0.7

Table 2 above also shows that the management by exception active (MBE-A) has the mean score (M=2.1, SD=1.2) indicating that the leaders at minimum level exhibit this competency of transactional leadership behavior. Conversely, standard deviation for the management by exception was more than one. This clearly shows responses some teachers' believe that their leaders tends to focus attention on irregularities, mistakes, complains, and failures. The second competencies of transactional leadership contingent reward (CR) that has mean score (M=1.1, SD=0.7) which indicate that leaders are not recognizing, appreciating teachers' for their work, and not expressing satisfaction when teachers' meet expectations.

Table 3: Non- Leadership Behavior of Leaders

No	Leadership Behavior	Respondents (N=120)	
		M	SD
1	Laissez-faire (LF)	2.7	0.4
Cumulative Non-leadership		2.7	0.4

Table 3 above shows that leaders predominantly demonstrate non-leadership competencies, laissez-faire (LF) (M= 2.7, SD=0.4) which clearly illustrate leaders are not actively participating in the administration. They are not motivating, inspiring, encouraging teachers' frequently, if not always. Generally, the cumulative mean score for transformational leadership style (TFL) was (M=1.4, SD=0.6), transactional leadership style (TSL) was (M=1.4, SD=0.7) and non-leadership style (NL) was (M=2.2, SD=0.4) revealing that non-leadership behavior were predominantly demonstrated by leaders in public secondary schools in Adama town.

Table 4: Outcomes of Leadership Behavior

No	Outcomes	Respondents (N=120)	
		M	SD
1	Extra effort (EE)	1.2	0.5
2	Effectiveness (EF)	1.5	0.7
3	Satisfaction (S)	1.3	0.4

The mean score of extra effort, outcome of leadership, was (M=1.2, SD= 0.5) which indicated that leaders' leadership behavior are not able to make teachers' to perform beyond expectation to achieve organizational goals, heighten teachers' desire to succeed, and making effort to increase teachers' willingness to try harder. The mean score of effectiveness, outcome of leadership, was (M=1.5, SD=0.7) which shows that leaders tends to be effective in meeting teachers' job-related needs, in representing teachers' to higher authority. The mean score of satisfaction, outcome of leadership, was (M=1.3, SD=0.4) which revealed the dissatisfaction of teachers with the predominantly demonstrated leadership behavior of their leaders and it also shows that leaders are not working with teachers' in a satisfactory way.

Table 5: Employees commitment to organizational goal

No	Item	Response (n=120)	
		M	SD
1	The leadership behavior of my leader makes me more committed to help this bureau to meet its goal.	2.4	1.8
2	I always encourage others to apply for this bureau because of the greatness of the leadership behavior of my leader to work for the goal of the organization.	2.3	1.5
3	The leadership behavior of my leader makes me feel part of this bureau.	2.5	1.5
4	The leadership behavior of my leader makes me to face any challenge to achieve the goal of this organization.	1.8	0.9
5	I feel that the leadership behavior of my leader helped me develop myself.	1.9	1.1
6	I proud to tell others that I'm comfortable with the leadership behavior of my leader.	2.1	1.6
7	I feel that the leadership behavior of my leader motivate and inspire me to perform beyond expectations.	2.5	1.5
8	I feel that the probability of leaving this bureau is fifty percent because of the leadership behavior of my leader.*	1.9	1.0
9	The leadership behavior of my leader makes me to spend extra time and effort to do efficient and effective work.	1.7	0.7
10	Because of the leadership behavior of my leader I feel regret for joining this bureau.*	3.9	0.7
11	Leadership behavior of my leader made me feel emotionally attached to this bureau.*	2.4	0.5
12	Leadership behavior of my leader made me feel that this Bureau problem is my own problem.	2.1	0.6
13	Leadership behavior of my leader motivated me to spend the rest of my career with this bureau.	2.00	0.8
14	Leadership behavior of my leader made me to feel that I wasted my time for working to this bureau.*	3.56	0.8

As depicted in Table 5 above, the mean score and standard deviation for the item 1 of OACQ was 2.4, and 1.8 respectively. It was, therefore, inferred that the predominantly demonstrated leadership behavior are not making teachers' feel affectively committed to organizational goal. The mean score and standard deviation for the item 2 of OACQ was 2.3 and 1.5 respectively. This meant that teachers' are not satisfied with the prevailing leadership behavior of leaders. Concerning the mean score and standard deviation for the item 3 of OACQ, was 2.5 and 1.5 respectively. This indicates that because of the leadership behavior of leaders, teachers' do not feel they are member of the organizations. This kind of circumstance made teachers' not to develop school citizenship.

With regard to the mean score and standard deviation for the item 4 of OACQ, was 1.8 and 0.9 respectively. In comparison with other mean, the mean score for this item is the lowest next to item 9. Therefore, it can be inferred that the leadership behavior of leaders are not making teachers' in public secondary schools to face challenge/obstacle so that they can meet the goal for which organizations are established to achieve. Furthermore, from statistical result it can be inferred that if employees come across challenge/obstacle while discharging their duties, they might refrain from accomplishing the task or delivering service because, they don't want to face challenge/obstacle and at the same time they don't want to suffer.

As data in the Table 5 shows, the mean score and standard deviation for the item 5 of OACQ was 1.9 and 1.1 respectively. The result indicated that leaders are not characterized by coaching teachers' so that they can be capacitated to meet performance standard. The mean score and standard deviation for the item 6 of OACQ, 2.1 and 1.6 respectively. In view of the fact that, employees are not satisfied with the predominantly demonstrated leadership behavior of their leaders, they are not willing to perform beyond expectation and be affectively committed to organizational goal. With regard to the item 7 of OACQ, the mean score was 2.5 and standard deviation was 1.5. This clearly indicates that the leaders tend to exhibit as they motivate and inspire their teachers' in order to make them affectively committed and perform beyond expectation. But, the standard deviation is greater than 1 showing that there is difference between teachers' concerning the practicability of displaying this competency.

The mean score and standard deviation concerning the item 8 of OACQ, was 1.9 and 1.0 respectively. In view of the fact that, employees are not satisfied with predominantly demonstrated leadership behavior, if teachers' get job opportunity in other organization they are ready to leave their current organization. As can be seen from Table 5, the mean score and standard deviation of the item 9 of OACQ was 1.7 and 0.7 respectively. The statistical result show that leaders predominantly demonstrated leadership behavior that are not encouraging teachers' to put forth their effort and perform beyond usual time in order to make teachers' deliver efficient and effective job performances. With regard to the mean score and standard deviation of the item 10 of OACQ, was 3.9 and 0.7 respectively. Therefore it can be inferred that instead of being develop sense of organizational citizenship, teachers' are not happy for being part of the

organizations. The mean score and standard deviation of the item 11 of OACQ was 2.4 and 0.5 respectively. The analysis result indicated that leaders are not devoting their maximum effort to secure teachers' affective commitment and loyalty to organizational goal.

With regard to the item 12 of OCAQ, the mean score and standard deviation was 2.1 and 0.6 respectively. Thus, the result indicates that employees are poorly committed to organizational goal and developed the attitude of "I don't care". Concerning the item 13 of OACQ, the mean score and standard deviation was 2.00 and 0.8 respectively. It was, therefore, inferred that the predominantly demonstrated leadership behavior are not able to retain well qualified teachers' in the organizations. Thus, teachers' are ready to leave organizations as soon as they get better job. The last item of OACQ, the mean score and standard deviation was 3.5 and 0.8 respectively. Thus, it can be inferred that the predominantly demonstrated leadership behavior are not helping teachers' to perform to the maximum of their potential. Thus, teachers' feel they are wasting their precious time. This result supports Allen and Meyer (1990) that reported similar correlation between leadership styles and organizational commitment in their studies. Bass and Avolio (1997) also suggest similar correlation among the transformational and transactional sub-scales.

The qualitative analysis of this study identified feature that are related to leadership that leaders are currently immersed with that attributed to teachers lack of commitment to organization are: lack of personal credibility of leaders; employees being undervalued and less respected by leaders; absence of recognition for high performing employees; lack of knowhow on leadership competencies that help to boost up employees' effort toward organization success.

In general, employees' weak affective commitment affected negatively their initiation to work hard and the overall performance of the organization. Therefore, securing employees' affective commitment requires leadership behavior that influences employees to deliver performance beyond expectation so that significance success can be achieved. In fact on one hand, the complexity of human nature and dynamism of variable that can contribute to employees' commitment can make the task of building affectively committed non-managerial employees a challenging job for the leaders. On the other hand, there are strong believe on leadership role in changing attitude of employees and make them leaders in the struggle of achieving goal. Nonetheless, it would be essential to focus on the leadership behavior that could affectively commit employees to organization goal.

4. Conclusion and the Way Foreword

Due to the fact that, almost all school principals were from non-management or leadership educational background, they lack knowhow on how to influence and get teachers to perform beyond expectation, develop sense of school citizenship and work for unifying purpose. In the view of the fact that, the challenge of affectively committing teachers to school mission will remain difficult task for at least in short term. Besides, the attitude "non-competent" held by teachers about the leadership behavior of school principals is one of the main factors for their weak affective commitment to school mission. Moreover, lack of recognition and appreciation for effort have affected teachers moral to commit themselves to school mission. Hence, to get teacher's affective commitment and enhance school performance school principals should set example for staff to follow; show respect for staff and concern about their feeling and needs. Besides, school principals should provide incentives; structures to promote change, as well as opportunities for individual learning and appropriate means for monitoring progress toward improvement; endorse visions that embody the best thinking about teaching and learning. Moreover, transformational leadership training and development program need to be planned and conducted regularly.

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