

## **ABBREVIATIONS / ACRONYMS**

**DS:** District supervisor of Education

**EDPM:** Educational Planning and Management

**EME:** Experts from the Ministry of Education

**ERE:** Experts from Regional Education

**ESDP:** Education Sector Development Programme

**ETSIP:** Education Training Sector Improvement Programme

**GEQIP:** General Education Quality Improvement Program

**MOE:** Ministry of Education

**SDP:** School Development Plan

**SIP:** School Improvement Programme

**SNNPR:** Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region

**UNESCO:** United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **1.1. INTRODUCTION**

The instructional leadership role of school principals has been widely studied since the 1980s, and research has shown that the principal's instructional leadership is an important element of effective management in successful schools. It can be argued that leadership is only second to classroom instruction among all school related factors that contribute to student learning (Leithwood, 2004:75). After generating educational reform, the principal's instructional leadership needs to be analysed against national and state licensing standards. This study has therefore been designed to determine the extent to which principals in South Nations, Nationalities and People's Region secondary schools are engaged in instructional leadership.

### **1.2. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

Education systems in many developed countries are being devolved to school level, and this is putting unprecedented pressure on school principals to be accountable for the quality of education provided by their school. The level of responsibility principals are expected to assume is further compounded by the amount of pressure exerted by the demands of the improved education quality that already exists. In today's educational climate of heightened expectations, principals are in the "hot seat" when it comes to improving the quality of teaching and learning in schools. School principals need to be educational visionaries, instructional and curriculum leaders, assessment experts, community builders and educational experts (Chapman, 2008:98).

Today, effective school leadership must combine the traditional school leadership duties such as teacher evaluation, budgeting, scheduling, and facilities maintenance with certain specific aspects of teaching and learning. Effective instructional leaders are intensely involved in curriculum and instructional issues that directly influence student achievement. A principal needs to demonstrate effective leadership in efforts aimed at improving student's achievement, in spearheading needed changes in the instructional program, and in implementing and monitoring the school improvement plan.

Educational reform places a great premium on the relationship between leadership and school improvement (UNESCO, 2005:87). The logic of this position is that an orderly school environment that is well managed provides an effective and efficient atmosphere conducive to effective improvement of student learning. Effective leaders exercise an indirect, but powerful influence on the effectiveness of the school, as well as on the achievements of students.

Hatcher and Hale (2006: 26) have argued that excellent instructional leaders are very important and are vital role players in the process of lifting schools' performance to the desired level; also in improving the standard of students' achievement to the level demanded by most communities. Accordingly, instructional leaders need to lead teachers, students, and the community with a view to creating excellent schools. They should create visions and develop trust collaboratively with other role players in schools; these will earn them (instructional leaders) respect of all in their school communities.



Blase and Blase (2000:65) conducted a study into how the role of a principal as an instructional leader promotes teaching and learning in schools. The primary aim of their study was to determine teachers' perspectives on effective instructional leadership that impacts on classroom teaching. A principal's leadership behavior and his or her role as an instructional leader has a significant impact on the creation of a more effective school, and leads to higher levels of student achievement. It is therefore reasonable to expect principals of secondary schools to manage their schools by giving instructions that are sound, balanced, and fair, to their staff members.

Cotton (2003:132) claims that the following types of principal behavior have a significant impact on student achievement: the establishment of a clear focus on student learning by having a vision, having clear learning goals, and high expectations for all students. Interactions and cordial relationships with relevant stakeholders to ensure effective communication are essential. Provision of emotional and interpersonal support that has to accompany visibility and accessibility will promote parent-community participation. Creating a school culture conducive to effective teaching and learning through shared leadership, joint decision-making, collaboration and risk taking would lead to continuous improvements. Provision of instructional leadership should entail among others, discussions of instructional issues, observing classroom teaching and giving feedback, supporting teacher's autonomy and respecting instructional time. An instructional leader has to show accountability by monitoring students' progress and then use the progress data for the purpose of improving the program.

These are the types of behavior the researcher hoped to examine whether principals as instructional leaders in the four selected schools of the region, do manifest.

Best quality schools have a clear vision and goals that are provided by a principal who is an effective instructional leader. An effective principal creates a clear school mission statement and a vision, develops a strategic plan to implement them, and ensures that there is commitment to implementing them in order for the effective teaching and learning to be realized.

### **1.3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Effective instructional leaders have the ability to assess their own performance as well as the performance of their teachers. These leaders understand the importance of communicating the qualities of a successful teacher, to teachers. Since effective instructional leaders want to see teaching and learning improving on a continual basis, they give honest feedback concerning teachers' performance and tips on what could be improved. Instructional leaders should be knowledgeable about what is going on inside and outside the classroom. Not only should these leaders know the needs of teachers and other administrators, but they should also have an idea of what the students need in terms of learning. Being visibly present on a daily basis and maintaining a positive rapport with students and staff members helps an instructional leader to understand the overall needs of the school (King, 2002:12).

According to Blase and Blase (2004:120) lack of instructional leadership frequently results in a loss of teachers' respect for the principal. It also affects teachers' performance negatively; especially performance of those who have become jaded who require the principal's support. In other words, lack of instructional leadership usually

leads to poor performance on the part of both teachers and students. Furthermore, lack of time management skills by principals, will also lead to poor performance.

The effectiveness of the principal is critically linked to the success of any school. A principal's engagement with school, community, students, teachers and all educational stakeholders is crucial if the school is to achieve its objectives. The principal should be able to establish a safe and positive school climate that will facilitate high academic performance on the part of the students. School principals should have the ability and the right perspective to clearly define the goals and objectives of the school. However, the practical reality that school principals find themselves in may not be conducive to meeting the desired standards.

There seems to be confusion today in the south Nation Nationalities People's region of Ethiopia as to whether the role and functions of instructional leaders should extend from mere supervision of staff members to include their development as well. The role of a school principal was seen as mainly that of a manager/administrator. It was found that as the manager ascended in rank to the highest level in the school hierarchy, his or her administrative duties increased to the extent that his or her teaching duties decreased. In other words, the school principal undertook more management and administrative duties and less actual teaching. However, all the school principals' responsibilities are focused on the effective instructional activities to ensure successful accomplishment of the desired outcomes. Active involvement with the instructional program of the school is essential to any instructional leader in order to remain in touch with what is going on in the classrooms.

As viewed by the researcher the trend in most secondary schools in Ethiopia is that schools are led without any clear plan or vision. It becomes a problem if what is happening in a school is not need-based and participation during the process of planning and implementation is not inclusive. School principals need a style of leadership that promote, celebrate, and enhance the image of teaching and learning that contributes directly to instructional improvement.

To demonstrate effective instructional leadership in improving student's achievement, the school principal must also have the knowledge and understanding of effective communication strategy, otherwise the school will experience huge problems. Despite changes taking place at secondary school level, the researcher feels that most school principals in Ethiopia currently seem to be lacking in effectiveness and efficiency with regard to instructional leadership. They therefore perform below their communities' expectations in respect of achievement of secondary school's goals.

Currently, even though the secondary schools have made various attempts to improve the effectiveness of the instructional leadership, there are some observed limitations that impede the teaching learning process. As practicum coordinator of the Dilla University for the last two years, the researcher had the opportunity to observe such gaps and conditions. By my own experience triggered me with insight into how this critical phenomenon is dealt with. Many a time, instructional leaders neglect the critical issues of teaching and learning while occupying themselves with the more administrative responsibilities. My position as a teacher put me in a position to see how instructional leadership, or the lack of it, could lead to good or poor school performance. This study hopes to inform policymakers, implementers and institutions responsible for

principals' training and principals themselves, of some potential variables related to effective continuous development of instructional leadership skills.

Different documents that have been presented at various educational conferences, and published annual educational evaluation forums and supervision reports on the role of secondary school principals as instructional leaders seem to be less effective in addressing the problems. Without effective instructional leadership, the secondary schools will not achieve their educational goals.

Therefore, the existing challenging practices need to be investigated so as to achieve effective implementation of instructional leadership. Based on this line of argument, the following research questions were formulated.

## **1.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The study investigated the following research questions:

### **1.4.1. Main-Question**

- How do principals practice effective instructional leadership role in secondary schools of Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Region, Ethiopia?

### **1.4.2. The subsidiary research questions**

- (a) To what extent do secondary school principals believe that they have the capacity to provide effective instructional supports?
- (b) What are the roles of secondary school principals in delivering effective instructional practices?

(c) How do secondary school principals acknowledge individual capacity and background differences in their instructional leadership?

(d) How do secondary school principals perceive instructional leadership training as a source of confidence in providing effective instructional supports?

(e) What are the factors that hinder secondary school principals from applying effective instructional leadership?

## **1.5. AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1.5.1 The main aim of the study was to investigate principal's instructional role and strengthen the practice to address the need for improving principal's capacity in the system.

### **❖ General objective**

Investigate the roles of secondary school principals in terms of current practices of instructional leadership.

### **❖ Specific objectives**

- a) To identify the capacity of secondary school principals in providing effective instructional support.
- b) To determine whether or not secondary school principals are providing effective instructional leadership.
- c) To identify the secondary school principals' individual capacity and background that result different effects on their instructional leadership.

d) To explain the practices of principals' instructional leadership training as a source of confidence in providing effective instructional supports.

e) To identify the factors that hinder secondary school principals from applying effective instructional leadership in their schools.

## **1.6. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

1. The Ministry of Education can formulate policy guide based on the instructional model designed by this research.

2. The results of the study would create awareness among school principals regarding effective practice of instruction process in their own schools.

3. The recommended model could help as a guide to the regional education bureau to enhance effective instructional leadership system throughout the region.

4. The study results would improve the understanding of the functions being carried out by the regional education bureau that are aimed at improving the leadership capacity of the secondary school principals.

5. The study would help create awareness nationally of the essence of effective management and improvement of learning outcomes in the instruction process.

6. Help as a benchmark for further research.

## 1.7. CLARIFICATIONS OF KEY CONCEPTS

**Effectiveness:** The power or capacity to produce a desired result (Blase and Blase, 2002:5).

In this study effectiveness refers to the degrees to which objectives are achieved and the extent to which targeted problems are solved.

**Instructional leadership:** A leadership activity carried out by the school principal with special focus on teaching and learning process in the school environment (DuFour, 2002:8). Instructional leadership in this study can be defined as those actions that a principal takes, or delegates to others, to promote learning in learning communities.

**Principal:** Instructional leader is appointed at the top position in a school to manage, operate, and lead all the activities of the school (Blase and Blase, 2002:3). A principal in this study means the head or director of a school who plays a leading role in any school activity, as a player and chief actor.

**Secondary schools:** In Ethiopian context, secondary school refers to the formal category of school level that offers education to grades 9 and 10 learners (MOE 1994:13). Secondary school in this study is a school, which provides secondary education to learners who are typically between the ages of 15 and 17; it is provided after primary school education but before higher education.

**Region:** Region is governed by a regional council whose members are directly elected to represent districts (*woreda*). Each council has a president, who is elected by the council. The regions also have an executive committee, whose members are selected



by the president from among the councilors and approved by the council. Each region has a sector bureau, which implements the council mandate and reports to the executive committee (MoE, 2002:2).

**Zone :**Zone is an area, especially one that is different from the areas around it because it has different characteristics or is used for different purposes. It is under the supervision of the regional administration (MoE, 2002:2).

**District:** is an area that accommodates above ten thousand people in the same geographical location. It is under the supervision of the zonal administration. (MoE, 2002:2).

## **1.8. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Instructional leadership is the backbone of education. A study covering more schools, more regions, and more stakeholders from the selected regions would have been more valuable. This study was very difficult to carry out. Everything had to be condensed since time was limited. The region in which the study was conducted was very vast, making it technically very difficult to cover all schools in different zones. The researcher, therefore, had to limit the study to only two zones, four school principals and four education experts from the Ministry of Education, six regional education bureau experts and six district supervisors.

The reason for including principals, officials and experts in the study is that they were the ones who were directly involved either in the provision or monitoring of instructional leadership in schools. They were managing, supervising and giving feedback to

schools. They are more responsible to enhancing effective instructional leadership practices.

The other constraint concerning the investigation was the timing of the research, which coincided with the examination time. During that period principals were very busy; they were as a result, left with limited time to assist in my study. However, the researcher managed to grapple with all the challenges encountered throughout the investigation.

### **1.9. SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

Currently, Ethiopia has nine regional states and two administrative cities. In order to use the researchers' time and resources effectively and to be able to manage the study adequately, the South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region, which is one of the regional states of the country was chosen as the area in which the study was to be conducted. This region was convenient for the researcher since his work place is situated in it. There are 228 secondary schools in the region. Out of these, the researcher selected two secondary schools from Gedeo zone (Yirgacheffe and Dilla secondary schools) and two from Sidama zone (Chuko and Tabor secondary schools) for his investigation; therefore, a total of four secondary schools were selected for the study. All the selected schools were easily accessible and the researcher gathered information within eight weeks from the respondents without any problem.

### **1.10. CHAPTER OUTLINE**

The thesis has five chapters, which have been organized as follows:

- A. In chapter one the research problem is introduced to the reader. This chapter handles the introduction and the background to the study, the problem statement,

the research scope and limitations of the study. The important concepts used in the study are clarified the way they are used in the study.

- B. Chapter two gives a review of the relevant literature, theoretical background of the field of study, and the role of a principal as an instructional leader and the influence thereof on effective teaching.
- C. Chapter three presents the research methodology and design. It describes and justifies the research design that is used in the study and the sampling procedures employed. It also describes the data collection instruments and how the data was actually collected. The trustworthiness and transferability of the research instruments are also described.
- D. Chapter four presents the analysis and interpretation of the collected data that culminated into the empirical research findings.
- E. Chapter five gives a summary of the study and the main findings. The conclusions and recommendations of the research are also discussed. Moreover, new model of effective instructional leadership proposed by the researcher is presented.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITRATURE REVIEW**

#### **2. AN EXPOSITION OF THE THEORIES AND PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING THE CONCEPT OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN THE SCHOOL SITUATION**

##### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter deals with the concept and the theoretical framework of the development of instructional leadership; as well as the historical context of its origin, nature, function and growth. Furthermore, models of instructional leadership used in the United Kingdom (UK), United States of America (USA), Nigeria and South Africa are examined, and interpreted in relation to this study. Finally, the strengths and weaknesses found in the Ethiopian situation were explored.

##### **2.1. THE CONCEPT OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

Instructional leadership encompasses those actions that a principal takes or delegates to others to promote growth in students learning (Hallinger, 2009:12). Blase and Blase (2000:131) also indicate that instructional leadership entails direct assistance provided to educators on a one to one basis or by way of group development. These can be part of staff development or curriculum development. Instructional leadership is usually aimed at the welfare of the staff. The instructional leadership guides, directs and regulates the education occurrence. It organizes educational matters such as creating educational infrastructure; planning, managing, implementing and controlling staff development programs; and, evaluating the entire educational programs.

From the above explication it is clear that instructional leadership is one of the many principal's management tasks. It is the process where principals immerse themselves in the actual teaching and learning program of the school. This immersion enables principals to identify problems with regard to staff development and staff appraisal; and to reflect on how to offer guidance and support to ensure effective learning and teaching.

## **2.2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

One major emphasis in the educational arena in the early 21st century has been the continuing demand for greater accountability to increase student performance. National and state expectations require schools to ensure that all students achieve mastery of curriculum objectives, and local schools focus on implementing those requirements to the best of their ability. As a result, leading instructional efforts in a school has evolved into a primary role for school principals.

In order to meet the challenges associated with national and state expectations, principals must focus on teaching and learning to a greater degree than before, especially in terms of measurable student progress. Consequently, today's principal makes sure that his or her school has a vision. Furthermore, he or she ensures that he or she shares leadership with teachers, and influences his or her school to operate as a learning community. Creating an organizational culture and infrastructure that support a learning organization appears to be requiring the principal of today to be in possession of a different set of leadership skills than the principal of yesterday.

Literature in educational leadership of earlier years showed that leadership effectiveness was considered in terms of leadership styles and capacity of leader's personality interaction. However, the uniqueness of each situation in which leadership abilities are manifested makes generalisation of characteristics and leadership styles difficult. Moreover, due to the growing emphasis that was laid on the management of non-instructional functions, instructional leadership was overshadowed by administrative leadership. Such studies also failed to identify activities of leaders that have impact on the students learning. Such limitations of earlier studies directed the attention of most researchers of the 1980's to focus on the common leadership functions that contribute to effective teaching and learning in schools. Accordingly, the instructional leadership framework designed by Hallinger (2009:142) consists of five main components:

1. Building and sustaining a school vision
2. Sharing leadership
3. Leading a learning community
4. Using data to make instructional decisions
5. Monitoring curriculum and instruction

### **2.2.1. Building and Sustaining a School Vision**

A successful instructional leader must have a clear vision that shows how all components of a school will operate at some point in the future. Having a clear image of their schools helps instructional leaders meet the administrative requirements of their jobs. In fact, instructional leaders may need two types of vision: one vision of their

schools and the roles they play in those schools, and another vision of how the change process will proceed.

Clearly, multiple role expectations exist for school leaders. Every school needs an instructional leader who can ensure that the instruction provided is of high quality. Thus, there is a need to spend time in classrooms observing the process of teaching and learning without doing that at the expense of student safety and sound relationships with parents. To fulfil these multiple responsibilities well, an instructional leader needs to possess an inner compass that consistently points towards the interests of the school, and never lose sight of the school's vision, mission and goals.

Successful instructional leader understands that it is important to set clear learning goals school-wide; and even community-wide goals. The development of a clear vision and goals for learning is emphasized by instructional leader of high-achieving schools (Leithwood and Riehl, 2003:66). They hold high expectations that teachers and students will meet these goals and hold themselves accountable for the success of the school. Such instructional leaders provide emotional support for teachers and are viewed as possessing the ability to foster positive interpersonal relationships.

They protect instructional time by limiting loudspeaker announcements and minimizing other possible disruptions as much as possible. They ensure that student progress is monitored through the continual aggregation and disaggregation of student performance data that are directly related to the school's mission and goals. Instructional leaders of high-achieving schools are confident that they will attain their vision and goals despite

challenges and setbacks and, thus, serve as role models for staff and students and when milestones are reached, they celebrate.

Building and sustaining the school's vision focuses on the following principles:

- Instructional leaders need to have clear visions for their schools
- Schools need instructional leaders who strive to improve the quality of instruction in their schools
- Instructional leaders of high-achieving schools expect teachers and students to achieve the schools' goals
- Instructional leaders of high-achieving schools are confident that their schools can attain their goals
- Instructional leaders who focus on school improvement have more effective schools, high-achieving schools, and they communicate to all stakeholders that the school's most important mission is promotion of effective learning

### **2.2.2. Sharing Leadership**

Guiding a school staff to reach a common vision requires intensive and sustained collaboration. It is the expertise of teachers upon which any quality educational system is built. Wise principals know that going it alone makes achieving instructional goals virtually impossible. A key responsibility of school leaders is to sustain learning, and this can best be accomplished through leading learning endeavours that are focused on long-term outcomes rather than short-term returns (Hargreaves, 2009:12).



Effective instructional leaders facilitate shared leadership and collaboration among their staffs to include the following:

Effective instructional leaders understand that they cannot reach instructional goals alone; attaining school goals requires individual and shared efforts. They believe that staff members need to collaborate and openly discuss instructions and programs collectively together with all stakeholders. Leadership that is delegated across the school contributes to sustainable improvements within the school organization. Leaders should develop and count on the expertise of their staff members to improve the effectiveness of the school. Even though they function as chief instructional leaders of their schools, they need to balance their multiple responsibilities by involving their staff members.

### **2.2.3. Leading a Learning Community**

Today's principals must become role models for learning while continually seeking tools and ideas that foster school improvement (Lashway, 2003:53). Simply put, schooling is organized around two key functions:

- (1) Teaching and learning, and
- (2) Organizing for teaching and learning.

Thus, it seems clear that school principals need to manage the structures and processes of their schools around instruction. Particular attributes of effective principals and their role in leading the learning community include the following:

Effective instructional leaders tend to the learning of all members of their school communities; serve as participatory learners with their staffs; provide conditions through staff development programs that incorporate study of professional literature; demonstration and practice of new skills and peer coaching; use action research focused on collecting student data; study the effects of new strategies on students; possess a broad view of the expertise of their teachers.

#### **2.2.4. Using Data to Make Instructional Decisions**

Data sources inform and guide action. Without meaningful data it is impossible to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of school initiatives. An effective principal gathers information skilfully that determines how well a school organization is meeting its goals. Furthermore, he or she uses that information to refine strategies designed to realize and accomplish the goals. Thus, instructional leaders find themselves in a situation where they have to do some analysis, reflection, and refinement constantly. They challenge their staff to re-examine assumptions about their work and how it can be performed. Beyond the ability to successfully gather and analyse school data, principals need to possess basic skills for using these data for setting directions, developing people, and restructuring the organisation. The use of appropriate data helps to maintain a consistent focus on improving teaching and learning, and, consequently, effective principals accept no excuses for lack of success to improve student learning (Leithwood and Riehl, 2003:76).

The demands that accompany high-stakes testing compel principals to guide their schools to learn from their results and experiences. Doing so will lead to coherence

within a school and offer better opportunities to sustain results. Additionally, continuous improvement requires principals to examine data and find means to address inconsistencies with expected results.

Useful and properly retrieved data can inform staff about the gaps between desired outcomes and the actual results. Furthermore, this knowledge should result in changes in practice. Encouraging staff to collect, analyse, and determine appropriate, remedial actions based upon the results should be a collective enterprise. When staff members assume an active role in the data analysis process, it promotes finding appropriate solutions and identifying actions for improving results. It also facilitates active involvement of all staff members in gathering and analysis of information. Effective instructional leaders skilfully gather data and use them for determining school effectiveness and continuous improvement. Hence good results are achieved when principals encourage school staff to actively analyse data for improving results.

#### **2.2.5. Monitoring Curriculum and Instruction**

There are good reasons to focus on school leadership. The importance of the principal's role has never been greater, taking into consideration national accountability standards for schools and the likelihood that principal job vacancies will increase in the near future. Not only do effective principals focus attention on curriculum and teaching, they also understand teaching and possess credibility in the eyes of their staff.

Schmoker (2006:31) suggested that too often school cultures discourage close scrutiny of instruction. He says that effective leaders can look for evidence that curriculum

standards are met through the review of formative assessments, grade books, team lesson logs, and student work.

Principals support instructional activities and programs by modelling expected behaviours, participating in staff development and consistently prioritising instructional concerns on a day-to-day basis. They strive to protect instructional time by removing issues that would detract teachers from their instructional responsibilities. Moreover, principals in effective schools are involved in instruction and work to provide resources that keep teachers focused on student achievement. They are knowledgeable about curriculum and instruction and promote teacher reflection about instruction and its effect on student achievement. The role of the instructional leaders on monitoring curriculum and instruction indicates the following:

Effective principals possess knowledge of the curriculum and good instructional practices and, subsequently, focus their attention in their schools on curriculum and instruction. They monitor the implementation of curriculum standards and make sure they are taught. They model behaviours that they expect of school staff. They are in a good position to support teacher effectiveness through observations and conversations with teachers. Principals need to spend time in classrooms in order to effectively monitor and encourage curriculum implementation and quality instructional practices. They need to feel it is important to have someone to steer the curriculum and prioritize staff development; someone able to judge the quality of teaching and share a deep knowledge of instruction with teachers. They need to promote coherence in the

instructional program where teachers and students follow a common curriculum framework and students trust teachers to implement instruction effectively.

Generally, the principal's role is more important for ensuring successful student learning. School principals who focus on visions of their schools nurture the leadership capabilities of their teachers. Additionally, if their schools are moving in the right direction, they model effective leading and learning. Combining these efforts with using data appropriately, as well as monitoring what takes place at the classroom level, will increase the likelihood for schools to achieve their goals for student learning.

### **2.3. HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND THE ORIGIN OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

The concept of instructional leadership can be traced back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century (Gurr, 2009:132). At that time the word instruction was equated to teaching and the fact that leadership took place in a school made it instructional leadership. Although most literature on the topic states that the concept of instructional leadership developed during the 1980s, it is noteworthy that in 1967 Bridges wrote about the extensive amount of literature that already existed at that time on the topic of instructional leadership.

At the time, Bridges (2002:145) was promoting his view of instructional leadership as 'experimenter', according to which he or she anticipated the connection between instructional leadership on the one the hand, and innovation and school improvement on the other. In the 1970s instructional leadership was focussed on teacher supervision and evaluation; a focus, which in the United States of America shifted to curriculum improvement. The 1980s is considered the revolutionary period of the concept of

instructional leadership arising from the school effectiveness movement in the United States.

The school effectiveness movement promoted the idea that effective leaders were 'strong, directive' leaders focused on curriculum and instruction (Hallinger, 2003), and that these qualities could be developed. This understanding of leadership therefore had a great influence on the principal leadership training academies in the USA.

Dinham (2011:140) points out that from the 1980s there has been an increasing decentralisation of management responsibilities from the national level of the education system to local school level, in Australia, although this affected more government schools than independent schools. This change for school principals to assume greater management roles at school level contributed to a shift of focus to business models of corporate administration, which in some cases diverted the attention of principals away from the educational or instructional emphasis of their work. The focus has now returned to academic concerns partly due to government policy on funding and accountability.

The 1990s brought the identification of high and low achieving schools through standardised tests under spotlight. In Australia this began at State level but later became centralised at a national level. There was also an international reaction against the idea of the principal becoming 'the centre of expertise, power and authority,' by advocating for the notion of distributed leadership.

In the last 20 years the use of the term instructional leadership has had varying levels of emphasis in the midst of a number of other 'adjectival' leaderships, the most prominent being transformational, distributed or shared, although there are tens if not hundreds of

others. The concept of instructional leadership has become strongly connected with the shift towards measurement of improved student outcomes and the instructional leadership actions that contribute to that improvement.

In the 2000s performance standards became equated with measurable student outcomes, usually restricted to literacy and numeracy, and an emphasis on data as a means of informing practice became common place. In the last few years terms such as 'leadership for learning', 'learning centred leadership', 'student-centred leadership' and 'leadership of learning' (Hallinger, 2010: 22 ) have entered the vocabulary.

Recent concepts of leadership tend to include the idea of moral purpose connected to vision and values that goes beyond a conception of the principal as solely an instructional leader but as someone involved in developing human potential.

#### **2.4. MODELS OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

Some researchers define instructional leadership through the traits, behaviors and processes a person needs to lead a school effectively. Thus, a multitude of conceptual models that demonstrate instructional leadership exist. The three major functions of instructional leadership were defining mission, managing the instructional program and promoting a positive school climate (Hallinger, 2005:10).

Mission focuses on framing school goals, communicating school goals; instruction was elaborated in terms of supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating curriculum and monitoring student progress. Principals created positive school climate by protecting instructional time, promoting professional development, maintaining high visibility, providing incentives for teachers, enforcing academic standards and providing incentives for students. The principal's functions consist of mostly indirect activities that

help create a positive learning environment. These include creating a positive school culture, engaging in activities like making a point to visit each teacher before his or her class begins, greeting students as they enter the building, and providing common planning time for teachers who in turn develop both the students' capacity for learning and success.

Murphy (2002:12) broke down this dimension in to the following two major roles or behaviors of the principal: framing school goals and communicating school goals. Framing school goals refers to a principal's role to determine the areas on which the school staff will focus their attention and resources during a given school year. The emphasis is on fewer goals around which staff energy and other school resources can be utilized. A few coordinated objectives, each with manageable scope, appear to work best. The goals should incorporate data on past and current student performance and include staff responsibilities for achieving the goals. Staff and parent input during the development of the school's goals seem important. Performance goals should be expressed in measurable terms.

Communicating and explaining school goals is one of the crucial roles of the principal as an instructional leader. Clear goals and high expectations commonly shared among members of the school community are some of the characteristics of an effective school. Framing school goals encompass setting goals that emphasize achievement by all students, incorporating data on past and current student performance and including staff responsibilities for achieving the goals. Communicating goals frequently, formally and informally, to students, parents, and teachers highlights the fact that school goals guide the activities of the school.



The above concept is vital to this study because, instructional leaders can have common understanding of clear and focused mission, high expectations for students, a climate conducive to learning, opportunities to learn, and regular monitoring of students and classrooms. They can also share the understanding of the following: positive home school relations, ties, collegiality, collaboration, positive school outcomes, school culture, change, and improvement. Success is more likely when teachers are collegial and work collaboratively on improvement activities. When teachers and administrators work cooperatively, the level of commitment, energy, and motivation is likely to be higher and change efforts are more easily implemented. Schools with professional collaboration exhibit relationships and behaviours that support quality work and effective instruction. Such a situation is conducive to complex problem-solving, extensive sharing of knowledge and stronger professional networks to share information. The results are increased job satisfaction, identification with the school and more continuous and comprehensive attempts to improve the school.

## **2.5. THE ROLE OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS**

Principals should understand that contemporary theories of learning are directed to learner-centred learning and therefore, should be able to utilize this knowledge in playing their instructional leadership role. This does not mean that principals will become "all knowing", but that they will have to understand key educational ideas and be able to apply such knowledge appropriately to their school community. The contemporary ideas promoted these days are learning behaviourism, constructivism, as well as the following learning theories: multiple intelligences, activity theory, learning styles, learning as a process of active engagement, learning as

individual and social activity; and learner differences as resources to be used (Hill, 2006:64).

Today, principals should spend more time establishing appropriate preconditions and following through with interventions aimed at improving teaching and learning. The interventions instructional principal stages to improve teaching and learning should include communicating school goals focused on student achievement; working with teaching staff to analyse state assessment results; and curriculum mastery. Principals should determine time on task by analysing absences, tardiness and other behavioural problems. Current educational processes and strategies that are being used need to be evaluated. Time should be provided for examining student achievement on a regular basis during the school year. Principals should also ensure that teachers analyse results of formative assessment and monitor student performance based on curriculum standards. Principals should provide professional development that assists teachers and paraprofessionals in, analysing data, the use of effective teaching strategies, identifying additional methods for collecting data to determine if learning is occurring, and in using a systematic step by step approach to ensure change occurs.

Principals should perform less administrative duties and operate more as educational leaders in the sense of being experts in teaching and learning and in creating an environment that facilitates learning. New conditions and expectations in education can create new challenges and perspectives for the principal. Principals' interventions will usually impact on their students' performance, particularly in the most challenging schools. A highly effective principal can increase his or her students' achievement. Effective principals can reduce students' disciplinary problems such as student

absences and suspensions; but improve pass or graduation rates. It was found that principals of low-achieving, poverty-stricken, and minority schools tend to make a greater impact on student performance than principals of less challenging schools.

For effective principals in the ever changing educational dispensation, the challenge is to redefine the functions of leadership, since this is crucial for change to occur and to build democratic schools. This means creating schools where more people participate in decision-making. In order to ensure success, it is important to develop the necessary democratic knowledge and skills on how to manage and lead democratically.

With the trend moving toward school self-management as described in the previous section, principals are also expected to be more accountable and more responsive to community expectations, in order to be able to lead a complex and substantial organization successfully. The role of principals is important; with the increasing autonomy given to schools, it is crucial that principals should not only be experts in learning and teaching, but also have leadership skills to utilize this knowledge to influence good performance in their entire schools.

Instructional leadership expects educational leaders to set clear expectations maintain discipline and implement high standards, with the aim to improving teaching and learning at school. The principal is described as a visionary, leading the school community in its development to use more effective teaching and curricular strategies, and supporting educators' efforts to implement new programs and processes.

Instructional leaders perform, according to Parker and Day (2007:87), the following functions: defining and communicating a clear mission, goals, and objectives;

formulating guidelines for collaboration of staff members, mission, goals, and objectives to realise effective teaching and learning. A clear sense of mission is particularly important when schools are undergoing a number of changes; and for managing the curriculum and instruction. Managing and coordinating the curriculum in such a way that teaching time can be used optimally, and teachers can be supervised.

Ensuring that educators receive guidance and support to enable them to teach and monitor learning programs effectively. Monitoring and evaluating the learners' progress by means of tests and examinations. The results are used to provide support to both learners and educators to improve, and to help parents understand where and why improvement is needed. Creating a positive school climate in which teaching and learning can take place. In a situation where learning is made exciting, where educators and learners are supported and where there is a shared sense of purpose, learning will not be difficult.

More recently, however, as a result of the changes and reforms highlighted in the previous section, principals have been encouraged to motivate, inspire and unite educators around common goals. They have the ability to persuade their followers to join their vision and share their ideals. They also have the ability to achieve productivity through other people. The actions of transformational leaders convey the message about the beliefs and commitments they stand for.

In researching principal leadership, principals had an important role to play in connecting schools with the external world and bringing into schools a variety of knowledge. Principals are the persons in schools who have the greatest capacity to

network with the wider community and ensure that schools keep abreast of current initiatives and anticipate future trends. This role takes up more of the principal's time who is more often doing office work, supervising employees, supervising students, dealing with student discipline, attending decision-making committee meetings and other relevant meetings such as parents meetings and meetings with external officials.

Explicit in the above statement, particularly in relation to ideas such as empowerment, vision, planning, evaluation and improvement is the concept of shared leadership, from which synergy might result through the genuine use of everyone's abilities. Perhaps the ultimate shared leadership was best portrayed by Kidman (2001:132) in asserting that the first and most important quality of a leader is that of being a servant of the staff members by encouraging, enabling, supporting and empowering them. This school principal, clearly saw servant leadership as a means of managing today's pressures from schools.

Instructional leaders have an understanding of the "real issues" or values of life (i.e. Power, justice, responsibilities, influence, the nature of the future, etc.), and are not only clear in their personal views, but are also open to the views of others. They are prepared to stand up and do what is right. Apart from these values, effective school principals in the modern age should also possess certain qualities of leadership that distinguish them from their peers. Qualities such as reflection, vision, commitment, courage, power, and empowerment come immediately to mind when one thinks about excellence in principalship.

## **2.6. EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND SCHOOL SUCCESS**

The concepts of historical context, role, and functions of instructional leadership have been previously clarified but it was found necessary to examine the personal qualities needed for an individual to be an effective instructional leader. The survey of literature produced a list of the researchers' findings on the necessary personal qualities for principals, which included trust, perseverance, good communication, flexibility, listening skill, open-mindedness, creativity, problem solving skill, and ability to visualize.

Principals need to have high expectations of all members of the school community in order to create an atmosphere of trust and perseverance. An enabling atmosphere may be accomplished through developing positive relationships with teachers, allowing teachers to take risks without penalty, providing opportunities for professional development, giving leadership in staff development, and working collaboratively. Though instructional leadership can be learned, there are other variables, which need to be addressed. Leithwood (2005:19) reviewed the literature on the difference between men and women in the area of instructional leadership and found that women tended to be stronger instructional leaders than men because of the socialization process: Socialization experiences of men and women are linked to differences in career aspirations and views of the principal's role. Such experiences appeared to be causing more men to aspire to be principals early in their careers (before age 30); and to aspire to be superintendents in their next career move. Gender socialization experiences also seemed to contribute to a relatively large proportion of women viewing themselves as more curriculum and instructional leaders. Relatively larger proportions of men, in contrast, viewed themselves as general managers.

Evidently, if male principals want to succeed as instructional leaders, they will have to put more effort into the following personal qualities and behaviors: incorporating reflective: conversations; focusing on instructional improvement; supervision; development of curriculum; and developing relationships conducive to creating a positive climate. According to Cross and Rice (2000:165), a principal who wants to be an instructional leader must have a vision and be committed to improving students' achievement, have high expectations of students, develop a trusting working environment, be capable of effective communication, and have courage to seek assistance. Considerable evidence exists that a strong instructional leader is a key in an effective school. A clear school mission and vision; creating climate conducive to education; cultivating leadership in others; improving instruction; managing people, data and processes; strong integrated curriculum; and frequent monitoring of what is happening in the classrooms, are the most potent factors to be taken into account in determining a school performance.

## **2.7. INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN ENHANCING LEARNING**

An instructional leader is a person and a notion, the notion that learning should be given top priority while everything else revolves around the enhancement of learning. Principals need to work closely with students, developing teaching techniques and methods as a means for understanding teacher perspectives and for establishing a base on which to make curricular decisions. Hence, to have credibility as an instructional leader, the principal should also be a practicing teacher. Instructional leaders need to know what is going on in the classroom. Many principals are not in touch with what is going on at the classroom level and are unable to address some of

the problems teachers and students encounter. The tendency is to address instructional issues in terms of the usually outdated information, which the principal obtained when he or she was still a class teacher.

Whitaker (2007:89) identified the following four skills essential for instructional leadership:

- Firstly, they need to be resource providers. It is not enough for instructional leaders to know the strengths and weaknesses of their school, they should also recognize that teachers desire to be acknowledged and appreciated for a job well done.
- Secondly, they need to be instructional resources. Teachers count on their instructional leaders as resources of information on current trends and effective instructional practices. Instructional leaders are tuned-in to issues relating to curriculum, effective pedagogical strategies and assessment.
- Thirdly, they need to be good communicators. Effective instructional leaders need to communicate essential beliefs regarding learning such as the conviction that all children can learn and no child should be left behind.
- Finally, they need to create a visible presence. Leading the instructional program of a school means a commitment to living and breathing a vision of success in teaching and learning. This includes focusing on learning objectives, modeling behaviors of learning, and designing programs and activities for instruction.

Generally, the principal is both manager-administrator and instructional leader in many countries. Principals tend to be more manager-administrators oriented while the duties of instructional leader are most often delegated to the assistant principal. Even then, the



label 'instructional leader' is seldom assigned to any one person, but is assumed to be the responsibility of all teachers.

Nonetheless, it is interesting to note that the trend is towards insisting that the principal assume the prominent role of an instructional leader. It will be a formidable task convincing the principals to relinquish their image as manager-administrator and take on the role of instructional leader. From the above scenario, we can conclude that, principals do not view themselves as instructional leaders and many are of the belief that anything that has to do with teaching and learning is best assigned to teachers.

In some cases, principals feel inadequate to initiate and develop instructional programs given the assortment of subject areas taught with each having its own pedagogical uniqueness. For example, teaching reading is different from teaching science, and would it be fair to expect the principal to be knowledgeable about instructional strategies for each of the subject areas. Despite these apprehensions, proponents of the idea that the principal should be an instructional leader, is gaining serious attention. If that is the case, then the principal needs to have up-to-date knowledge on three areas of education, namely; curriculum, instruction and assessment.

With regard to curriculum, principals need to know about the changing conceptions of curriculum, educational philosophies and beliefs, knowledge specialization and fragmentation, curricular sources and conflict, curriculum evaluation and improvement. With regard to instruction, principals need to know about different models of teaching, the theoretical reasons for adopting a particular teaching model, the pedagogy of the internet, the theories underlying the technology-based learning environment. With

regard to assessment, principals need to know about the principles of student assessment, assessment procedures with emphasis on alternative assessment methods and assessment that aim to improve rather than prove student learning.

Underlying these three areas of knowledge, is a deep understanding of how humans learn. It may not be an overstatement to suggest that a principal is not fully equipped if he or she does not have a deep understanding of human learning (Phillips, 2006:13). The core business of a school is learning and recent research in cognitive science has produced a wealth of knowledge about human learning. It is crucial that principals know and understand these theories so that they may serve as a resource in enhancing instructional effectiveness. An impoverished understanding of human learning will make it difficult for the principal to explain and justify the theoretical underpinnings of instructional strategies practiced. Furthermore, with the growing importance of technology in schools, principals also need to be equipped with the knowledge of education technology and how to integrate it into teaching and learning.

Increasingly, principals are looked upon as leaders who will inspire teachers to adopt innovative pedagogies in the classroom. For example, if some students are unable to read and write at secondary school level, the principal as instructional leader should take steps to alleviate the problem by supporting teachers' instructional methods, allocating resources and materials, visiting classrooms frequently, providing feedback on instructional methods and techniques and using data to focus attention on improving the curriculum and instruction.

Gorgon and Andrews (2002:43) explain that the following are issues that contribute to instructional leaders' ability in solving problems of teaching and learning: sharing a common vision and goals to bring about change; playing a key role in increasing the effectiveness of pedagogical leadership practice in their school; focusing on activities maximising learning outcomes and learner performance. Leadership engage the whole school in conversations concerning meaningful use of assessment data; use of data for inquiry and decision making; use of a tool to enable school leaders and teachers to implement change in schools, promotion of a culture of high standards and the use of appropriate assessment for improving learning; use of data to understand where learners experience problems; designing improvement plans aimed at improving the instructional effectiveness of the teacher.

## **2.8. SKILLS IN WHICH PRINCIPALS NEED TO DEVELOP**

### **2.8.1. Instructional leaders as staff development promoter**

The holistic definition of instructional leadership is an active, collaborative form of leadership where the principal works with teachers to shape the school as a workplace in line with shared goals, and promoted by teachers' collaboration, teacher learning opportunities, teacher certainty, teachers' commitment, and student learning (Fullan, 2009:161). In every school it is the principal's responsibility to see to it that staff members develop in their work. The starting point for development is induction. A school needs a program for introducing new educators in the school, even experienced educators.

In support of this view the instructional leaders should encourage the formation of groups because they offer a situation in which the inexperienced can learn from the experienced. As schools are involved in fulfilling their mission, the people in them must at the same time be provided opportunities to grow and develop. Through the staff development process individuals are provided opportunities to engage in self-evaluation and capacity building. Educators are involved in selecting the topics and planning the staff development activities. It is likely that such an exercise would boost the level of educators' commitment to their work.

The instructional leader should involve others in the task of management; he or she would be supported by his or her colleagues who will see many of the decisions reached as their own. This will reduce the pressure on the instructional leader and in sharing the tasks of leadership he or she would be preparing others for leadership positions so that when their turn comes they should be ready to equal the challenge. Planning staff development activities is the major method of improving instruction. It is therefore essential that each school should have a policy for staff development, which should help the school to attain its aims.

The staff development program of the school should include everyone. The staff development can contribute to schools flexibility and it has potential to build companionship among teachers and across groups. It can also provide new possibilities for accountability; and improve teacher retention by enabling teachers to become more directly involved in their own learning and professional growth.

### **2.8.2. Professional development of staff members**

Professional development refers to many types of educational experiences related to an individual's work. In education, research has shown that quality teaching and school leadership are the most important factors in improving student achievement. For teachers, school leaders as well as district leaders to be as effective as possible, they need to expand their knowledge and skills continually and implement the best educational practices. Educators learn to help students learn at the highest levels. Many people may not be aware of their local school system's methods for improving teaching and student learning. Professional development is the only strategy through which school systems can enhance their educators' performance levels. Professional development is also the only way educators can learn so that they are able to better their performance and raise student achievement (Cooper, 2009:16).

Effective professional development enables educators to develop the knowledge and skills they need to address students' learning challenges. To be effective, professional development requires thoughtful planning followed by careful implementation and prompt feedback to ensure it responds to educators' learning needs. Educators who participate in professional development then must put their new knowledge and skills to work. Professional development is not effective unless it causes teachers to improve their instruction or causes administrators to become better school leaders. The effectiveness of professional development depends on how carefully educators conceive, plan, and implement it. There is no substitute for rigorous thinking and

execution. Unfortunately, many educators responsible for organizing professional development have had no formal education in how to do it.

The learning experiences they create for others are similar to their own experiences, many of which were neither positive nor effective. Effective school leaders are key to large-scale, sustainable education reform. For some time, educators have believed that principals must be instructional leaders if they are to be the effective leaders needed for sustained innovation. School capacity is another crucial variable affecting the quality of instruction as well as the performance of students. At the heart of school capacity are principals who are focused on the development of teachers' knowledge and skills, professional community, program coherence, and technical resources. Therefore, the way principals are treated, the respect they are shown by senior colleagues, the responsibility they are offered, and the opportunities for professional discussion provided to them, all contribute to their personal development. The principal's conduct and behavior should be exemplary.

### **2.8.3 Development of communication skills of staff members**

Communication is the exchange and flow of information and ideas from one person to another; it involves a sender transmitting an idea, information to a receiver (Melons, 2008:49). Effective communication occurs only if the receiver understands the exact information or the idea that the sender intended to transmit. Many of the problems that occur in schools are the direct result of people failing to communicate, or of processes that lead to confusion and can cause good plans to fail. Studying the communication process is important because instructional leaders can coach, coordinate, counsel, evaluate, and supervise throughout this process. It is a chain of understanding that

involves all members of a school from top to bottom, bottom to top, and from side to side.

The advantage of having principals who use their communication skills effectively at schools is that they would improve the understanding as to which school and classroom practices improve student achievement. Such principals know how to communicate with teachers effectively to bring about positive change. They support teachers in carrying out instructional practices aimed at assisting all students succeed in their studies; thus prepare them (teachers) to become principals. A principal needs to be skillful in, exposition, questioning, leading discussions, eliciting responses from learners and in selecting appropriate material for teaching and learning. It is the duty of the principal as an instructional leader to help educators develop these skills.

Besides, Cooper (2009:16) states that schools need to create models of shared leadership, which incorporate talents and energies of principals, teachers, students, and parents to foster communication. This mode of instructional leadership provides for learning and working with other teachers, students and parents to improve the quality of instruction. It is their responsibility to create a strong school culture that enables teachers to collaborate with them in redesigning the instructional program so that all students can learn.

Effective communication involves more than speaking; people communicate by writing, listening, and using non-verbal signals to get their message across. What people don't say while speaking could be just as important as what they do say; and how our body language supports or refutes what we say could signify the difference between

communicating and just speaking. Principals spend the vast majority of their days communicating. How they address their department can set the stage for effective communication within a school. Principals must keep in mind that feedback may not always be positive, but it should still be accepted and acknowledged. Maintaining a positive attitude is essential in effective communication.

#### **2.8.4. Developing the skills of staff members with regard to learner performance**

The leadership role should be manifested in the culture the principal creates within the school. Effective instructional leaders in school settings create a strong culture that is viewed as fundamental in striving to realise the school's mission. Principals should send a clear message that both students and teachers are crucial and equal, and take steps to involve them in all aspects of the school community. The principal should reframe the role of teaching to be a collaborative, rather than an isolated work. In effective schools teachers work very differently, engaging in regular collaboration around lesson planning, data analysis, and shared problem-solving activities.

Principals play a key role in creating and sustaining this culture of collaboration, including creating opportunities for teachers to engage in collaborative planning and joint professional development within and across grade levels. Principals ensure that their schools have a sequential curriculum that builds children's knowledge and skills from one grade to the next, and from one skill to the other, aimed at sequential improvement in proficiency. They put in place curriculum-aligned, formative and interim assessments that provide teachers with data to inform instruction.



They also provide professional development that enables teachers to use curriculum, assessments, and student data to improve student learning. Principals allocate resources, time, people, and money within the school to support implementation. And they also allocate resources for unplanned interventions in order to make provision for struggling students who might fall behind. School principals need knowledge of the various developmental aspects of the child's development; namely, physical, intellectual, emotional and social development.

The current demands for quality education are placing great pressure on schools to improve education service and delivery. Hence, the role of the school principal has become an all inclusive task that focuses on, among others, improving teaching and learning in classrooms, and subsequently improving learner academic performance. Among a number of factors, the quality of teachers, especially in relation to academic qualifications, may hamper or enhance. Thus, it becomes critical for the principals to adopt strategies to motivate teachers to improve their professional qualifications for their personal benefit and the subsequent benefit of learners. Highly qualified teachers are inspired theoretically and practically to develop programmes for the enhancement of learners performance.

#### **2.8.5. Developing skills of evaluating teachers' performance**

Evaluating teachers is one of a principal's most important responsibilities. Evaluating a teacher is the single most important task a principal has. The evaluation process needs to be an ongoing process. Feedback from the principal should always be constructive, objective, and understandable. Then continuous follow-up needs to occur to ensure that the teacher implements the principal's recommendations. An ongoing evaluation

process is essential, which can be in a form of open line communication that allows teachers to ask questions, engage in discussions, and express their comfort level. The principal's primary responsibility is to be a mirror for every teacher; mentoring, coaching, suggesting, and guiding are all part of his or her job. This kind of evaluation assists the principal to change, adapt or improve the performance of the school (Melons, 2008:49).

Although there are multiple goals of teacher evaluation, they are perhaps most often described as either formative or summative in nature. Formative evaluation consists of evaluation practices meant to shape, form, or improve teachers' performances. Principals observe teachers, collect data on teaching behaviour, organize these data, and share the results in conferences with the teachers observed. The principal's intent is to help teachers improve their practice.

A principal observes teachers in action, works with them on committees, and examines their students' work, and talks with parents. These actions, aimed at least in part at obtaining evaluative information about teachers' work, inform the principal's decision to recommend a teacher either for renewal of his or her contract or for termination of employment. Decisions about, hiring, promoting, rewarding a teacher, or terminating a teacher's contract are examples of the class of summative evaluation decisions.

The goals of summative and formative evaluation may not be as different as they appear at first glance. If an evaluator examines teachers collectively in a school system, some decisions concerning some individuals might be considered formative in terms of improving the teaching staff as a whole. For instance, the summative decision to add a

single strong teacher to a group of other strong teachers would result in improving the capacity and value of the whole staff.

The evaluation process will be ongoing throughout the year and will consist of both formal and informal evaluations. If a teacher's performance falters during the course of the year, the principal should request that additional evaluation steps be incorporated into the process. If a serious difference in evaluation exists between the teacher and the evaluator, the teacher may express disagreement by (1) writing comments on the post-observation conference data sheet, (2) writing comments on the summative evaluation document, and/or (3) using the established complaint procedure (Blase and Blase, 2010:20). Evaluators shall maintain a record of all formal and informal observations, times, dates, duration of the observations, and any other pertinent discussion, activities or agreements surrounding these events.

#### **2.8.6. Instructional leader as supervisory actor**

The instructional leader is responsible for monitoring the education and extracurricular activities of the students at the school. This individual will monitor lesson plans of teachers as well as other activities which go on in the school to ensure that the students' educational needs and other related needs that are necessary to provide a well-rounded learning environment for them (students), are met (Bundy and Wiles, 2006:140).

The instructional leader is often the individual who usually takes a lead in maintaining discipline in a school. In addition to providing supervision in the school itself, the instructional leader will also engage with outside entities, contact businesses to inform

them of any need for contributions or sponsorships, which may be needed for various school programs. The instructional leader will stay abreast of current laws, rules and regulations and ensure the school's compliance with all of the above. The instructional leader is also responsible for the administration of extracurricular activities for the students. The instructional leader must be sure that everything that deals with the smooth operation of the school is in keeping with state and federal laws, and regulations. He or she is in the best position to know the requisites for his or her school, and the best ways to obtain these things from government entities.

Instructional leaders use classroom visits to make sure teachers are complying with the instructional goals of the school. Instructional conferences with teachers have an effect on teacher classroom instruction. Besides, it was found that teachers believe good principals use the following five strategies during instructional conferences (Blase and Blase, 2010:38):

- (a) Making suggestions for instructional improvement,
- (b) Giving feedback on classroom observations,
- (c) Modelling good instruction,
- (d) Using inquiry to discover what teachers think, and
- (e) Soliciting advice and opinions from teachers.

These strategies affected teachers positively by increasing their use of reflectively informed instructional behaviour, which referred to teachers taking more risks in the

classroom by using different instructional strategies and placing more emphasis on instructional planning. In improving instruction through supervision, the principal should become more clinical in reviewing the processes and procedures of the classroom. They further argued that it is essential that the supervisor and the teacher develop a shared reality that can become the basis of professional dialogue. This indicates that the principal should in a systematic way; draw the connection between curriculum and instruction from the teacher. This will help in enabling the instructional leaders to understand the educator's classroom concerns and be in a position to provide the necessary assistance.

In Ethiopia with schools facing increased pressure to improve teaching and learning, the duties and responsibilities of principals have expanded further to include the responsibility for leading school reform aimed at improving student achievement. Success in leading reforms to increase student achievement often hinges upon the principal's ability to create a shared vision within the school community and also on the success in implementing new organizational structures that engage teachers in shared decision-making.

Principals have discovered that engaging the entire school staff in making decision results in more commitment to school reform initiatives. Principals are also responsible for facilitating their school's interactions with parents and other role players in the school community. This responsibility includes working with parents when disciplinary issues arise, when students are not succeeding academically, and when parents have concerns related to the school. Principals also interact with parents who serve on school

advisory boards, parent/teacher organizations, and booster clubs. Principals continue to be responsible for the management of their schools even though their primary responsibility has shifted. One major management responsibility concerns school safety. This responsibility includes ensuring that facilities and equipments are safe and in good working order, the development of overall school discipline policies and the enforcement of those policies, and the delegation of supervisory responsibilities among school personnel (Demoze, 2007:27).

### **2.8.7. Principal's role as curriculum managers**

Instructional leaders play a major role in coordinating curriculum change in schools. The communication between administrators, supervisors, teachers and instructional leaders is critical at the implementation stage. Techniques such as pre-service meetings, workshops, and bulletins help facilitate communication processes (Hallinger, 2005: 76). The instructional leaders should have open communication lines with all members of the school personnel; should promote a strong staff development program to allow teachers the opportunity to be involved successfully in the process of curriculum change; must also arouse interest and enthusiasm about the new curriculum by encouraging and helping faculty members on a daily basis; are responsible for the success of any school implementation process. Instructional leader's preparation initiatives rightfully focus attention upon instructional leadership skills.

Management of curriculum is primarily concerned with promoting quality learning and teaching in the classroom. It also recognizes that what happens in the whole school affects the classroom experiences of learners and educators. The instructional leader is

the key element in dealing with both educational policy and curricular matters in the school. All activities connected with the setting of the main aims and objectives of the school, the provision of an academic and pastoral curriculum to meet the needs of the whole range of pupils, and the management and methods of teaching, rest with the principal. This shows that it becomes the instructional leader's major responsibility to coordinate the delivery of the curriculum as it was intended by those who planned the program. Instructional leaders are thus the linkage between the desired ends identified in a departmental plan and the delivered curriculum as found in the classroom.

Instructional leaders are perfectly positioned to observe curriculum planning and implementation, because they operate at the school and the classroom level. Instructional leaders ensure that the desired change is occurring, that improvements are directional and that the results obtained are those projected in the planning process. This emphasizes the fact that every instructional leader is involved directly in all curricular related matters of his or her school. The principal should therefore keep himself or herself updated with new developments in education pertaining to curricular planning, development, monitoring and evaluation.

## **2.9 APPROACHES TO INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

Most researchers agree that the principal can be the key element in establishing an effective school. Adding his voice to this belief, Leithwood (2005:25) wrote that effective schools have a focus on learning and teaching, and the ability of a school leader to offer strong instructional leadership is a key factor in ensuring academic effectiveness.

The principal's leadership role has three dimensions. These are:

- (a) Modeling,
- (b) Consensus building and
- (c) Feedback.

### **2.9.1. Contribution of modelling in schools by instructional leaders**

In putting the three dimensions into perspective, the principal's role should be that of modeling for an academic emphasis. To do this the principal should set the tone and focus of the school by observing classrooms, enforcing the code of conduct in a "fair but firm" manner and setting goals for the school that are supported by administration, staff and students. Behavior of principals should communicate what is really valued to both teachers and students. The teachers and students tend to imitate the actions, attitudes and beliefs of those in authority such as the principal.

One major emphasis in the educational arena in the early 21st century has been the continuing demand for greater accountability to increase student performance. National and state expectations require schools to ensure that all students achieve mastery of curriculum objectives, and local schools focus on implementing those requirements to the best of their ability.

In order to meet the challenges associated with national and state expectations, principals must focus on teaching and learning, especially in terms of measurable student progress to a greater degree than heretofore. Consequently, today's principals concentrate on building a vision for their schools, sharing leadership with teachers, and influencing schools to operate as learning communities. Accomplishing these essential school improvement efforts requires gathering and assessing data to determine needs,



and monitoring instruction and curriculum to determine if the identified needs are addressed.

### **2.9.2. Instilling sense of consensus**

Consensus is a process that seeks the consent of all participants. Webster, (2005:12) defines it as, firstly, general agreement, and secondly, group solidarity of belief or sentiment. It is used to describe both the decision and the process of reaching a decision. Consensus building is thus concerned with the process of deliberating and finalizing a decision, and the social and political effects of using this process.

Consensus building in secondary schools is important in today's interconnected society because many contemporary problems affect diverse groups of people with different interests. As problems mount, the schools that deal with problems come to rely on mutual assistance. The parties affected by decisions are often interdependent as well. Therefore, it is extremely difficult and often ineffective for schools to try to solve controversial problems on their own. In building consensus for academic emphasis, the principal should encourage teachers to meet in order to plan course content and sequence topics according to grades, together. Consensus for orderly environment can be accomplished if the principal holds periodic sessions with the teachers concerning student behavior. Principals of schools are both educational and instructional leaders. In improving the instructional program, principals must be able to work with educators in planning, evaluating, controlling and decision making.

### **2.9.3 Contribution of feedback in schools by instructional leaders**

Principals communicate school goals in many different ways. They often do it through faculty meetings and departmental chair meetings. They communicate them through individual meetings such as follow-up conferences to classroom observations. Teachers perceive their principals to be strong instructional leaders when they communicate school goals through (a) interacting with them on their classroom performance, (b) being accessible to discuss instructional matters, (c) allowing teachers to try new instructional strategies by letting them know that it is okay to take risks, and (d) clearly communicating a vision for the school ( Poston, 2009:140). Hence, these points help instructional leaders to provide effective feedback for the improvement of instruction.

### **2.10 THE INFLUENCE OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER IN A SCHOOL**

Hale and Moorman (2003:5) state that effective leadership is at the heart of all successful organizations. As regards the influence of the school principal, the literature survey reveals the following: It is agreed that school leaders have an influence on the running of schools and that they play a key role in school improvement. Leithwood and Roehl (2003: 40) also add that school leadership has a significant influence on student learning, which is second only to the influence of teachers on teaching and the quality of the curriculum. Although large-scale quantitative studies of schooling indicate that the influence of school leadership on student performance is small, they conclude that it is, nevertheless, significant.

Numerous studies on school effectiveness conclusively indicate that leadership quality is a key factor in determining the success or failure of schools. Vick (2004: 34) is more hesitant in his support of the above positive findings. Seeking to prove that leadership

makes a measurable and real difference remains a major challenge for principals and researchers. He also argues that, although there seems to be a vague conception of the causal factors that link leaders to student performance, these relationships vary and take time to determine.

Training programs for school leadership have been criticized for equipping principals with the skills to run schools as they exist today rather than forming leaders who can guide and develop schools for the future. However, there is an ongoing need for a different type of a school leader, and also a need to prepare different types of leadership to address the changing contexts of education.

## **2.11 STRATEGIES OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

Principals use the following leadership strategies to change teachers' instructional practices (Blase and Blase, 2010:65):

- (a) Communicating goals,
- (b) Supervising instruction
- (c) Promoting professional development
- (d) Providing resources, and
- (e) Providing incentives

### **2.11.1. Communicating goals through instructional practices**

Principals communicate school goals in many different ways. They often do it through faculty meetings and departmental chair meetings. They communicate them through

individual meetings such as follow-up conferences to classroom observations. Teachers perceive their principals to be strong instructional leaders when they communicate school goals through (Poston, 2009:140):

- (a) Interacting with them concerning their classroom performance,
- (b) Being accessible to discuss instructional matters,
- (c) Allowing teachers to try new instructional strategies by letting them know that it is okay to take risks, and
- (d) Clearly communicating a vision for the school

Communicating school goals was found to be affecting the type of instruction teachers delivered, positively. Communication of school goals by the principal was found to be having a significant link with the teacher classroom innovativeness. Classroom innovativeness is brought about by the teacher's willingness to try new and various instructional approaches. Communicating school goals encourages teachers to use more reflection, which may lead to teachers adjusting their instructional techniques to address different learning needs of students.

### **2.11.2. Promoting professional development in instructional practices**

Promoting professional development is the most common principal leadership duty to have a positive effect on teacher classroom instruction (Ryes and Ford, 2002:77). Professional development is thought to be a key to improve teacher instruction. Administrators at the district and school levels are responsible for providing teachers with quality professional development. Principals promote professional development by

using supervisors and colleagues to train teachers on instructional strategies, giving teachers time for independent studies, and by using interventions by external agencies such as college courses, district-level workshops, and consultants who are experts in a particular area. The promotion of professional development by principals increases teachers' use of higher-order instructional strategies when they receive professional development on a particular strategy.

Higher-order instructional strategies involve teaching in non-traditional ways and were found to be increasing the learning capacity of students. Principals were perceived by teachers to be instrumental in providing staff development on teaching the writing process. A significant relationship was found between principals promoting professional development and teachers' willingness to try new and various instructional ideas in the classroom.

The only area in which promoting professional development was not the most important factor, concerned teacher innovativeness at the high school level. This raises a question concerning the effect high school principals have on teacher classroom instruction. It could be that principals at the high school level are not the ones promoting professional development; rather teachers could be influenced by other sources such as supervisors in the central offices. The promotion of professional development by principals increases teachers' use of creative thinking, including innovative thinking and instructional risk taking.

Blase and Blase (2010:153) provided a list of strategies, principals used to promote professional development that increase teachers' use of reflectively informed behaviors:

- (a) Emphasizing the study of teaching and learning,
- (b) Supporting collaboration among educators,
- (c) Developing coaching relationships among educators, and
- (d) Applying principles of adult learning to staff development.

Principals supporting and encouraging participation in professional development activities influence teachers to change their classroom practices to meet the needs of gifted students. These professional development activities include training from a private organization on how to change the curriculum to meet the needs of gifted students. Principals actively encouraged teacher participation in these professional development activities, and this support motivated teachers to continue participating. Hence, the participation of the principals in curriculum work with teachers was found to be a key to the implementation of higher-order thinking skills by these teachers.

### **2.11.3 Providing resources and changes in instructional practices**

Principals influence classroom instruction by supplying teachers with the necessary resources. Providing resources include more than just monetary resources and materials. According to Signe (2006:45), providing resources includes:

- (a) Scheduling,
- (b) Developing the school calendar,
- (c) Hiring and correctly placing the teachers,
- (d) Adopting textbooks, and

(e) Purchasing necessary materials to support instruction.

Principals influence student achievement through helping teachers acquire the necessary resources for his or her instruction. The lack of resources may be a barrier to the use of some instructional strategies by teachers. Some schools did not have the necessary resources to support certain instructional strategies and activities. There was no mention of the principal, there were only teachers only. The researchers cited the school and school system as the reason for the lack of science resources. This places responsibility for not providing adequate resources on principals and administrators at the central office.

Providing resources is viewed by teachers as effective leadership on the part of principals. McGhee and Lew (2007:75) discovered that majority of strong instructional leaders was given positive ratings as resource providers for:

- (a) Promoting staff development activities for teachers,
- (b) Possessing knowledge of instructional resources,
- (c) Mobilizing resources and district support to achieve academic goals, and
- (d) The most important instructional resource in the school.

Teachers perceived the most important strategies as, principals' engagement as resource provider; promoting professional development and providing teachers with instructional resources.

#### **2.11.4. Providing incentives and changes in instructional practices**

Providing incentives for teachers is a strategy principals can use to motivate teachers to change their instructional practices. Principals provide incentives by giving formal awards and using public or individual praises for teachers. Organizations use incentives such as praise, good working conditions, material rewards, pride in work completed and emotional attachment to the organization, and positive working relationships with colleagues to motivate employees (Fullan, 2006:67).

Praising teachers in front of their peers can be effective because it encourages improvement by all teachers. Most teachers do not receive sufficient monetary compensation for what they do in the classroom. Recognizing teachers for their classroom performance provides an incentive for improvement and continued growth. Principals motivate teachers to try instructional strategies through rewards such as praise and material rewards.

Communicating goals, supervising instruction, promoting professional development, and providing incentives increase teachers' use of reflectively informed behaviors. Communicating goals and promoting professional development increase teachers' use of innovative instructional practices.

### **2.12. OTHER INFLUENCES ON CHANGE IN INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES**

The following sections provide descriptions of these influences:

#### **2.12.1. Pedagogical knowledge in instructional practices**

Education courses that focus on pedagogical knowledge positively affect teacher performance. Northouse (2010:51) studied successful completion of seven education



courses, grade point average (GPA) in major, National Teacher Exam scores, and student -teaching performance. Student teaching performance was assessed through surveys completed by cooperating teachers, content supervisors, school of education supervisors, and self-reports by the student teachers.

### **2.12.2. The influence of instructional leadership on students achievements**

Researchers generally agree that programs are needed to prepare school leaders if learners are to attain higher levels of performance. However, a literature review indicates various perspectives on the influence of leadership programs on school practice and student performance. Studies in educational management, for example, cannot confirm that programs have any influence on student performance in schools where graduates have been placed (Levine, 2005: 44). The curricula of programs do not address the real needs of educational leaders. There is also a lack of research on the value of educational management programs, the aspects of the program that make a difference, and what aspects are not needed or are minimally meaningful to enhance the growth and performance of learners in the school.

Lashway (2003:11) is more explicit in his opinion that preparation programs for principals generally are not highly effective. This position is further substantiated by the study of university-based programs that indicates that the programs reviewed are not sufficiently pragmatic and action-oriented to develop the necessary skills. The relatively few studies on the influence of preparation programs for principals do not conclusively support their overall effectiveness. Moreover, he found that only three percent of the studies on preparation programs for educational leadership were empirical. What is of

greater concern is that in an assessment of schools of education carried out in the USA students said that they did not view educational leadership studies as being very helpful.

The effectiveness of leadership programs in preparing and supporting school leaders for complex roles remains a 'developing' issue rather than one that has been 'confirmed'. What is very disturbing is that many students who enrol for preparation programs are more attracted to the possibility of an improved salary than to rigorous academic studies. They are more interested in 'ease of access and ease of programming'.

From a different perspective, Grogan and Andrews (2002:244) state that it is unfair to blame preparation programs for the state of schools: 'Even the most dedicated, enlightened reformer in the field is facing an uphill battle at present to bring about significant change'. However, the belief that school leadership does make a difference to the functioning of schools is primarily the focus of leadership preparation programs. There is also agreement that the effectiveness of principals depends on their appropriate training.

### **2.13. RECENT DEVELOPMENT IN PREPARATION PROGRAMS FOR SCHOOL LEADERSHIP**

The approaches to principal preparation programs have been a general concern for some time, which explains the need for preparation programs in leadership to change. There is agreement that previous programs with their emphasis on management did not address current educational challenges and have not succeeded in guiding schools and assisting them to achieve academic success in the 21st century. Criticism of traditional and theory-based programs, public demand for improved quality of leadership in

schools and the new emphasis on the principal as 'leader of student learning' have paved the way for re-conceptualization and restructuring of preparation programs and school practice (Wong, 2004: 140).

As a result of this, the focus of many programs has changed from management to leadership preparation. Adopting the notion of 'organization' as the core concept removes the dichotomy between the concepts of management and leadership that has otherwise suggested that such a shift would provide a more holistic and systemic approach that could better inform practice. Individual's management development is best placed within the school context and should become a fundamental part of the daily management of schools. Education management development should therefore be seen as a process whereby individual development and the achievement of organizational goals are synchronized.

Amy (2005: 701) regards it as a challenge for program developers to prepare future leaders to assume this kind of leadership role. Unfortunately, many preparation programs have been relatively slow in adapting this approach to principals as leaders in order to enable them to face the challenges of 21st century schooling

The idea of program evaluation dates back to the work of Wong (2004: 112), who viewed evaluation as an essential element of the education process. Such an evaluation can help to address the emerging changes in the work of principals. Program evaluation can change trains into a 'powerful force' that has value for both school and society. It means if we are to review critically the influence that the program has had as evidenced by the way in which graduates and institutions have benefited from leadership

development In order to determine the possible influence of preparation programs, it is necessary to focus on the prerequisites of school leadership in schools.

#### **2.14. PREREQUISITE FOR EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

According to Doris et al., (2000: 71) education management has changed considerably since it first evolved as a formal field in the 1920s. The concept underwent many modifications before the role of the principal emerged as that of an instructional leader during the late 1980s and 1990s.

The education manager's role is now understood to be focusing on stability, manageability and to some extent on accomplishments, while the education leader's role focuses on action, joint decision-making and is future-oriented. Although current perspectives on educational leadership differ, there is a movement away from perspectives that view principals as managers towards perspectives that view principals as instructional leaders who focus on teaching and learning in schools. The greatest change in the running of schools has been the move to site based management, that is, management based on the idea of participative, collaborative forms of school leadership and management. On site-based management, team-based structures develop and different kinds of leadership evolve as a consequence of such development. Principals have to possess certain leadership abilities to achieve and maintain quality schools in complex environments. Such complex environments also imply that school leaders should be equipped with 'multifaceted skills,' which form pre-requisites for successful leadership. According to Leithwood and Roehl (2003:5) the following are prerequisites of effective educational leadership.

## **2.14.1 Setting direction**

### **2.14.1.1. Setting a course**

In setting a course, school leaders attempt to develop school goals and encourage others with a vision of the future. The following are interventions applied:

- Creating and sharing a focused vision and mission to improve student performance.

New generations of school leaders are required to build a shared vision and work collaboratively to create good schools for all learners. The first characteristic of effective school leaders is their ability to align vision and mission, priorities and personal, professional and organizational values, to a particular context in the school.

Charisma may be critical in this respect. Charisma is a characteristic that describes leaders who are able to exert a profound influence on their followers, the school's performance and climate by the power of their personality, personal charm, magnetism, inspiration, competence and emotion.

- Cultivating the acceptance of cooperative goals. School leaders work mainly with and through other people. The acceptance of co-operative goals requires the cultivation of shared values and the development of an appreciation for the value of working together and caring about each other. Furthermore, valuing people is necessary to build trust and support in schools.

- Creating high performance expectations. These are leaders' expectations for excellence, quality and high performance that may have an influence on relationships and outcomes in schools. Through nurturing and caring relationships in schools, it is believed that student performance and social growth will be enhanced. School leaders

also have to keep everybody informed and focused on student performance. Leaders create a shared sense of purpose and direction by working through other people.

#### **2.14.1.2. Staff development**

To develop professional community at school the principals should perform the following activities: Sharing leadership among members of professional communities. Principals are key players at schools since they have to manage through collaborative and educational thinking about leadership that emphasizes their role as leaders of an instructional team. Leadership in professional communities therefore involves shared leadership, in particular where instructional leadership is distributed and expanded throughout the school, thus increasing delegated powers. Instructional leadership, however, implies that the incumbent has expert knowledge and uses this knowledge to improve student performance. Sharing leadership and knowledge can be a tool for staff members' empowerment and can be linked to feeling valued (McCarron, et al., 2003: 5).

Empowering staff is based on the idea that 'if schools are to become better at providing learning for students then they must also become better at providing opportunities for teachers to innovate, develop and learn together'. In an empowering environment leaders also encourage the entire staff to solve problems. Teacher empowerment does not remove the autonomy of principals, but should rather create a new and healthy form of shared leadership.

Through this approach the science of management has been replaced by the psychology of leadership, which emphasizes interpersonal relationships and focuses on follower development and enhancement of student performance. Devolving power to

the school level does not necessarily increase the possibility of teacher empowerment if authority and control remain firmly in the hands of the school management team.

Therefore, the ability and willingness to share power as well as the leadership style of school managers will strongly influence staff empowerment. School managers who are power hungry or who have autocratic leadership styles may feel threatened a condition which is not reconcilable with empowerment. Empowerment needs leaders who are confident, have a strong sense of direction and who are willing to become facilitators and equals in decision-making processes. The change in leadership style and member expectations depends on the clarity of goals, the establishment of trust and effective communication patterns, and on members being able to regard themselves as potential leaders.

#### **2.14.1.3. Developing the organization**

Educational leaders can create a school environment; mobilize teachers and direct efforts for the sake of student learning. This depends on their ability to lead their team of educators and to create an ethos that generates committed educators and inspired learners in an effective school setting (Vick, 2004:27). This will require leaders to focus on activities such as the following:

- Developing technical skills. These leadership skills refer to the skills required to implement site-based management, work with teams, and plan strategically for the future and maintain effective discipline.
- Emphasizing learner-centeredness. Learner-centered leadership is concerned with influencing the quality of teaching and student outcome. It creates a school organization

where staff understand that every student counts and where every student has the support of a caring adult. Furthermore, education leaders must believe that all students can succeed. This implies that they should create school environments in which students are respected and valued. Instructional leadership is the key: principals should operate as facilitators of change and create an effective learning environment in schools.

- Strengthen the school culture. Education leaders create and maintain safe and effective school environments for the sake of student performance. Their leadership is overwhelmingly important in establishing a positive school culture. Without effective leadership, in particular transformational leadership, efforts to change the school culture and influence educator commitment and student performance are likely to fail. Such an environment should also make staff feel valued and respected. Furthermore, ethical practices in schools should be promoted and conflicts should be managed on time.

- Monitoring organizational performance. Unlike in the past when principals believed that educators needed constant control, according to the current leadership approach it is expected of principals to ensure that agreed-upon organizational goals and outputs are achieved by entrusting educators and learners to work towards these without constant supervision. It is, however, necessary for school leaders to determine the school's effectiveness by using multiple indicators to continuously monitor learner progress and teacher effectiveness.



#### **2.14.1.4. Encouraging collaboration**

A key task for principals is to create a collective expectation among teachers concerning student performance. That is, principals need to set up collective expectations of teachers about student learning. Principals must work to ensure that teacher expectations are aligned with the school's instructional goals. Furthermore, principals need to eliminate teacher isolation so that discussions about student learning become a collective mission of the school (Singe, 2006:43).

Principals must develop and sustain school structures and cultures that foster individual and group learning. That is, principals must stimulate an environment in which new information and practices are eagerly incorporated into the system. Teachers are more likely to pursue their group and individual learning when there are supportive conditions in the school, such as, particularly, effective leadership. Schools where teachers collaborate in discussing issues related to student learning are more likely to be able to take advantage of internally and externally generated information.

One popular collaboration structure is teacher teams. Schools are recognized in such way that teachers work together in teams as opposed to working individually, in isolation in their classrooms.

According to Smile (2010:77) high performing teams will accomplish four different outcomes:

(1) They will clarify exactly what students should know and be able to do as a result of each unit of instruction. We know that if teachers are clear on the intended results of instruction, they will be more effective.

(2) They will then design curriculum and share instructional strategies to achieve those outcomes.

(3) They will develop valid assessment strategies that measure how well students are performing.

(4) And, they will analyze those results and work together to come up with new ideas for improving those results. Regular assessment and analysis of student learning are key parts of the team's process.

#### **2.14.1.5. Using data to improve learning**

Three factors can increase a school's progress in achieving learning for all students. The primary factor is the availability of performance data connected to each student. Performance data need to be broken down according to specific objectives and target levels in the school curriculum. Then the school is able to connect what is taught to what is learned. The curriculum goals should be clear enough to specify what each teacher should teach and what the assessment measures are. These will indicate what students have learned. Teachers need access to longitudinal data on each student in their classes. With such data, teachers are able to develop individual and small-group education plans to ensure mastery of areas of weakness from previous years while at the same time assist students to make progress in the school curriculum.

The second factor concerns the public nature of the assessment system. Annually, the school district should publish a news letter of schools and honor those schools that have performed at high levels. This provides role models for other schools to emulate.

At the school and classroom levels, it provides a blueprint of those areas where teachers should focus their individual attention, and of grade levels or schools that require professional development plans. The public nature of the data from the accountability system promotes transparency. Data should be disaggregated by race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, English language proficiency, and disability. Performance of each subgroup of students on assessment measures makes the school community aware of which students are well served and which students are not well served by the school's curriculum and instruction.

The third factor in gaining progress toward achieving student learning is the specifically targeted assistance provided to schools that are performing at low levels. Before the advent of accountability systems, it was not evident which schools and students needed help (Lunenburg and Ornstein, 2008:13). The first step is to target the schools in need of help based on student performance data. Each targeted school is paired with a team of principals, curriculum specialists/instructional coaches, and researchers to observe current practices; discuss student performance data with staff; and assist in the development and implementation of an improvement plan. The targeted schools learn how to focus their program of professional development on the weaknesses identified by the data. They learn how to develop an improvement plan to guide their activities and monitor the outcomes of the activities, all of which are designed to raise student performance levels.

Once a team of teachers has worked together and identified students who are having difficulties, then the school faces the challenge of how they are going to respond to the students who experience learning problems. So, the challenge is not simply re-teaching

in the same way in which teachers taught before, but providing support for teachers to expand their repertoire of skills in order to provide support and time for students to get additional assistance they need to master the skills they missed. When students are not learning, principals must ensure that professional development programs are in place to give additional support to teachers, and intervention strategies are in place to give additional support to students.

#### **2.14.1.6. Providing support**

Teachers need to be provided with training, teaching tools, and the support they need to help all students reach high performance levels. Specifically, teachers need access to curriculum guides, textbooks, or specific training connected to the school curriculum. They need access to lessons or teaching units that match curriculum goals. They need training on using assessment results to diagnose learning gaps. Teachers must know how each student performed on every multiple-choice item and other questions on the assessment measure. Training must be in the teachers' subject areas. Only then can teachers be equipped to help students achieve at high levels (Poston and English, 2009:54).

In addition to professional development for teachers, all schools need an intervention and support system for students who lag behind in learning the curriculum. Schools need to provide additional help to students who lag behind in core subjects, either during school hours, during after school hours, on weekends, or during the summer. Boards of education and school superintendents need to supply the financial resources to fulfill this mandate. This involves acquiring materials, information, or technology. In addition, time needs to be created to offer teachers opportunities to learn; professional

networks need to be facilitated; and an environment that supports school improvement needs to be created.

A focus on student learning usually means changes in curriculum, instruction, and assessment, which imply changes in teaching. The history of school reform indicates that innovations in teaching and learning seldom penetrate more than a few schools and seldom endure when they do. Innovations frequently fail because of individuals who implement them.

#### **2.14.1.7. Aligning curriculum, instruction, and assessment**

Principals need to ensure that assessment of student learning is aligned with both the school's curriculum and the teachers' instruction. When they are well constructed and implemented, assessment instruments can change the nature of teaching and learning. They can lead to a richer, more challenging curriculum; foster discussion and collaboration among teachers within and across schools; create more productive conversations among teachers and parents; and focus stakeholders' attention on increasing student achievement (English, 2000:34).

Professional learning communities attempt to align their assessment measures with their curriculum. English (2000:36) encourages schools to consider the following three principles: Firstly, assessments not based on the curriculum are neither fair nor helpful to parents or students. Schools that have developed their own assessment measures have done a good job of ensuring that the content of the assessment can be found in the curriculum. That means, children will not be assessed on knowledge and skills they have not been taught. However, the same is not true when schools use generic, off-the-

shelf standardized tests. Such tests cannot measure the breadth and depth of the school's curriculum. Secondly, when the curriculum is rich and rigorous, the assessments must also be rich and rigorous.

Assessments must tap both the breadth and depth of the content and skills in the curriculum. Thirdly, assessments must become more challenging in each successive grade. The solid foundation of knowledge and skills developed in the early grades should evolve into more complex skills in the later grades. If one accepts the premise that assessment drives curriculum and instruction, perhaps the easiest way to improve instruction and increase student achievement is to construct better assessments.

As the instructional leader, the principal is the pivotal point within the school who affects the quality of individual teacher instruction, the level of student achievement, and the degree of efficiency in school functioning. Thus, current literature will be consulted concerning what makes effective leadership.

There are activities that can be grouped together. Goal emphasis, coordination and organization, power and discretionary decision making can be grouped together. Securing resources, generating alternatives, assisting and facilitating to improve the instructional program go together. Human relations management that deals with staff, parents, community, and students, can be grouped together.

Joyce and Calhoun (2010:77) mentioned five general leadership qualities of effective leaders:

1. Have a vision. Work toward a shared understanding of the goals, progress toward their achievement and coordinate curriculum, instruction and assessment.

(2) Translate the vision into action. Work as a team; emphasize school wide goals and expectations.

(3) Create a supportive environment. Promote an academically-oriented, orderly, and purposeful school climate.

(4) Know what's going on in the school. Find out what teachers and students are doing and how well.

(5) Act on knowledge. Intervening where necessary and accommodating different teacher personalities, styles, and teaching strategies.

In addition to these leadership qualities mentioned above, Fullan (2006:185) found in his research that "schools operated by principals who were perceived by their teachers to be strong instructional leaders exhibited significantly greater gain scores in achievement in reading and mathematics than did schools operated by average and weak instructional leaders". Thus, the perception could be included as a strong determinant of effectiveness. The principal's influence does create a favorable climate for learning, though it may be more indirect. The most effective role may be supportive rather than supervisory or evaluative.

## **2.15 INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCES IN FIVE COUNTRIES**

This section explores the experiences of five countries regarding how they practice instructional leadership functions in their secondary schools. The five countries are: the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Nigeria, South Africa and Ethiopia. The discussion of the practice of instructional leaders in these countries provides an

overview of the models, standards and the general functions of the principal in each country.

### **2.15.1. The model of the United Kingdom (UK)**

In the United Kingdom, most principals spend an average of 20 percent of their time in a week on teaching. Many a times, principals are not in touch with what is going on at the classroom level and are unable to understand some of the problems teachers and students encounter. The tendency is to address instructional issues like they use to tackle when they were teachers. Principals work closely with students in developing teaching techniques and methods as a means for understanding teachers' perspectives and for establishing a base on which to make curricular decisions. Also, a teaching principal strengthens the belief that "the sole purpose of the school is to serve the educational needs of students (Pohang, 2010:88).

Supporting this Whitaker (2003:155) identified four skills essential for instructional leadership: Firstly, they are a resource provider. It is not enough for principals to know the strengths and weaknesses of their faculty; they should also recognize that teachers desire to be acknowledged and appreciated for a job well done. Secondly, they need to be Instructional resources. Teachers count on their principals as resources of information on current trends and effective instructional practices. Instructional leaders are up-to-date concerning issues relating to curriculum, effective pedagogical strategies and assessment. Thirdly, they need to be good communicators.

While it is generally held that the principal is both manager-administrator and instructional leader in many countries; principals tend to be more manager-administrator



oriented while their instructional leadership duties are often delegated to their assistant principals. Even then, the label 'instructional leader' is seldom assigned to any one person, but is assumed to be the responsibility of all teachers. Nonetheless, it is interesting to note that the trend is bending towards insisting that the principal assume the prominent role of an instructional leader. It will be a formidable task to convince principals to relinquish their image as manager-administrator and take on the role of instructional leader.

Generally, principals in the United Kingdom do not see themselves as instructional leaders and many are of the belief that anything that has to do with teaching and learning is best assigned to teachers. In some cases, principals feel inadequate to initiate and develop instructional programs given the assortment of subject areas taught with each having its own pedagogical unique. For example, teaching reading is different from teaching science; therefore, it will be fair to expect the principal to be knowledgeable about instructional strategies for each of the subject areas.

Despite these apprehensions, the idea that principals should be instructional leaders, is gaining serious attention and momentum. Should that be the case then principals will be expected to possess an up-to-date knowledge of three areas of education, namely; curriculum, instruction and assessment. With regard to curriculum, principals know about the changing conceptions of curriculum, educational philosophies and beliefs, knowledge specialization and fragmentation, curricular sources and conflict, and curriculum evaluation and improvement.

With regard to instruction, principals need to know about different models of teaching, the theoretical reasons for adopting a particular teaching model, the pedagogy of the internet, and the theories underlying the technology-based learning environment. With regard to assessment, principals know about the principles of student assessment, assessment procedures with emphasis on alternative assessment methods, and assessment that aims at improving rather than proving student learning. Underlying these three areas of knowledge, is a deep understanding of how humans learn.

The core business of a school is learning, and recent research in cognitive science has produced a wealth of knowledge about human learning. It is crucial that principals know and understand these theories so that they may serve as resources in enhancing instructional effectiveness. An inadequate understanding of human learning will make it difficult for the principal to explain and justify the theoretical underpinnings of instructional strategies practiced. Furthermore, with the growing importance of technology in schools, principals also need to be equipped with the knowledge of technology and how to apply it in teaching and learning. Increasingly, principals are looked upon as leaders who will inspire teachers to adopt innovative pedagogies in the classroom. For example, if some students are unable to read and write at secondary level, the principal as instructional leader takes the necessary steps to alleviate the problem by supporting teachers' instructional methods, allocating resources and materials, visiting classrooms frequently, providing feedback on instructional methods and techniques, and using the collected data to focus attention on improving the curriculum and instruction.

### **2.15.2. Model of the United States of America (USA)**

It was found that the practice of instructional leadership in the USA was highly conservative, carried out by the principal with little reference made to teachers, department heads, or even assistant principals as instructional leadership (Hallinger, 2005:3). There was little discussion of instructional leadership as distributed function to be shared.

During the 1980s, policy makers in the USA realized that principals in instructionally effective schools exercised strong instructional leadership and this prompted them to encourage all principals to assume this role in order to make their schools more effective. In spite of some criticism leveled against instructional leadership, it became strongly identified as a normatively desirable role those principals who wish to be effective should play.

The following are some of the reasons why instructional leadership survived all the criticism in the USA: Instructional leaders were viewed as strong, directive leaders who had been successful at “turning their school around.” They were viewed as culture builders, who sought to build on “academic press” that fostered high expectations and standards for students as well as for teachers (Ali-Millcreek, 2003:43). They were regarded as being goal-oriented, and able to define a clear direction for their schools. They were capable of motivating others to join in order to support their schools towards achieving the desired results. Effective instructional leaders were found to be able to focus strategies and activities on the attainment of school missions. These instructional leaders focused not only on leading but also on managing and their management roles

included coordinating, controlling, supervising, and developing curriculum and instruction (Hallinger, 2007:5).

Instructional leadership in the USA included a combination of charisma and expertise. These were “hands on principals, hip-deep in curriculum and instruction”, not afraid of working directly with teachers on the improvement of teaching and learning. Their involvement with the teachers is related to the core task of schools; that of promoting and developing teaching and learning. The description of their role varies and includes pedagogical leadership, managing teaching and learning, and ‘achieving excellence in teaching and learning’. Instructional leadership focuses on the direction of influence, rather than on its nature and source. The increasing emphasis on managing teaching and learning as the core activities of educational institutions has led to this approach being emphasized and endorsed.

Burdett, F., et al., (2006: 90) argues that leadership development is a ‘strategic necessity’ because of the intensification of the principal’s role. Avoca (2005:6) makes a compelling case for leadership development based on the view that leaders are ‘made not born’. Those who appear to be possessing ‘natural’ leadership qualities have actually acquired them through a learning process. Leadership is fixed at birth. This leads to a view that systematic preparation, rather than inadvertent experience, is more likely to produce effective leaders.

There is evidently a link between leadership development and the quality of school leadership on the one hand, and both school and student performance, on the other. Policy makers will be particularly keen to know if the training interventions make a

difference in the practice of school leadership as well as in the school performance. However, empirical support for such assumptions is weak and usually indirect. Heck (2003:43) uses the twin concepts of professional and organizational socialization as a lens to examine the impact of preparation. Professional socialization includes formal preparation, where it occurs, and the early phases of professional practice. Organizational socialization involves the process of becoming familiar with the specific context where leadership is practiced.

### **2.15.3. The model of Nigeria**

Principals, as identified by Arikewuyo (2001:70); the Nigerian principals, are not only instructional leaders but performing both managerial and instructional functions. The following functions are directly related to the principal instructional leadership practices:

*Providing leadership for curriculum development; providing leadership for instructional improvement; creating an environment conducive for the realization of human potential influencing the behavior of staff and learners ; supervising instructional activities in the school; guiding curriculum implementation and change, creating a professional; ethos within the school by involving staff members in decision making (Arikewuyo, 2001:70).*

The managerial functions of the Nigerian principals, which are performed concurrently with the above functions include, but not limited to: Managing and deploying resources efficiently; allocating school accommodations appropriately; ensuring satisfactory standards of maintenance and cleanliness of school facilities; managing the structuring and redeployment of teachers. Generally, principals in Nigeria ranked academic and

instructional activities, including curriculum development, teaching and instructional supervision, second to staff and students management, liaison, coordinating and functional management which were treated with much vigor.

#### **2.15.4. The model of South Africa**

Hadley et al., (2007:21) conducted a study in some South African secondary schools with the primary purpose of gaining an understanding of issues securing prominence in policy and research discussions as to how school management might be contributing towards the improvement of student achievement. The study revealed that most leadership studies in South Africa indicate that the majority of the principals have not received adequate specialist training, especially in financial management and instructional leadership. In their study on leadership and management they indicated that most of the investigations into leadership are “not conceptually rich”, and recommended the need for a theory of leadership relevant to the South Africa context. They indicated that knowledge on how principals manage curriculum in schools in South Africa is limited. They further argue that while there is growing awareness in South African research that school principals play a crucial role in creating conditions for improved instruction, what is less understood is how they contribute towards this course. Hence, the principal’s influence on schooling outcomes is manifested in the shaping of the direction of the school, the setting of visions, missions and goals. This implies that principals need to create “Organizational containment”, which enables teaching and learning to take place and sets up a “culture of expectations.”

Generally, the models of instructional leadership discussed above should be seen as a lesson in the Ethiopian instructional leadership problems. Some of the lessons that

contribute towards better understanding of the Ethiopian instructional leadership situation are: a collaborative learning environment where learning is not confined to the classroom and is the objective of all educators; inherent in the concept is the idea that learning should not be a top-down process. If those in charge of the school are excited about learning, then they will share their enthusiasm throughout the community. Those who learn to be instructional leaders acquire many ideas, which contribute by giving a sense of direction to their schools. They help to prioritize and focus attention on the things that really matter in terms of the work of students.

Furthermore, instructional leaders know what is happening in their classrooms and develop the capacities of staff by building on their strengths and reducing their weaknesses. These leaders also attempt to sustain improvement and bring about change in their schools by anticipating and overcoming the obstacles that inevitably will emerge along the way. They can also promote professional growth by studying literature and proven professional growth programs. They support risk-taking, creativity and innovation. They provide effective staff development programs, resources and time during school days to aid collaboration. They offer feedback and every support that is beneficial to their schools and communities.

Principals should come up with clear suggestions. In addition, instructional leaders promote teacher reflection by modeling and developing action research skills. They encourage teachers to ask questions about their schools; using available data to question, evaluate and critique teaching and learning. They extend the autonomy of teachers and involve them in developing shared visions for their schools.

### **2.15.5. Instructional leadership in the Ethiopian context**

Ethiopia is located in the Horn of Africa; it occupies a vast area of land that is 1.127 million square kilometers in size. It is the second most populous country in Africa, surpassed only by Nigeria. In 2008, the total population was estimated to be 76.9 million, of which about 57 per cent were 0–19 years old, and 45 percent were below age 15. The male-female ratio in Ethiopia was almost equal, at 51.5 percent male and 49.5 per cent female. The rural population constituted 84 per cent of the total (Ethiopian Central Statistics Authority, 2008).

Hence, the situation of most Ethiopian children was characterized by inadequate implementation capacity at the local level, the disparity in gender equality, disproportionate service provision between urban and rural areas, and underserved, vulnerable groups that include pastoral communities. In response to these conditions, the Government of Ethiopia is determined to scale up its poverty reduction and sustainable development efforts, as demonstrated in policy and program documents, including the Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program (SDPRP) 2002/03–2004/05, PASDEP 2005/06–2010/11, and sector development programs such as education, health, agriculture and water. In the PASDEP, the Government has clearly articulated its goals, strategies and investment priorities, placing education at the top of the agenda, with a firm belief that long-term, sustainable development rests upon the expansion and provision of quality education to all citizens.

Within the framework of the 1994 Education and Training Policy, and the 20 year education sector indicative plan, the government of Ethiopia launched the first five-year Education Sector Development Program (ESDP I) in 1997/98, followed by ESDP II in



2002/03, ESDP III in 2005/06 and ESPD IV in 2011. ESDPs I and II were concluded in 2001/02 and 2004/05, respectively, with remarkable success in expanding access to primary education. Primary school enrollment was boosted from 3.7 million in 1999 to 8.1 million in 2000/01, and grew to 13.5 million in 2005/06. During the same period, the gross enrollment rate was increased from 61.6 percent to 91.3 percent, and the net enrolment rate grew from 52.2 percent to 77.5 percent (MOE, 2007).

In addition to the rapid expansion of formal primary schooling, the introduction of Alternative Basic Education Strategies, responsive to the lifestyle of pastoral communities and disadvantaged children, also contributed to the overall growth of primary school enrollment. The success in primary education enrollment was partly attributed to the support and participation of development partners, including UNICEF. It is also notable that this remarkable achievement in primary education enrollment was recorded at the time when major strides in the expansion of secondary education, technical and vocational education and training, and higher education sub-sectors occurred.

For instance, enrollment in the first cycle of secondary education showed significant increases, i.e. the gross enrolment rate increased from 17.1 percent in 2001/02 to 33.2 per cent in 2005/06 (MOE, 2007). Currently, ESDP III is being implemented with particular attention given to ensure universal access to quality primary education by 2015 and to quality secondary education by 2025. In 2006/07, the gross and net enrolment rates for primary education reached 91.3 percent and 77.5 percent, respectively. The gender parity index also improved, to 0.915 (MOE, 2008).

The Government of Ethiopia has made its ambition to strengthen the education sector performance clear through increased funding. It was its intention, for example, to increase the gross domestic product share of education from 3.1 percent in 2003/04 to 4.1 percent in 2009/10 (MOE, ESDP III 2005).

#### **2.15.5.1. Strength on the Ethiopian context**

In response to the dire education scenario, the Ministry of Education and its development partners have placed a high priority on improving the quality of education during the years to come. In 2007, the Ministry of Education developed a new package of interventions to remedy identified weaknesses of education at both the primary and secondary levels.

This reform package, the General Education Quality Improvement Program (GEQIP), encompasses four key areas of intervention, namely, (i) the Teacher Development Program, (ii) curriculum improvement, (iii) leadership and management, and (iv) the School Improvement Program and two complementary packages, 'Civics and Ethical Education' and 'Information Communications Technology'. Within the GEQIP framework, SIP focuses on these four key domains: the teaching-learning process; instructional leadership and management; environment conducive and attractive to learning; and community participation. The educational management is decentralized to district and school levels for more participatory decision-making, implementation and monitoring at lower levels of accountability.

Thus, better regulatory frameworks and administrative mechanisms shall be designed; responsibilities at different levels of government shall be sharply delineated; it shall be

ensured that decentralization does not lead to inequitable distribution of resources; it instead make more efficient use of existing human and financial resources. Capacities for managing diversity, disparity and change; and for integrating programs within the education and other sectors will be improved. Training will be provided for school leaders and other education personnel.

Responsibilities in operational planning, budget allocation and budget control shall be devolved to district. The district Education and Training Board has established and assumed the overall responsibility for managing primary and secondary educations in the district. District is responsible for, empowering the community; devising strategy by which resources will be mobilized from the community and used to improve access and quality of education; ensuring equity; recruiting teachers and non-teaching staff; and, for applying disciplinary measures on teaching and administrative staff.

Similarly, in rural areas, district Education and Training Boards were established, and Parent Teacher Associations were established at the school level to strengthen community-school relationship, create the best learning environment, and to decrease dropout rates. The Parent Teacher Associations would increase community support to schools in terms of material, labor and finance. All these would definitely require the acquisition of management skills (personnel administration, evaluation, monitoring, planning, budgeting, accounting, etc.).

Building the implementation capacity of schools, that includes, identification of training needs, provision of short-term domestic and/or external training programs on educational management, supervision, finance, purchasing and material management,

is a major undertaking. Principals had an important role to play in connecting schools with the external world and bringing into schools a variety of knowledge. Principals are the persons in schools who have the greatest capacity to network with the wider community and ensure that schools keep abreast of current initiatives and anticipate future trends.

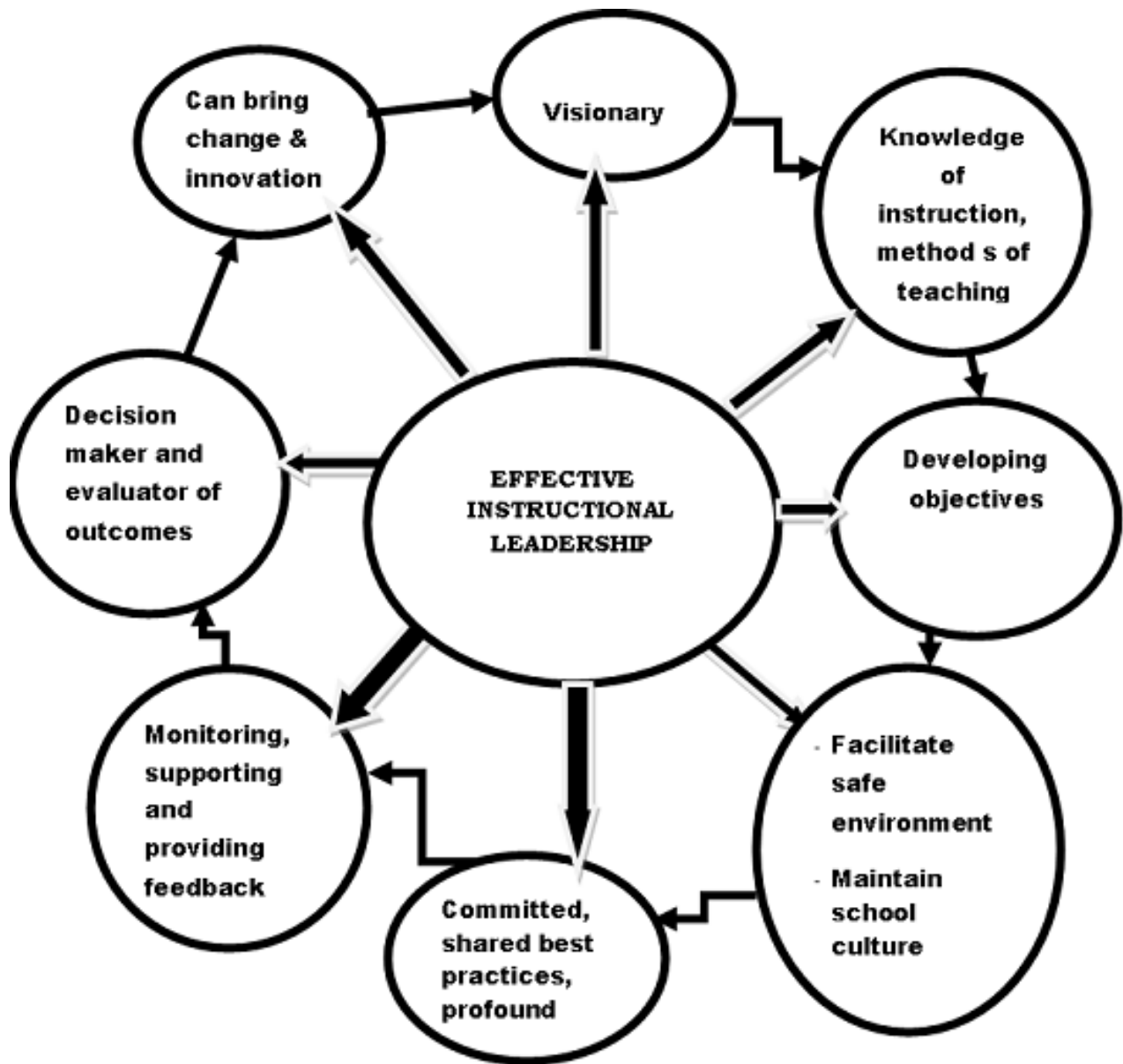
#### **2.15.5.2. Weaknesses on the Ethiopian context**

Principals of Ethiopian schools are faced with two major challenges in their day-to-day management duties, namely, (1) handling the teaching learning process properly to ensure quality and (2) creating a sound culture of teaching and learning in which effective education can take place. The central role that a principal played in all the programs of a school and the impact that he or she has on the tone and ethos, which are conducive to teaching and learning is crucial in the process of building a sound culture of learning and teaching. Principals are inclined to perform less administrative duties; they are more orientated towards being educational leaders in the sense of being experts in teaching and learning, and in establishing an environment that facilitates this.

These areas of knowledge include the following: Detailed knowledge about the individual and collective progress made by learners, detailed understanding of the local context and the background of learners, detailed understanding of the preferred learning styles of learners; and, knowledge about different kinds of interventions and their effects on learner learning. Knowledge of a balance between instructional leadership and management; defining and communicating a clear mission, goals, and objectives; formulating ,with the collaboration of staff members, a mission, goals, and objectives to

realize effective teaching and learning. Implementation of innovative educational practices such as continuous assessment and self-contained classroom organization still requires much effort to be exerted. Further strengthening and expansion of in-service training programs, and provision of appropriate manuals and other support materials may be needed to improve the teaching learning process.

2.16. A MODEL THAT THE STUDY PROPOSES (2014)



## **2.16.1. Description of the new model**

### **2.16.1.1 Visionary:**

In the model that the researcher have designed as a result of the study, the researcher argue that the principals should become visionary, instructional leaders who should demonstrate energy, commitment, entrepreneurial spirit, values and conviction that all students in their school will learn at high levels, and that principals will strive at all time to inspire others with this vision, both inside and outside school buildings. The researcher also argues that in his model the instructional principal should come up with a mission whose purpose is a clear statement of the reason why the school as an organization should achieve the highest standards.

The researcher furthermore argues that structured vision and mission brings clarity of purpose to members of the school, and broad direction as to what members of the school should be aiming for. These school principals should formulate a vision that inspires all staff members to strive for the highest levels of performance and should make the improvement of teaching and learning the school's top priority.

The reason is that, instructional leaders are responsible for leading instruction, managing operations, and increasing the effectiveness of their school communities. Secondary schools seek talented, dedicated leaders who have the skills and experience to lead the secondary schools, and the desire to help transform them into the highest performing district schools in the country. Instructional leaders are characterized by their focus on student achievement, leadership, vision, instructional expertise, systems and resource management.

Instructional leaders should ensure that all teachers are provided with the necessary tools as well as the time to work collaboratively in a professional learning community; and establish a climate that is conducive to learning by fostering a culture of trust and mutual respect. The reason is that effective instructional leaders are strong educators, anchoring their work on central issues of learning and teaching and continuous school improvement. The combination of the following three concepts constitutes the foundation for positive improvement results: meaningful teamwork; clear, measurable goals; and the regular collection and analysis of performance data.

Instructional leaders must lead their schools through the goal-setting process in which student achievement data are analyzed, improvement areas are identified and actions for change are initiated. This process involves working collaboratively with staff and school community to identify discrepancies between current and desired outcomes, to set and prioritize goals to help close the gap, to develop improvement and monitoring strategies aimed at accomplishing the goals, and to communicate goals and change efforts to the entire school community. Instructional leaders must also ensure that staff development needs are identified in alignment with school improvement priorities and that these needs are addressed with appropriate professional learning opportunities. Thus, instructional leaders recognize and embrace the need to continuously engage the broader school community, including parents and community leaders, as critical partners in achieving the school's vision.

The researcher points out in the researcher's model that visionary leaders can be found from the secondary school teachers and education experts of the region who have good communication skills; who are chief organizers, are creative and capable of taking



initiatives with the appropriate actions; who take intelligent risks that capitalize on prime conditions; strategic planners, long-term thinkers, who can create an exciting future for themselves; who never experience failures, instead, write them off as learning experiences; their behaviour is purposeful, goal-directed and make progress; who don't criticize or blame others when something goes wrong, instead, they focus on the solution.

Visionary leaders are key role players in efforts to create an environment where quality teaching can thrive and best practices can be embedded. One of the most effective ways to attain this goal is to combine different advantages of the national and local-level approaches. Such an exercise would produce high-quality training and ongoing support to school leaders. University professors should design a novel curriculum and give intensive practical training that would bring about change.

#### **2.16.1.2. Knowledge of instructional methodologies:**

In the model the researcher argues that knowledge of instructional methodology is essential because instructional leaders should have a working knowledge of research-based, student-centered instruction, project-based learning, cooperative learning, integration of technology into instructional strategies, and integration of academic and career/technical studies. They should know how to help teachers learn new instructional methods, how to estimate how much time it will take teachers to master new techniques, and how to “network” with teachers as they implement new approaches; and they need to understand the amount of time it takes to plan effectively.

### **2.16.1.3. Developing objectives and maintaining fidelity:**

The researcher pointed out in his model that instructional leaders should ensure that schools are provided with school resources and teaching materials to support the school improvement program. These are critical ingredients in learning and the intended curriculum cannot be easily implemented without them (Blase, and Blase, 2005:21).

Over the past years the importance of the provision of adequate Learning and Teaching Materials that include textbooks, teachers' guides and supplementary materials, to support educational development and quality upgrading has been recognized by government throughout the country and by most development partners. Textbooks are one of the most important learning materials that have a demonstrable impact on student learning. School improvement goals, classroom instruction, and classroom / school assessment need to be linked in such a way that they support and complement one another.

Teachers trust the results from these assessments because of their direct relation to classroom instructional goals. Besides, the results are immediate and easy to analyze at the individual student level. To use classroom assessments to make improvements, however, teachers have to change both their view of assessments and their interpretation of results. Specifically, they need to see their assessments as an integral part of the instructional process and crucial for helping students to learn. Identify Key processes that impact results need to be identified. One major emphasis in the secondary schools has been the continuing demand for greater accountability to increase student performance. The Ministry of Education and regional education bureau require secondary schools to ensure that all students achieve mastery of curriculum objectives, and focus on implementing those requirements to the best of their ability.

Instructional leaders should identify performance measures and indicators that link key instructional processes to instructional goals. Hence, the instructional leaders have systems and processes for anticipating and addressing school staffing, instructional, and operational needs in a timely, efficient, and effective ways. Using these, they monitor the performance of students and conditions in each school; and communicate with decision makers outside the school. This promotes effective use of professional development and activities to support school improvement and maintain current data regarding teacher shortage areas.

Ensure that school goals are aligned to school district goals. To realize the goals of secondary schools, students need to meet the demands of individual learning goals aligned with district standards and high school graduation requirements. To support high levels of student achievement and instructional excellence, all district resources and programs need to be linked, and, parents and the community need to be engaged.

District office should be informed of the school needs. District supervisors should create a common vision for the district and communicate it to all schools. This will ensure support towards a shared vision and goals for the district. There will be coordination in developing and ensuring effective implementation of a communication plan that would facilitate communication with all stakeholders (parents, students, staff members, unions, school board members, and community members).It will also be convenient when budget and other requisites (i.e. school calendar, school schedules, transportation, staffing, etc.) are required from the school board. This will facilitate the requisitioning of

the necessary resources for implementation. Good working relationship with union representatives will also be established.

#### **2.16.1.4. Facilitating safe environment and maintaining enabling school culture**

The following are the reasons why instructional leaders should focus on facilitating safe environment and maintaining enabling school culture:

Focus on policies and support services that will enhance each school's ability to achieve its own strategic vision and plan within the context of the district's vision (Blasé and Blase, 2005:39). This indicates that, instructional leaders within each school must engage the departments and develop a vision of what the school must do if it is to graduate more students who are prepared for life and work outside the school. If state and district leaders have done their jobs, if the vision and desired outcomes are clear and the necessary supports are in place, then the instructional leaders can begin to design and implement solutions tailored to the unique needs of their own students and communities.

Develop tools and processes that principals and teachers can use to ensure that instruction for all groups of students is aligned with college- and career-readiness standards. High standards that are consistent across the region provide teachers, parents, and students with a set of clear expectations that are aligned to the expectations in secondary schools. The standards promote equity by ensuring all students' needs are met. The standards enable collaboration between districts on a range of tools and policies, including the development of textbooks and other teaching materials aligned to the standards, the development and implementation of common

comprehensive assessment systems to measure student performance annually that will replace existing state testing systems. Those changes that are required for helping support educators and schools in teaching need to be linked to the new standards.

Invest in high-quality professional development for the district staff, school principals and teachers. In order to progress from reforms of this sort to changes in student performance, instructional leaders have to assume that changes in policy and organization will result in a different kind of teaching, which will in turn result in a different kind of learning for students, who will in turn demonstrate this new way of learning by doing better on measures of performance.

Consider working with an external school improvement provider to develop a strategic vision that can move the district forward. Through the aligned vision of the district many committed stakeholders, including parents and Education offices are on a path to improvement that is guided by the Ministry of Education's Strategic Priorities. Hence it is advantageous for future plans to strengthen these structures and ensure success for every student in all the secondary schools of the region.

Develop a succession plan for school principals. The deep commitment to systems' instructional leadership is essential to implement a lasting succession plan. An integrated plan that is collaboratively designed, clearly communicated, and consistently applied, is critical to building instructional leadership capacity. Instructional leadership capacity must be developed and sustained to guarantee academic success for every child in the secondary schools.

Engage parents and the larger community in ongoing dialogue about the changes needed. Secondary schools should invite groups of parents to exercise their

responsibilities as citizens by suggesting and/or effecting needed changes in schools. Focus on raising parents' conscientiousness and increasing their awareness of the importance of their collective power.

#### **2.16.1.5. Committed and shared practices**

The advantages of using committed and shared practices are: Increased collaboration with stakeholders in the school improvement process; and in producing positive change collectively in schools (Fullan, 2003:13). It is vital to share student's achievement data with all stakeholders. Accordingly, successful accountability systems capture data on student learning activities, assessment of those learning activities, and on characteristics of the schools in which students are enrolled; including the actual decisions concerning the reasons for the assessment. Provide time for collaborative problem solving. Collaborative problem solving is a critical and necessary skill needed across the secondary schools settings. It has its own merits, like, it allows for an effective division of labour; the incorporation of information from multiple sources of knowledge, perspectives, and experiences; it enhances creativity and quality of solutions; and, it is stimulated by ideas of other group members.

There are a number of critical advantages, which underlie an instructional leader's effectiveness in leading the process of improving student achievement; which are: The instructional leader's commitment to student learning as the fundamental purpose of schooling; promotion of the belief that all students can achieve high standards of learning; collaborative problem solving with staff and stakeholders; ongoing collection and analysis of data; ensuring data-driven decision making; promotion of lifelong

learning for self and others; emphasizing focus and alignment to achieve goals; and doing the work required for high levels of personal and school performance.

#### **2.16.1.6. Monitoring, supporting and providing feedback:**

Monitoring, supporting and providing feedback is crucial for the following purposes: To establish a regular, predictable process to track the impact of improvement efforts on student's achievement. Instructional leaders can establish a regular, predictable process to track the impact of improvement efforts on student achievement. He or she can closely monitor the systematic collection and analysis of data by staff to assess whether progress toward attainment of objectives is satisfactory for all groups of students. He or she can collect and utilize data continuously to inform instructional decisions at the school and classroom levels and provide academic interventions for individual and groups of students (DuFour, 2002:12). He or she can closely monitor the systematic collection and analysis of data by staff to assess whether progress towards attainment of objectives is satisfactory in respect of all groups of students.

He or she collects and utilizes data continuously to inform instructional decisions taken at school, and acknowledges successes of key players. Instructional leaders must become increasingly creative at creating an environment that attracts and retains talented staff. A fair and consistently applied reward and recognition program should be part of the plan. To facilitate the use of data continuously they need to evaluate and revise the school improvement plan. Before implementing strategies for data-driven decision making, the school systems should invest time and resources in building a solid foundation for system wide improvement efforts. Integral to this process is setting

specific, measurable goals for the system, school, classroom, and individual student. Once such goals are set, instructional leaders should concentrate on developing and monitoring the implementation of a system-wide curriculum.

Time for provision of staff development for school improvement, like time for staff meeting, team work, and for in-service training needs to be scheduled, communicated and monitored. Encourage staff to promote healthy practices; provide training for staff in essential skills; develop strong collaborative relationships among staff members, provide an orientation programme for newly-employed staff members; as well as measures for success. Supports staff in effecting instructional changes necessary to support school improvement efforts. Effective instructional leadership that focuses on all students learning is at the core of improved schools. Instructional leadership should be committed, persistent, proactive, and distributed throughout the secondary school system.

#### **2.16.1.7. Decision maker and evaluator of outcomes**

The following points are helpful in decision making and evaluation process:

**Self awareness**, which means having a realistic perception of one's own values, interests, and strengths; and being able to recognize one's own emotions. It is very useful, because the best attribute needed to assume leadership position is self awareness. Self-awareness means knowing your own values, personality, needs, habits, emotions, strengths, and weaknesses. Moreover, self-awareness allows instructional leaders to motivate and manage stress effectively; helps with intuitive



decision making; and assists in leading and motivating others more effectively (Blase, and Blase, 2000:12).

**Self management**, which refers to how well one manages his or her own emotions, impulses, and stress, and whether one is able to set himself or herself goals and achieve them; and whether one can exercise self-discipline. To appreciate the importance of self-management, it is necessary to consider both its practical and theoretical implications.

**Social awareness**-refers to the ability to understand perspectives of others, and to appreciate and respect diversity. Instructional leaders are able to come to the understanding that everyone has culture and that culture plays a central role in their beliefs, biases, and assumptions, and also in the decision they make.

**Relationship skills**- refer to the ability to participate in healthy, cooperative, and caring relationships, and in resolving conflicts effectively. A major advantage of a relationship skill is its diversity in resourcefulness, knowledge, and ideas. Most instructional leaders are aware of disagreements and have received training in conflict resolution; but they seldom assign a high priority to solving conflicts. With this in mind, it is critical that team members possess skills to resolve conflict among them.

**Responsible decision making**- is the ability to recognize and generate good choices, evaluate the likely consequences of actions, and to take responsibility for one's decisions. An instructional leader should take cognizance of the fact that his or her decisions will affect the whole school. Every decision they make will affect different teachers in one way or another. It is important to be aware of the impact of their decisions, and to understand the costs they can cause. Taking decisions demonstrates

the desire to lead. By making decisions, Instructional leaders prove to teachers that they are willing to direct actions, and get things done.

#### **2.16.1.8. Can bring change, innovation and creativity**

Instructional leaders should ensure that the school improvement plan is based on data analysis and problem clarification. Prior to the beginning of the school year, an instructional leader should review and select relevant data from available sources of data. To do this successfully, an instructional leader needs to develop a plan that will set forth processes to collect important data throughout the school year. This data collection plan should form a blueprint for gathering key descriptive information.

They have the ability to facilitate the development of an improvement plan in which goals, evidence of attainment, objectives and strategies are clearly aligned and articulated. Therefore, using emotional intelligent competencies to cultivate a professional learning community ,instructional leaders will collect, analyze, and use data to identify school needs, use data to identify and plan for needed changes in the instructional program, implement and monitor a school improvement plan and use systems thinking to establish a clear focus on attaining student achievement goals.

There is a need for capacity to identify the knowledge and skills teachers need to implement the school improvement instructional strategies. Promoting the learning and achievement of learners is the main aim of school education. Teaching is the main way of achieving this. Teaching and learning are what ultimately make a difference in the mind of the learner, and thus affect knowledge, skills, attitudes and the capacity of young people to contribute to contemporary societies. Lastly, they should have the

knowledge and skills of providing opportunities for staff to seek successful strategies from schools that have been outperforming them. The strategies of instruction should focus on students' interests, learning styles, and aptitudes through a variety of small learning community approaches. The instructional leaders should allow teachers, with whom they can develop personal relationships, the opportunity to use reflective thought and sustain professional development.

### **2.17. SYNTHESIS AND KNOWLEDGE GAP**

Data from literature is captured in Blase and Blase (2000:131) words that instructional leadership is the integration of the tasks of, direct assistance to educators, group development, staff development and curriculum development. The instructional leadership guides and directs the education occurrence; it regulates and organizes the educational matters such as providing the educational infrastructure; it plans, implements, and manages staff development programs; it also evaluates the educational programs. (See section 2.1).

The instructional leadership framework designed by Hallinger (2009:142) consists of five main component, namely,; building and sustaining a school vision, hiring leadership, leading a learning community, using data to make instructional decisions, and monitoring curriculum and instruction. (See section 2.2).

According to Hallinger, (2005:10) the three major functions of instructional leadership are defining mission, managing the instructional program and promoting a positive school climate. (See section 2.4).

Whitaker (2007:89) identified four skills essential for instructional leadership, namely, need to be a resourceful provider, need to be an instructional resource, need to be good communicator and need to create a visible presence. (See section 2.7).

Blase and Blase, (2010:38) found that teachers believe good principals use the following five strategies during instructional conferences: making suggestions for instructional improvement, giving feedback on classroom observations, modelling good instruction, using inquiry to discover what teachers think, and soliciting advice and opinions from teachers.(See section 2.8.6).

Leithwood (2005:25) indicates that effective schools fix their focus on learning and teaching. And the ability of a school leader to offer strong instructional leadership is a key factor in assuring academic effectiveness. The principal's leadership role has three dimensions. These are, modeling, consensus building and feedback. (See section 2.9).

Blase and Blase (2010:153) provide a list of strategies principals used to promote professional development that increased teachers' use of reflectively informed behaviors on emphasizing the study of teaching and learning; and these are, supporting collaboration among educators, developing coaching relationships among educators, and applying principles of learning in staff development.(See section2.11.2).

Signe (2006:45) found that providing resources should include scheduling, developing the school calendar, hiring and correctly placing the teachers, adopting textbooks, and purchasing necessary materials to support instruction. (See section 2.11.3)

Vick (2004:27) reflects on how educational leaders can create an enabling school environment; mobilize teachers and direct efforts for the sake of student learning through developing technical skills, emphasizing learner-centered leadership, strengthening the school culture, and monitoring organizational performance.(See section 2.14.1.3 )

Joyce and Calhoun (2010:77) mentioned five general leadership qualities of effective leaders. These are, having a vision, translate the vision into action, creating a supportive environment, knowing what is going on in the school, and acting on knowledge. (See section2.14.1.7).

## **SUMMARY**

Several key ideas can be summarised from the above discussion regarding the impact, role, and responsibilities of instructional leadership. Among others, school size, level, and organization, influence the presence and nature of instructional leadership. Instructional leaders in larger, departmentalized secondary schools find it necessary to delegate responsibilities and lead in more indirect ways. District support, rather than control, is connected to strong, effective instructional leadership. Principals need autonomy of governance in order to succeed.

Personal traits such as principal's gender, age, and prior teaching experience correlate positively with active instructional leadership. A remarkable consistency of findings regarding the likelihood that female principals can be effective instructional leaders is evident in some research results. Despite some disagreement among researchers, the general conclusion is that the impact of instructional leaders in schools and student

achievement is indirect. Although they may appear to be directly involved in the teaching and learning of students, instructional leaders influence outcomes through others.

A school's mission, founded on academic goals and high expectations, is the most important and influential responsibility of instructional leaders. Instructional leaders' efforts to create and promote a positive school climate, through resource provision, and consensus-building, are also key responsibilities. There is little empirical evidence that principals' direct, active involvement in schools' instructional program impacts on student achievement. Instructional leadership is only one of many responsibilities of a principal. Many principals lack the expertise, autonomy, and/or the inclination to act as instructional leaders. Typical models of instructional leadership place too much responsibility and power on the role of a principal, neglecting the importance of involving other role players in the running of the school.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN**

#### **3.1. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The methodology that this study used is the qualitative approaches because it aimed at providing an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of the role of instructional leadership. In this study qualitative method was selected because it helps to understand the meanings individuals construct in order to participate in their social lives. Thus, Creswell (2007:32) define it as “a research design which emphasizes inductive, interpretive methods applied to the everyday world which is seen as subjective and socially created”. In this study, the qualitative method was regarded as an appropriate method because it discovered how respondents constructed their own meaning on instructional leadership. Interactive qualitative research is an inquiry in which researchers collect data in face-to-face situations by interacting with selected persons in their natural settings.

The research used this approach to collect data from the secondary school principals, district supervisors, regional education officers and experts from the ministry of education using interview, observation and document analysis. The knowledge gained through qualitative investigations was more informative, rich and offered an in-depth understanding of instructional leadership.

### **3.2. RESEARCH DESIGN**

The study was a case study design. Case study is a descriptive, or an explanatory analysis of a person, group or event. It is a research strategy mainly used to explain those causal links in real-life intervention that are too complex for either the survey or experimental strategies. Like other research strategies, its design includes questions or propositions, units of analysis, the logic linking the data to the questions or propositions, and the interpretations of the outcomes. A case study can be reported as a single case or as a compilation of a series of cases. It is a simple and excellent way to focus on an individual unit like a person, family, or social group; usually emphasizing developmental issues and relationships with the environment.

The research design used in this study is based on a case study of the secondary schools in South Nations Nationalities People's Region of Ethiopia. The research instruments used to collect data are the following: the semi-structured interviews, the observations and document analysis. These instruments were used to find answers to the research questions posed in section 1.4 and its subsections. The research questions were posed to the individuals selected in order for them to express their perspectives on the research problems.

For the purpose of this empirical investigation, the qualitative research design was preferred to the quantitative research design because the intention was to gain an in-depth understanding of the principal's role in the instructional leadership. In that regard a qualitative research design was viewed as a collection to inquiry; all of which



relied on verbal, visual, and auditory information to ensure a deep understanding of the phenomenon studied.

The use of multiple data collection tools helped to construct a richer, bigger and meaningful picture of instructional leadership as the phenomenon under study. Harrington (2005:4) refers to the application of the method as “a systematic use of particular techniques in the pursuit or study of something”. Thus, to corroborate, and augment the secondary data collected, the researcher used multiple data collection methods, namely semi-structured interviews, document analysis and observation to answer the research questions. The use of multiple data collection methods provided an opportunity to make the collected data more reliable.

The study examined secondary school principals and education experts in their role as instructional leaders from the perspective of practitioners. The aim was to acquire an in-depth understanding of the role of secondary school principals as instructional leaders in the secondary school situation where they are in charge. The themes were revealed through a discussion of the data, and it was shown how they relate to the mentioned research questions.

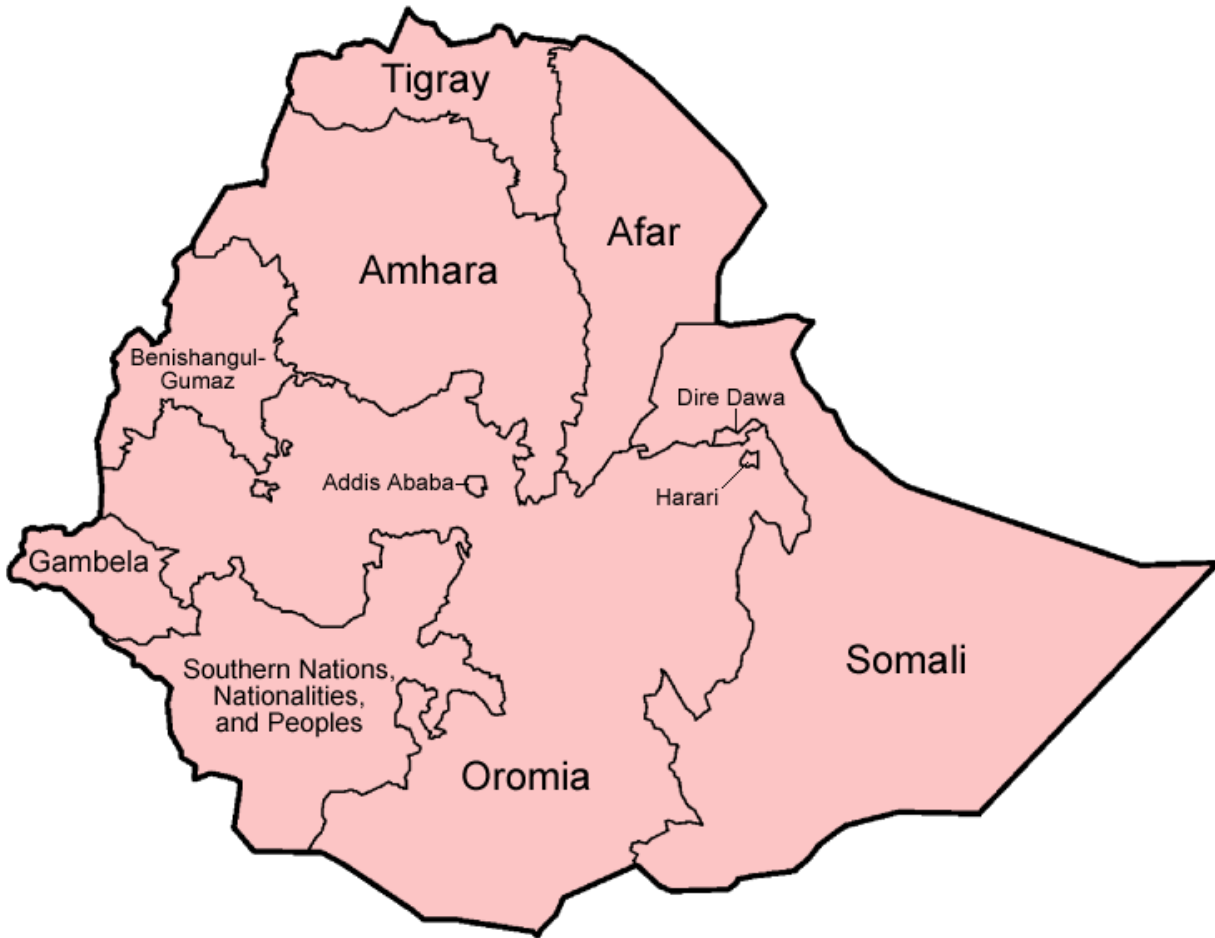
### **3.3. THE STUDY AREA**

The Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Region (SNNPR) is located in the Southern and South-Western part of Ethiopia. Geographically, it roughly lies between 4°43'- 8°58' North Latitude and 34°08'- 39°14' East (Map policy of the National Geographic Society of Ethiopia, 2012). It is bordered by Kenya in the South, the Sudan

in the South West, Gambella region in the North West, and surrounded by Oromiya region in the North West, Northern and Eastern sides.

The total area of the region is estimated to be 110,931.9 Km<sup>2</sup>, which is 10% of the country and inhabited by a population size of about 15,760,743 accounting nearly 20% of the total population of the country. The population density of the region became 142 persons per Km<sup>2</sup>, which makes the region one of the most populous parts of the country (Map policy of the National Geographic Society of Ethiopia, 2012). The region is multi-national; it consists of about 56 ethnic groups with their own distinct geographical location, languages, cultures, and social identities living together. These varied ethnic groups are classified into the Omotic, Cushetic, Nilo-Sahara and Semitic super language families. Among which Omotic and Cushetic are the most populous and diversified ones with the largest area coverage in the region respectively.

Based on ethnic and linguistic identities, the region is at present divided into 13 zones (sub-divided into 126 districts) and 8 special Districts. This again is divided into 3678 rural Kebeles. Regarding urban areas, there are 22 town administration and 114 certified towns with municipal city status totally having 238 urban Kebeles (Ethiopian Tourism magazine,2012).



**Figure 1: A map showing Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People's Region (SNNPR), Ethiopia**

The sample area for this study included four secondary schools. Two secondary schools were selected from the area called Gedoe Zone and the other two from Sidama zone. The selection was based on convenience. Dilla secondary school is found in Dilla town, 96 km away from the regional capital-Hawassa. The Yirgacheffe secondary school is located in Gedee zone, 46 km away from Dilla town. The Hawassa Tabor secondary school is located in the capital city of the Southern nations and nationalities and peoples region, and Chucko secondary school is situated 45 km away from Hawassa.

According to the Education statistics Annual Abstract 2011/12, SNNPR Education Bureau, the schools had a staff complement of 240 teachers, (105 males and 35 females), a learner enrollment of 5600, 4 principals and 4 assistant principals. The school management team is comprised of the principal, department heads and parent's teachers' association (MOE, 1994). English is the medium of instruction and Amharic language has been offered nationally as a subject (MOE, 1994).

### **3.4. SAMPLING TECHNOQUE**

A sample is a limited number of elements selected from a population to be representative of that population. The sampling of the secondary schools as well as the participants for my study was informed by the purposive preference in qualitative research. As advocated by Merriam (2009:77), purposeful sampling is “based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned”. Cohen et al., (2007: 100) suggest that “researchers must take sampling decisions early in the overall planning of a piece of research as factors such as time, expense, accessibility frequently prevent researchers from gaining information from the whole population”. The sampling technique used in this study was called purposive sampling. It was used to select a sample of four principals, six district supervisors, six regional experts and four experts from the Ministry of Education. I chose the participants purposively because each of them was able to give me information on instructional leadership because of the positions they held within the education system.

### **3.5. DATA GATHERING PROCESS**

The researcher used a number of methods to collect data, namely: semi-structured interviews, observations, and document analyses. The data gathering process took a period of eight weeks. This was done for triangulation purposes because triangulation techniques in the social sciences attempt to map out or explain more fully the richness and complexity of human behavior by studying it from more than one standpoint. In this study data that was triangulated came from the principals, education officials and from report documents. The data collection methods are explained in detail in the following sub-sections.

#### **3.5.1. Semi-structured interviews**

A semi-structured interview involves “a set of pre-set questions which initiate the discussion, followed by further questions which arise from the discussion” (Rule and John, 2011:65). In this study semi-structure interviews were used to provide access to what is ‘inside the person’s head,’ and as such it makes it possible to determine what a person knows, likes or dislikes and thinks. In this study, the researcher used interviewing as a data collecting instrument because the data required had to be based on experiences and feelings for the sake of a deep understanding. For that reason the researcher valued the contact with key players in the research field who could provide privileged information. It (interviewing) is also used to probe responses and investigate motives and feelings further. The researcher relied on the fact that with interviews, information can be obtained not only in terms of participants’ words, but also in terms of response on-verbal communication, such as tones of

voices and facial expressions. This contributed to more complete and subtle meanings of the collected data.

The researcher used the face-to-face semi-structured interviews as one of the primary data collection tools and they provided an opportunity to communicate directly with the participants. They (interviews) also elicited rich information from the interviewees on the issue being researched; furthermore they allowed the researcher to capture individual perceptions and experiences. The interviews were conducted with the principals of secondary schools and the selected experts. The purpose of the interview questions was to investigate the role principals played in the instructional process and how it could be further strengthened.

The researcher avoided giving signs of approval or disapproval at the responses received, by allowing the participants to continue talking until they were done. One participant was interviewed each day in order not to interfere with the operation of the school and this was done in the afternoon. Interview questions (Appendix A) focused on the role of a principal as an instructional leader in the promotion of teaching and learning, which occurs in the classroom, where teachers and learners interact daily.

### **3.5.2. Observation**

The researcher observed events using a structured time table. The researcher's interest during the observation sessions was to find out whether instructional issues were given the necessary preference and attention they deserved and if other instructional issues such as time on task were respected.

In this study, the researcher used observations to observe how the four principals of the selected secondary schools provide instructional leadership in areas like: curriculum development and implementation, lesson-planning and delivery of class work and assignments, extra-mural activities and experiments in the laboratory. In support, Cohen et al., (2007:398) argue that “observation offer an investigator the opportunity to gather ‘live’ data from the natural setting and allow the investigator to look directly at what is taking place in situ rather than relying on second-hand accounts”. The observations were used to generate data that complemented data that was gathered from the interviews and from the analysis of documents on how principals provided instructional leadership in their schools. Furthermore, the researcher conducted observations during morning assemblies, staff briefing, staff meeting, parent meeting, school events like sport, practical lessons and examinations.

### **3.5.3. Document analysis**

Documents are useful because they form an important element of the research project as they contain valuable information. Through the analysis method the researcher studied memos, briefings, circulars, and minutes of parents and staff meetings, from which information regarding significant instructional issues at the school could be gathered.

The documents consulted provided relevant and accurate information the study needed, which was in the form of minutes, rules and regulations.

The researcher also accessed recent policy documents such as Education Sector Review V (2012/13) and newspapers like General Education Quality Progress, which

had articles about the official position of the government of Ethiopia and Ministry of Education regarding instructional issues in schools. The other reason why the researcher employed document analysis as one of the instruments for data collection was to verify information on the achievement of students and teachers performance collected by means of the other two data collection tools.

School principals and experts were very helpful as they provided documents like school vision and mission statement, school development plan, school internal policy guide, school rules and regulations, classroom observation instruments, minutes of meetings such as staff, management, parents and departmental meetings, master and class timetables and year calendar of activities (SNNPR Education guideline:2012/13).

#### **3.5.4. Data analysis techniques**

Nieuwenhuis (2010:100) understands qualitative data analysis to be “an ongoing and interactive process, implying that data collection, processing, analysis and reporting are intertwined, and not merely a number of successful steps”. He further argues that the process of data analysis “tries to establish how participants make meaning of a specific phenomenon by analyzing their perceptions, attitudes, understanding, knowledge, values, feelings and experiences in an attempt to approximate their construction of the phenomenon (Nieuwenhuis, 2010:100). I agree with this notion, hence I started with data analysis right from the beginning of the data collection process, to the end. Data gathering involves development of ideas and theories about the phenomenon being studied, even as the researcher makes contact with gatekeepers and sets up interviews. I read and carefully examined the data generated from the research tools.



As a norm in qualitative studies, I kept all the original data for possible verification and to solicit feedback from the participants in the research.

I was aware of the need to sift, reduce, label, interpret and present the raw data that I generated from the field. The raw data I generated was then coded and sorted into categories in relation to the study goals. It was very important to triangulate data generated from the different data collection methods so as to try and find out to what extent the sets of data were similar or different. This helped me as a researcher to understand the phenomenon from different angles and, in doing so; I also strengthened the validity of the findings.

### **3.6. ETHICAL ASPECTS OF THE RESEARCH**

Before the study was carried out, the researcher obtained approval from Dilla University Research and Dissemination Directorate in order to conduct the research. The researcher then sought permission from the principal of each of the participating schools and offices through a letter requesting to be allowed to carry out his research in the institutions. The letter informed the principals of the purpose of the study, the methods to be employed in collecting data and the participants to be required for interviews.

The study required the researcher to inform the participants of its purpose. A comprehensive consent form, which provided the participants with an explanation of the research and the option to terminate their participation at any time with no penalty, was drawn up. It was explained clearly to the participants that they had the freedom of choice to participate or not to participate, that the information obtained from them

through their responses would be kept confidential. They were assured that the data would not be linked to individual subjects by name. This was done by collecting and transcribing data anonymously using codes to denote the participants.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **4. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTREPRETATION**

#### **4.1. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter focuses on data collection, analysis and interpretation of the collected data. The research seeks to investigate the instructional leadership role of secondary school principals and how it could be strengthened in order to achieve improved performance.

#### **4.2. CODING AND PROFILES OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS AND SCHOOLS**

The participants' leadership experiences differed as they started teaching at different times and occupied different positions like unit leaders and department heads. For ethical reasons, the following codes were used in the schools and for participants:

1. Experts of Education at Ministry level :( EEM)
2. Experts of Education at Regional level: (EER)
3. District supervisors: (DS)
4. Principals: A, B, C, and D
5. Secondary schools: S1,S2 S3, and S4

4.2.1 Principal A: began his teaching career in 2000 at a school in the southern region and was later promoted to the position of principalship of a secondary school in 2004. In 2010 he was appointed principal of a senior secondary school. He has a degree of Bachelor of Education in Physics from Dilla University. He was interviewed on 18/ 02/ 2013.

4.2. 2 Principal B: started teaching in the region in 2006 where he stayed until when he was promoted to the position of principalship. He possesses a degree of Bachelor of mathematics.

4.2. 3 Principal C: This senior teacher has a teaching career spanning over a decade. He joined the school in 2004. He started his teaching career in 1990 at Aleta Wondo primary school. He has a degree of Bachelor of Education from the Dilla University.

4.2. 4 Principal D started teaching in 2005. His teaching career started at a different school in the same area. He moved to Hawassa Tabor secondary school at the beginning of 2009. He has a Bachelors degree in Biology and also holds an Advanced Certificate in Educational Leadership and Management.

4.2. 5 EEM represents experts in the ministry of education. They all hold Master's degrees in the discipline Educational Planning and Management. They have teaching experience and are responsible for in-service training of principals and are also responsible for teaching and learning process at the Ministry level.

4.2.6 Both DS and EER represent experts who served more than ten years in the area of education at district and regional levels. The respondents in the regional bureau have Master's degrees while the district supervisors have Bachelor's degrees.

### **4.3. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

In the previous chapter the research method and research technique used in the collection of data were discussed. Data was collected by means of interviews with secondary school principals, education experts and district supervisors; observation; and analysis of documents sourced from the selected schools. An important factor to be

borne in mind is that the qualitative method indicates the practical perception and feelings of the target groups on the concept of instructional leadership as a role to be played by school principals. The information gathered during principals' interviews was recorded and transcribed for analysis.

The interviews were recorded and filed. After all of the interviews had been recorded and coded, the next task was to decode the data into major topics creating themes or categories. These data were then reviewed and the codes were expanded according to the major findings of the research.

The codes provided specific details, which were subsequently analysed according to themes and patterns to create a combined picture of the secondary school principal instructional leadership roles and experiences that led to their instructional leadership practices.

## **4.4 A SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **4.4.1 Interview result of secondary school principals**

#### **4.4.1.1. Research question 1**

**To what extent do secondary school principals' believe that they have the capacity to provide effective instructional supports?**

- Principal A's response to the first question is that the support given to teachers and other staff members help to ensure the goals are attained, and lead to improved teaching and learning process. He emphasized by saying:

*I always support teachers in giving information about the instructional process and encourage to participate and voice their opinions on the issues in staff meetings.*

*So, we share what we think is best for the school. I always try to make them feel*

*comfortable, and I maintain a cordial relationship with them. I don't want to make them feel inferior.*

- Principal B's response to the first question is ensuring that financial, capital, human resources, curriculum and teaching resources, professional learning resources and program allocations are linked to priorities; with student achievement and well-being as the central, unambiguous focus. He argued that workshops play a big role in their professional and pedagogical improvement and development, as they acquaint them with the latest teaching techniques.
- Principal C's response to the first question is that enabling schools, school communities and districts have to work together and learn from each other, with a central focus fixed on improving quality and student achievement and their well-being. He said, they hold meetings, which provide them the opportunity to plan and discuss issues, make suggestions, and have a conference time for any questions. So what they do is just to create an open platform for anyone to raise his or her concerns. He reported that most teachers currently employed at the school are university graduates. The recruitment of qualified and suitable teachers is very crucial to improve student learning outcomes and it is of utmost importance that stakeholders invest aggressively in the training of teachers.
- Principal D's response to the first question highlights the importance of teamwork. He stated that he believe that a one man show never works. The school is operating as a team; teachers do lesson plans together and visit each other during the lesson presentations, which enhance teaching and provide opportunities for learning. He said, to avoid tension, you must try to build a team and make stakeholders feel part of the

team. Teaching is a team effort and organizational members' skills, expertise and knowledge should be utilized to the benefit of the schools.

- Principal D also described how helping each other have become a culture, and it started from the top management. He created a cycle called “teamwork” in the school:

*If I can give an example, if one is busy stapling exam papers for learners and there is nobody to help, another teacher will help with stapling and so on. Also, when it comes to the preparation of classes that one does not understand, another teacher will help him/her.*

- Lack of teaching and learning materials are still living in a situation where learners are sharing textbooks, especially in subjects like social sciences and Natural sciences. According to him there are not enough textbooks at the school and sometimes a textbook is shared among four students, and this directly compromises quality teaching and learning. Apart from teaching and learning materials, there is also a shortage of physical facilities.

The researcher observed several morning briefings at the schools. Meetings were used to share information related to learning and teaching, such as moderation and invigilation of examinations, and also to discuss regional correspondence. Meetings are not only used to convey information, but are also very useful platforms for stakeholder's participation. According to Rivera (2008:1), participative management addresses issues of governance within organizations and the role of employees and external stakeholders at all levels of organizational decision making. Giving them opportunities to have a say in matters that affect them may ultimately lead to dedication, loyalty, productivity and

workmanship. It is generally believed that people are likely to be bias towards ideas they are directly involved and that this could have a positive impact and support on school performance.

Schools conduct morning assembly on Mondays and Fridays and staff briefings on Tuesdays and Thursdays. These are used as platforms where the principal, superintendents, teachers and students make announcements and convey information to the school community. Teachers and students were provided with a platform to report back to the school on the Geography tour undertaken by grade 10 students. A staff meeting that the researcher observed was chaired by the principal and participants made their contributions and asked questions freely. This was a demonstration of power sharing, which reduces the principal's load and burden.

There was a support given to schools at all levels. Through inclusive participation schools were able to create team work; staff members were accorded opportunities to get involved in the day to day activities of the principals. Teamwork is very evident at schools and school management teams are taking the lead in encouraging it.

The data further revealed that team work was not only confined to individual schools, but it was also intercollegiate or inter-school as reported at one staff meeting on 19/05/2011, where it was noted that a group of teachers from the other school visited one of the best performing schools in the Southern region to familiarize themselves with their best teaching practices. This is in line with Glaze (2006:13) thinking that successful instructional leaders facilitate best practices in teaching by visiting other school sites where best practices are well known, and even encourage teachers to visit in order to



bring back fresh ideas and different ways of doing things. Though not formalized, the aim is to cluster schools together so that they can share resources and expertise, which can lead to poor schools benefiting from better resourced schools in terms of both human and capital resources.

School leaders delegate some of their functions to their subordinates, not only to lessen their load, but also to empower them (subordinates) and utilize the varieties of skills, knowledge and expertise the schools have at their disposal. The data explicitly revealed how external players/stakeholders are instrumental in enhancing and supporting instructional leadership in the secondary schools. This is done through school board meetings, parents' day and meetings; monitoring of the teaching and learning program by supervisors of Education; advisory teachers and learner representative council meetings, where learners air their views and grievances on issues of an instructional nature, rights, facilities, and quality of education.

The researcher read seven class observation reports written by principals. Their comments were mostly positive and encouraging. They provided teachers with advice on areas that need improvement and how to go about it. The vision and mission of the secondary schools are displayed on the official school documents such as the school development plan, and on the internal school policy guide. Accordingly, the school vision is described as striving towards academic excellence. The principal and other members of the management team were always on time during the assembly, briefings and for their lessons. It is believed that encouraged and shows other show to towards achieving the school vision. Hence, schools should set themselves goals and a vision of where they want to be in the future and how to get there. School members are very

instrumental in helping the organization to realize its vision and mission; however, instructional leaders should strive to direct and persuade staff members to own the school vision.

In line with this thinking, Parker and Day (2007:87) view instructional leaders as facilitators of collaboration who identify, define and communicate a clear mission, goals and objectives. They set, together with the staff members, a mission, goals and objectives to realize effective teaching and learning as one of their main functions. Similarly, the experts from the regional bureau pointed out that for a school to prosper academically, it needs to have a vision. A school is an organization set up by different individuals, with different views, and different philosophies. Firstly, all these individuals should have the same vision, meaning that a school should have a direction of where they want to go. These individuals should have a shared vision, whereby whatever they do; they will do to reach it (vision).

Cawed and Gibbon (2009:11) also argued that instructional leadership is a process of guiding and encouraging the teacher along a path towards greater professional effectiveness. Such guidance demands care, far-sightedness and effective planning, based on professional insight, and, constructive and accurate analysis of teaching-learning activity. The participants view monitoring as a very important element of school leadership as it provides an opportunity for guidance and motivation. It emerged from the data collected that those in leadership or *mandated* with supervisory roles monitor the teaching process and guide others on the best teaching practices.

The study further established that the school encourages teaching by keeping the staff motivated by rewarding and recognizing their achievements. This was reflected in the internal school policy guide that there will be an annual planned school awards ceremony at the beginning of the third term of each academic year. The data indicated that rewarding achievements and acknowledging good performance could help improve performance. It emerged, however from the responses that the school management is aware of this, as indicated.

Activities such as prize giving ceremonies, congratulatory letters and trophies strengthen and renew the mode of teaching and learning. From the responses, it emerged that teachers are even more committed as they are competing for regional awards for themselves and their schools. This can be encouraging for both teachers and learners as it is testimony that hard work pays, and would subsequently have an impact on the school's academic performance.

Principals have been increasingly called to act as instructional leaders and provide support in their schools to ensure that teachers have the opportunity to increase their knowledge and perfect their craft. The assumption is that deeper teacher knowledge brings change in instruction, which, in turn, results in high student achievement. Therefore, the researcher agrees with the quote above that teachers can only increase their knowledge if school principals are supportive and create an enabling environment. Furthermore, school principals need to allow, organize and ensure that teachers attend scheduled development programs or workshops at school or outside school. This is in line with Glaze's (2006:13) argument that successful instructional leaders should invite

workshop leaders from within and outside of the school to conduct sessions on topics that teachers wish to learn about.

The researcher also observed through the internal school policies and the school development plans that staff development opportunities are present, though not to the extent it was anticipated. A study by Blase and Blase (2002:136) revealed that peer interaction has more impact than outside assistance. Continuous professional development promotes positive school culture. Generally, from the above discussion the result showed that, principals' perceived effectiveness of instructional supports is being dependent upon how effective they think they are as school principals; and how capable they think their teachers are in guiding student achievement. Principals are likely to perceive professional development, instructional supervision, and classroom resources as effective interventions for improving teacher performance. Teachers are competent in their efforts towards improving student achievement.

#### **4.4.1.2. Research question 2**

##### **What are the roles of secondary school principals in delivering effective instructional practices?**

- Principal A's response to the second question is that principals must be knowledgeable about curriculum development, teacher and instructional effectiveness, clinical supervision, staff development and teacher evaluation in order to deliver effective instructional practices. He also added that during meetings every teacher is given a platform to explain the weaknesses and strengths regarding the performance of their subjects. The establishment of the school boards in Southern region and the governing bodies in Ethiopia opened up doors for parental involvement in the running

of schools where they are today taking their rightful place, despite the numerous challenges they are facing.

➤ Principal A also responded that:

*Principals can promote positive school climate so as the teachers to take as their risk to improve student capacity of learning and change of behaviour, attitude and skills. Efforts were made to share instructional expectations with teachers like enrolments of school age children, retaining of enrolled students and promotion of efficiency to get the best academic achievement and desired change of students in the academic year.*

Principal B's response to the second question is that principals really do a lot through briefing sessions and meetings they conduct. They encourage teachers to carry on with their profession, to do administrative work, and to review performance of students in their examinations. Each and every teacher is given an opportunity to explain the performance of his or her students, be it a good or bad performance. The principal would in turn explain to teachers how they can manage the difficulties.

- There are teachers chosen from the school that are doing better in specific subjects so that they can help others that are struggling with teaching and further indicated that whenever there are new teachers at the school, they are attached to senior teachers for mentoring.
- Principals can play great holistic role of instructional leadership through an active, collaborative form of leadership where the principals work with teachers to shape the school as a workplace in relation to shared goals, teachers collaboration, teacher learning opportunities, teacher certainty, teacher commitment, and student learning.

- He also added:

*The role of principals was help teachers to have professional growth in doing the following performances: Creating the opportunity to teacher's collaborative activities among teachers, motivating and supporting teachers in redesigning the programme, practicing action research, giving induction and school meeting in a month.*

- Principal C's response to the second question is that principals lead and engages school teams in gathering and analysing data to identify trends, strengths and weaknesses that will inform which specific actions for improvement are required. They focus on teaching and learning by challenging current practices and foster innovation through conversation. They provide feedback that will lead to improvements in student achievement and well-being. He also added the following:

*Actually I really do a lot through the briefing sessions that I have by conducting meetings. It really encourages them to carry on with their profession, as well as to do administrative work as well. I always have staff meetings at the end of each and every practice.*

He also stated that schools need to create models of shared leadership which incorporate the talents and energy of principals, teachers, students, and parents. Accordingly, this mode of instructional leadership provides for learning and working with others - teachers, students and parents - to improve instructional quality and create responsibility to a strong school culture, enabling teachers to collaborate with them in redesigning the instructional program so that all students can learn.

- Principal D's response to the second question is that the role of the school principal was to encourage team work among teachers so they plan lessons together, set the same tests and invigilate examinations as a team. Teachers should always get

together, plan and work as a team in the school, for instructional practices to be effective.

Principal D also mentioned the following roles:

The role of school principals thought in areas that they perceived as effective in improving teacher performance in the following tasks: 1.) mentoring teachers to use learning aids, 2.) mentoring teachers to make effective use of instructional time, and 3.) providing constructive feedback on teaching performance.

- Generally, principal should encourage collaborative groupings of teachers to play a more central role in the instructional leadership of the school. This, however, will require active participation of the principal to facilitate change by motivating the staff and students, by reaching out to the community, and by continually improving the school.

#### **4.4.1.3. Research question 3**

**How do secondary school principals acknowledge individual capacity and background difference in their instructional leadership?**

- Principal A's response to the third question is that they have the opportunity to build rapport with teachers, students, parents, and local community stakeholders by working through collaborative processes to build their individual capacities. The principal spend more time on instructional leadership tasks than on management tasks. More time on instructional leadership leads to more opportunity for building rapport, which has potential for increased sense of job satisfaction among principals.

Principal A also added on the third question:

*Principals' perception of their teachers' capacity is likely to impact whether they will accept the policy or education reform as a strategy that will improve instruction within their school. Taking this key aspect of principals' perception into consideration is likely to aid the development of policies and education reform that have a greater chance for successful implementation.*

Therefore, principals' allocation of more time on instructional leadership and less time on management tasks suggests that teacher development and instructional improvement is high on the list of priorities to the principal within the current model of school-based management. Spending more time on a high priority such as school improvement area like professional development and instructional supervision allows the principal to collaborate with teachers in order to build their capacities. That provides the opportunity to address key issues more directly. Likewise, the effectiveness of principals is heavily dependent on their skills and credibility. If the principal is unable to gain the expertise and insight necessary to plan and implement professional development and instructional support, he or she is likely to feel frustrated when interacting with teachers; as well as when fulfilling own capacities and job responsibilities, which may negatively affect his or her sense of job satisfaction. It is interesting that control is related to principal's perceived capacity in providing each of the three instructional supports, though most significantly related to providing classroom resources. Hence, secondary school principals are highly dependent upon other sources of authority in providing instructional supports. In the process for providing professional development and instructional support, principals are dependent upon teachers' expertise in classroom instruction, and their insights into the needs of students.



In the process of providing classroom resources, the principal is dependent upon the resources provided by the community and other key sources of support that are under the control of parents or district office. Efforts for providing instructional supports are inadequate if there are no other sources of control other than that of the principal .

- Principal B's response to the third question is that perceived effectiveness of instructional supports was the most significant factor related to capacity building in providing professional development and instructional support. It seems reasonable to expect these to be variables related to the principals' sense of their own capacity to provide professional development and instructional support, but not to provide classroom resources. Providing professional development and instructional support are new responsibilities associated with instructional leadership that demand principal's already limited time. He asserted that among the three types of instructional supports, they are likely to have more experience in providing classroom resources.

Besides, the principals' management duties have included regular and direct involvement in working to determine and obtain classroom resources. The principal perceived capacity for providing classroom resources, the provision of learning aids in the classroom as effective in promoting improved classroom teaching. They perceived capacity to provide professional development and instructional supervision as being low.

He pointed that:

*Principals are mostly likely to provide instructional support focused on mentoring teachers to use the learning aids in supporting the teaching-learning process. This indicates that teachers, as a resource in providing instructional support, are limited to*

*improving teaching through classroom resources. Capacity building for teachers should focus on strategies for improving teaching other than the use of classroom resources. Teachers who are more knowledgeable about strategies leading to improved teaching-learning processes are likely to provide principals with instances of vicarious learning that will impact their perceived capacity*

- Principal C's response to the third question is that the level of capacity and background differences varies in providing three different types of instructional supports, namely, professional development, instructional supervision, and classroom resources. The capacity to provide professional development and instructional supervision is related to the level of control over instructional supports. It is further related to how they think the supports would improve teacher performance. Also, to how much time they spend on instructional leadership tasks, and the level of their job satisfaction.
- Giving different professional support inspire teachers to acknowledge individual capacity of teachers and adopt innovative pedagogies in the classroom. For example, if some students are unable to read and write at secondary school level, the principal as instructional leader takes steps to alleviate the problem by supporting teacher's instructional methods, allocating resources and materials, visiting classrooms frequently, providing feedback on improving the curriculum and instruction.
- Principal D's response to the third question is that a formal or informal meeting is an opportunity for open dialogue and discussion in building capacity, but it risks squandering an excessive amount of time and energy if the meeting is not conducted efficiently. The researcher also observed that principals spend most of their time on

management tasks. Providing classroom resources is a management task that the principal perform regularly. Therefore, the amount of time the principal spends on instructional leadership tasks has a direct impact on the mastery of the tasks performed by teachers.

Principal D added that:

*Capacity in providing professional development and instructional support is most dependent upon the capacity level and influence of teachers. If principals are weak of planning, developing, and implementing professional development and instructional support and lacks influence over teaching staff, then the principals are likely to feel less capable in providing these instructional supports.*

He also confirmed that, in-order to acknowledge individual capacity and background difference of teacher it is necessary to keep the moral of teachers. Besides, having knowledge in the core areas of education the principal possess certain responsibilities to carry out the tasks of an instructional leader. These skills are interpersonal skills, planning instructional observation skills.

Therefore, Principals' effectiveness of instructional supports was the most significant factor related to principals' level of capacity in providing professional development and instructional supervision.

In conclusion, the principal's level of capacity revealed that principals' capacity varies in providing three different types of instructional supports, namely, professional development, instructional supervision, and classroom resources.

#### 4.4.1.4. Research question 4

##### **How do secondary school principals perceive instructional leadership training as a source of confidence in providing effective instructional support?**

- Principal A's response to the fourth question is that leaders felt confident in providing instructional supports after having been engaged in training activities that involved hands-on experience in the school setting. The Action Plan required the principal to use the school improvement plan to involve teachers and other stakeholders in training activities aimed at mastery of their tasks. Training activities should therefore be linked to instructional leadership tasks embedded in the actual work situation.
- Principal A also reflected that:

*The first step towards gaining an employee's commitment was aimed at introducing the job and the organizational culture to the recurrent schools. It involves orientation and training of the employee in the organizational culture and showing how he/she is interconnected. Ensuring sustained relationship between a youth and an adult through continued involvement the adult offers support, guidance and assistance as the younger person goes through a difficult period ,face new challenges ,or work to correct earlier problems. Besides, experienced teachers and department heads was supported new teachers before, during and after the instruction.*

Principal B's response to the fourth question is that training helps policy and practice to build secondary school principals' capacity and confidence in solving the principal-agent problems within a newly decentralized education sector. In order for principals to feel capable in providing professional development and instructional support, they need to be able to allocate an adequate amount of time to instructional leadership tasks. Since principals have traditionally been school managers who focused on providing classroom

resources, allocating time toward instructional leadership tasks, such as providing teachers with professional development and supervision is likely to be difficult. He added that training could assist to work with key stakeholders in developing the school mission and goals, and in devising the school Improvement Plan. The principals need to prioritize instructional leadership and put some time aside to attend to school improvement issues identified in the school improvement plan, such as classroom instruction. Therefore, training aimed at supporting the principals' role as instructional leadership must be designed to guide the principal on how to prioritize instructional leadership and to budget time for it.

- Principal C's response to the fourth question is that training principals is helpful in enhancing their capacity to adopt innovative pedagogies in the classroom. For example, if some students are unable to read and write at secondary school level, the principal as instructional leader takes steps to alleviate the problem by supporting and conducting training for teachers on instructional methods, and allocation of resources and materials. The principal will have to visit classes frequently, provide feedback aimed at improving the curriculum and instruction.
- Principal D's response to the fourth question is that training for principals would help to be capable of guiding teachers on how to improve students' achievement. It will also influence the way principals perceive the value of instructional supports. Training principals on the development of education reform have a greater chance to improve the implementation of the curriculum to be even more effective. It enhances research skills that are needed by many principals to conduct investigations on the school problems and on how to solve problems immediately. Principals are mostly, likely

committed to provide instructional support focused on mentoring teachers on how to use learning aids in the teaching-learning situations.

#### **4.4.1.5. Research question 5**

##### **What are the factors that hinder secondary school principals from applying effective instructional leadership?**

- Principal A's response to the fifth question is when the school sometimes avail information to read teachers do not read until they become victims of the circumstances. Principals devote their time trying to look for materials everywhere. Almost on daily basis, when teachers go to class, they have to reproduce copies for learners on a particular topic, simply because learners do not have learning materials. Time management is one of the areas that the school is making an effort to improve on. Some teachers still wait to be told to go to classes. The distribution and sharing of responsibilities is not well coordinated at our school, because though there are different committees, there are some people who serve on almost all these committees, which, in the respondent's view, bring about imbalances in the way responsibilities are shared among staff members. The issue of class sizes previously discussed also contributes to the heavy workloads of teachers. Therefore, to minimize these problems classrooms should be constructed soon to reduce the workload of teachers.
- Principal B's response to the fifth question is that most teachers behave very badly to the extent that as a principal you can sometimes lose your temper. Their behavior is just not conducive to the instructional process. There are sixty learners in some of the classes; you would, however, find a class of fifty two students, and a few others with fifty. With such big class groups teachers won't be able to finish marking and give

feedback in time. This forces teachers to keep their materials and operate from the staff room, which further deprives learners of an opportunity to interact and have more access to their teachers. It is clear from the assertions above that, although some parents are involved in their children's education, there is a need for them to get more involved. Although the education act made provision for parents to participate in school activities through the creation of school boards, only a few parents do participate.

➤ Principal C's response to the fifth question is that a lot of time is being wasted by teachers, even though the supervisor tries to get them (teachers) to be on time and stop wasting time. The other factor is shortage of classrooms; learners are overcrowded in classrooms making it very difficult for effective learning and teaching to take place. Hence, awareness raising mechanisms should be planned to update the motivation of teachers.

➤ Principal D's response to the fifth question identifies the following factors:

*The feeling of job security in the working environment, collaboration, affiliation and interpersonal relationships among teachers, recognition of achievement and accomplishment in terms of feedback, status associated with the respect of teachers from others, professional growth and development that allow teachers to assume increased responsibilities by taking on meaningful and challenging work., the management and leadership approach of the principal in terms of fairness, control and monitoring of instruction affects the instructional process*

➤ . He also noted that big class size and shortage of materials increase the load of teachers as they, as a result, spend more time writing summaries on the chalkboards and compiling learning and teaching materials. Since they have to pay individual

attention to individual learners, they are usually left with limited time to fully commit themselves to effective teaching and learning.

Generally, principals are associated with poor time management which should be taken very seriously, as time lost can never be recovered. The study revealed, a lack of teaching and learning resources and physical facilities as some of the challenges impeding effective instructional leadership and the provision of quality education at the schools. All the participants indicated a shortage of textbooks as one of the biggest problems that schools are facing; sometimes up to four learners share a single textbook. This compromises quality teaching and learning, as teaching time gets divided between developing materials and actual teaching.

The challenge of inadequate teaching and learning materials were further compounded by the shortage of physical facilities. The study pointed out that instructional leaders (teachers, principals and supervisors) are overloaded thus finding it difficult to execute their duties effectively. It emerged from the responses that a lot of administrative duties are expected of educators today. These include constructing personal development plans, formulating schemes of work and other duties as required by the National Standards and Performance Indicators. Most of the participants view their workload as excessive.

Based on the above data, the researcher concluded that the factors that affect principals' role in implementing effective instructional practice was, lack of strong administrative leadership, shortage of resources and physical facilities, ill-disciplined



teachers, misbehaved students, poor time management, overburdened teachers and shortage of skilled personnel were the main problems observed in the schools.

#### **4.4.2. Interview results of education officers**

##### **4.4.2.1. Response of district supervisors**

The district supervisors argued that all activities taking place in schools are meant to boost learning and teaching. This implies that despite limited teaching and learning resources at the school level, schools should make it their duty to priorities support given to teaching and learning, and avail funds to buy teaching and related learning materials. Besides, they pointed out that, for a school to prosper academically, it needs to have a vision. A school is an organization consisting of different individuals, with different views, different philosophies; so first of all these individuals should have the same vision, meaning that a school should have a direction to follow. The individual members of the school community should have a shared vision they will strive to live up to with whatever they do.

- If principals spend a limited amount of time on instructional leadership tasks, then the opportunity for regular and direct practice is limited. The more principal practice tasks related to professional development and supervision, the more likely they find chance to develop their sense of perceived capacities.
- The principals create opportunities for collegiality among teachers within and between subject departments; and create opportunity for teachers to set up school committees to be responsible for extra-curricular activities and organizing departmental meetings where they may share ideas and discuss matters concerning the subject and learners' performance.

➤ Giving feedback on instructional strategies/methods during observations, post observation conference formal evaluation, and during informal classroom visits is essential to update the status of teachers. The school principal should follow the following steps:

- Pre-conferencing: Discussions with teachers more about the pedagogical area of instruction during classroom observation; including categorical frequencies, physical indicators of presentation of subject matter, method of presenting the whole process of teaching and learning.
- During observation: Checking lesson plan preparation, student participation, teaching methods used by the teacher, classroom management, and teacher's voice. The principal wrote short notes about the classroom occurrence and were subsequently discussed by the participants.
- Interpretation of the observation and post conferencing results: The results together with the remedial actions recommended, were discussed with teachers with the aim to develop their professional skills with regard to teaching and learning process. Principals gave positive or negative feedback on results from observations; they discussed the methods of teaching required; rewards were awarded for good performance; and remedial actions were taken for poor performances.

The schools planned for the classroom observations that would take place the following year, before the end of the year. The observation would take place four times during that year. In the school assessment, based on teaching and learning process, this activity was very common; and so did strong inbuilt supervision. During pre-

observations teachers planned together and compiled suitable programme to conduct their observation. During observation the observer checked teachers' personalities, their daily lesson plans and annual plans, student activities, hand writing, sound audibility, classroom management, time budgeting for given activities, summary and evaluation. During the post observation conference, the principal analyzed what was observed, and then gave feedback for teachers. The principal revealed his or her strengths and made different comments on the activities already performed. Besides, there was formal evaluation system, which was participatory.

Teachers' interactions and support of one another on instructional issues were positive. Collegiality promoted idea-sharing; project coordination and assistance in professional growth benefited students. Creating an environment that promotes collegiality is important for the principals to provide opportunities for the staff to talk about teaching and learning. Encouraging teachers to observe each other, promotes cooperation among staff members when they are involved in planning, designing and evaluating curriculum. By making all teachers participate in CPD programmes, according to departments, creates opportunities for experienced teachers to share their experiences with new teachers. Subject teachers' group discussions concerning teaching and learning create camaraderie among teachers in schools.

The principal, department heads, unit leaders and teachers all participated formally in evaluating learning and teaching in classes.

The informal class visits by the principal and the unit leader were also common in the school to check class attendance, and resource allocation. The principal had been

trained, therefore possessed the skill to supervise. Feedback on instructional strategies was given to teachers after every class visit. This was a face to face meeting during which the principal would inform the teacher of the strengths observed and then proceeded to the weaknesses. They would finally reach a consensus as to how to improve where gaps had been identified. Formal evaluation was conducted with department heads and internal supervisors to evaluate the performance of teachers and their implementation of the curriculum. Informal class visits were conducted without a designed program.

Teachers were supported in the preparation of lesson plan; encouraged to use active learning methods, supported by providing available materials to be used in the classes, and encouraged to use teaching aids obtained from the pedagogical centre of the school. Teachers were also encouraged to use their time properly and effectively, and to manage classes effectively. They (teachers) were supported to give effective and continuous assessment.

- Upon scrutinizing a document titled “Job Description for a teacher in the Ministry of Education (MOE)”, during his stay at schools, the researcher observed that there was a loophole, which may lead to overloading as one of the clauses reads, “...and perform any other duty or responsibility that might be reasonably requested by the supervisor”. So, this clause was tantamount to abuse if not properly interpreted. The school structures do not have provision for specialized personnel in counseling and social work to offer professional help. The district supervisors highlighted this by saying: ‘Within the ambit of teaching and learning, you cannot just teach the learners without dealing with the psychological issues’. Similarly, the researcher also observed that there were a lot

of free periods on the time-table and teachers do not take non-promotional subjects seriously.

#### **4.4.2.2. Responses of experts from the Ministry of Education**

The support given to schools includes provision of materials such as textbooks and copies of syllabuses; and the school itself needs desks and chairs as well to function effectively. The experts also indicated that they monitor school operations in these words: “what we actually do is monitor what is happening in schools and also train school masters on how to actually interpret the policies regarding the implementation of the curriculum in the schools. We also provide on-the-job training to the school managers, mostly principals, to ensure that their leadership style is conducive to the preparation of teaching and learning activities at the schools.”

- Meetings are very important components of organizational structure as they create a platform for engagement and discussion of issues affecting the organization and its members. The advisory services unit of the regional office organizes workshops and conferences where teachers share knowledge on the techniques of marking. This is a sign that apart from meetings and briefings, other platforms are available for stakeholder involvement such as conferences mentioned above. Meetings and briefings at schools are normally used to give feedback to teachers and to create opportunities for teachers from the same departments to share information and materials from training workshops, or any other crucial information that members may need to share.
- In relation to increase teacher involvement in school decisions, principals need to create models of shared leadership, which incorporate their talents and energy and those of teachers, students, and parents. They need to facilitate learning and working

with teachers, students and parents to improve the quality of teaching and learning and to create a strong school culture. Principals need to enable teachers to collaborate with them in designing and redesigning instructional programs. The offices should expand the role of leadership and management to be active and collaborative. The principal should work with teachers to shape the school as a workplace with shared goals; where teachers have learning opportunities, enjoy job-satisfaction, are committed to their work, and students are motivated to learn. The role of principals in future models should be to encourage collaborative groupings of teachers to play a more central role in the instructional leadership of the school.

This, however, will require active participation of the principal to facilitate change by motivating the staff and students, by reaching out to the community, and by continuously improving the schools. The problem is that effective leaders disagree with the above statements since they stated categorically that school management and instructional leadership are two separate tasks that cannot be performed by a single individual. However, they strongly agree with the idea of teacher empowerment whereby teachers can be afforded the opportunity to participate in the decision-making processes concerning instruction. They argue that well managed schools enable real instructional leaders to empower teachers who can in turn promote effectiveness in schools. One of the responsibilities of the Department of Education is to train principals to ensure that their leadership styles contribute towards the creation of an environment conducive to effective teaching and learning. All participants referred to workshops organized by the professional development unit (advisory services) of the region aimed at improving teaching and learning in different subjects.

- With regard to the supply of resources to schools all the regional education experts asserted that all schools were supplied with requisites, both the human and material resources. In order to facilitate the creation of a situation conducive to provision of quality education, the supply is usually delivered on time.
- The schools are supposed to submit requisitions to the district education office for resources like computers, radios, and furniture at the beginning of each academic year. Schools were provided the following necessary materials: notebooks, text books, copies of syllabuses, teacher's guides, reference books, pedagogy centre materials (marker, graph papers, charts etc) ,laboratory materials (science kits, stoves, stove base); equipment like computers, radio and TV, furniture like chairs; they (schools) were also provided with human resources like teachers and supporting personnel. All schools were old and the principals were trained. Schools were supplied with different materials necessary for instruction.
- Different techniques were used to implement the plan, which was prepared by concerned agents. Schools had not been conducting continuous assessment on the teaching and learning process; as a result principals would not assist teachers nor involve them in the information sharing sessions on this matter. Furthermore, schools had not been determining whether objectives were attained and therefore, no corrective actions were taken. There was a meeting to evaluate the achievement of teaching and learning objectives. Scores were analysed and teachers were ranked according to their subject achievement. A discussion was conducted around the results of class observations and document analysis. There was also discussion with students and parents to determine to what extent are school goals being achieved.

To promote the improvement of teachers' performance through public and private recognition as incentives for teachers, material rewards were awarded, and, descriptive and constructive feedback was provided. Parents show appreciation for the teachers' good performance by sending recognition letter to the teachers concerned; by giving rewards in a form of money; and some teachers earned loud praises from parents. Providing incentives to teachers is common and very important; and they were rewarded on the basis of their good performance in class as well as in extra activities.

Other forms of encouragement like letter of recognition, material reward, and thank you certificate are also provided and given to teachers. Reinforcement and rewards are vital for outstanding goal achievers.

- Encouraging instructional change with the purpose to improve learning and teaching in classes is the duty of principals. Principals and unit leaders have to see to it that environment conducive to effective learning is created; budget for laboratory equipment and for other teaching and learning material is allocated. They also facilitated collaborative work. Principals, for a change, encouraged teachers to be innovative when dealing with new situations that have potential to promote growth and development of the school academic performance. The other required skills are interpersonal skills. The empowerment by a principal leads to a sense of ownership and commitment on the part of teachers. Collegiality promotes sharing, co-operation and collaboration. During staff meeting discussions these agenda items should be included: provision of feedback to teachers, analysis of students academic results, school improvement issues, school mission, and vision. The following issues should also receive special attention: expectations of students, supporting staff members should be informed of the



educational policy issues and guidelines and how to implement them, and informing teachers of the current educational issues. School principals should play an important role in different aspects when teachers perform their activities. Assignments given should promote participative or democratic way of handling issues in a school. Schools should develop a culture of work.

- Principals' roles should include the following activities: Ensure that teachers' experience is shared among themselves; they work together and support one another. Teachers of the same subject and same grade may prepare instructional media, lesson plans and year plans together. Two teachers of the same grade may pair in one class to teach and evaluate together in order to support each other.
- The training activities given in the form of induction, in-service programme, and school improvement programme provided principals with the opportunity to gain experience that boosted their level of confidence and therefore enabled them to provide instructional supports with ease; principals felt confident in providing instructional supports upon engaging in training activities that involved hands-on experience in their own school setting.
- The other support given to schools as discussed by regional education expert was preparation of three year strategic plan and one year operational plan. The important components of these plans were school vision, statement of mission and values; in addition critical issues were prioritized, weaknesses analyzed, time schedules were determined and control was done. Besides, the school improvement plan has the following domains: teaching and learning, safe school environment, school leadership, and community participation. All the above mentioned points were quantified in terms of

the number required and in relation to the capacity of the school; and were also evaluated against the determined standards and the goals set. In schools, improvement plans were presented as strategic plans for three years and action plans were developed from the strategic plans. The plan was driven by the assistance of parent-teacher association and based on the national standards.

The domains that focused on facilitating teaching learning process were safe and healthy environment, community participation and enabling school-based management. In addition, by sub-dividing these four domains into twelve sub-domains, with the participation of parent-teacher association, the plan was designed and implemented. Through the government support and subsidies, school furniture and teaching materials were supplied to schools and the school environment subsequently became conducive to effective teaching and learning. Through continuous professional development and induction program for teachers, experience sharing and collaborative working habits were developed. Effective teaching and learning that ensued from capacity building improved student's performance.

School-wide development was promoted by concentrating on achieving set goals that focus on areas of improved teaching and learning, enhanced academic achievement of students, improved students' behaviour, and creation of an environment conducive to effective teaching and learning. Communities were involved in school activities like raising income, sharing ideas on planning, alleviating students' absenteeism, and dropout rate and grade repetition. To ensure that progress takes place, the school improvement committee, together with other stakeholders, gathered information and compiled the school improvement plan. The plan consisted of three objectives, namely,

improving school environment, improving students' achievement, and improving students' behaviour.

Principals' support and induction given to newly employed teachers included survey of the environment, and observation of the experienced teachers in their classes. Monitoring of new teachers was conducted by experienced teachers who were good in their work, their subject area and in professional ethics. Coaching was conducted by experienced teachers and department heads during and after lessons. It was their duty to support inexperienced teachers. Teaching was student-centred; and it was therefore based on group work, debates, active lectures, and continuous assessment. Semester examinations were conducted and served as summative assessment. Peer supervision was introduced to create opportunities for teachers to observe the performance of model teachers; and also to see the effective pedagogical strategies they apply. A discussion was held with teachers around the topic of 'use of active learning methods to achieve good students' academic results.

The role of school principals need to be focused on improving teachers' performance by:

1. mentoring teachers to use learning aids,
  2. mentoring teachers to make effective use of instructional time, and
  3. Providing constructive feedback on teaching performance.
- Principals are required to work with parents and regional and district offices in developing school missions and goals, and school improvement programs. These form

the basis for principals to collaborate with teachers in working towards school improvement.

- To upgrade principal's performance in encouraging creativity in developing professional skills of students, the office has conducted a short term training course on teaching and learning skills, experience sharing and new technologies. They also conducted school visitations in the district, and facilitated continuous professional development (CPD) programme with induction for all principals and teachers. Principals ensured that teachers attend courses like continuous professional development, and induction course given to newly employed teachers to improve their skills and knowledge. Short training courses were offered to natural sciences teachers to assist them to improve students' academic achievement. Action research was conducted in areas such as school resources and students' discipline. In schools principals organized teachers into groups according to their subjects so that each group could identify curriculum gaps in their subject. If the identified problems are sensible and relevant the teacher presents them to other teachers and students for documentation in the portfolio of school problems. Solutions to the problems would be sought during continuous professional development program courses. However, the implementation faced resistance on the part of teachers; they believed it was time consuming. Schools prepared project plan with the assistance of the NGOs and some experts who conducted trainings.

Principals need to be trained to ensure that their leadership styles are compatible with the actualization of teaching and learning. Having discussed the issues that emerged as strong elements of instructional leadership at the case study schools, the researcher now move to present the challenges that participants pointed out as hindrances to

teaching and learning. With the fast pace of the development of technology and a high demand for excellence, teachers are required to upgrade their skills and knowledge on a daily basis if they are to provide quality education. This implies that teachers should continuously learn throughout their teaching careers if they are to execute their professional duties effectively

➤ School factors have predominantly contributed towards the creation of instructionally effective schools. These factors are:

- (1) Strong administrative leadership;
- (2) High levels of expectations in student achievements;
- (3) An orderly but not oppressive school climate;
- (4) A focus on pupil acquisition of basic school skills;
- (5) Atmosphere conducive to the instructional process;
- (6) Means of student progress monitoring; and
- (7) Resources that can be focused on the fundamental learning objectives of the school.

Thus, it is clear that one of the key factors in creating school effectiveness and improvement is the role of school leadership.

#### **4.2.2.3. Responses of the regional education bureau experts**

Experts of the regional Education bureau highlighted that secondary school principals' perceived capacity to provide support on classroom resources depends on their level of

control over those resources, and on whether they think classroom resources are improving teacher performance. Teacher support, in particular, is most strongly similar with principals' sense of self-efficacy; principal's relationship with the teacher was related to their own sense of capacity in providing professional development and instructional support.

- School management training provided by the Ethiopian government must include capacity building for teachers since this role is a key to principals' perceived capacity in performing key instructional leadership tasks. Training for principals should focus on strategies for improving teaching rather than on the use of classroom resources. Principals who are knowledgeable about strategies leading to improved teaching-learning processes are likely to provide other principals with instances of vicarious learning that will impact their perceived capacity.

Principal's knowledge base for strategies aiding the teaching-learning process must be improved. Instructional leadership training must include opportunity for mastery experiences in implementing strategies aside from classroom resources that support the teaching-learning process. Therefore, instructional leadership training can be designed uniformly to meet principals' learning needs regardless of differences in principals' background and school context within which they work.

- The role of effective instructional leadership is essential for school academic success and performance. However, like all other activities there are challenges limiting effective implementation of instructional leadership in schools. The participants identified several challenges that hinder the effective implementation of instructional leadership. They further explained that the data revealed ill-discipline among learners and teachers as

one of the factors hindering the smooth implementation of instructional leadership at schools. These vary from disobedience, poor time management, to absenteeism. The other problem is discipline for both teachers and learners, especially working with different people from different backgrounds.

Effective principals should create a safe and conducive environment by communicating their high expectations for student behavior as you cannot have high student achievement in a situation where student misbehavior is tolerated. Like where learners roam around the school grounds and make noise when teachers are absent from classes. This happens during free periods on the timetables, which in actual fact are periods allocated to non-promotional subjects that some teachers do not attend. However, the school management is trying its best to curb this problem by punishing culprits.

This was confirmed by an announcement of the suspension of some learners for missing lessons, made at the morning assembly of the 05/06/2013. It also emerged from the responses that there was a poor reading culture at the school, which could be seen as a form of indiscipline as well. Comments on concerns regarding teachers, who absent themselves from their examination invigilation duties, were made during one of the staff meetings. This happened despite the fact that all teachers were provided with copies of the invigilation time-table with the dates, times and venues clearly indicated. The internal school policy guide on examinations is also very specific that “invigilators are expected to be in their assigned venues ten minutes before the examination starts.” The researcher also observed that time management was not observed by most of the

teachers as they always wait for the bell to ring before they start walking to their respective classes.

#### **4.4.3. Document analysis result**

In the internal school policy guide teachers are advised to liaise with the parents via the principal's office. Similarly, the school calendar of activities for the 2013 academic year indicates scheduled parent meetings. Minutes of one of the departmental meetings, which was held on 30/ 03/ 2013 at S1, revealed that chemistry students were not performing according to expectations and it was decided that, subject heads should monitor the work of the responsible teachers after every two weeks. Asked about his view regarding the role of school principals, the department heads said: "They should carry out class visits while the teachers are teaching to get information by observing lessons and find out what the strengths and weaknesses of the teachers are. From there the principal should actually know what to do such as advising the teacher on how to improve."

According to the minutes of the staff meeting held on 19/ 02/ 2013 at S2, a parents meeting scheduled for the 11/03/2013 was announced and teachers were urged to interact with parents. One of the district supervisors said the following on parental involvement: "I remember last year the principal came up with an initiative for the grade 10<sup>th</sup>, to have follow up meetings with the parents of the learners who were not performing well".

Documents of S3 indicate that the school management was striving to create healthy learning environment by availing the facilities required by teachers and learners for use.



The minutes of the management meeting held on 30. 03. 2013 states that Principal A informed the management team at that meeting that the construction of new classrooms was completed and ready to be used. At the same meeting, they resolved that every staff member who has school furniture in his or her house should return it to the school as soon as possible. This clearly indicates the effort of the school management in ensuring that school facilities are used for the purpose of teaching and learning.

As an act of motivation, it was highlighted during the Natural Sciences departmental meeting of the 18/01/2011 in S4 that one of the teachers was a role model when it comes to punctuality in the school, and other teachers were asked to follow his good example. In this regard, Bush (2007:391) claims that “governments in the world today are realizing that their main asset is a human resource and schools need trained and committed teachers who in turn need the leadership of highly trained and effective principals”.

The issue of hiring qualified teachers was also reflected in the minutes of the school board meeting, according to which the most suitable candidate was recommended based on the following reasons: “her academic record is very attractive because she has performed well”. This is an indication that education authorities today value skills and knowledge based on qualifications above any other attribute when hiring teachers, which could have a positive impact on school performance. Teaching can be seen as a battlefield and teachers as soldiers in the battlefield who need to be sufficiently and efficiently primed, equipped and trained during the time of peace, for them to fight effectively during the time of war.

Furthermore, the data collected from the document analysis also revealed that one of the principals, during one of the staff meetings, emphasized the importance of timely feedback from those who do class visits; and those visited were advised to take feedback as a way of helping them. The Ministry of Education underscored the importance of guidance and monitoring, at the recently held National Conference on Education. It was recommended at that conference that monitoring of the teaching of all the subjects as specified in the curriculum, by inspectors, advisory teachers, school principals and heads of departments had to be intensified.

Having qualified teachers is not enough as they also need to be properly equipped, hence teaching and learning materials are essential for the effective implementation of the instructional program in schools. To conduct their daily business of teaching and learning schools need books, computers, desks, chairs and classrooms. The documents the researcher analyzed indicated that, the school management of one of the case study schools was committed to availing facilities necessary for teaching and learning, for example, new classrooms were built towards the end of 2012 for use from the beginning of the following academic year. This is in line with Glaze (2006:13) statement according to which he calls upon principals to make timely interventions in the provision of teaching and learning materials, facilities and budgets necessary for effective teaching and learning to take place.

Parker and Day (cited in Kruger, 2003:207) view supporting teaching program and providing resources as one of the main functions of instructional leadership, that would enable teachers to carry out their task effectively.

## **SUMMARY**

In this chapter the researcher discusses the data of the research against a backdrop of leadership and management theories that are seen to be underpinning instructional leadership. It emerged that strong instructional leadership is prevailing at the school which is helping the school in maintaining its good academic performance. It also emerged however, that like other organizations, the schools were faced with numerous challenges, which hamper the smooth implementation of instructional leadership.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **5. FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1. INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter the researcher begins by discussing the key issues arising from the findings and then moves on to considering the significance of the study. The study led to a number of conclusions. It confirmed that instructional leadership is strongly evidenced at the school and that the school leadership is committed to creating an environment where teaching and learning can flourish. The role of leadership and challenges impeding the effective implementation of instructional leadership is also presented in this chapter. The limitations of the study and the recommendations for practice and suggestions for future research are also discussed.

#### **5.2. SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS**

In the study, different instruments that the researcher considered relevant to collecting data for the study were used. The data analysis method used was qualitative in nature. Hence, the analysis conducted led to the following major findings:

##### **5.2.1. Capacity building for effective instructional support**

According to data from question one the overall assessment of the practice of instructional leaders in capacity building revealed that secondary school leaders have moderate support to teachers in the form of direct personal support, direct group support, individual assistance and school wide support. The school principals are not getting sufficient support in the form of demonstrating use of modern teaching techniques, and supply of resources from the Regional Education Bureau and Ministry

of Education. Hence, the study concluded that there was a need for instructional leadership to be strengthened through capacity building and creation of an enabling environment for the effective implementation of instructional programmes in secondary schools.

### **5.2.2. Roles of secondary school principals for effective instructional practices**

Data from question two revealed that school principals were not strong in identifying and addressing potential barriers to the implementation of a school vision and in channeling the existing resources in support of the school vision. Instructional leadership was not so evident at schools, both the school leadership and external stakeholders are not necessarily working together to realize the missions and visions of the schools. It was observed that school principals are rarely understood by their school communities; they do not cater for the personal welfare of teachers. Besides, evaluation should be done continuously to help and direct teachers. Participative management that emerged from the data showed that the school needs to strive for academic excellence. Moreover, monitoring and leadership are very important aspects of the democratic process because they involve members in decision-making.

### **5.2.3. Individual capacity and background understanding**

It was discovered from question three that the secondary school principals did not believe in individual capacity and background differences of personality and teaching styles. So, there is a need for instructional leadership to be strengthened through capacity building and creating an enabling environment for effective implementation of the instructional programs.

#### **5.2.4. Training as a source of confidence**

Data from question four revealed that according to the perceptions about the contents of the training packages, the training courses were not focused on the principals' needs and interests. It was also found that the training contents were more deficit-oriented than growth-oriented. Hence, the perception of principals on training contents is very low.

#### **5.2.5. Hindering factors for instructional leadership effectiveness**

Data from question five revealed that lack of incentives, the pressure from other jobs, leader's unwillingness to take risks, ill-discipline among learners and teachers; poor management and inadequate teaching-learning materials, were found to be the major factors that affected the effectiveness of instructional leadership in the secondary schools under study.

### **5.3. CONCLUSIONS**

This study made an attempt to determine how the selected secondary school principals used instructional leadership to manage and run their schools. This was necessitated by the interest aroused by the way some schools had been performing in examinations over a number of years, as stated in chapter one of this study. The geographical location and its rural setting made it necessary for the researcher to investigate how principal instructional leadership roles are manifested at the secondary schools and how it could be strengthened. Secondary schools are mission centers where macro level goals are realized and teachers are the ones who are supposed to implement these aspirations. Hence, these teachers need support so as to do their level best. Improving secondary schools' effectiveness focuses on helping teachers to learn more about what

they do, to share what they know with others and strive to improve their teaching practices, should be at the heart of the responsibility of instructional leaders.

However, the study showed that secondary school principals had not set good role models in demonstrating better support and techniques to teachers. Furthermore, instructional leaders do not have adequate supply of instructional resources. This shows that, the secondary school leaders lack knowledge about learning theory and effective instruction.

The findings also revealed that, the roles of instructional leaders are as follows: to be responsible for leading instruction, managing operations, and increasing the effectiveness of their school communities. Instructional leadership seeks talented and dedicated leaders, who have the necessary skills and experience to lead secondary schools and the desire to help transform them into the highest performing schools in the country. Instructional leaders are characterized by their focus on student achievement, leadership, vision, instructional expertise, systems and resource management. But, the roles were not tested against potential barriers that can hinder the effectiveness of the instructional leaders.

The data revealed that an effort should be exerted to strive for academic excellence through capacity building and increased awareness of the background information for teachers. It also emerged that apart from appointing qualified teachers, the provision of adequate and quality teaching and learning materials is essential. Learning and teaching materials are critical ingredients in learning and teaching, and the curriculum cannot be easily implemented without them. It was, however, highlighted that there are

problems with regard to the provision of teaching and learning materials. Participants indicated continuous guidance and monitoring as a very important element of school leadership. While it is taking place, it needs to be strengthened in some of the departments. The study suggests that monitoring and evaluation should be done continuously to help and build the capacity of teachers.

To achieve the level of academic profile that the school is aiming for, there is a need for instructional leaders to articulate the school's vision, how to attain it and then lead by example. Leaders were found to be leading by example on issues like time management, and they generally encouraged good practices at the school. From the findings, it also emerged that the principal together with the rest of the staff need to formulate the vision and mission of the school, if it is to be owned by all.

The school management team was very supportive and encouraged teachers to participate in continuous development programs. Although there were varying opinions on whether or not they are effective, it was the conclusion of this study that continuous professional development was taking place and teachers were responding positively to such opportunities. Accordingly, all staff members were encouraged to take responsibility for their own continuous development. It is notable that staff at the sample secondary schools was equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge not only to perform their current roles, but also to prepare themselves for future opportunities and changes required in order to support the continued success of the schools.

The study further pointed out that another critical issue was the shortage of teaching and learning materials and physical facilities. It emerged that teachers were faced with



fundamental problems such as shortage of textbooks, large class sizes and lack of other necessities such as chemicals in the laboratories. The problem of textbooks was especially serious in rural areas where learners had to share textbooks while living far away from each other. Teachers also find it very difficult to identify and help learners with special needs, as large class groups made it almost impossible. In addition, educators are expected to do a lot of administrative work today and this has increased their workload.

The study revealed that training was a source of confidence in implementing effective instructional practices. There was a need for instructional leadership training to be strengthened through capacity building and creating an enabling environment for effective implementation of the instructional programs in the secondary schools.

It can be concluded that training was helpful to correct the failures of past teaching styles and management approaches in the secondary schools in the study area: to introduce the instructional leaders to newly developed techniques of managing the schools, to identify problem areas and develop new strategies and action plans that will improve teaching styles. The responses also revealed that there were challenges that may hinder the effective implementation of instructional leadership, such as indiscipline, inadequate teaching/learning materials, and increased workload for teachers and poor time management.

According to the research findings, the school leadership and management were committed and working hard to improve the academic performance by creating an

enabling environment for effective teaching and learning. It also emerged that the school climate and culture allows for the involvement of stakeholders who help them

#### **5.4. RECOMMENDATIONS**

To improve the practice of instructional leadership in secondary schools the following recommendations are suggested in view of the findings and conclusions drawn:

5.4.1. From the findings of question one the researcher recommends that: principals of secondary schools as instructional leaders need to understand the amount of time it takes to plan effectively. Good instruction requires good planning. Teachers who are expected to teach higher-level content need time to devise ways to connect what they are asking students to learn with what these students have learned or experienced in the past. Instructional leaders should know enough about teaching and learning to be able to identify and support teachers who are doing the best job of raising student achievement.

Effective instructional leaders provide opportunities for teachers to strengthen their subject-matter knowledge while learning new research-based, student-centered instructional strategies. The best staff development combines content knowledge and instructional methods.

5.4.2. From the findings of question two the researcher recommends that: the role of principals as instructional leaders should not be limited to control, which is unlikely to result in a better performance, instead, at best it may develop teacher's compliance. However, weak supports have been reported in the area of empowering teachers, demonstrating effective teaching and instructional strategies and assisting teachers.

Hence, the practice of instructional leaders should shift their mode of leadership from control to support so that teachers can realize their potentials and develop new capacities.

A democratic leadership style enhances teacher empowerment and allows collaborative and participatory decision-making whereby teachers are voluntarily invited to participate in school matters and policy-making, in both extracurricular and curricular activities.

Principals should develop a network of principals aimed at creating a culture of mutual dependency and support about effective instructional leadership strategies.

The principal as a staff developer should develop a pool of resourceful staff members who has the responsibility to plan, design and present staff development programs for teachers.

The study shows that the problems of instructional leadership effectiveness stem from the Ministry of Education guidelines on school management, which particularly focuses on school leaders' responsibility. This can be justified by critically reviewing the lists of responsibilities of school principals. The guidelines do not give due considerations to the role of instructional leaders as supporters of the instructional wing of school management. Hence, the Ministry of Education should redefine the role of instructional leaders by including responsibilities, in such areas as providing support to teachers, building supportive culture and open climate, exercising collegial authority and providing meaningful, needs-based, and growth-oriented support for teachers.

5.4.3. From the findings of question three it is evident that the study showed that capacity building for instructional leaders was not need-based. Hence, for effective capacity building to be in place it is recommended that experts at the Ministry of Education and regional education office should make it need-based and growth-oriented.

Instructional leaders did not value individual differences and backgrounds in personalities, learning and development needs. School principals should build and nurture a supportive culture by adding new values like officially acknowledging differences.

5.4.4. From the findings of question 4 the following is evident: the current experience of preparing principals for the education system seems divorced from the aim of including courses in the area of instructional leadership and capacity building for secondary schools. There was less effort in tailoring the training to improve instruction. Hence, it is suggested that the training modality and its curricula be revised.

It is recommended instructional leaders must be willing to make follow-up an integral part of staff development. Teams of trained teachers should be allowed to try new strategies, refine their skills and share their knowledge with other teachers and design ways to raise funds to purchase teaching and learning materials and for construction of more classrooms.

Workshops should be conducted by the regional education office on instructional leadership and these workshops must be practical and handouts, pamphlets and

journals supplied during the workshops should be fully utilized. These workshops should be conducted at least twice a year.

5.4.5. From the findings of question five the researcher recommends that: the regional education bureau should make an effort to increase the commitment of instructional leaders by working with leadership training institutions to re-examine the selection, promotion and appointment procedures of instructional leaders in the secondary schools. This might include introducing leadership, career structure and clear promotion and appointment policy that are based on merit, interest, and experiences.

The structure of secondary schools should be revised. This might include assessing administrative assistance that would support the school leadership by handling administrative routines of the school to the extent of modeling best instructional practices.

The Ministry of Education and regional education office should make further research studies on instructional leadership to inform policy formulation.

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# APPENDIX A

## ETHICAL CLEARANCE GIVEN FROM DILLA UNIVERSITY

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**DILLA UNIVERSITY**  
**Academic & Research**  
**Vice President Office**

Ref No. DU/AC/RES-19/5793  
Date 12 FEB 2013

TO -----

Subject: **Permission to conduct research in your school**

I am writing to obtain your permission for Mr Bekurestion Hailesilassie Abreha (student number 49024388) to collect data from your school. He is a registered Doctorial student at the University of South Africa in the field of Education Management. He has reached the point where he is ready to conduct his research. He wants to investigate principal's role of Instructional leadership in your school. Mr Bekurestion Hailesilassie Abreha will need access to documents, to observe the school in action to get a sense of its climate and culture, and to interview selected teachers and the principal. He deserves the assistance he can get for this project. Instructional leadership is an important issue in education in Ethiopia and the rest of the regions but as yet under researched. Mr Bekurestion Hailesilassie Abreha has done well so far in his coursework and I have every confidence that he will produce a good study. Thank you in anticipation for your permission and support. If you have any queries please feel free to contact Research and Dissemination office of Dilla University.

Sincerely

CC:  
> Ac/Res/V/President Office  
Dilla University



## **APPENDIX B**

### **Principals Consent Form**

You are invited to be in a research study of instructional leadership. I ask that you read this document and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by BEKURETSION HAILESILASSIE **ABREHA** a doctoral student for the University of South Africa in the area of Education Management.

#### **Background Information:**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the role of the principal as instructional leader. Instructional leadership is a vital part of the principals' duties and can look differently in each school. There is much to be learned by practicing principals including how they practice instructional leadership and what that looks like in a school setting. The balance of management and instructional leadership is a time consuming part of the principals' day. How principals deal with this balance and what that looks like in the school setting all can help provide insight into how principals can be effective instructional leaders and meet the ever-increasing demands of accountability.

#### **Procedure:**

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to participate in a one-hour interview. This interview will require that you respond openly and honestly to the questions and provide the researcher with your personal perspective as a principal. You will also be

asked to review the notes from the interview and verify the validity of what was transcribed.

**Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:**

The study has the following risks: First, the risks will be minimal as the only information being requested is that which is volunteered by the interviewee. The level of risk in sharing information lies with the interviewee and their comfort level of expressing their ideas.

**Confidentiality:**

All materials will be kept confidential including the tapes and transcribed notes. Within the research, all names will be replaced with pseudonyms to protect the identity of the participants. Any identifying details about the district in which the principal works will be protected and reported in general terms, so as to protect the chance of determining the principal by the district being described.

**Voluntary Nature of the Study:**

Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University of South Africa and Dilla University. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

**Contacts and Questions:** Bekuretsion Hailesilassie **Abreha** **Phone:** 0911776306

**e-mail:** Bekre51@yahoo.com



If you want to talk to someone other than the researcher, you may contact Prof. Mathipa, Elias the researcher's supervisor at University of South Africa or Mr. Birhanu Belayneh Academic & Research Vice President of Dilla University. You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

**Statement of Consent:**

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature of the interviewee \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Investigator Obtaining Consent \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX C**

### **LETTER OF CONCET FROM EDUCATIONAL EXPERTS**

Dear educational experts: I am conducting a dissertation study entitled,

**“AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE PRINCIPAL’S INSTRUCTIONAL ROLE: A CASE OF FOUR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN SOUTH NATIONS NATIONALITIES PEOPLE AND REGION, ETHIOPIA”** under the guidance of the Educational leadership Department of The University of South Africa. The purpose of this research is to explore the perceptions of principals and education experts in relation to instructional leadership roles. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits. You may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. There are no foreseeable physical and/or psychological risks or discomforts associated with participation in this study.

The confidentiality of your individual information will be maintained in any publications or presentations regarding this study. Group results will be destroyed at the conclusion of the study. If you have any questions about the study, you may contact Dr. Amare Bantider, Director of Research and Publication of Dilla University This research study has been reviewed and approved by the Dilla University Management. If there are questions it can be contacted at 0463312097 with any questions regarding the rights of research subjects. I truly appreciate your time and efforts and your willingness to participate in this study contributes to research intended to increase student success.

Sincerely,

Bekuretsion Hailesilassie Abreha

## APPENDIX D

### Interview questions for secondary school principals

1. What are your roles in supporting teachers in the school to promote the instructional processes in terms of making resources available such as: textbooks, teacher guides, and classroom resources (Chalkboard, pencils, notebooks, etc.), learning aids? (Globes, maps, posters, science lab equipment, etc),
  - using research to understand teaching methods to improve classroom instruction,
  - mentoring teachers in making decisions about the best teaching method,
  - providing teacher's direct assistance (induction, mentoring, coaching, peer supervision, effective pedagogical strategies and assessment techniques)
  - constructive feedback on teaching performance and to make decisions about strategies for assessing student learning,
  - mentoring teachers to make effective use of instructional time ,
  - promoting teachers professional development,
  - engaging teachers in curriculum development,
  - implementation and evaluation, communication,
  - school improvement,
  - Involvement of parents with new ideas and ways to improve instruction and problem solving skills

2. How do you acknowledge individuals' capacity and background differences in your instructional leadership practices?
3. Do you believe that trainings can bring a source of confidences for effective instructional leadership? What kind of trainings has been given for the effective implementation of instructional leadership in secondary schools?
4. What are the factors that hinder effective practice of instructional leadership?
5. How can be strengthening by avoiding the challenges to improve instructional leadership at national, regional, district, school, and community levels?

## **APPENDIX E**

### **Interview Questions for MoE, Regional and District educational officers.**

1. As expert, what was your support given to enhance principal's knowledge, skill and attitude of instructional leadership at secondary schools?
2. What roles do your office played in supporting principals to practice effective instructional leadership in secondary schools? Please explain.
3. Are there any development programs and trainings given for principals in the region?
4. In your view how instructional leadership could be strengthened in the context of secondary schools?
5. What do you consider to be a climate conducive to effective instruction in the schools?
6. What constraints do you consider in effecting an effective instructional leadership?
7. Given the number of hindering factors to effective execution of the instructional process, what would you suggest as possible ways that principals could act to improve the situation?

**Thank you for your time and effort**