

Research Article

# The Role of School Leaders on Students' Academic Achievement in Secondary Schools of Wolisso Town

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## Abstract

School leaders are the primary figures in school settings. And, the success of schools is largely ascertained by the efforts of their school leaders. Therefore, the main objective is to reveal the role of school leaders in students' academic achievements in secondary schools of Woliso town. A mixed approach and descriptive design that was accompanied by survey method has been utilized. Three primary schools in the town were selected using purposive sampling. From a total of 200 staff in the designated primary schools, 142 participants were recruited using a proportional simple random sampling and availability method in 2023. Data was collected using questionnaires and interviews. The numerical statistics were examined using expressive statistical methods. Mean, ratio and standard deviation are supported by SPSS version 26. The findings show that school leaders' roles should be considered and taken into account. Developing parents' participation and community involvement, communicating with parents about students' result, facilitating communication between the school and parents regarding academic matters, assigning properties on behalf of appropriate operation and success of school visualization and aims, fulfilling facilities like text books, table, chairs, black boards and other materials to improve academic achievement of students', facilitate teachers' adequate workspace for preparation such as library and staff. The government and other interested parties should set priority to work strongly toward improving school leaders' role and other aforementioned factors sequentially for the success of the students' academic achievement.

## Keywords

School Leaders, Academic Achievement, Secondary Schools

## 1. Introduction

In the dynamic realm of education, the quest for academic excellence remains a core element of our collective goal. Internationally, educational policy agendas have underscored the heightened significance of school leadership, impacting the inspiration of instructors, families, the public, and education shareholders [10]. The leadership styles adopted by school principals directly shape school performance, ultimately contributing to the achievement of both school and

national objectives [7]. The effectiveness of a leadership style hinges on the specific situation and the characteristics of the subordinates, necessitating leaders to be adaptable and choose the most suitable approach [1].

Education systems in many parts of the world are poorly managed and inefficiently administered, resulting in unsatisfactory academic performance among students [2].

School leadership is a process of exerting influence rooted

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in perfect morals and views, controlling the development of a dream for the school. Leaders express this dream to secure the commitment of staff and stakeholders toward the ideal of a better future for the school, its learners, and stakeholders [5]. Public institutions, including school systems, have specific goals and objectives delegated to school leaders, and the success of a school in achieving these goals is largely contingent on the leaders' abilities [12]. The quality of leadership significantly impacts both school and student outcomes, with widespread recognition worldwide, in developed and developing countries, that effective leaders and managers are crucial for providing the best possible education. [5]

In the realm of secondary education, leadership stands as a critical determinant of education quality and school performance. [13] The quality of education is intricately tied to the leadership provided by the school principal, encompassing their capacity to oversee, direct, and guide teachers and students. Leadership quality also plays a pivotal role in students' academic achievements, considering aspects such as teachers, pupils, rules, regulations, and school policies [4].

Secondary schools, serving as preparatory grounds for further education, necessitate concerted efforts by stakeholders to realize this objective. In this context, [6] recommends that high schools and teachers establish college-ready expectations and impart rigorous content, enabling students to apply knowledge in new situations.

Underprivileged proficiency of leaders, lack of preparation and understanding sharing programs, deprived school-community relationship, role diversity, lack of proper supervisory support, and inadequacy of educational resources delay leaders' effectiveness. [11]

School leaders are also expected to involve parents, teachers, students, and community members in decision-making processes to foster a sense of ownership. [3]

Ethiopia has grappled with persistent challenges in education quality over the years, notably in the aftermath of formulating the Education and Training Policy. [8] The government has implemented diverse measures to address these challenges, leading to notable changes in education expansion. According to the Ministry of Education [9], attempts to enhance the professional skills of school leaders are aimed at improving effectiveness and academic achievement, forming part of an ongoing initiative to tackle quality issues in education.

## 2. Methods

The aim of this research was to evaluate the impact of school leadership roles on students' academic success in secondary schools in Wolisso. To achieve this objective, a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods was utilized. The research design adopted for this study is a descriptive survey, intended to provide an overall understanding of the existing status of school leadership roles and their influence on students' academic achievement in secondary schools.

### 2.1. Population

The research was conducted in three secondary schools of Woliso Town south West Shewa Zone, Oromia region, Ethiopia. The population comprises school principals, supervisor and teachers. There are five secondary schools in Woliso town. The researcher selected three schools, 133 teachers, 9 principals and 1 supervisor were found in the population.

### 2.2. Sample and Sampling Techniques

Among five secondary schools found in the town, the researcher selected three schools by using purposive method techniques because, three of them have grade twelve students. The sampling frame for schools and respondents would be determined on the basis of 2021/2022 G. C annual statics from Woliso Town educational office.

Entirely pupils were included in the file investigation 2368. 200 teachers, 8 principals, and 1 supervisor were included in the study. All 8 principals (100%) and the single supervisor (100%) were selected, while 133 teachers (66%) from the sampled schools were chosen using a proportional simple random sampling technique based on Yamane's formula (1967:886) [14]. Additionally, principals and the supervisor from three secondary schools were selected through a non-probability, availability sampling technique due to their manageable population size.

### 2.3. Data Gathering Technique

Primary and secondary data was gathered by using appropriate data collection tools. Thus, to gather primary data for the study, questionnaire would be developed by reviewing different literature and guidelines. In-depth interview guides would be developed for qualitative study with the aim of obtaining detail and deep information to triangulate with the data collected using questionnaire. This interview would be used to acquire qualitative data. The interview would be conducted based on face-to-face interaction with the principals and supervisor.

### 2.4. Data Analysis

The researchers employed descriptive statistics to examine the data. The close-ended items, aligned with the collected data from respondents, underwent systematic coding, tabulation, and organization for analysis. The resultant organized and coded data was then stored in an editable Excel spreadsheet and imported into SPSS version 26. The analysis involved descriptive statistics such as percentage, frequency, mean, standard deviation, and average mean. Subsequently, various data sources, including interviews, open-ended questions, and document reviews, were qualitatively analyzed and interpreted. This involved describing or narrating the responses provided by respondents and integrating them with quantitative analysis methods.

### 3. Results

From descriptive data analysis, three variables were identified and analyzed as the following one by one:

#### 3.1. Leaders Role

The respondents confirmed that the curriculum is effectively implemented to meet the academic needs of students and principals setting the school objective. On other hand, principals

foster collaboration among teachers and staff to improve academic performance and make participatory decisions. Leaders deliberate thoughts and ideas of teachers to increase the academic achievement of students' in the school. Majority of respondent highly agree that principal's guide and support teachers in their instructional practices. Based on the result of the responses the principals promote student engagement and motivation for academic success and ensure that assessment results are used effectively to improve teaching and learning.

*Table 1. School leader's role.*

S/N	Variable	Measurements	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
	Leaders role					
1	Ensure the curriculum is effectively implemented to meet the academic needs of students.	SA	100	78.7%	4.72	.714
		D	1	0.8%		
		N	7	5.5%		
		A	18	14.2%		
		SDA	1	0.8%		
		Total	127	100.0%		
2	Setting the school goal for students' academic achievement.	SA	3	2.3%	3.90	1.584
		D	9	7%		
		N	7	5.5%		
		A	32	25.2%		
		SDA	76	59.8%		
		Total	127	100.0%		
3	Foster collaboration among teachers and staff to improve academic performance and making participatory decisions.	SA	76	27.5%	4.85	.568
		D	4	3.1%		
		N	9	27.5%		
		A	35	6.7%		
		SDA	3	2.4%		
		Total	127	100.0%		
4	Leaders deliberate thoughts and ideas of teachers to increase the academic achievement of students' in the school.	SA	85	66.9%	4.52	.773
		D	38	29.9%		
		N	-	-		
		A	2	1.57%		
		SDA	2	1.57%		
		Total	127	100.0%		
5	Guiding and supporting teachers in their instructional practices.	SA	95	0.8%	4.46	1.019
		D	11	8.66%		
		N	2	1.6%		
		A	18	13%		

S/N	Variable	Measurements	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
6	Promote student engagement and motivation for academic success.	SDA	1	74.8%	4.81	.666
		Total	127	100.0%		
		SA	95	74.8%		
		D	26	20.5%		
		N	3	2.4%		
		A	2	1.6%		
		SDA	1	0.8%		
		Total	127	100.0%		
		SA	4	3.1%		
		D	3	2.4%		
7	Ensure that assessment results are used effectively to improve teaching and learning.	N	6	4.7%	4.20	.955
		A	49	38.6%		
		SDA	65	51.2%		
		Total	127	100.0%		

### 3.2. Parental Involvement

The study reveal that principals do not involve parents and the community in efforts to improve students' academic

achievement and also do not communicate with parents about their students' academic progress. The result show many of them highly disagree on issue leaders do not facilitate communication between the school and parents regarding academic matters.

*Table 2. Parental involvement.*

S/N	Variable	Measurements	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
Parental Involvement						
1	Involve parents and the community in efforts to improve students' academic achievement.	SDA	48	45.7%	3.93	1.325
		D	32	30.5%		
		N	5	4.8%		
		A	10	9.5%		
		SA	10	9.5%		
		Total	127	100.0%		
2	Communicate with parents about their students' academic progress.	SDA	88	69.3%	3.50	1.539
		D	1	0.8%		
		N	7	5.5%		
		A	8	6.3%		
		SA		0.8%		
Total	127	100.0%				
3	Facilitate communication between the school and parents regarding	SDA	96	75.6%	3.89	1.325
		D	28	22%		

S/N	Variable	Measurements	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
	academic matters.	N	-	-		
		A	2	1.6%		
		SA	1	0.8%		

### 3.3. Infrastructure Related Role

The result shows many of the participants highly disagree on the issue of leaders do not assign incomes for the appropriate application and accomplishment of school visualization and objectives. On the other hand, school leaders do not pro-

vide facilities such as text books, table, chairs, black boards and other materials to improve academic achievement of students' and do not give teachers' adequate workspace for preparation, such as the library and staff. Principals do not prepare central pedagogy and teaching aids like globe, map, and science kit and, etc. to improve the academic achievement of students'.

*Table 3. Infrastructure related role.*

S/N	Variable]	Measurements	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
	Infrastructure related role					
		SDA	89	70%		
		D	32	25%		
1	Assign incomes for the appropriate application and accomplishment of school visualization and objectives.	N	1	0.8%	3.90	1.506
		A	3	2.4%		
		SA	2	1.6%		
		Total	127	100%		
		SDA	95	74.8%		
		D	20	15.7%		
2	Fulfilling facilities such as table text books, chairs, black boards and other materials to improve academic achievement of students'.	N	-	-	4.12	1.035
		A	11	8.6%		
		SA	1	0.8%		
		Total	127	100%		
		SDA	91	71.6%		
		D	17	13.4%		
3	Facilitate teachers' adequate workspace for preparation such as library and staff.	N	2	1.6%	4.04	1.126
		A	6	4.7%		
		SA	11	8.66%		
		Total	127	100%		
		SDA	93	73.2%		
		D	30	32%		
4	Preparing central pedagogy and teaching aids like globe, map, science kit and, etc. to improve academic achievement of students'.	N	3	2.4%	4.20	.955
		A	5	3.9%		
		SA	15	11.8%		

S/N	Variable\]	Measurements	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
		Total	127	100%		

## 4. Discussion

### 4.1. School Leaders Role-Related

Regarding school leaders' role in the students' academic achievement was the major factor found in this study. School leaders was one of the dimensions designed to a student's academic achievement and its impact on leaders' performance. It indicates the curriculum is effectively implemented to meet the academic needs of students. Most of respondents highly agree on principals setting the school goal for students' academic achievement. Respondents argue the most of respondents highly agree that on the issue most of the principals foster collaboration among teachers and staff to improve academic performance and make participatory decisions. Respondents argue that principals consider ideas and suggestions of teachers to improve the academic achievement of students' in the school. The study indicated that principals guiding and supporting teachers in their instructional practices. The study shows that the principals promote student engagement and motivation for academic success.

### 4.2. Parental Involvement

This section deals with parental involvement as the role of school leaders in students' academic achievement designed in this study. Respondents argue that principals do not involve parents and the community in efforts to improve students' academic achievement. Respondents agreed that parental involvement enhances school leaders' maximum effort in his or her job. Respondents showed that principals do not communicate with parents about their students' academic progress. Based on the result of the responses, the principals should not facilitate communication between the school and parents regarding academic matters. Other research revealed that the school leadership activities of the school leadership have an unintended result on student achievement through the variables of teacher team-work, classroom teaching, and parental involvement. [15]

### 4.3. Infrastructure Related Role

The last dimensions of the school leader's role designed in this study were infrastructure - related role. Based on the result of the responses, most respondents highly disagree on the issue of principals not assigning incomes for the appropriate application and accomplishment of school visualization

and objectives. Respondents indicate that principals do not provide facilities such as table, chairs, black boards and other materials to improve the academic achievement of students'. Respondents showed that most respondents highly agree on the issue that principals do not facilitate teachers' adequate workspace for preparation such as library and staff. Finally, respondents indicated the principals do not prepare central pedagogy and teaching aids like globe, laboratory, map, science kit and, etc. to improve the academic achievement of students'.

## 5. Conclusions

Generally, from the analyzed in secondary schools, the roles of school leaders in students' academic achievement were influenced by school leaders' related role, parental involvement and infrastructure. School leaders and other concerning bodies have to improve students' academic achievement by developing parents' and community involvement, communicating with parents about students' result, facilitating communication between the school and parents regarding academic matters, assigning incomes for the appropriate application and accomplishment of school visualization and objectives, fulfilling facilities like text books, table, chairs, black boards and other materials to improve academic achievement of students', facilitate teachers' adequate workspace for preparation such as library and staff. However, government under the supervision of Oromia Education Bureau constructed additional high schools and facilities such as tables, chairs, to overcome the infrastructure related problems. So hence, in my case, there were facilities granted by the government though, they were not satisfactory with the increase in students' enrollment. This shows that Ethiopian government nowadays today must solve the problems regarding my topic of investigation.

## 6. Recommendation

Therefore, depending on the results, recommendations were forwarded:

- 1) Schools should conduct continuous and frequent discussion with parents, teachers, students and other concerned bodies on the major success and problems of the students' academic achievement.
- 2) The government, the town educational office and other concerning bodies should providing facilities such as text books, table, chairs, black boards, library, ICT room and other materials to improve the academic achieve-

ment of students’.

- 3) The Committee and Woliso town education office have to make school attractive to stay in it by filling materials for the teachers and students.

Finally, for the reason that this study may have limitations and individuals, schools, education office coordinators and decision, makers can conduct further study in this paper.

## Abbreviations

SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
ICT	Information Communication Technology
MOE	Ministry of Education
GC	Gregorian Calendar
SNNPR	Southern Nation Nationalities of People Representatives

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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