



Leadership Qualities of and Administrative Task Performance Effectiveness of Secondary School Principals in Irbid Governmate

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Abstract: *The success of any organization depends greatly on its leadership. The school leader (principal) should possess certain qualities that would enable her to perform her administrative tasks efficiently and effectively for the attainment of the school goals and objectives. Therefore, this study was aimed at finding out the relationship between principals' leadership qualities and their administrative tasks performance effectiveness as perceived by secondary school teachers in Irbid governmate. Two research questions were formulated to guide the study. The sample of the study consisted of (120) teachers sampled from secondary schools in Irbid. The instrument developed by the researcher and titled "Principals' Leadership Qualities and Administrative Tasks Performance Effectiveness Questionnaire were used for data collection. The results of the study revealed that teachers perceived their principals as exhibiting moderate leadership qualities with relationship being the mostly exhibited leadership quality ($X = 17.30$). The study also showed that teachers perceived their principals as being moderately effective in their administrative tasks performance. They were assessed to be very effective in curriculum development and instruction ($X = 18.67$). There was a significant positive correlation between principals' leadership qualities and their administrative tasks performance effectiveness. Premised on the findings of this study, it was concluded that leadership qualities are strong determinants of principals' administrative task performance effectiveness in secondary schools. It was recommended among other things that principals should improve their leadership qualities to enhance administrative tasks performance effectiveness.*

Keywords: *Principal, Leadership qualities, Administrative task performance, Secondary schools.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The success of any work organization depends greatly on its leadership. The secondary school administrator (principal) is a leader who is expected to possess certain qualities that will enable her to administer the school effectively and efficiently for the attainment of the school goals and objectives (Akpan, 2011). Cheng and Townsend (2000) state that in the efforts of various countries for educational change and effectiveness, the role of leadership at both the system and site levels is often crucial to their success. Leadership is the process of directing, guiding and influencing followers to work willingly and cooperatively towards the achievement of a set goal. (Akpan, 2011).

It therefore has to do with the ability of the leader to motivate, inspire, stimulate and influence the actions, reactions, behaviors, beliefs and attitudes of followers to achieve organizational goals.

Mullins (1996) defines leadership as a relationship through which one person influences the behavior or actions of others, while Ogunsaju (2006) defines leadership as a position of dominance and prestige accompanied by the ability to direct, motivate and to assist others in achieving a specified purpose. These definitions portray leadership as a symbiotic relationship which involves interactions between the leader and the followers characterized by influence and actions toward goal achievement. Leadership therefore, is a dynamic process. The process of leadership cannot be divorced from the activities of the organization and effective team building (Akpan 2011). It is a process of social influence where leaders induce followers to apply their energies and resources toward a collective goal. Therefore, leadership is related to the process of influencing other people's behavior, their attitude, actions and reactions toward organizational goal attainment.

Bass (1985) identified two types of leadership namely, transactional leadership and transformational leadership, that are applicable in school administration. Transactional leadership involves motivating and directing subordinates primarily through appealing to their self-interest (Bass, 1985). The transactional leader motivates the subordinates through reward and punishment. The subordinates have to obey the orders of the leader and the workers are closely monitored, supervised and controlled to get the work done from them. The leader seeks compliance and practice. The relationship between

the leader and subordinates is based on the fact that leaders expectation for work must be satisfactory (Ezuizo & Onyemauche, 2007). Transformational leadership on the other hand, focuses on changing and motivating subordinates. The leader is very much interested in innovations that will lead to achievement of school goals. The leader is a model of values and she keeps on changing those values of the school in order to bring about realization of the vision (Akpan, 2011). According to Northouse (2001) managers who exhibit transformational leadership are more effective leaders with better work outcomes. They are strong role models, encouragers, innovators and coaches that help to transform their subordinates into better, more productive and successful individuals. Bass (1985) identified four areas of transformational leadership attributes to include:

1. Idealized influence: This refers to the leader's charisma. The ability to gain trust and confidence of subordinates by showing conviction, commitment, ethics and involvement.
2. Inspirational motivation: This refers to ability of the leader to motivate the subordinates to be committed to the vision of the organization. The leader encourages team spirit to reach goals.
3. Intellectual stimulation: This attribute enables the leader to encourage innovation and creativity. The leader encourages critical thinking and problem solving among subordinates. The leader encourages new ideas and suggestions from subordinates.
4. Individualized consideration: This refers to the ability to see every follower or subordinate as a unique individual with strengths and weaknesses.

School leadership therefore, can be viewed as leadership that provides direction and expert advice on development of learning, teaching and curriculum. School leadership emphasizes relevance to education management, diagnosis of school problems and encourages professional development and teaching improvement. The school principal as a leader has leadership or administrative roles to perform. It is the duty of the school leader to direct, lead, guide, and motivate the personnel towards the achievement of the school goals and objectives. The administrative task of a school principal is probably the most important aspect of school leadership. She performs many administrative tasks for the proper operation of the school. Akpagwu (2012) outlines some of these administrative tasks to include staff and students' personnel administration, school-community relations, school finance management and physical facilities administration. Other administrative tasks of the school principal are motivation of staff, communication, decision-making, co-curricular activities, conflict management, record and examination management. Another important administrative task of a school principal is curriculum development and instruction. The principal by virtue of her office is the instructional leader of the school. As an instructional leader, she coordinates the instructional programmes of the school by providing materials, resources and equipment for effective implementation of the school curriculum. Akpakwu (2012) highlighted the instructional roles of a school principal to include:

1. Promoting quality instruction by ensuring consistency and coordination of instructional programmes and defining recommended methods of instruction.
2. Supervising and evaluating instruction by ensuring that school goals are translated into practice at the classroom level and monitoring classroom instruction through regular classroom observation.
3. Providing teachers with uninterrupted blocks of instructional time and ensuring that basic skills and academic subjects are taught.
4. Relating the desired curriculum to available time, physical facilities and personnel.

The extent to which the school principal can effectively perform these tasks depends on his leadership qualities. They are the attributes that give a leader the ability to perform his leadership roles effectively as well as direct, influence and guide his followers toward the achievement of group goals. Leadership qualities are those leadership characteristics that attract followers to the leader and make them to work cooperatively to accomplish set goals. They command respect and trust for the leader.

Sharma (2011) identified the leadership qualities of a school principal to include communication skills, comfort, empathy, decision making skill, influence, self-management, time management skills and commitment. Ames and Flynn (2007) categorized these qualities into intelligence, assertiveness, charisma, and conscientiousness.

According to them, intelligence has to do with the ability of a leader to be creative in solving interpersonal and work related problems, being quick in assessing situations and finding solutions. Conscientiousness is the ability to exhibit dedication, steadfastness and willingness to complete work in an efficiently, timely and meticulous way. Charisma on the other hand deals with ability to motivate others to become enthusiastic about pursuing the goals of the group and the leader acting as a role model. Assertiveness refers to the ability to persist in displaying and defending one's ideas and interests in an unwavering manner and without ambivalence. Other leadership attributes or qualities that can enhance effective administrative task performance of school principals are relationship and emotional stability (Lunenburg & Orstein 2008). Relationship deals with ability to be sociable, sympathetic, cooperative, good-natured, warm and approachable. While emotional stability refers to the capacity for composure, self-confidence and self-awareness.

Aghenta and Omeregig (2006) posit that the school leader (principal) provides the formal leadership and whose behavior determines the extent to which teachers see the school as a desirable place in which to work. This suggests that the principal's leadership attributes determine the organizational climate of the school and the level of teachers' commitment. Similarly, the leadership qualities of the principal determine his effectiveness in the discharge of her administrative tasks. In other words, the principal effectiveness in administrative task performance is a function of her leadership qualities. Her leadership competence would enable her to induce the teachers and other members of staff not only to participate in school administration but also to commit themselves to the life of the school. In support of this fact, Hoy and Forsyth (1997) reported that the greater the inducement pattern created by the school leader, the more committed teachers and other staff members will be to the school and this will enhance administrative task performance effectiveness.

In a study carried out by Sharma (2011), it was found that teachers perceived their principals as having moderate leadership capacities in school vision, instructional leadership, organizational leadership, community leadership, moral dimension and political context. Similarly, it was found that teachers perceived their principals as exhibiting moderate leadership qualities. But there was a strong and positive relationship between the perception of teachers on leadership capacities and leadership qualities of school principals. The researcher concluded that leadership qualities and capacities of principals were related to each other. In a related study by Luo and Najjar (2007), it was reported that teachers rated their principals as having moderate leadership capacities generally. It was also found that the internal leadership capacities of school vision, instruction and organization were perceived lower than the external leadership capacities in corroborative partnership, morale perspective. This finding agreed with the research finding of Hunter-Boykin and Evans (1995) who reported a significant positive correlation between teachers' perception of principals' leadership behavior and teachers' morale. Arikewuyo (2007) in a study reported that teachers assessed their principals as being moderately effective in the areas of technology, and information system, ability to apply appropriate models and principles in school development and management as well as understanding of policies, laws and regulations that affect the schools. It was also reported that teachers perceived their principals as having moderate leadership capacities in facilitating activities that can improve instructional practices and curricular materials, ability to accommodate learners' needs and deploying of financial and human resources that will promote students' achievement.

These findings suggest that principal leadership effectiveness in school management was moderate. In a study by Piccolo and Colquit (2006), it was found that transformational leadership attributes had a significant positive relationship with task performance. This finding was in agreement with that of Weese (1994) who reported that transformational leadership qualities had a positive impact on employee satisfaction, productivity and organizational effectiveness. These findings depict that there is a relationship between leadership qualities and the leaders' job performance effectiveness.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Although much researches have been done on principal's leadership behavior and styles on teachers' job performance in Jordan, very little or no researches have been carried out on leadership qualities and administrative task performance of school principals in Irbid Governmate. This study sought to fill this gap. In the context of this research, leadership qualities were measured in terms of intelligence, charisma, emotional stability, conscientiousness, relationship and assertiveness, while

administrative task performance effectiveness was measured in terms of school discipline, personnel administration, curriculum development and instruction, school plant administration, school-community relations and communication.

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were posed to guide the study.

- 1) How do teachers rate the leadership qualities of secondary school principals Irbid Governmate ?
- 2) How do teachers assess the administrative tasks performance effectiveness of secondary school principals in Irbid Governmate ?

4. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study was to investigate the relationship between leadership qualities and administrative task performance effectiveness of principals of secondary schools in Irbid Governmate. Specifically the study sought to find out

1. Teachers' rating of principals' leadership qualities in secondary schools in Irbid Governmate .
2. Teachers' perception of administrative tasks performance effectiveness of secondary school principals in Irbid Governmate .
3. The relationship between leadership qualities and administrative tasks performance effectiveness of secondary school principals in Irbid Governmate.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research design: The study adopted the descriptive survey design. This type of design depends basically on the use of questionnaire for data collection. It involves the collection of data to objectively and accurately examine existing phenomenon.

The study Sample : A stratified proportionate random sampling technique was adopted for this study, and the study sample consisted (27) principals and (120) teachers from public secondary schools in Irbid Governmate.

6. INSTRUMENT

The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire developed by the researcher and titled "Leadership Qualities and Principals' Administrative Tasks Performance Effectiveness Questionnaire (LQPATPEQ). The instrument consisted of three sections A, B, and C. Section A sought personal and demographic data from the respondents such as age, gender, and years of teaching experience and so on. Section B was a 4-point response scale type and consisted of 36 items classified into 6 groups namely, intelligence (6 items), charisma (6 items), emotional stability (6 items), conscientiousness (6 items), relationship (6 items) and assertiveness (6 items).

Each item had 4 response options of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The respondents were required to tick one of the 4 response options against each item to indicate the extent of their agreement or disagreement with the item. Similarly, Section C was also a 4-point response scale type and consisted of 36 items that measured the six sub-variables of administrative tasks performance effectiveness identified for the study. Each sub-variable was measured using six items and each item had 4 response options ranging from Highly Effective (HE), Effective (E) to Ineffective (IE) and Highly Ineffective. To ascertain the reliability of the instrument, a trial test was carried out. The instrument was administered on (20) teachers who were not part of the actual study. The data obtained were analyzed using Cronbach alpha reliability method and a reliability coefficient of 0.815 was obtained. This was adjudged to be high enough for the instrument to be considered reliable. The instrument was administrated on the respondents (teachers) in their various schools

7. RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) were used to analyze data for research questions. The decision criterion reference was a mean value of 15.00. Each sub-variable of the study was measured using 6 items on a 4-point response scale of which four was the highest score and one, the lowest score. Thus, $4 + 3 + 2 + 1 = 10 \div 4 = 2.50$, for each item and $2.50 \times 6 \text{ items} = 15.00$.

Therefore, a mean rating below 15.00 showed poor leadership quality or ineffective administrative task performance. A mean rating of 15.00 to 15.99 was regarded as moderate, while a mean rating of 16.00 and above was regarded as good or high.

1. Research Question 1

How do teachers rate the leadership qualities of secondary school principals?

The data for this research question were analyzed using descriptive statistic, means and standard deviations. The results are presented on table1.

Table1. Mean Ratings of the Leadership Qualities of School Principals.

Leadership quality variables	No. of items	\bar{X}	SD	Ranking
Relationship	6	17.30	1.97	1 st
Intelligence	6	16.35	1.73	2 nd
Assertiveness	6	15.78	2.10	3 rd
Emotional stability	6	15.38	2.25	4 th
Conscientiousness	6	14.15	2.35	5 th
Charisma	6	12.56	2.40	6 th
Grand Mean		15.25	2.30	

Criterion mean value = 15.00

The data on table 1 show that the grand mean of 15.25 and standard deviation of 2.30 is greater than the accepted mean score of 15.00 as criterion decision mean. This shows that teachers accepted the 6 categories of leadership qualities as being exhibited by school principals. The data on table 1 also show that relationship with a mean score of 17.30 and a standard deviation of 1.97 is the mostly exhibited leadership quality of principals as perceived by teachers, followed by intelligence (X= 16.35; SD=1.75). This is followed by assertiveness (X= 15.78; SD=2.10), emotional stability (X =15.38; SD=2.25), conscientiousness (X=14.15; SD=2.35), and charisma being the least exhibited leadership quality (X =12.56; SD=2.40). The grand mean shows that school principals exhibited moderate leadership qualities as perceived by teachers.

2. Research Question 2

How do teachers assess the administrative tasks performance effectiveness of secondary school principals?

The results of data analysis using means and standard deviations are presented on table 2.

Table2. Mean Ratings of the Administrative Tasks Performance Effectiveness of School Principals.

Variables	X	SD	Ranking
1. Curriculum development and instruction	18.67	1.20	1 st
2. Communication	16.25	1.92	2 nd
3. School plant administration	16.15	2.01	3 rd
4. School discipline	15.30	2.33	4 th
5. School-community relations	14.45	2.38	5 th
6. Personnel administration	14.21	2.41	6 th
Overall Mean	15.84	2.04	
Criterion mean value=15.00			

Table 2 reveals that the grand mean of 15.84 with a standard deviation of 2.04 is greater than criterion decision mean score of 15.00. This means that teachers agree that principals are effective in administrative tasks performance. The grand mean score shows that principals are moderately effective in administrative task performance. Table 2 also shows that teachers rate their school principals as being very effective in the administration of curriculum and instruction (X 18.67; SD=1.20), followed by communication process (X= 16.25; SD=1.92) in that order with personnel administration being the least with a mean score of 14.21 and standard deviation of 2.41.

3. Hypothesis

There is no significant correlation between the mean ratings of leadership qualities and administrative tasks performance effectiveness of secondary school principals in Irbid governmate.

Pearson’s product moment correlation statistics was used for data analysis and the result is presented on table 3.

Table3. *Correlation Analysis of the Relationship between the mean ratings of Leadership Qualities and Administrative Tasks Performance effectiveness of secondary School Principals*

Variables	X	SD	r
Leadership qualities	15.25	2.30	
Administrative tasks performance effectiveness	15.84	2.04	0.88*
* p< .05; df = 818; Critical-r = .062			

Table 3 shows that the observed r-value of 0.88 is greater than the critical r-value of .062 needed for significance at .05 alpha level and 818 degrees of freedom. This means that there is a significant positive correlation between leadership qualities and administrative tasks performance effectiveness of secondary school principals in Irbid governmate, with this result therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is upheld. This finding means that the higher the leadership potentials or qualities, the higher the effectiveness of principals in administrative tasks performance and vice versa.

8. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The finding of the study reveals that teachers rate their principals as having moderate leadership qualities. This finding means that school principals exhibit their leadership qualities of relationship, intelligence, assertiveness, emotional stability, conscientiousness and charisma to a certain extent with relationship being the mostly exhibited leadership quality. This finding could be attributed to the fact that principals used for the study had seen the need to be person-oriented in their leadership behavior by maintaining a cordial relationship with staff and students and being sociable, warm and approachable. They have the capacity to effectively administer their schools for the attainment of school goals and objectives.

This finding is in agreement with the report of Aghenta and Omoregie (2006) who posited that the school leader provides the formal leadership and whose behavior determines the extent to which teachers see the school as a desirable place in which to work. Thus, principals’ leadership qualities determine the organizational climate of the school and the level of teachers’ commitment. It is the leadership qualities of school principals that make teachers to trust and respect their principals and this enable them to work cooperatively for the success of the school. It is the leadership qualities of the principals that determine the extent of teachers’ participation in school administration. This finding is also in agreement with the research finding of Hoy and Forsyth (1997) and Sharma (2011) who reported that teachers perceived their principals as exhibiting moderate leadership qualities.

Another finding of this study shows that principals are moderately effective in administrative tasks performance. However, the finding shows that they are very effective in curriculum development and instruction. This finding is not surprising because the success of any school is based on how effective curricula and instructional activities are carried out. The principal is the instructional leader of the school and should be very effective in this area of school administration if the goals and objectives of the school are to be attained.

The result of this study also reveals that a significant positive relationship exists between principals’ leadership qualities and their administrative tasks performance effectiveness as perceived by secondary school teachers. This means that principals’ leadership qualities are associated with effective administrative task performance. In other words, the more principals exhibit good leadership qualities, the more effective they are in administrative job performance. Leadership qualities are the attributes that give a leader the ability to perform his/her leadership roles effectively. Therefore, leadership qualities and administrative tasks performance effectiveness of principals are positively and strongly correlated. If principals have good leadership qualities, they will be more effective in administrative tasks performance. This finding is supportive of the research finding of Sharma (2011)

who reported a significant correlation between leadership capacities and leadership qualities of school principals. The finding also agrees with Piccolo and Colquit (2006) research finding that a significant positive relationship existed between transformational leadership qualities and task performance effectiveness of institutional administrators.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

Premised on the findings of the study, it was recommended that school principals should improve their leadership qualities to enhance their administrative tasks performance effectiveness.

10. CONCLUSION

Premised on the findings of this study, it could be concluded that leadership qualities determine the level of administrative tasks performance effectiveness of secondary school principals. Principals exhibit moderate leadership qualities and moderate administrative tasks performance effectiveness. However, there is a significant positive relationship between leadership qualities and principals' tasks performance effectiveness. Principals' leadership qualities influence effective school administration, teachers' commitment and morale, students' learning outcome and the success of the school. Therefore, leadership qualities are strong determinants of principals' administrative tasks performance effectiveness in secondary schools in Irbid Governmate.

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