

The role of transformational leadership in students' academic performance: A Case study in the Sidama Region of Ethiopia

BY

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The role of transformational leadership in students' academic performance: A Case study in the Sidama Region of Ethiopia

I declare that the above dissertation is my work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged using complete references.

I further declare that I submitted the thesis to originality-checking software and that it meets the accepted requirements for originality.

I further declare that I have yet to previously submit this work, or part of it, for examination at Unisa for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.



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Abstract

The study investigated how transformational school leadership affects students' academic performance in the Sidama Region of Ethiopia. Burns, Bass, and Leithwood Kenneth's transformational leadership theories and the development of the transformational leadership model in the context of education served as the foundation for the study's theoretical framework. The study was methodically planned using the pragmatic research paradigm with a convergent parallel mixed research design. This rigorous approach ensured comprehensive findings related to the research questions and objectives.

The study's target population was 5956 teachers and 95 principals of public secondary schools in the Sidama region of Ethiopia. Three hundred sixty-two teachers and 91 principals from 24 public secondary schools participated in the survey, which was conducted using an acceptable sampling technique. Twenty teachers and ten principals took part in the qualitative phase. The subjects were selected using a purposive sampling technique, ensuring a diverse and representative sample for the study. The data collection process was robust, with a modified questionnaire based on the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) used in the quantitative phase and an open-ended semi-structured interview administered in the qualitative phase. This meticulous design and rigorous data collection process instill confidence in the validity of the study's findings. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the gathered data. A pre-test and expert opinion were considered to guarantee the validity of the instruments. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the instrument's reliability; the result was a coefficient value of 0.93.

While the qualitative data was presented verbatim, the analyzed quantitative data was displayed in tables and figures. The study found that principals in varying ranges understand and practice transformational leadership behaviors in their respective schools. The study additionally found that the principal's transformational leadership practices strongly and dramatically impact students' academic achievement. The linear multiple regression of principals' perception revealed that changes in the principal transformational leadership practice account for 69.9% of the student's academic performance variation. The results, with a correlation value of $r = .827$ ($p < .01$) based on principals' perception and $r = 0.779$ ($p < .01$) based on teachers' perception, indicated that the principal's transformational leadership practice positively impacts the student's academic performance. The research additionally demonstrated that principals in higher-performing schools exhibit transformational leadership behaviors more often than in lower-performing ones.

Key Terms

Leadership, leadership theory, Transformational leadership, Idealized influence, Inspirational motivation, Intellectual stimulation, Individualized consideration, School principal, and Student academic performance.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my late father, Dalkie Dukamo Gota.

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Acronyms

NLA: National Learning Assessment

ETP: FDRE Education and Training Policy

FDRE: Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

MLQ: Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire

ESDP: Education Sector Development Program

GER: Gross Enrollment

NER: Net Enrollment

GTP: Growth and Transformation Plan

MOFED: Ministry of Finance and Economic Development

SNNPRS: Southern Nation Nationalities and Peoples Regional State.

BOFED: Bureau of Finance and Economic Development

GDP: Gross domestic production

UNESCO: United Nations Education, Science, and Culture Organization

EFA: Education for All

GEQIP: General Education Quality Improvement Program

UNICEF: The United Nations Children's Fund

OECD: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Science

MOE: Ministry of Education

NEAEA: National Assessment and Examinations Agency

ESAA: Education Sector Annual Abstract

CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Education is vital to a nation's economic, social, and political development. The World Economic Forum defined education as skills that enhance productivity (WEF, 2016). This means that educated and well-trained personnel are essential to performing complex tasks that meet the evolving production and productivity needs. Woessman (2015), in his analytical report on the Economic case for Education, prepared for the European Commission, argued that education is the leading determinant of economic growth.

Smith (2021), in his article titled *"How Does Education Quality Affect the Economy?"* argued that a positive link exists between human capital development and economic growth. On the other hand, Kautz, Heckman, JDiris, Weel, and Borghans (2014), in their articles reviewing the recent literature on measuring and boosting cognitive and noncognitive skills, explained the importance of education as tools that shape the lives of individuals and create social well-being. Education is, therefore, an essential element in the life of human beings. Historically, every country has achieved political, economic, and societal transformation with considerable investment and focus on human capital development (Ozturk, 2008). Education can transform lives progressively and positively; it is a key to combating poverty (UNESCO, 2005). Mauren (2011) asserts that education is how we are endowed with the necessary impetus to progress and do something worthwhile. Regarding economic and technical advancement, countries differ depending on the quality of their education (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2015; OECD, 2018; World Bank, 2018).

With the importance of education in mind, it is also evident that the quality of education should be maintained and improved, specifically in changing times. Different scholars from different perspectives define education quality. There is no standard definition of educational quality. According to Madani (2019), education quality includes a variety of indicators such as student/teacher ratios, teacher qualifications, and test scores. Belmonte, Bove, D'Inverno, and Modica (2020) explained that the quality of education is determined by education input. The authors argued that the availability of necessary educational resources leads to higher education quality (Belmonte et al., 2020). On the other hand, Fomba, Talla, and Ningaye (2023), in their empirical analysis of the impact of institutional quality on education quality in developing

countries, which covered 82 developing countries, contended that the quality of governance and management within a school determines the quality of education. UNICEF (2000) has provided a comprehensive framework for understanding educational quality, identifying five key elements: learners, environment, content, process, and outcomes. UNICEF (2000:2-4) succinctly describes educational quality as follows:

Quality education includes healthy learners who are well-nourished, ready to participate and learn, and supported in learning by their families and communities. It also includes healthy, safe, protective, and gender-sensitive environments, providing adequate resources and facilities. In the content sense, reflected and relevant curricula and materials are needed. A Well-trained teacher with an appropriate teaching methodology and a well-managed classroom are necessary indicators. These all prevail in outcomes encompassing knowledge, skills, and attitudes linked to national educational goals and positive social participation.

According to UNESCO, a high standard of education should guarantee several significant aspects of learning. Regarding this, UNESCO (2005) stated that quality imperative issues should support students' emotional and creative growth in its Education for All (EFA) statement. It is also considered how to provide quality education to support students' aspirations for secure and peaceful citizenship and uphold local and global cultural values for future organizations.

"Quality education empowers individuals, gives voice, unlocks their potential, opens pathways to self-actualization, and broadens perspectives to open minds to a pluralist world," according to UNESCO (2005:50–52), which outlined the significance of quality education. Similarly, without raising quality, UNESCO (2004) claimed that education for all (EFA) could not be accomplished in its Global Monitoring Report on EFA. This suggests that education needs to be of higher quality.

Samoff (2007:5-6) connects education quality to national test scores, stating that *'when students perform well on national examination, it is plausible to conclude that they obtained a high-quality education.'* Mensal and Nsabimana (2020) emphasized the input parameter for education quality, explaining that healthy nutrition leads students to score better on test results. Nafukho and Muyia (2021) defined education quality as learners' quality, learning environment, content, process, and outcomes. From the above points of view, it is clear that

education quality is a holistic concept that entails various parameters. These parameters require effective school leadership that can affect all other factors.

Today, having strong school leadership is highly valued by the global community as a means of improving students' academic success. Day, Gu, and Sammons (2016) used mixed methods to study the relationship between principals' work in successfully developing primary and secondary schools and student outcomes in England. The authors argued that educational leaders are essential in determining how to enhance students' academic performance most effectively and how to design the learning environment. Competent school administrators are crucial to guarantee students access to high-quality educational opportunities.

Education quality and student learning are primarily influenced by school leadership and management. "*Leadership is second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at school,*" according to Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, and Wahlstrom (2004:57), highlighting the significance of school leadership as a critical factor that affects student learning. With an emphasis on enhancing students' learning outcomes, school leadership assists in establishing a distinct and consistent learning direction for schools. According to Leithwood, Jantzi, and Steinbach (1999), school leadership affects every other element of education, including building commitment to change, developing people, fostering teacher growth, and interacting with external forces constantly acquiring and directing resources.

School leadership attributes positively impact teacher dedication, which has a beneficial knock-on effect on learning outcomes. Quin, Deris, Bischoff, and Johnson (2015) argued that principals at high-performing schools demonstrate stronger transformational leadership qualities than those at lower-performing schools. Bush (2008) argued that school leadership could influence school subordinates toward school vision achievement. Similarly, Leithwood and Jantzi (2006) argued that leadership is vital for effectiveness and a changing school environment. According to Day, Sammons, Leithwood, Hopkins, GU, Brown, and Ahtaridou (2011), successful school principals are also said to be able to establish the school's vision based on stakeholders' expectations and, in the process, set direction while fostering a supportive learning environment.

Harris (2010:16) related school effectiveness with effective school leadership, stating that '*principal leadership effectiveness can have a positive effect on students' academic achievements.*' School effectiveness is the ability of schools to achieve school-related goals,

among which students' academic performance is the most important (Bishara, 2017). To this end, Bishara related school effectiveness to students' academic test scores. It is argued that students' test scores are higher in schools with greater effectiveness (Bishara, 2017).

Since 2000, much further research has proposed the relationship between student academic accomplishment and transformational school leadership (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2003; Finnigam, 2012; Quin et al., 2015). Leithwood et al. (1999; 2006) developed the transformational school leadership model to measure how administrators contribute to the success of their respective organizations. Teacher engagement and student achievement are positively impacted by transformational school leadership features, according to research by Leithwood and Jantzi (2003). Quin and colleagues (2015) argued that principals with high achievement levels apply transformational leadership practices more often than their counterparts in schools with low performance levels. On the other hand, Duke, Tucker, Salmonowicz, and Levy (2006) contended that poor school performance and climate are caused by inadequate transformational school leadership.

These studies indicate that the effectiveness and competence of school principals as leaders are significant factors that affect education quality and school improvement. From previous experience, the researcher agrees with the scholars' view that effective school leadership influences all other factors that affect student learning outcomes. There is a clear gap among schools in student learning outcomes based on the effectiveness of school principals' leadership (Day et al., 2016). Schools with better leadership effectiveness have better student scores on the national test (MOE, 2021). Anastasiou and Garametsi (2021) considered school leadership an influential factor in school effectiveness. Similarly, Ibrahim (2021) and Harris, Jones, Adams, and Cheah (2019) argued that quality school leadership has the potential to change students' academic performance and that there are apparent differences in student academic performance based on the leadership styles explored.

At present, education quality stands as a critical issue for school leadership in Ethiopia. The education community is raising questions about students' academic achievement and the role of school management (MOE, 2021). In Ethiopia, the quality of education is evaluated using a National Learning Assessment or NLA (ETP, 1994). This system is applied to grades 4 and 8 and secondary school students in grades 12.

According to the 2020 National Assessment and Examinations Agency (NEAEA) report, only 37.71% of Ethiopian fourth-grade students evaluated nationwide in 2020 demonstrated literacy

beyond the basic level. Similarly, only 35% of Grade 8 students scored minimum literacy levels during the same period. What is particularly alarming is the significant disparity in test results among various regions and schools (MOE, 2021).

National examinations measure Student learning performance in Ethiopia after grades 8, 10, and 12. Students who score above the passing mark at all levels are well below the expected standard (MOE, 2021; BOFED, 2021). At the national level, only 47% of grade 12 students scored a minimum passing mark in 2021 (MOE, 2021). Among these, only 25% were eligible to join a government university (MOE, 2021). In the study area, among grade 12 students who took the university entrance test in 2019, only 45% scored the mark that allowed them to join the university. Alarmingly, only 29% scored the passing mark to enter university in 2020, and this result decreased to 19% in 2021 (BOE, 2021). This indicates how education quality and students' academic performance deteriorate occasionally. This felt necessary to examine school leadership's roles in changing these deteriorating student achievement results. The researcher worked as an education leader at the district level and has now been working as a policymaker for social affairs. The researcher's ability to examine the issue of education quality in the context of school leadership stems from his experience in the field.

1.2 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Ethiopia is a large and diverse country with a population comprising more than 80 ethnic and linguistic groups. In 2023, it is Africa's second-most populated country, with a total population of 126 million. Its economy is among the fastest growing in the world, with an average annual GDP growth rate of 9.9% between 2007-2018. Ethiopia's high economic growth and pro-poor programs reduced the poverty rate from 44 % in 2000 to 23.5% in 2015 (MOFED, 2018).

Education remains a priority sector for the Ethiopian government, as evidenced by its consistently high investment in education over the last two decades. The National Education and Training Policy (ETP) was launched in 1994 by Ethiopia's Federal Government to recognize the significance of education. Within the framework of the ETP, a series of consecutive five-year strategic plans, referred to as the Education Sector Development Plan (ESDPI-ESDPV), were designed and implemented. Currently, the Education Sector Development Program ESDPVI (2020/21-2024/25) is under implementation. Consequently, the number of students at all levels has increased tremendously yearly. MOFED (2021)

reported that the gross enrollment rate (GER) for elementary education was 95.1% in 2021, while the net enrollment rate (NER) increased to 86.4% at the same time. Similarly, in the stated period, the GER of secondary education (9-12) is 42.1%. Ethiopia's education system has expanded significantly from 7.1 million learners in 2000 to 25 million in 2021 in the general education sector (ESAA, 2021). During the time mentioned above, there was a significant growth in the number of schools and elementary and secondary education enrollment within the study areas.

The researcher has been working as a government official for the past 20 years, starting from district to national level, mostly directly with education leadership and some indirectly but responsible for education development. The researcher has observed that overall progress regarding education quality and student academic achievement has deteriorated in recent years. School leadership was not fulfilling the expected roles, according to the research findings in the researcher's master's dissertation, which examines the function of school leadership in preserving education quality. However, the study that has been completed has not focused primarily on how school principals' leadership styles can improve students' academic performance. Moreover, it is felt necessary to examine the problems associated with the educational outcomes of the students as evaluated by the national secondary school tests in grade 12 in light of the leadership styles of principals.

The study's foundation was the theoretical and applied research on the efficacy of school leadership and its connection to student outcomes. In this regard, many researchers revealed that school leadership could play a significant role in ensuring education quality (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2003; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005; Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, & Hopkins, 2008; Finnigam, 2012; Quin et al., 2015; Anderson, 2017;). Moreover, other academics contend that transformational leadership can improve the effectiveness and outcomes of organizations (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Bass & Riggio, 2006). These reasons gave the researcher the idea to undertake this study on the impact of school principals' transformational leadership style on academic achievement and student outcomes.

Numerous initiatives have been undertaken in the study area to enhance students' academic performance by providing educational resources and implementing other strategies to increase educational standards. Assigning trained school principals and different capacity-building initiatives aimed at school improvement in general and student outcomes in particular are some of the measures taken by the government. Despite these efforts, there has yet to be significant

progress in the Ethiopian context on student academic results assessed by the secondary school leaving test at the national level. The results are deteriorating from time to time. This inspired the researcher to study how the leadership styles of the school principal impact students' academic results. This study examined the relationship between the dependent variable, students' academic performance, and the independent variable, the principals' leadership style as perceived by themselves and their teachers. The study addressed the effectiveness gap of the school principal leadership style toward student academic outcomes based on theoretical foundations.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In today's technologically advanced, globalized society, where change occurs quickly, the quality of education is critical (Thangeda, Baratiseng & Mompati, 2016). Today, innovation is one of the most competitive factors in the world. In such an environment, competent and innovative human resources development makes a difference (Hammond, 2013). Knowledgeable, capable, and proactive citizens cannot be produced without quality education.

As was covered in the sections above, it is thought that Ethiopian education in general and the study area in particular are becoming of worse quality. Identifying the issue with quality, the Ethiopian government, in partnership with other relevant parties, initiated the General Education Quality Improvement Package (GEQIP) program. Additionally, many measures have been taken to improve the quality of education. Despite these attempts, there are still many concerns regarding the declining quality of education. Parents, teachers, and other stakeholders bemoan that students across the board require the abilities and knowledge expected of them.

As mentioned in the above sections, different researchers have explored school leadership's role in changing school conditions and improving education quality differently (Powell, 1992; Leithwood, 2005; Leithwood et al., 2004; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2007). Leithwood (2005) argued that successful school leadership is critical to enhancing students' academic performance. Leithwood et al. (2004) highlighted the significance of school leadership as a critical factor that affects student learning. Similarly, in their doctoral thesis, Ayene (2016) and Beyene (2016) concluded that school leadership played a significant role in maintaining educational quality in Ethiopian schools. However, there needs to be more research literature on transformational leadership styles and practices in high-performing and low-performing

schools. Other studies on this topic had focused on the behaviors of school leadership (Cotton, 2003; Finnigan, 2012; Lingam & Lingam, 2015) rather than critical dimensions or factors of transformational leadership as conceptualized by Burns (1978) and Bass (1985). Finnigan (2012:184) suggested that “*principals’ leadership is critical to turning around low-performing schools by changing school environment.*” On the other hand, Ligan and Ligan (2015) linked the importance of transformational leadership behaviors with teacher commitment, which in turn affects school performance. The primary instrument for this study was the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), which included certain modifications and respondent demographic data. Thus, examining the effects of transformational school leadership in a selected public secondary school in the Ethiopian Sidama region is becoming increasingly necessary.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.4.1 Research Questions

Based on the discussion above, the main research question for this study could consequently be phrased as follows: **What is the role of transformational leadership of the principal in the academic performance of students in the Sidama region of Ethiopia?** Based on the main research question, the study sought answers to the following research sub-questions:

- What are the principals’ and teachers’ understanding of transformational leadership?
- What possible impact may the transformational leadership style of school principals have on student academic achievement?
- What are the differences in leadership practices of school principals between high and low-performing schools in the Sidama Region of Ethiopia?
- How can the school principal increase student outcomes through transformational leadership in the Sidama region of Ethiopia?

1.4.2 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The main objective or purpose of this study was to determine the role of transformational leadership by the principal in the academic performance of students in the Sidama region of Ethiopia. The specific objectives of the study were to:

- describe the concept of transformational leadership;
- establish what possible impact the transformational leadership style of school principals may have on students' academic achievement;
- determine the perceptions of the principals and teachers about transformational leadership and its effect on the academic performance of students in the Sidama region of Ethiopia;
- establish if there is a significant difference in principal leadership practices between high-performing and low-performing schools in the Sidama region of Ethiopia and
- find out how the school principal can increase student outcomes through transformational leadership in the Sidama region of Ethiopia.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.5.1 Introduction

Schwardt (2007) described that research technique is the appropriate course of inquiry. It entails dissecting the presumptions, guidelines, and practices of a specific investigative methodology. Research methodology, according to Dawson (2002), is a process that describes how research is carried out methodically. He added that research methodology is a general principle that guides research practice. Research methodology includes the research process, tools used, and procedures to be followed during particular research. As argued by the above scholars, following an effective research methodology enabled the researcher to conduct fruitful research on the intended topic based on the research problem.

1.5.2 The research paradigm

The opinions and consensus regarding the best way to comprehend and approach a topic constitute a research paradigm (Kuhn, 1990). Paradigms are general frameworks or viewpoints

that provide ways of making assumptions about the nature of reality, as explained by Bubbie (1998). Similarly, Patton (2002) presented a paradigm describing a worldview informed by philosophical assumptions about social reality. Guba (1990) explained that paradigm deals with the three basic questions: Ontology—reality, epistemology—the way we come to know what we know—and methodology—the way we conduct empirical research. Creswell (2014:6) argued that “the *paradigm is the basic beliefs of the researcher which guides overall research process.*”

In this study, the researcher understood that reality-searching answers for the research problem fall under the pragmatic research paradigm, and consequently, the researcher adopted this paradigm. According to the pragmatic view, reality is constantly negotiated, debated, and interpreted (Cresswell, 2009; Lukenchuk, 2013). According to the argument of pragmatists, the best method is one that solves the problem (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018).

1.5.3 The research approach

Convergent mixed-methods research was employed in this study, wherein the researcher combined quantitative and qualitative data to thoroughly analyze the research problem (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The mixed-method approach combines qualitative and quantitative methods (Johnson & Onwuegbuzle, 2004). In this approach, two data types were gathered simultaneously during the data collection process (Creswell, 2009). Using a mixed method, a researcher could provide prospects for a more comprehensive and wide-ranging perspective (Creswell, 2006).

According to Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003a), a mixed-method approach increases the opportunity for diverse data collection and integration. It provides crucial deductions for the researcher to provide truthful responses to queries. The mixed method enables the researcher to answer questions meaningfully, combining particularity with generality (Cohen et al., 2018). According to Denscombe (2014), a mixed-method approach is essential to increase data accuracy and reliability through triangulation, thus reducing bias in the research. The researcher agreed with the scholars' view and deployed this methodology as it enables the answer to the research question comprehensively and holistically. Cohen et al. (2018) explained the importance of mixed research methodology over a single method in a holistic way. These scholars contended that it allows for a thorough and complete comprehension of

occurrences. Additionally, they concurred that a mixed-method approach combines particularity and generality to enable the researcher to respond to research problems more effectively.

Both approaches allowed the researcher to overcome the shortcomings of using either methodology alone (Poth & Munce, 2020). In addition, both methods confirm data reliability and cross-validate the findings. According to Creed, Freeman, Robinson, and Woodley (2004), a mixed-method approach comprehensively answers the research question: *What roles do principal leadership styles have in students' academic performance?* It avoids the limitations of using a single approach. Because of its complementing capabilities, the researcher has decided to conduct this study using a mixed-method technique.

1.5.4 The research design

According to Leedy (1997), a research design is a study plan that delineates the structure for gathering data. A research design is a strategy for choosing participants, study settings, and data collection techniques to solve the research question, according to MacMillan and Schumacher (2001). A research design is a framework, a strategy, and a plan for conducting a research project, according to Carriger (2000). Denzin and Lincoln (2011) considered research design a research strategy. Trochim (2006) defined research design as the research framework, which serves as the 'glue' that ties all of the fundamental aspects of a research project together. Creswell defines research design as a plan or proposal for conducting research (Creswell, 2009). According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2005), research design is a strategy for gathering data to arrive at relevant answers to research questions. Similarly, Bryman (2006) describes research design as a data collection and analysis framework for obtaining information to answer research questions.

This study used a descriptive survey research design that depend on the perception of teachers and school principals. A descriptive survey method gathers data on specific situations within given time frames to describe the nature of existing conditions and explore the relationship between particular events. According to Leedy and Ormond (2005), the descriptive survey design is one type of study design and data analysis utilized for a particular subject. It entails obtaining information about occurrences and organizing, tabulating, and summarizing it. As per Jackson's (2009) assertion, case studies, surveys, and observational approaches can all be

used to gather descriptive data. This study used descriptive survey methodology to understand the connection between students' academic achievement and principals' leadership styles.

1.5.5 Population and Sampling

A population in a research study refers to the group from which the researcher wishes to conclude. The study's target populations were 95 school principals and 5956 teachers from the Sidama region. Conversely, a sample is a specific group from which the researcher will collect data. Kothari (2006:109-110) defined the study population as “*all elements in any field of inquiry constitute a universe or population.*” Kothari (2006) also argued that a sample design is a definite plan for obtaining a sample from a given population. It refers to the technique or procedure the researcher would adopt to select sample items. Since it is impossible to accommodate every population, the researcher selected a sample for each study phase.

1.5.5.1 Sample and sampling procedures for Phase 1: Quantitative phase

As the study area is secondary schools, the target population was selected based on its academic performance in the national examination test. Among secondary schools in the study area, high and low-performing category schools were selected based on the four-year national examination result. According to the Regional Education Bureau, 95 public secondary schools are in the Sidama region. In these schools, 5956 teachers are involved in the teaching process. Among 95 regional public secondary schools, 24 (25%) secondary schools (grades 9 to 12) were selected using a purposive sampling technique. In each school, all principals and vice principals were targeted. Teachers from the selected schools were recruited using proportionate and simple random sampling methods. This sampling approach ensures that all participants receive an equal opportunity.

The sample size is the appropriate proportion of the target study group that would provide information in the study that would allow generalization of the target group (Creswell, 2012; Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun, 2012). The sample size of the study population of teachers was selected based on the statistical formula derived from www.surveymonkey.com as;

$$\text{Sample size} = \frac{z^2 \times p(1-p) / e^2}{1 + (z^2 \times p(1-p) / e^2 \times N)}$$

Where;

N = population size

e = Margin of error (percentage in decimal form); accepted error margin = 5%

z = z-score = 1.96, (for desired confidence level 95%, z- score is 1.96)

p standard deviation based on population proportion of expected prevalence, normally 50% or .5

$$\text{Sample size} = \frac{\frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.5(1-0.5)}{(0.05)^2}}{1 + \frac{1.96^2 \times 0.5(1-0.5)}{(0.05)^2 \times 5956}} = 362.$$

Therefore, 362 teachers were the subjects of the study, and they were selected based on proportional and simple random techniques, taking into consideration gender during selection.

1.5.5.2 Sample and sampling procedures for Phase 2: Qualitative phase

For phase two, 10 principals and 20 teachers, a total of 30 participants had been interviewed. These participants were selected from 10 secondary schools based on their academic performance. Therefore, purposive sampling enabled the researcher to include participants from high-performing and low-performing schools.

1.5.6 Instrumentation and Data Collection Technique

1.5.6.1 Instrumentation and data collection in Phase 1: The quantitative phase

The primary instrument used in the quantitative portion of the study was the Multi-Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), which was developed by Burns (1985) and updated by Bass (2002) as a way to measure transformational leadership. The researcher added additional items to the questionnaire. The questionnaire described leadership styles in descriptive statements. Respondents were asked to rate the descriptive statements on a Likert scale of 1 to 5, where 1 was the least descriptive statement, and 5 was the most descriptive. In a Likert scale, the respondent is asked to respond to each statement using several descriptors, usually four or five (Kothari, 2006). There were two sections in the questionnaire. The participants' background information and biographical facts are the main focus of the first section, providing a

comprehensive image of the study's independent variables. The next section of the study instrument contained closed-ended items to rate the respondents' views on school leadership roles and styles in the respective schools.

The quantitative phase's data collection had two stages. The first step was the pilot test, which tested the instrument's content validity and allowed the researcher to modify it before distributing it for the next phase (Creswell, 2014). After consecutive consultations and a briefing on its importance and general guidelines, the second step was distributing the amended questionnaire to school principals and teachers.

1.5.6.2 Instrumentation and data collection in Phase 2: The qualitative phase

In the qualitative phase, structured and semi-structured open-ended interview questions were conducted for selected principals and teachers (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). This allowed the researcher to look into and comprehend the effectiveness of school leadership as perceived by principals and teachers. The researcher interviewed the selected respondents one-on-one to clarify the quantitative data. An audio recorder was used during the one-on-one interviews, enabling the researcher to code and transcribe the data for data analysis. These open-ended questions allowed the researcher to gain in-depth insight into the perceptions of principals and teachers on school leadership roles to maintain student academic performance.

1.5.7 Analysis and presentation of the data

Data analysis for the study was carried out per the data collection phases.

1. 5.7.1 Data analysis and presentation in Phase 1: The quantitative phase

The data from the quantitative phase was entered into SPSS and MS Excel. Numbers were assigned to closed-ended questions according to the Likert scale. By analyzing the data in frequencies, percentages, means, and weighted means, the researcher verified the impact of the school principals' transformational leadership practices on the student's academic performance in the study region.

Data validation and appropriate coding were checked. The Likert scale was used to assign numerical values to closed-ended questions, which were then used to produce descriptive and inferential statistics. The quantitative data were presented in tables and figures. These were again analyzed using the mean and standard deviation of the score range.

1. 5.7.2 Data analysis in Phase 2: The qualitative phase

In the qualitative phase, data was collected from the selected respondents, which were school principals and teachers, as mentioned in the above section. During the interview, an audio recording was made. The recorded data from the interviewees were organized and documented in tables. This enabled the researcher to identify specific issues from the original data and transcribe it correctly. The data were reviewed repeatedly to understand the participants' words (Creswell, 2009). The reviewed data was organized in light of the research questions. The participants' responses were grouped into tables as summary sheets (Creswell, 2009). Based on the participants' views, themes were identified.

The data transcribed, reviewed, and organized as above was coded to maintain confidentiality and research ethics. Interpretation and analysis of the findings were carried out. Participants were given specific numbers as pseudonyms to ensure anonymity. The recorded response was coded and analyzed, compared with the research question, and organized for further analysis. The transcripts were read thoroughly and repeatedly to understand the respondents' opinions better.

1.5.7.3 Triangulation of the data from the two phases

Triangulation captures multiple voices and truths about the topic rather than using the 'right' result (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The triangulation method employed the viewpoints and opinions from two samples (Phase 1 and Phase 2, respectively) to compare the results from the two samples. Document analysis of student test results from national examination tests was done to correlate the result with leadership effectiveness.

1.6. VALIDITY, RELIABILITY, AND TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY

Whiston (2012) defined validity as the acquisition of data appropriate for the intended use of measuring instruments. The degree to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure is known as its validity (Kothari, 2006). It also describes the extent to which a method captures the essence of the targeted measurement.

The stability and consistency of the measurement device over time are referred to as reliability. The ability of an instrument to yield consistent findings when utilized at various times is known as reliability. It refers to how error-free a test is in terms of measurement; the more errors that

occur, the less reliable the test is (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). Reliability also refers to how consistently a method measures something. The measurement is considered trustworthy if the same result can be consistently achieved using the same techniques under the same circumstances. Kothari (2006) asserts that a measuring device is dependable if it consistently yields the same results when tested again. The consistency of results in time, in different observers, and in parts of the test itself allows the researcher to overcome the reliability error. Trustworthiness, on the other hand, is the assessment of the quality of the research (Anney, 2014).

1.6.1 Validity and reliability of the data from the quantitative phase

In quantitative research, validity denotes an instrument's purpose (Jackson, 2015). According to Babbie (2007), validity can alternatively be defined as a measure's ability to represent the idea that it is intended to assess fairly. The capacity to infer causal linkages from the data gathered is known as internal validity. By ensuring that changes in the dependent variables would only come from the independent variable and not from other competing factors, the researcher attempted to preserve internal validity in this study. To ensure the validity of the study instrument, it was created under the close supervision of an advisor. Checking how well the results correspond to established theories and other measures of the same concept had been undertaken.

Susanne (2012) describes how external validity was used to generalize from the research sample to other or bigger groups and settings. To accomplish this, the researcher carefully considered which sampling strategies would work best to create a sample representative of the study population. Careful consideration was also given to variables that could impact external validity and generalizability, including participants (respondents), circumstance, time, intervention, and measures. The researcher addressed these concerns by contacting respondents before the visit to guarantee a convenient time to distribute surveys and conduct one-on-one interviews.

The ability to conclude from the facts collected indicates a conclusion's validity (Susanne, 2012). To ensure that the data analysis procedure satisfies the requirements outlined for the validity of the conclusions, the researcher enlisted the assistance of a reputable statistician. Additionally, the researcher's supervisor ensured that the findings drawn were only based on the reports from the data analysis.

The researcher also noted the validity of the measures in terms of convergence, face, and content. The researcher examined whether the questionnaire's content could be considered to measure what it was designed to test to determine the face's validity. The researcher ensured that every aspect of transformational school leadership was well covered in the questions to ensure the veracity of the information. Lastly, the researcher ensured that the questionnaire's variables or statements had the same or comparable constructs to attain the convergent validity of the measure.

1. 6.2 Trustworthiness of the data from the qualitative phase

The study achieved trustworthiness by focusing on credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability. The researcher conducted structured and semi-structured interviews to ensure that the researched phenomenon is understood from and within multiple realities. The researcher used a variety of data sources to guarantee reliability during the study's qualitative phase. Interviews and literature reviews were utilized to see if the findings produced by the sources were consistent with their face validity. After the transcripts of the interviews were finished, the researcher contacted each interviewee to ensure there were no factual inaccuracies. This allowed the researcher to check both validity and internal consistency. During the coding process, the researcher coded the transcripts into categories himself. This allowed the researcher to become more familiar with the data, and the researcher tried to ensure trustworthiness in this phase by avoiding generalizations.

1.7. RESEARCH ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to O'Leary (2010), research ethics are codes of conduct that serve as guidelines for what is appropriate in any field. In the research, ethical considerations were taken into consideration. Permission to conduct the research was obtained from all concerned bodies. The researcher first legally communicated with all concerned bodies. The purpose of the study was made clear and understandable to all participants. Any communication with the concerned bodies was based voluntarily. The researcher kept the respondents' identities and the provided information private. The participants' names were protected during the study's analysis and interpretation phases. Any personal identity was kept, coded names were disassociated, and numbers and other codes were used instead (Creswell, 2009).

1.7.1 Anonymity and Confidentiality

Ensuring study participants' confidentiality entails telling them that their names and the names of their schools will remain private and that no one other than the researcher can access or monitor any information they submit. According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2013), maintaining confidentiality allows participants to express their right to limit how their personal information is used and to withhold from the researcher the source of any information reported by respondents. The specific names of the respondents were excluded from the study. Honesty and integrity were strictly maintained during the study. Participants received assurances that the information they provided would only be used to identify them for the study. The researcher guaranteed that participant identities and other details would remain confidential.

1.7.2 Informed consent

Leady and Ormrod (2001) state that potential participants must be free to give informed consent and determine whether or not to participate in the study. Leady and Ormrod (2001) claimed that for respondents to give their informed consent, they need to be given a chance to comprehend the methods that will be followed in the research and the risks and demands that may be placed upon them. The researcher informed the respondents that they could withdraw from the study at any time. The benefits of the research were explained to participants so they could make their decisions based on the information.

1.7.3 Permission to conduct research

Initial informed consent was gained by applying for ethical approval from the University of South Africa to conduct research under the supervision of the University's research project supervisors. The researcher obtained authorization from the Sidama Region Education Bureau to access specific secondary schools to gather data after receiving ethical clearance to conduct the study. All participants received official consent letters outlining the study's objectives.

1.8. CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

School leadership might be crucial to guaranteeing high-quality education. The quality of education has improved significantly when effective school leadership has been in place. Marzano et al. (2005) state that competent school leadership may make increasing student success possible. Examining the degree to which school principals fulfill the expected role is

imperative. The study's conclusions will probably be vital since they will show the advantages and disadvantages of school leadership in delivering high-quality education and guide the appropriate authorities in addressing the shortcomings.

The study demonstrates how different principal leadership styles can encourage teachers and, as a result, increase students' learning and academic performance. The study results showed how transformational school leadership influences student learning outcomes. It also offered an evidence-based understanding of the leadership roles of principals in improving schools and achieving and maintaining educational outcomes. The study results also indicated how the school principal can increase student outcomes via transformational leadership. The study's research findings may add to the existing literature on the role of school leadership in improving student academic performance. It was also essential to test transformational leadership theories conceptualized by Burns (1978) and Bass (1985) that state their role in increasing organizational performance. It can also inform policymakers, the relevant ministry, and the bureau of the need to train and assign school principals based on their awareness and readiness to ensure the quality of education. The findings may also be helpful to universities and colleges engaged in training school leadership programs that will prepare the next generation of administrators.

1.9. LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study assumed that there would be adequate time and budget, as well as willingness and collaboration of the concerned bodies participating to carry out this research study. However, there were time and resource constraints to research as intended. The lack of willingness to participate in the study was also a challenge. Awareness was made about the importance of the study before conducting it. The appropriate time and the prior schedule for those participating in the research were arranged. It was tried to efficiently and effectively use the limited resources available during the study. To solve the inconvenience over time, the researcher attempted to follow the schedule conveniently for the respondents and other bodies participating in the study.

Many factors affect the quality of education and the academic performance of students. However, this study was limited to the transformational leadership styles of school principals and their relationship to student academic performance. General education is structured as

primary and secondary in the Ethiopian education system. The study was focused only on secondary education. There are public and private secondary schools in the region. Among these, the study was limited to only public secondary schools in the region.

1.10. DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

The following key concepts used in the title can be briefly defined:

Leadership is the process by which a person motivates others to achieve a common objective (Northouse, 1997:3, 2015, 2021). It is the ability to persuade subordinates to accomplish the organization's goals, according to Maxwell (2011). Based on the various viewpoints and arguments of other scholars mentioned above, a comprehensive definition of leadership could be, "Leadership is a process by which an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve an organizational goal by envisioning, mentoring, empowering, and inspiring them towards the achievement of the stated organizational goal."

Transformational leadership: A leadership style in which leaders collaborate with individuals or groups to effect positive change by identifying difficulties, sharing visions of desirable results, and developing strategies that address the need in an encouraging and motivating manner. It is the process by which an individual interacts with others and establishes a relationship that increases motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower (Burns, 1978). According to Bass & Riggio, 2006 and Kouzes & Posner, 2017, transformational leadership is defined in this study as a process where a leader motivates followers to achieve organizational goals through idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration.

Transformational school leadership: a leadership model developed by Leithwood et al. (1999; 2006) to measure the behaviors of principals that make schools effective and reviewed by different scholars (Berkovich, 2016, 2018; Anderson, 2017).

School principal: An administrative person at school who is responsible for all school activities (MOE, 2017).

Academic performance is the extent to which the goals set for educational activities are met (Avolio, 2002; Sun & Leithwood, 2012).

Student academic achievement: A student's educational performance is defined by a determined scale based on the cut-off point as the passing mark indicating whether students acquire the desired knowledge through their learning (Sun & Leithwood, 2012).

Secondary schools: In this study, secondary schools include grades 9-12 as structured by ETP and modified by education road map (ETP, 1994: MOE, 2017).

The Sidama region is one of Ethiopia's regional governments. It is a newly established region (2020) according to the Ethiopian constitution that grants people self-determination of being a regional state.

1.11. CHAPTER OUTLINE

The chapter layout of the study thesis was structured as follows:

Chapter 1 includes a brief introduction, background, and rationale for the study. In addition, the study's research problem, questions, aims, and objectives are deliberated. The chapter will also briefly discuss the research methodology for the analysis and aspects of trustworthiness and validity. The ethical considerations of the research are also discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature that forms the basis for this research and provides direction for the study. This chapter discusses the concepts of leadership and transformational leadership while highlighting possible and appropriate leadership styles for maximum school effectiveness. The importance of education, the quality of education, and the role of school leadership in maintaining education quality were discussed thoroughly based on different literature, books, journals, articles, policy documents, and internet sources.

Chapter 3 presents a theoretical framework for the study based on transformational leadership theories by Burns (1978) and Bass (1985).

Chapter 4 discusses all aspects of this study's research methodology, such as the research design, data collection instruments and methods, study population, sample and sampling techniques, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques.

Chapter 5 presents and analyzes the research data obtained from the quantitative and qualitative phases of the study.

Chapter 6 summarizes and discusses the study findings, recommendations, and the study's unique contribution.

1.12. SUMMARY

Chapter 1 presented the overall structure and nature of the study, while an explanation of the background of the study that laid the foundation for the problem statement was discussed. Based on the problem statement, the research questions were formulated, as well as the aim and objectives of the study. The research methodology and appropriate research design were described, while the limitations and delimitations of the study were discussed. The intended approach, namely a mixed-method approach under a pragmatic paradigm, was discussed. Aspects of validity, reliability, and trustworthiness during the research process were briefly discussed, while the ethical consideration issues received attention. The chapter clearly described the problem under discussion and provided an overview of the study.

CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

2. 1 INTRODUCTION

A literature review is a comprehensive overview of the literature and research work, such as textbooks, articles, academic presentations at conferences, newspaper reports, and other sources relevant to the topic under investigation (Denney & Tewskbury, 2013). In other words, it is a systematic way of gathering and synthesizing prior research information (Snyder, 2019). It helps to identify research gaps and generate ideas on how to proceed with the proposed study (Denney & Tewskbury, 2013).

Chapter 1 presented the study's orientation. The chapter provided, among other things, information on the study's background, the main research question and sub-questions, the aim and objectives of the study, the research design and methodology, definitions of basic terminologies related to the study, and the study's contribution.

The current chapter, chapter two, reviews the literature related to the study topic. The literature review focused on defining the concepts of leadership and transformational leadership in

education, the relationship between principals' transformational leadership practices and students' academic achievement, education quality, and the factors influencing education quality. This is followed by a discussion of educational performance among students, specifically in the Ethiopian context.

2.2 THE CONCEPT OF LEADERSHIP

Throughout the years, leadership has been conceptualized in different ways. Different authors and scholars have given different concepts regarding leadership. Since there are practically as many definitions of leadership as persons who have attempted to describe it, Stodgill (1974) contended that there are multiple conceptions when different authors define leadership. Likewise, Burns (1978:2) offered the following explanation for the diversity and complexity of perspectives on leadership: "*Leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth.*" Gill (2006) also argued that different people have varied interpretations of leadership.

Bass (1999) defined leadership from a process perspective. According to him, leadership is the growth process in which the individual has particular traits or characteristics. According to Bass, these traits and characteristics enable people in leadership positions to inspire others to accomplish organizational goals. Northouse (1997) came with the perspective that posits Bass's view of leadership as a process. For Northouse, leadership is a process that influences the group of people engaged in specific tasks to achieve specific targeted goals. As argued by various scholars, leadership requires an interaction process between people. In these processes, people who interact will be influenced by the leader's ability to inspire them toward the vision and goals of the organization. Schools are organizations that have serious interactions with the school community. These interactions require effective school leadership to create a conducive environment for a positive teaching and learning process.

According to Gallos (2008), leadership is a relationship between those in an organization who wish to lead and others who are willing to follow. Leadership has also been defined by Kouzes and Posner (2006) as an interpersonal relationship. The authors define leadership as the interaction between those who choose to follow and those who desire to lead (Kouzes & Posner, 2006). As leadership occurs in relation to subordinates, leaders should establish a positive relationship with the people to lead effectively. A positive relationship on the job leads

to productive organizational performance. This indicates that school leadership has to maintain a positive relationship to inspire teachers and students toward better school performance.

Yukl (2010), in his book *Leadership in Organizations*, defined leadership in terms of influence as a way of influencing subordinates toward the achievement of envisioned organizational goals. According to Yukl, people must be organized and motivated by leadership to attain common objectives. Yukl (2013) further argued that leadership is the ability to influence followers toward achieving common organizational goals. Similarly, Maxwell (2007:12) argued that leadership is an influence in the way *'If you do not have influence, you will never be able to lead others.'* On the other hand, Northouse (1997:3) described leadership as influence: *"Leadership is a process by which an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal."* Similarly, Northouse (2013) argued that leaders can influence others. Moreover, Northouse, in his later works, also repeated leadership as influence, where individuals influence a group of individuals to achieve common organizational goals (Northouse, 2016). The scholar's view of leadership as an influence indicates that school principals who exhibit appropriate leadership styles have the power to influence the school community toward better school performance.

Chen (2014) quoted Zinn as defining leadership from the communication perspective. He defines leadership as coaching, inspiring, directing/guiding, and supporting/counseling others through communication (verbal or nonverbal). Andrews, Basom, and Basom (1991) explained that leadership is about communicating the vision to create trust in the workplace. Leaders should develop the ability to communicate effectively to inspire others to perform their duties efficiently and effectively.

Gill (2006) explained the role of leaders as vision and mission developers and organizational management system developers. In a more elaborative manner, Gill (2006): 10) pointed out that:

'Leadership is evaluated in that leaders develop the mission, vision, and values, as well as role models of a culture of excellence; leaders are personally involved in ensuring the organization's management system, motivate, support, and recognize the people of the organization.'

In the leadership process, there are commonly three variables. These variables are the leader, followers, and the conditions when people interact (Plumkett, Attner & Allen, 2008). Leadership occurs when there are people to interact with and lead. In their articles on leadership

behavior, Yukl (2012) and Behrendt, Matz, and Göritz (2017) argued that leadership functions in interacting and communicating with others. According to scholars, leadership involves interpersonal influence through interactions with individuals who perform specific tasks. In their work, Cullen-Lester and Yammarino (2016) argue that leadership is not limited to a single individual. According to scholars, leadership results from an interaction in which those in the interaction influence each other. Vito (2018) argued that leaders must stimulate and encourage empowerment, innovation, and creativity to influence people.

From the above views, it is possible to summarize that leadership is a process that occurs among people and involves influence. Leadership is not all about the power or authority that individuals have. However, leadership is characterized by the ability to influence others through inspiration, motivation, and appreciation of the creativity and talents of individuals (Northouse, 2018). Leadership is not given for people's unique traits, such as personal quality or knowledge; it is a dynamic process involving individuals in a specific interaction environment (Yukl, 2012; Northouse, 2018). Leadership involves individuals attaining specific organizational goals (Yukl, 2012; Northouse, 2018). It requires particular relationships with those in the system's interaction process (Kouzes & Posner, 2006). With interaction in the system, leaders must organize people to achieve the organizational goal envisioned. In leadership, leaders must clearly articulate the vision and mission to mobilize subordinates toward achieving the vision and mission. Leadership is not about giving direction only from the top. It is about interacting in both ways. The interaction with subordinates requires effective communication. This positive interaction enables the subordinate to be motivated towards organizational goal attainment. The above arguments and explanations explain how different authors and scholars conceptualize leadership.

2.3 TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

In his 1978 book "Leadership Concepts," Burns presented the idea of transformational leadership. The term "leadership" was first used by James Downton in 1973, before Burns' detailed explanation. In his first book, Burns' transformational leadership theory was used to analyze political leaders. Burns thereby connected the function of leadership with followership (Northouse, 1997). According to Burns (p. 20), transformational leadership is characterized by "*one or more individuals interacting with others in a way that inspires and elevates one another to higher moral standards.*" As stated by Burns, the primary objective of transformational

leadership is to inspire and encourage individuals to take the initiative to accomplish organizational objectives and move beyond themselves. Using these drives, executives may achieve organizational goals and give employees a sense of pride in the company's success.

Bass (1990) developed and made transformational leadership more transparent, according to Nickerson (2021). Bass thus makes the following arguments: (i) people are motivated to follow; (ii) someone possessing a strong sense of purpose and vision can do great things; and (iii) the best way to complete tasks is to approach them with vigor and excitement. Transformational leadership holds that for employees to give their all, they need to be inspired and motivated. According to Wen, Ho, Kelana, Othman, and Syed (2019), transformational leaders create and embrace a company vision that encourages people to be their best selves while exhibiting an open and sincere perspective. Ihsani, Inderawati, and Vianty (2020) used a mixed research approach to describe the transformational leadership behavior of school principals at private vocational senior high schools in Palembang, Indonesia. They discovered that the teaching-learning process and principals' transformational leadership behaviors were connected and improved student academic achievement by inspiring and motivating teachers.

According to Bass (1999), leaders with a transformational leadership style are charismatic and offer their followers intellectual stimulation, idealized influence, individual attention, and inspirational motivation. Northouse (2016) defines transformational leadership as a leadership style that uses intellectual stimulation, individual consideration, idealized influence, and inspirational motivation to inspire followers to act altruistically. Similarly, Shrestha (2020) clarified that behaviors like idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration are all part of transformational leadership. It is believed that principals who engage in these practices will improve student academic achievement and school effectiveness. Transformational leadership is mainly composed of these elements. These transformational leadership factors are covered in the following section since they are essential variables of the study question: What is the principal's influence on students' academic success in the Sidama region of Ethiopia?

2.3.1 Idealized Influence

According to Gill (2006) and Bass and Riggio (2006), an idealized influence is the degree to which a leader demonstrates exceptional behavior that causes followers to identify with them. Furthermore, according to Northouse (Northouse, 2007; Northouse, 2016), the leader in an

idealized influence situation sets an example for the followers. With idealized influence, leaders demonstrate integrity, moral commitment to followers, and selflessness (Bass, 1985; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Barling, Christie, & Hopton, 2011). Leaders who demonstrate idealized influence resist pressures to take easy or unethical shortcuts rather than being focused on the collective good of the organization and its employees collective good. They remain committed to the organization's and its employees' long-term well-being and success. Kouzes and Posner (2012: 17) argued the leader's idealized influence by saying, *'Leading by example is more effective than leading by command; if people see that you work hard while preaching hard work, they are more likely to follow you.'* Transformational leaders with idealized influence behavior must demonstrate standards, be clear about their values and philosophy, and set and achieve shared values and goals. Kouzes and Posner contended the importance of leaders' commitment to organizational values: *'Values are guiding principles in our lives concerning the personal and social ends we desire'* (Kouzes & Posner, 1995, p. 60). Shrestha (2020) also argued that transformational leaders exhibit high moral values and solid ethical conduct when interacting with their subordinates.

According to Kouzes and Posner (2003), leaders communicate personal values to their organizations. Furthermore, the authors contended that leaders set examples and align their actions with the group's shared values. Strong leaders follow through on their promises, build trust and commitments, and affirm the common values they share with others. To this end, Kouzes and Posner again explained the importance of keeping values as *'If the words you speak are not your words but someone else, you will not, in the long term, be able to be consistent in word and deed'* (Kouzes & Posner, 2007, p. 49). De Pree added to this by saying, *'Leadership can never stop at words. Leaders must act, and they can do so only in the context of their beliefs; without action or principles, no one can become a leader'* (De Pree, 1997, p. 6). Kouzes and Posner (2007) also noted in their First Law of Leadership the importance of consistency in values: *'If you do not believe in the messenger, you will not believe the message'* (p. 38). The authors also argued that trust is the basis for credibility. In their book "Credibility: How Leaders Gain and Lose It, Why People Demand It," Kouzes & Posner (2011) outlined the need for leaders to get to know their constituents and help them get to know them.

The following is how Kouzes and Posner described the significance of the leader's idealized influence:

'To get people to follow someone willingly, the majority of constituents must believe the leader 1) Honest - It is obvious that if people are going to follow someone willingly, whether it is into war, the boardroom, the front office, or the front lines, they must first convince themselves that the person is trustworthy. 2) Forward-thinking - People want leaders to have a sense of direction and care about the organization's future. 3) Competent - Before enabling others to act, we must feel they can lead us in the right direction. We must view the leader as competent and effective. 4) Inspiring - We also need our leaders to be enthusiastic, energetic, and positive about the future ((Kouzes & Posner, 2002, pp. 24-26).'

According to Bass et al. (2003), a charismatic leader who demonstrates idealized influence is trusted, respected, and admired by their followers. Northouse (2007) asserts that transformational leaders set an example for others who aspire to follow. Shrestha (2020), in his article, *Transformational Leadership and Its Dimensions: Contributions in Organizational Change among Schools*, argued more elaborately that idealized attributes of transformational leadership are charismatic qualities of leaders. According to him, leaders with idealized influence enable followers to trust leaders and commit to working under the command of leaders to achieve organizational goals.

As this attribute of transformational leadership enables the teacher to be motivated and committed in their teaching and learning activities, school principals exhibiting idealized influence will improve school academic performance by modeling themselves. In 2020, Gyansah carried out a mixed research correlational analysis to ascertain the impact of transformational leadership techniques implemented by school heads on students' academic accomplishment in the public senior schools in Kumasi Metropolitan, Ghana. The findings indicated that the principal's idealized influence tactics significantly impact students' and instructors' attitudes towards enhancing the school's overall academic performance. The idealized influence of principals motivates and inspires teachers to do their work enthusiastically and motivates students to make their efforts toward better educational outcomes. The principals can foster a cooperative atmosphere among stakeholders through idealized influence. Research by Riffe, Lacy, Watson, and Fico (2019) shows a strong correlation between teachers' job happiness and principals' idealized influence techniques, improving students' academic performance.

2.3.2 Inspirational Motivation

The second factor, inspirational motivation, gauges how well leaders persuade their followers with an appealing and inspiring vision. It refers to how leaders communicate with subordinates to develop high expectations through motivation and make them commit to achieving the organization's shared vision (Northouse, 2007; Shrestha, 2020). An inspiring leader establishes high expectations for their people, expresses confidence about the future, and gives the task at hand purpose (Northouse, 1997). Many scholars argue that leaders with inspirational motivation enable their followers to exceed their expectations of themselves (Bass, 1985; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Barling et al., 2011). Transformational leaders who demonstrate inspirational motivation maximize their followers' performance by setting ambitious but achievable goals, providing support and encouragement when faced with challenges, and encouraging their followers to feel confident in their abilities. Furthermore, transformational leaders employ inspirational, motivating strategies like sharing tales and symbols to inspire and motivate their followers. A strong, self-assured, and dynamic presence that inspires followers is how inspiring motivation spreads "*high-performance expectations*," according to Bass (1990, p. 218).

Influential transformational leaders envision the future, craft compelling visions, and foster relationships among individuals who share their vision and choose to follow it to inspire a shared vision (Kouzes & Posner, 1995). They can express to others their positive vision of the future. Transformational leadership was also described as "*the kind of leadership that gets people to infuse their energy into strategies*" by Kouzes and Posner (2007, p.122). Listening to others' dreams and demonstrating to them how they can come true are characteristics of transformational leaders with inspirational motivation. Kouzes and Posner (2012, p. 18) emphasized the significance of followers' inspiration and motivation in such a way: "*You must inspire commitment; you cannot command it.*" Furthermore, Kouzes and Posner argue that a leader should appeal to people's common goals to unite them behind a shared vision. Similarly, Dartey-Baah (2015) claims that by engaging with their followers and leading by example, an inspirational leader inspires them to take on shared responsibility.

Through inspirational motivation that inspires followers while maintaining a sense of task completion, the transformational leader creates a vision for the future. The vision is expressed intelligibly and consistently, and the transformational leader communicates the importance of each step required to turn the vision into reality while offering the support needed to accomplish the goals (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Felfe, Tartler, and Liepmann, 2004). The goal of a

transformational leader is to communicate the organization's vision to followers to encourage them to adopt new perspectives (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Bass and Avolio believe transformational leaders impact followers by inspiring and encouraging them to meet organizational objectives (Bass & Avolio, 1995). The authors added that transformational leaders enable subordinates to imagine appealing future outcomes related to the organization (Bass & Avolio, 1995).

This attribute of transformational leadership is essential in the school setting as it allows school principals to motivate and inspire teachers and other actors involved in the teaching and learning process. Principals can motivate teachers and students to improve academic performance through transformational leadership's inspirational motivational characteristics (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Northouse, 2016; Shrestha, 2020). Principals can excite teachers and the school community by sharing the school's goals with them through motivational and inspirational activities. Principals can also instill zeal and dedication in teachers through it. It is even more important to encourage students toward high academic performance expectations. School principals with inspirational motivation can envision teachers and students looking at the future big picture, thus enabling them to work hard to accomplish these envisioned school goals (Shrestha, 2020). Teachers are motivated to dedicate themselves to assessing students' academic achievement and general school improvement by this attribute.

2.3.3 Intellectual stimulation

The third component, intellectual stimulation, measures how much the leader requests about the opinions of their followers, questions presumptions, and takes calculated risks. It also promotes intelligence and creativity in problem-solving (Shrestha, 2020). Bass and Riggio believe this attribute helps leaders inspire and encourage innovation and creativity in their followers (Bass & Riggio, 2006). In addition, transformational leaders who motivate their followers to solve challenges independently are said to provide intellectual stimulation (Bass, 1985; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Barling et al., 2011). The leader facilitates knowledge in the context of intellectual stimulation. Transformational leaders assist staff members in framing issues, offer resources for additional research, and let them come to conclusions to help them develop critical thinking abilities. Bass argued that intellectual stimulation plays a role in developing and allowing followers to release their creativity in such a way that “*Enables followers to think of old problems in new ways*” (Bass, 1990, p. 218). Tims, Bakker, and Xanthopoulou (2011) believe intellectually stimulating behavior fosters an environment where

followers are critical thinkers and actively participate in the organization. Encouraging the heart also requires a strong belief in others and anticipating their best efforts (Kouzes & Posner, 2003). On the other hand, leaders who promote intellectual stimulation also help their followers develop novel and creative solutions to problems (Bass, 1999; Bass, 2000; Dartey-Baah, 2015). According to Northouse (2007), followers of transformational leaders who possess intellectually stimulating qualities are encouraged to think creatively. Cherry (2020) also argued that transformational leaders must inspire creativity and challenge the status quo.

Kouzes and Posner (2002) laid out four conditions for leaders seeking opportunities to challenge established practices. These four essential skills are (1) taking the initiative, (2) making challenges relevant, (3) innovating and creating, and (4) searching outside of oneself for new ideas. It is said that followers of transformational leaders are motivated to go above and beyond expectations (Bass, 1985). According to Bass's (1990) theory, transformational leadership produces obedient, devoted, and engaged workers. These employees frequently go above and beyond what their job descriptions require (Bass, 1985).

School principals who engage in intellectual stimulation can motivate teachers' creativity toward school improvement. Teachers are committed to their work when the principals encourage teachers to think freely and act creatively. This, in turn, enables teachers to release their creative power, allowing them to work toward improving students' learning outcomes. Muia (2018) investigated how principals use transformational leadership to influence students' academic achievement in Kenyan secondary schools. The study discovered that the principal's intellectual stimulation is highly linked to teacher motivation and improved student academic performance.

2.3.4 Individualized consideration

The fourth element of transformational leadership, individualized consideration or attention, speaks to how a leader caters to each follower's requirements, acts as a mentor or coach, and pays attention to their needs and concerns (Gill, 2006). According to Bass (1985), Bass & Riggio (2006), and Barling et al. (2011), it alludes to the recognition of the unique needs of every follower. Bass claims that giving neglected members personalized attention defines individual consideration (Bass, 1990). According to Bass, an attentive leader caters to followers' needs, mentors them, and exhibits compassionate and empathic behaviors. This is because a considerate leader understands that followers have different demands for achievement and development. These encouraging actions enable followers to reach their full

potential and develop their talents (Barling et al., 2011). A leader pays careful attention to every follower, seeing them as unique individuals in their personal and professional lives. These leaders mentor, coach, and help their colleagues to promote organizational success (Bass, 1999; Bass, 2000; Dartey-Baah, 2015).

Kouzes and Posner highlighted the significance of considering each person's potential, stating that "*leaders enable others to act by giving it away, rather than by hoarding the power they have*" (Kouzes & Posner, 2007, p. 21). Individual consideration behaviors exhibited by transformational leaders empower others to make decisions and encourage others to follow through. They create environments where people feel good about their work and how it contributes to the greater good. According to Bass and Avolio (1990), transformational leadership empowers followers to put their organization's needs over their own. Transformational school principals who exhibit these four attributes can increase student academic outcomes through the idealized influence of teachers, inspiration, motivation for teacher creativity, and consideration of teachers' individual needs.

2.4 SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Enwereuzo (2022), in his article reviewing the role of educational leadership in maintaining educational goals, defines school leadership as the process of enlisting and directing the skills of teachers, students, and parents to achieve shared educational goals. In contrast to school administration and management, which is focused on exerting control and oversight, school leadership is different. School leadership concepts suggest empowerment, proactivity, influence, and dynamism for school transformation and enhanced performance, especially regarding improved learning outcomes. According to Enwereuzo (2022), school leadership is the process through which school principals supervise and organize staff and student activities to fulfill academic goals.

Based on literature reviews and relevant empirical data, Leithwood, Harris, and Hopkins (2008) reviewed empirical research on effective school leadership and found that almost all significant school leaders employ the same core leadership strategies. Leithwood et al. (2008) identified these directions as (i) creating a vision and establishing goals, (ii) comprehending and fostering human development, (iii) restructuring the organization, and (iv) overseeing the teaching and learning program. Enwereuzo (2022) conducted a review of scholars' articles on educational

leadership in Nigeria, using a descriptive approach and argued that the function of school leadership is collaborating with staff to accomplish their tasks, supporting subordinates to enhance educational programs and planned activities, leading academic programs, and ensuring that the learner's development is in line with the outcomes of the targeted learner.

Smith and Riley (2012), in their article, "*School Leadership in Time of Crises*," asserted that school leadership is viewed as a proactive strategic process that entails creating and disseminating important objectives and a pertinent strategy for execution, oversight, and evaluation. Persuading people of their ideals and molding their thoughts, emotions, and actions to reach their full potential are all part of leadership as influence. According to Smith and Riley's research, successful school leaders are skilled communicators and determined visionaries who listen, think, learn, and empower their staff.

School leadership implies the roles of principals, vice principals, and other staff members who work in different teams. Although leadership at the school level is distributed (Harris, 2014), the critical leadership role belongs to principals. Day, Gu, and Sammons (2016) agreed that school leadership is becoming an exciting component in education since it is essential in increasing student outcomes. Similarly, Shatzer, Caldarella, Hallam, and Brown (2014) stated that the school principal's leadership style can significantly impact teaching and learning quality, resulting in increased student learning through a better school environment.

2.5 TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION

Different studies underscored that in school improvement, principals are effective when they practice transformational leadership styles (Sergiovanni, 2007; Shahrill, 2014; Quin et al., 2015; Sun & Leithwood, 2017; Wang, Wilhite & Martino, 2016). After investigating several publications, Sergiovanni (2007) made the case that because schools are unique environments, they require transformational leaders. Quin et al. (2015) carried out a quantitative analysis to identify the leadership behaviors required to increase academic attainment and bring about good change in school organizations. Teachers from ten Southwest Mississippi school districts in the United States participated. According to the researchers, principals in high-performing schools are more likely than lower-performing schools to use all leadership practices. Some academics (Burns, 1978; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005) assert that organizational restructuring and realignment, staff and curriculum development, interaction with external communities, and

vision are typically associated with educational transformational leadership. Principals' understanding of their school and its students is crucial, according to Waters, Marzano, and McNulty, who stated that "*principals should know when, how, and why to create learning environments that support people, connect them, and provide the knowledge, skills, and resources they need to succeed*" (Waters et al., 2003, p. 2). The transformational school leader also pushes teachers away from their self-interests by inspiring them to attain higher levels of success. This indicates that school principals who show one of the transformational factors, inspirational motivation, can increase teachers' commitment to school goals. Heck and Hallinger (2014) used a multilevel, cross-classified model to examine the effects of school leadership on school improvement and student academic outcomes. After conducting the assessment, they argued that school leadership impacts school improvement by creating conducive collaboration and consistency among teachers.

Several studies on transformational leadership emphasize that administrators can be change agents who modify people, culture, and atmosphere by addressing schools' complex and ever-changing demands (Quin et al., 2015; McCarley, Peters, & Decman, 2016). To investigate the relationship between teacher perceptions of a principal's demonstration of transformational leadership qualities and the perceived school climate in a large urban school district in southeast Texas, USA, McCarley et al. (2016) conducted a multi-level analysis using a Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire. The study's findings showed a relationship between engaged and supportive school climate components and transformational leadership. Effective administrators build academic achievement, increase student accomplishment, and bring about positive changes in their schools (Quin et al., 2015). After in-class education, school leadership is the second most significant factor in influencing a student's success level, according to Dutta and Sahney (2015). To facilitate student academic success, a transformational school administrator supports educators by giving clear direction and defining what is essential to the institution (Sergiovanni, 2007; Shahrill, 2014; Shatzer, Caldarella, Hallam, & Brown, 2014; Quin et al., 2015).

Principals have the power to affect students' academic achievement since they are leaders. Teachers design activities to improve the teaching-learning process and the instructional strategies they employ in the classroom (Hoy & Forsyth, 1986). Many scholars concur that by inspiring teachers, staff, and students, an academic leader can increase a school's ability to enhance student learning (Guarino, Santibañez & Daley, 2006). Sun and Leithwood (2017)

state that school administrators who demonstrate transformational leadership improve student academic achievement by providing intellectual stimulation and individualized attention.

According to Christie, Thompson, and Whiteley (2009), there is a claim that school administrators can influence teachers' performance on behalf of students if they build school capacity through effective leadership. Shatzer et al. (2014) claim that transformational school leaders may create a school's culture and vision to improve learning and instruction, improving students' academic performance. Day et al. (2016) went on to say that school principals support the growth of teachers' motivation, dedication, and skill sets to raise students' academic achievement by facilitating the structure and culture of the school toward a positive school environment.

Quin and colleagues contended that a transformational leader plays a crucial part in altering a school's culture, atmosphere, and individuals to accommodate the needs of change and intricacy (Quin et al., 2015). Additional researchers clarified that transformational school leaders can impact school climate and culture as well as student academic progress by demonstrating particular leadership strategies (Wang, Wilhite, & Martino, 2016; Sun & Leithwood, 2017). As cited by Day, Gu, and Sammons (2016), the National College for School Leadership (2001) described how school leadership contributes to increased school effectiveness as follows:

"Effective head teachers provide a clear vision and sense of direction for the school. They set priorities. They prevent staff members from becoming distracted or sidetracked with projects that will not significantly affect the pupils' work by concentrating their attention on what is most important. They are aware of what occurs in their classes. They are well aware of the advantages and disadvantages of their personnel. They are skilled in minimizing flaws and enhancing strengths. They can concentrate their staff development program on their personnel and school's needs. They come to this conclusion through a methodical program of observation and assessment. Effective head teachers can get the greatest performance out of their staff members, which is essential to influencing classroom work and boosting student standards. They do this by having a clear sense of purpose, awareness of what is going on, and clarity of thought."

According to several studies, administrative leadership is second only to direct classroom instruction in terms of its indirect impact on student performance (Bush & Glover, 2014; Dutta & Sahney, 2015; Boberg & Bourgeois, 2016; Leithwood & Sun, 2018). Some academics believe principals' leadership abilities directly impact students' academic performance because their ongoing interactions with teachers and administrators foster a productive learning environment and culture (Ross & Cozzens, 2016). According to Ross and Cozzens (2016), school principals should work to enhance the school climate, culture, and instructional best practices that lead to successful teachers in their capacity as instructional leaders. The authors state that administrative leadership approaches involving professionalism, diversity, reflection, and collaboration are necessary to attain instructional excellence in the classroom (Ross & Cozzens, 2016). It is also acknowledged that administrators' leadership styles impact student learning, work satisfaction, and the school atmosphere (Shatzer et al., 2014).

Principals are accountable to various stakeholders, including students, parents, careers, governors, the local government, and the community, to deliver high-quality education, encourage collective responsibility among the entire school community, and support the education service more broadly (ETP, 1994). Thus, it is stressed that in Ethiopian schools, school leadership is at the core of school improvement and student academic accomplishment (MOE, 2002).

In different literature, researchers revealed that leadership styles determine organizational culture and job performance, leading to better outcomes. Similarly, a leader's approach is critical to creating innovative, functional schools and promoting high-quality instruction (Dinham, 2005). Different actors work together in the school to achieve effective student outcomes. This requires fruitful group work and positive interaction among the actors. Thus, working with individuals to change the teaching and learning process is encouraged by transformational leadership (Blasé and Blasé, 2003; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005; Day et al., 2016). Effective leadership styles can impact students' performance (Waters et al., 2003). Based on a comprehensive analysis of multiple studies, Sun and Leithwood (2017) made the case that leadership enhances student academic attainment by fostering intellectual stimulation, a shared goal, and tailored support. These attributes are factors of transformational leadership, and the review of the author's work indicates the role of transformational school leadership in improving students' academic performance.

Effective transformational leaders foster an environment that supports teachers' efficacy in carrying out their classroom responsibilities, dignity, and positive student interactions (Huang, 2001). According to Ewest (2015), Underwood, Mohr & Ross (2016), and Anderson (2017), transformational school leaders are selfless and prioritize the needs of others over their own. They also communicate the school's vision, set norms, help staff members develop their strengths by altering their attitudes, and encourage them to take risks. Transformational school leadership similarly influences teachers' perspectives about school circumstances, commitment, work satisfaction, culture, and climate (Allen, Grigsby, & Peters, 2015; Anderson, 2017). The significance of school principals as the "*single most important factor in school effectiveness*" was also acknowledged by Hauserman and Stick (2013).

In his book "*Transformational Leadership in Education*," Kenneth Leithwood (1994) developed the transformational model of school leadership, drawing on the work of Burns (1978), Bass (1985), and Bass and Avolio (1994). He pointed out that for school principals to successfully traverse the twenty-first century's problems, they need to possess the Four I's of transformational leadership, as Bass and Avolio (1994) outlined. As to his assertion, the head of the school ought to give specific attention and care to each staff member, especially to those who appear marginalized (individual consideration). A proficient school administrator must stimulate staff members' minds to solve challenges in novel ways (intellectual stimulation). The influential school administrator must convey high standards to teachers and students through a strong and dynamic presence (inspirational motivation). Ultimately, the successful administrator must set an example for teachers to follow through with their achievements and moral qualities (idealized influence).

Through transformational leadership, it is possible to create a circumstantial event that ensures that the staff makes the organization's goals part of themselves (Marsh, Robertson, Duff, Philips, Cooper, and Weyman, 1995; Ozaralli, 2003). The transformational leader motivates, directs, and inspires employee action toward achieving organizational goals. According to Bass (1999), strong leaders can shift their followers' focus from their interests to a higher goal.

Taking the school as an organization, it is true that transformational school leadership motivates and directs teachers and other school stakeholders to achieve school goals. Anderson (2017) asserts that teachers' opinions of administrators' or leaders' leadership styles influence commitment, job satisfaction, and student accomplishment. According to Blase and Blase (1994), "*staff members with high levels of empowerment and participative decision-making*

were the hallmarks of successful principals" (p. 12). Hallinger (2005) also contended that school leaders influence school staff, parents, and students.

Ozaralli (2003) found that staff satisfaction increases in an organizational setting where transformational leadership is predicated. They make extra efforts to complete the task. Accordingly, administrators' individual consideration, intellectual stimulation, and shared vision affect teachers' commitment, efficacy, and trust, affecting learning, moral growth, and academic success (Sun & Leithwood, 2017). Additionally, Shatzer et al. noted that the four characteristics of transformational school leadership that set it apart from other types of corporate leadership are intellectual stimulation, idealized influence, individualized concern, and inspirational motivation (Shatzer et al., 2016).

In addition to potentially involving cultural shifts that reflect higher ideals, innovation, and accomplishments, this leadership style also powerfully fosters and advances organizational vision. Thus, teacher efficacy, commitment, and trust positively correlate with student learning, and transformational leadership approaches substantially impact teacher competency (Sun & Leithwood, 2017). The researchers satisfied themselves with the roles of school leadership through the influence of teachers. They claim that teacher motivation, job satisfaction, and overall school effectiveness correlate with the transformational behaviors of school leaders (Finnigan, 2012; Menon, 2014; Lingam & Lingam, 2015). Another argument made for the importance of transformational leader behaviors is that they help followers stick to the school's vision and goals while also helping them make social and personal relationships (Bass et al., 2003). Furthermore, Day et al. (2016) explained that school principals can promote student motivation, commitment, and skills by facilitating structure and culture in the school.

The works of Leithwood (1994) indicated that principal leadership affects student achievement. Maxwell (2002) states that meaningful school improvement starts with leadership and cultural transformation. Shatzer et al., 2014 also explained that transformational school leaders establish a school culture that promotes an effective and efficient teaching and learning environment toward school effectiveness.

In his book *Principals and Student Achievement: What the Research Says*, Cotton (2003) listed twenty-five principal behaviors that impact students' attitudes and academic performance. These are;

- Safe and orderly environment

- Vision and goals focused on high levels of student learning
- High expectations for student learning
- Self-confidence, responsibility, and perseverance
- Visibility and accessibility
- Positive and supportive climate
- Communication and Interaction
- Emotional and interpersonal support
- Parent and community outreach and participation
- Rituals, ceremonies, and other symbolic actions
- Shared leadership, decision-making, and staff empowerment
- Collaboration
- Instructional leadership
- The ongoing pursuit of high levels of student learning
- Norm of continuous improvement
- Discussion of instructional issues
- Classroom observation and feedback to teachers
- Support of teachers' autonomy
- Support of risk-taking
- Opportunities and resources for professional development
- Protecting Instructional Time
- Monitoring student progress and sharing findings
- Use of student progress for program improvement
- Recognition of student and staff achievement
- Role modeling

The majority of these 25 behaviors are connected to and associated with the idealized, inspirational, intellectual, and individualized behaviors that are key components of Bass' transformational leadership behaviors. For example, Cotton's school principal behaviors, such as vision/goals focused on high levels of student learning, high expectation of student achievement, collaboration, continued pursuit of high levels of student learning, communication and interaction, and shared leadership, are based on the school mission and interrelate with inspirational motivation of school subordinates toward achievement of school goals (Bass, 1985,1990; Gill, 2006; Northouse, 2007; Kouzes & Posner, 2012; Yukl, 2012; Beherendt et al.,2017; Steinman et al., 2018; Shrestha, 2020). Collaboration and shared

leadership behaviors are also ways of individualized consideration (Silins, 1994; Enwereuzo, 2022). Behavior like role modeling is related to the idealized influence of transformational leadership factors (Burns, 1978).

Transformational school leadership should also develop a positive environment fostering teaching and learning capabilities. Cotton's behaviors, such as a positive and supportive climate, a safe and orderly environment, support of teacher autonomy, emotional and interpersonal support, and community participation, are some of the behaviors that transformational school leadership should develop (Burns 1978; Lethwood & Jantzi, 2005; Kouzes & Posner, 2006; Heck & Hallinger, 2014). Supporting risk-taking and professional development opportunities is desirable and enables intellectual stimulation (Bass, 1990; Northouse, 2016).

On the other hand, Cotton's school principal's behavior indicates that school principals exhibit instructional leadership to some extent. Classroom observation and feedback to teachers, recognition of student progress, monitoring student progress, use of student progress for program improvement, and discussion of instructional issues are some behaviors related to instructional school leadership (Leithwood et al., 2008; Northouse, 2016; Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

On the other hand, Marzano et al. (2005) listed 21 duties of school principals and how they relate to student academic achievement in their book "*School Leadership That Works: From Research to Results*." These are:

- Affirmation
- Change Agent
- Contingent Rewards
- Communication
- Culture
- Discipline
- Flexibility
- Focus
- Ideals/Beliefs
- Input
- Intellectual Stimulation

- Involvement in Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
- Knowledge of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
- Monitoring/ Evaluating
- Optimizer
- Order
- Outreach
- Relationships
- Resources
- Situational awareness
- Visibility

Morzano's communication and focus responsibilities of school principals are related to the mission and vision of Cotton's school principal behavior. In contrast, monitoring and evaluation, input, knowledge of improvement, instructional assessment, contingent rewards, and affirmation responsibilities are instructional leadership practices of school principals (Gill, 2006; Northouse, 2007; Kouzes & Posner, 2012; Yukl, 2012; Beherendt et al., 2017; Steinman et al., 2018). On the other hand, situational awareness, flexibility, discipline, outreach, and relationships are the roles of school principals in developing a positive school environment (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). The visibility role indicates the idealized appearance of school principals. Similarly, change is related to inspirational motivation. School principals' responsibility for intellectual stimulation is directly related to one of the transformational leadership factors (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985, 1990; Gill, 2006; Northouse, 2016).

The behavior of Cotton's principals and Marzano's suggestion about principals' responsibilities indicate that school principals exhibit mixed leadership styles, including transformational, transactional, and, to some extent, instructional leadership roles. Responsibilities such as contingent reward, monitoring, evaluating, and order are transactional leadership practices. Cotton's principal behavior as a student and staff member recognition is also one of the transactional leadership attributes of contingent reward (Northouse, 2016).

"The most successful principals engage their staff and constituents in participative decision-making," according to Cotton (2003:69). According to several studies, there should be a combination of leadership styles in schools. On the other hand, research on the effects of transformational school leadership on student outcomes was synthesized by Sun and Leithwood (2012). They discovered that improving student achievement requires constant

accountability from school administrators and that instruction is paramount. As a result, methods of instruction and transformational behaviors were combined. According to Urick (2016), an instructional leader is a principal who oversees daily operations, manages the budget, hires and supervises staff, and maintains the safety and orderliness of the school premises.

While transformational leadership behaviors impact teacher motivation and ultimately result in student performance, Finnigan's (2012) study indicated that instructional leadership is directly associated with higher levels of success (Shatzer et al., 2014). Thus, transformational and instructional leadership philosophies are crucial for students' progress and thrive in a school. Thus, to effectively support student outcomes, school leaders should demonstrate some aspects of transactional and instructional roles in addition to transformational leadership styles.

Setting directions, developing people, redesigning organizations, and enhancing the instructional program are the four domains of successful school leadership that influence teaching and learning outcomes, according to Leithwood and his associates' synthesis of prior research based on qualitative and quantitative data analysis (Leithwood, 2010; Leithwood & McCullough, 2016). Leithwood and colleagues (Witziers, Bosker & Krüger, 2003; Robinson et al., 2008; Heck & Hallinger, 2009; Chang, 2011; Shatzer et al., 2013; Sun & Leithwood, 2015; Wu, Gao & Shen, 2019) have proposed a similar conclusion that supported the position as mentioned above. The points mentioned earlier concur with Bass's transformational leadership elements and their critical qualities for improving organizational performance.

The Kouzes and Posner (2009) Leadership Practice Inventory (LPI) is helpful for gauging standard leadership practices in educational settings. Influential leaders engage in five activities that make up the Leadership Practice Inventory (LPI): a) empowering people to take action; b) setting an example; c) inspiring a shared vision; d) challenging the status quo; and e) encouraging the heart (Pugh, Fillingim, Blackbourn, Bunch & Thomas, 2012).

Motivating others to act is first on the list of leadership activities evaluated in the LPI assessment. This refers to leaders who engage and collaborate with subordinates, promote group dynamics, and create a climate of mutual regard and confidence (Lingam & Lingam, 2015; Quin et al., 2015). The second aspect of the LPI survey is modeling the way, which involves developing a unique set of values, setting an example, and motivating others (Quin et al., 2015). According to Quin et al. (2015), the third LPI attribute, "inspiring a shared vision," involves leaders and followers collaborating to create a vision for the community. Another trait

of successful leadership indicated by the LPI is challenging the process, which describes leaders who inspire and encourage subordinates to take risks by experimenting with novel approaches (Quin et al., 2015). In this assessment, "encouraging the heart" is the last leadership trait. It describes leaders who foster a sense of commitment and connection among their followers to motivate and inspire them to accomplish (Quin et al., 2015). These procedures are crucial for assessing school administrators' leadership styles and are consistent with Bass's transformational leadership criteria.

Balyer (2012) found that administrators impacted teacher and student performance by examining how teachers perceived their transformational leadership techniques. Bass's (1985) transformational leadership model for school leadership was expanded to include four new dimensions: demonstrating high-performance standards, establishing a positive school climate, modeling excellent behavior, and developing procedures to promote teacher involvement (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000).

As a result, transformational leadership characteristics should be prioritized to influence the formulation of group goals, high student success, professional growth, and vision building in schools. School leaders greatly influence the performance of teachers and students (Balyer, 2012). School leadership is essential for school groups to succeed (Quin et al., 2015).

2.6 INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AT SCHOOL

In the school, the principals are responsible for general school-based leadership activities. School leadership includes transformational and instructional leadership exercises. The main difference between transformational and instructional leadership is how leaders engage in school-based activities. Instructional leadership focuses on school goals, curriculum, instruction, and environment, whereas transformational school leadership focuses on restructuring the school by improving school conditions (Stewart, 2006). This indicates that the two functions are essential for the school leadership to be successful. Transformational school principals must participate in instructional activities to affect students' academic achievement. This section discusses instructional school leadership in light of transformational school leadership.

Robinson (2011) states that instructional leadership requires a school vision prioritizing student learning. School administrators must work closely with teachers to ensure they consistently

improve and utilize best practices to facilitate teaching-learning activities. Administrators have a crucial role as instructional leaders because, as Robinson puts it, "*student-centered leadership requires direct involvement with teachers in the business of improving teaching and learning*" (2011: 22). Principals may make a big difference in how their schools lead instructional practices by facilitating guided learning opportunities, informal conversation, and teacher assessments. A student-centered vision for the school is a prerequisite for school administrators. Instructional leaders can use this vision as a roadmap to help them prioritize student learning in their daily work. The school should revisit its vision every year, incorporating feedback from all relevant parties, such as community members, parents, instructors, and students. In light of this, Healy (2009) said, "*A leader who has a vision and is focused on that vision is required to take a school from mediocre to great*" (p. 30). Above all, the school's mission must be closely tied to student education and pursuing learning enhancements. Robinson argued the importance of instructional school leadership (Robinson, 2011, p. 155), saying, "*Your work must be deeply informed by knowledge on how to enhance learning and teaching to achieve the vision.*" Robinson also suggested that educational leaders should again be in charge of leading academic institutions based on the abovementioned justification. Robinson's argument indicates that transformational school leadership should take teaching and learning goals at the center. According to Lemoine and Greer (2014), "*the school faculty will never accomplish the task of meeting the needs of students and helping them progress*" (p. 20) without the involved direction of the administrator. The most successful educational system will be achieved by combining instructional and transformational leadership approaches (Menon, 2014). According to Menon, relying exclusively on transformational leadership is insufficient, even though this approach has proven to be dynamic and effective in educational settings. As per Menon's (2014) proposition, the efficacy of transformational leadership approaches can only be achieved when combined with supplementary leadership behaviors, including those associated with instructional leadership.

Leaders must possess the necessary skills, confidence, and competence to assist teachers in enhancing their teaching methods. Fink and Resnick (2001:1) state, "*Most principals spend relatively little time in classrooms and even less analyzing instruction with teachers.*" Principals must identify ways to enhance their teaching practices by spending time with teachers as part of their instructional leadership responsibilities. This also enables school principals to motivate and inspire teachers and students to achieve school goals.

According to the study, the principal must be a capable instructional leader. Hallinger's work from 2003 was noteworthy in instructional leadership because he worked with others to create the most extensively tested model, which included three main elements of leadership practice: defining the school mission, managing the instructional program, and fostering a positive school climate. Similarly, Sergiovanni (1991) described instructional leadership as principals who can create educational initiatives that improve student instruction and learning.

According to Leithwood and Jantzi (1999), instructional leaders are educators and school administrators prioritizing teaching and learning practices to raise student performance. For student performance to be successful and to happen in a collaboration between district leaders, administrators, and teachers, instructional, transformational, and, to some extent, transactional leadership strategies must be apparent.

The above argument indicates that transformational school principals should also have an instructional role. This will be a good solution for those who argue that school principals do not directly impact student academic improvement. Although some scholars say that the role of school principals in improving student educational outcomes is indirect, it is believed that their role is essential to improving student academic outcomes in different ways.

2.7 SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND EDUCATION QUALITY

2.7.1 Introduction

Different scholars from different perspectives define the quality of education. There is no universal definition of the quality of education. According to Madani (2019), education quality includes a variety of indicators, such as student/teacher ratios, teacher qualifications, and test scores. Belmonte, Bove, D'Inverno, and Modica (2020) explained that education inputs determine the quality of education. According to him, the quality of education rises when the required resources are available (Belmonte et al., 2020). Learners, the environment, content, process, and outcomes are the five pillars of education quality that UNICEF recognizes (UNICEF, 2000). As a result, UNICEF (2000:2-4) provided the following explanation of educational quality.

Quality education includes learners who are healthy, well-nourished, ready to participate and learn, and supported in learning by their families and

communities. It also includes healthy, safe, protective, and gender-sensitive environments that provide adequate resources and facilities. In the content sense, reflected and relevant curricula and materials are needed. A well-trained teacher with an appropriate teaching methodology and a well-managed classroom are necessary indicators. These outcomes encompass knowledge, skills, and attitudes linked to national educational goals and positive social participation.

According to UNESCO, a high standard of education should guarantee several significant aspects of learning. Regarding this, UNESCO (2005) stated that quality imperative concerns should support students' emotional and creative development in its Education for All (EFA) statement. It is also maintained that high-quality education will support students' aspirations for secure and peaceful citizenship, advance excellence, and impart local and global cultural values to future organizations. To understand the significance of high-quality education, UNESCO (2005:50–52) stated that it "*broadens perspectives to open minds to a pluralist world, empowers individuals, gives voice, unlocks their potential, and opens pathways to self-actualization.*" Similarly, in its Global Monitoring Report on EFA, UNESCO (2004) claimed that increasing quality is the only way to realize education for all (EFA). This suggests that education needs to be improved in terms of quality. This shows the need to enhance the quality of education.

Samoff (2007:5-6) related education quality with national examination scores, concluding that '*when students perform well on national examination, it is reasonable to conclude that they had a high-quality education.*' Nafukho and Muyia (2021) reviewed the literature to examine quality education, lifelong learning, and a learning society for Africa's sustainable development in light of the sustainable development goals (SGD4). After reviewing numerous sources, they defined education quality as learners' quality, learning environment, content, process, and results.

2.7.2 Indicators of Quality Education

According to Kaagan and Smith (1985), an educational quality indicator offers broad insights into the state and well-being of the educational system. Dare (2005) defined education quality indicators as performance indicators that refer to quality features or objectives to show the broad framework of performance evaluation in which the learners operate.

Quality indicators in education can be divided into three categories, according to Ross and Mahkk (1990:72): inputs, outputs, and processes. Educational inputs include personnel, instructional materials, facilities, and content. Personnel with the necessary skills and training to instruct the learning process are included in the educational personnel. These are usually the efficacy and caliber of school principals as well as the caliber of teachers. On the other hand, financial input represents educational expenses given to students to support instruction and learning.

School intensity, teacher regularity and punctuality, and teacher-pupil intervention are all part of the process continuum of education quality indicators. Exam results, better health practices, active engagement in social events, and other outcomes are also part of the continuum of outcomes or results.

Principals are critical leaders at the school level. Today, principals are challenged when parents question their students' performance. These alert school principals to make themselves ready to work hard toward improving student learning outcomes with different actors such as teachers, students, parents, and the community. Working with and influencing others demands effective leadership. According to Leithwood (1994), principals' leadership of schools has a positive effect on student achievement. Comprehensive research work also indicated that the leadership style of school principals has a significant role in changing school climate and culture, leading to better student academic performance (Leithwood & Sun, 2012; Shatzer et al., 2014; Anderson, 2017; Sun & Leithwood, 2017). Effective transformational leaders are believed to foster an environment that supports teachers' efficacy in carrying out their classroom responsibilities, dignity, and positive student interactions (Huang, 2001; Anderson, 2017).

According to Marsh et al. (1995), Ozaralli (2003), and Leithwood & Sun (2012), a transformational leader crafts an incident that guarantees that the employees internalize the organization's objectives. This encourages, guides, and motivates workers to support the organization's objectives. Ozaralli (2003) found similar results, noting that employees are more content and go above and beyond to complete tasks in an environment where transformational leadership is assumed. Substantial cultural shifts reflecting higher values, more creativity, and more significant accomplishments are ways this leadership style fosters and feeds organizational vision (Ross & Cozzens, 2016; Allen et al., 2015; Shatzer et al., 2014; Olson, 2019).

From the views of the researchers above, school leadership is an essential indicator of educational quality. School leadership makes a difference in education quality based on its styles and effectiveness (Quin et al., 2015; Anderson, 2017; Leithwood & Sun, 2018).

2.7.3 Factors that affect the quality of education

Many factors affect the quality of education. Among these factors, the size of the student class, the instructional materials, the school facilities, the competence and commitment of the teachers, the relevance of the curriculum and the language of instruction, and the leadership and management of the school are the major ones. These are inside-school factors that affect student learning. Outside school factors include student family background, preschool background and exposure, parent participation, and support (Dare, 2005). Instructional materials, including textbooks, additional reference books, periodicals, audiovisual aids, and pedagogical centers, are essential for students to learn.

Physical school facilities are crucial for students to learn at their best. These include things like classroom layout and size, which affect how teachers teach; the amount of room and study furniture available; the presence of restrooms, which influences girls' attendance and absence from school; and access to clean water, electricity, health care, etc. (UNICEF, 2000). Teacher efficacy and competency are the most crucial elements influencing student learning. The 2000 Dakar Framework for Action confirms that teacher quality impacts student learning differently.

The relevance and appropriateness of the curriculum is another factor that affects the quality of education. Student achievement and curriculum content are related. A successful curriculum should integrate content matter carefully and concentrate on outcomes, standards, and learning objectives for students, according to UNICEF (2000). In all subject areas, the curriculum should be built around well-defined learning objectives appropriate for the grade level and well-arranged (UNICEF, 2000). School administration and leadership are key factors that impact the quality of education. In the following section, we will discuss this in further detail.

2.8 TRANSFORMATIONAL SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND STUDENT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Many research studies have revealed that school leadership has become the most widely accepted role in school effectiveness and student academic achievement. According to Johnson

and Snyder (1986:237), “*School leaders are key factors in the school’s attempt to alter achievement norms, and strong instructional leadership is one of the most important determinants of all school activities associated with school effectiveness.*” This idea indicates that the school leadership role influences all other factors that positively affect the students' learning outcomes. Duke, Tucker, Salmonowicz, and Levy (2006) researched what issues newly appointed low-performing school principals believed needed to be resolved to improve student achievement and how much these perceived circumstances differed among Virginia state schools in the United States of America. The researchers discovered that low-quality leadership frequently leads to poorly suited school organizations, affecting student achievement. According to Haris et al. (2003), effective school administrators have a vision for their schools and students' education, leading to better student outcomes. Quin et al. (2015) added that substantial academic accomplishment and higher student achievement are two other ways competent school administrators bring about beneficial transformation. According to Sebastian and Allensworth (2012), researchers concur that school leadership is essential to managing schools and improving the standard of teaching and teaching. “*Of all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at school, classroom instruction is second only to leadership,*” according to Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, and Wahlstrom (2004:57), who argued for the significance of school leadership. This statement highlights the significance of school leadership as a factor affecting student learning.

A clear and consistent learning direction that prioritizes improving student learning outcomes is established for schools with the assistance of school leadership. According to Leithwood, Jantzi, and Steinbach (1999), school leadership affects every other element of education, including building commitment to change, developing people, fostering teacher growth, and interacting with external forces constantly acquiring and directing resources.

School leadership attributes positively impact teacher dedication, which has a beneficial knock-on effect on student performance. Quin et al. (2015) conducted a quantitative study involving teachers from 10 school districts in Southwest Mississippi to determine the difference in leadership practices between high- and low-performing schools. The scholars argued that when comparing high-performing schools to those with worse performance, principals in the former usually demonstrate transformational leadership qualities. Bush (2008) also argued that school leadership could influence school subordinates toward school vision achievement. Similarly, Leithwood and Jantzi (2006) argued that leadership is vital for effectiveness and a changing school environment. Effective school principals are also believed to be able to set the vision of

a school. School principals can set a school vision based on stakeholders' expectations and, in the process, set direction while creating a conducive environment for the teaching and learning process (Day et al., 2011).

Harris (2002:16) related school effectiveness with effective school leadership, stating that *'principals' leadership effectiveness can positively affect student's academic achievements.'* School effectiveness is the ability of schools to achieve school-related goals, among which is the academic performance of students, which is the most important (Bishara, 2017). School effectiveness is related to student academic test scores. It is argued that students' test scores are higher in schools with greater effectiveness (Bishara, 2017). Since 2000, extensive research has proposed the relationship between student academic accomplishment and transformational school leadership (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2003; Finnigam, 2012; Quin et al., 2015). Leithwood et al. (1999; 2006) created the transformational school leadership model to quantify the actions of school leaders that contribute to the success of their schools. Leithwood and Jantzi (2003) found that transformational school leadership dimensions positively affect teacher commitment and student outcomes. Similarly, Quin et al. (2015) argued that principals in high-performing schools employ more or better transformational leadership practices than principals in low-performing schools. On the other hand, Duke et al. (2006) argued that a lack of adequate and transformative school leadership results in a poor school environment, leading to poor performance.

Anastasiou and Garametsi (2021) considered school leadership an influential factor in school effectiveness. Similarly, Harris, Day, Hopkins, Hadfield, Hargreaves, and Chapman (2019) and Ibrahim (2021) argued that quality school leadership has the potential to change students' academic performance and that there are apparent differences in the student's academic performance based on the leadership styles explored. Cook (2014) also argued that a good school leader nurtures a school environment that promotes effective teaching and learning for students' academic success.

Numerous studies have examined transformational leadership's direct and indirect effects on student achievement (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2003; Finnigam, 2012; Quin et al., 2015). In these studies, researchers focused on the relationship between the school environment and culture and how it affects students' learning outcomes. Others integrated transformational leadership with instructional attributes (Hallinger, 2003).

The efficacy of schools is increased by leadership, according to Hallinger and Heck (1999). They did point out that school administrators have an indirect impact on learning since they have an impact on the elements of the teacher and classroom environment. Analyzing empirical research on transformational leadership published between 1996 and 2005, Leithwood and Jantzi (2005) also made the case that transformational leadership has a major, albeit indirect, impact on student involvement and accomplishment. In addition, several recent studies have proposed that school leadership has an indirect impact on student accomplishment and is second only to direct classroom instruction in its importance (Bush & Glover, 2014; Dutta & Sahney, 2015; Boberg & Bourgeois, 2016; Leithwood & Sun, 2018). Through their correlational study, Allen et al. (2015) looked into transformational leadership aspects that are significantly and favorably correlated with the school climate. Quin et al. (2015) contended that transformational leadership methods were employed by principals in high-achieving schools more frequently and successfully than in low-achieving schools, supporting these viewpoints. Contrary to the arguments of the above scholars, Chen (2014), in his thesis work, reported no significant effect between transformational leadership and student learning outcomes in the California State Assessment.

Other researchers agreed on the role of school leadership in improving student performance by changing school culture and teacher attitude. Davis, Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, and Meyerson (2005) agreed that principals can influence student achievement by developing effective teachers and organizational processes. Additionally, Sun and Leithwood (2017) discovered that transformational leadership approaches significantly impact teacher competency and that dedication, efficacy, and trust among teachers have a favorable relationship with student learning. Similarly, Hartinah, Suharso, Umam, Syazali, Lestari, and Roslina (2020) argued that transformational school leaders' attributes have been found to impact teacher work performance. According to Olson's (2019) research, fostering a collaborative culture inside the school can positively impact teacher dedication. According to several studies, school leadership plays a significant role in determining whether teachers are willing to put extra effort into the classroom. This, in turn, facilitates teamwork to enhance the teaching-learning process and boost academic achievement (Leithwood and Sun, 2012; Brandon et al., 2018).

The school aims to provide quality education for their students that improves their academic performance as measured on national tests. To this end, school principals must create enthusiasm and commitment in subordinates, enabling enhanced effort toward the school goals.

This could be evident through transformational leadership behaviors as conceptualized by Bass (1985). Bass (1985) defined the four I's of transformational leadership as intellectual stimulation, individualized concern, idealized influence, and inspiring motivation. He added three transactional dimensions—contingent reward, management by exception, and laissez-faire—to his full-range leadership paradigm.

While schools are viewed as organizations, school success is indeed affected by the transformational leadership of school leaders, leading to better student learning outcomes. In light of this, Anderson (2017) stated in his review that transformational leadership styles have a crucial role in school achievement;

'Based on research that highlights the positive impact of transformational leadership styles on teacher commitment, performance, job satisfaction, and other areas that help facilitate overall school success, and based on its established positive correlations to employee performance, motivation, and job satisfaction in business organizations, the transformational leadership style appears to be a viable approach for education leaders to test in transforming schools to meet new stakeholder demands. '

Transformational leadership is best adapted to meet the demands of schools in the twenty-first century, according to Leithwood (1994), who also indicated that it positively affects schools' leadership ability to enable change in school restructuring programs. The significance of school leadership for student academic achievement was outlined by Allen et al. (2015), who noted that transformational leadership is shown to have a positive correlation with enhanced student performance in reading, as well as to be successful in energizing students, getting them to transcend self-interest and embrace change. Leithwood et al. (2008) explained that all successful school leaders undergo standard basic leadership practices. The authors list these activities as (i) crafting a vision and establishing goals, (ii) comprehending and growing individuals, (iii) restructuring the company, and (iv) overseeing the educational program. This also indicates that school leaders should show some aspects of instructional leadership.

Different researchers confirm that transformational leadership positively affects organizational performance effectiveness. Similarly, transformational school leadership has a positive link to school performance. Berkovich (2016), in his article, confirmed that school principals with transformational leadership styles can deal with complex school environments and fulfill the demands of the school community.

It is broadly argued that transformational school leadership influences school effectiveness differently. Transformational school principals motivate and inspire teachers who directly deal with teaching-learning interaction with students so that, in turn, they inspire and motivate students toward better academic achievement (Sharma & Singh, 2017). Transformational school leadership can also change school culture, improving positive learning environments. Positive work culture in schools, in turn, promotes collaboration, motivation, and creativity (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2010; Brandon et al., 2018; Olson, 2019). School principals can establish the school environment with norms that the school community follows toward common goal achievement (Cohen, McCabe, Michelli & Pickeral, 2009). This can be posited by Burns's view of transformational leaders focusing on the ultimate result by mobilizing organizational staff to pursue established organizational goals (Burns, 1978). Many scholars argue that transformational school leaders empower school teachers, which leads them toward motivation and commitment to school goal achievement (Leithwood and Jantiz, 2005; Sergiovanni, 2007). Transformational school principals who motivate teachers and subordinates toward school goal achievement can significantly affect student academic performance (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Finnigan and Stewart (2009) argued that it is expected to observe transformational leadership behaviors in high-performing schools. Despite its modest transformational effect, Sun and Leithwood (2012) state that school leadership positively impacts students' academic performance. The justifications above allow the researcher to conclude that improving student academic performance is a benefit of transformational school leadership.

These studies indicate that the effectiveness and competence of school principals as leaders are significant factors that affect education quality and school improvement. From previous experience, the researcher agrees with scholars' view that effective school leadership influences all other factors that affect student learning outcomes. There is a clear gap among schools in student learning outcomes based on principal leadership effectiveness (Day et al., 2016).

Whether direct or indirect, it is agreed that school leadership has a vital role in the outcome of student learning. Ethiopian education policy also emphasizes school leadership to improve student academic results. Therefore, examining how this role is practiced in the study area is necessary. More importantly, the gap between low-performing and high-performing schools that are in tune with school leadership styles and practices is an essential topic in the study.

In Ethiopia, school principals are expected to play various roles in maintaining education quality. Regarding the roles of school leadership, the education and training policy (ETP,

1994) indicated its role, and it is elaborated more by the national proclamation that aims to strengthen school administration and management (proclamation 217/2000). The directive for education management, organization, financing, and public engagement came subsequently (MOE, 2002). The policy and proclamation emphasize the significance of principals in the school's management and administration. The quality of education is the primary emphasis of the policy's objectives, the following proclamation, and the directions. Hence, the school principals are expected to play a role in ensuring the quality of education at school. In the Ethiopian education system, it is argued that schools with better leadership effectiveness have students scoring better on the national test (MOE, 2021).

The government is undergoing significant reforms to preserve the quality of education. The most important is the General Quality Improvement Package (GEQIP). The GEQIP outlines school principals' responsibilities for preserving the quality of education (MOE, 2008:51–53). The roles and responsibilities given to Ethiopian school principals are in tune with transformational leadership styles and behaviors, as explained by Burns (1978), Bass and Riggio (2006), and Leithwood and Jantzi (2006).

2. 9 SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review section above discussed leadership concepts, transformational leadership with its components, and transformational leadership in education setup. In the chapter, Education Quality and its Indicators, the role of school leadership in maintaining education quality and transformational school leadership and its effects on student academic performance are thoroughly discussed based on the existing literature. The reviewed literature posited that there is a positive link between transformational leadership practices and the behaviors adopted by school principals and student academic achievement. School principals who exhibit transformational leadership behaviors can change the school environment, making it supportive of the teaching-learning process at the school. Principals with these attributes also improve teacher performance by motivating and inspiring them to achieve school goals, mainly improving student academic performance. Although transformational leadership practices in schools are widely argued to affect school effectiveness positively, more research studies must be conducted on the extent and dimensions of effectiveness. Some say that its effect is indirect, and some others direct. The others also concluded that its impact was minimal and only to change school culture and environment. This research considers both teachers' perceptions

about principals' leadership styles and practices, as well as principals' perception of their leadership practices, as an independent variable, which is different from existing research works, taking only teachers' perceptions as an independent variable. Limited research studies link the extent of transformational leadership practices of school principals with student academic achievement. Previous research works do not indicate the gap between low-performing and high-performing schools regarding student academic results based on principals' leadership styles. The student's academic performance is the dependent variable in this study, and the principal's transformational leadership behaviors and practices are the independent variable. There is also limited research on school principal leadership practices between low- and high-performing schools on students' academic outcomes in the study area. Based on this review, it is considered necessary to research the effects of transformational leadership on student academic performance in the study area.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY

3. 1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter reviewed prior research and literature pertinent to the study issue. This chapter discusses the study's theoretical foundation based on accepted theories and models. A theoretical framework is the foundational basis of the study. It reviews existing theories that can serve as a roadmap for the research questions and arguments under study (Vinz, 2022). Theoretical frameworks justify and contextualize prior research work and link research questions with existing theories and ideas. It also lays the foundation for the study. In this section, the theoretical foundations of the study are reviewed in light of existing theories, models, and ideas.

This study's theoretical framework is derived from leadership theories, and models demonstrated to be effective in educational settings. Transformational leadership theories, or models of Burns (1978), Bass (1985), and Leithwood Kenneth (1990), are all fundamental theoretical underpinnings of the study and are thoroughly discussed. Furthermore, leadership styles and transformational leadership models in education form a necessary theoretical background for this study. Based on the theoretical bases of transformational leadership, a

possible conclusion was drawn to link it with research questions and the reviewed literature to show the essential foundations for the study.

3.2 THE LEADERSHIP THEORIES

3.2.1 Introduction

A leadership theory explains how particular people become leaders and how leadership develops. According to Wale (2023), leadership theories are schools of thought that explain how and why particular individuals become leaders. They describe characteristics and behaviors that allow people to become leaders. Leadership theory focuses on the traits and behaviors people can adopt in leadership development.

There are many definitions and theories about leadership, as discussed in the previous section. The historical development and evolution of the major leadership theories are covered in this section. This discussion focuses on exploring the main leadership theories in the era of leadership development. The Great Man theory from the 1840s, the Trait theory from the 1930s to 1940s, the Behavioral theories from the 1940s to 1950s, and the Contingency theories from the 1960s are the most well-known and prevalent theories of leadership during the leadership era.

3.2.2 Great Man Theory (1840s)

The Great Man theory (1840s) is one of the 19th-century leadership theories that explain leadership competence with innate or born characteristics of the leaders (Dziak, 2019). According to the Great Man theory, the core belief about leaders is that leaders are born and not developed through training and experience. This theory focuses on natural-born leaders. According to the Great Man, great leaders are exceptionally gifted individuals with innate attributes that make them suitable for leadership roles from birth. The Great Man theory argues that leadership is reserved for a select group of people with unique qualities. It focuses on the personal traits of leaders, such as intelligence, self-confidence, appearance, verbal fluency, height, and dominance (Scheerens, 2012). The theory assumes that leadership is only for exceptional, talented people, and it is only for men. This theory has attracted criticism from scholars, as it needs to consider the circumstances under which leaders can be developed and made through time and situation (Cherry, 2017). In addition, the theory does not consider that social movement and the environment shape people's behavior and personality. As leadership

occurs in the interaction process between people, the environment in which the interaction takes place shapes the people's attitudes. Through this interaction, leaders can be developed. However, the Great Man theory does not consider leadership development through time and interaction. Great men cannot shape themselves into great leaders. The environment and society shape leaders as great men and influential leaders. Additionally, it ignores the contribution of training and education to increase leadership qualities. The theory also ignores women as leaders. In addition to traits, leadership success requires potential skills that can be developed over time and experience. Due to these shortcomings, scholars have devised another leadership theory called the trait theory of leadership.

3.2.3 Trait theory (1930s-1940s)

Early in the twentieth century, the Great Man's theory inspired the development of trait theory (Buchanan & Huczynski, 2019). This leadership theory is based on identifying different personality traits and characteristics associated with successful leadership in other circumstances. The theory considers leadership competence a mixture of innate or developed characteristics. According to this theory, people are born or made with certain qualities to be leaders. The theory assumes that some factors make a leader, focusing on leaders' mental, social, and socio-physical traits (Benmira & Agboola, 2021). According to trait theory, leaders possess specific characteristics, such as intelligence, a feeling of responsibility, creativity, self-confidence, and other values, that allow them to flourish in their leadership professions. Researchers have focused on identifying characteristics that distinguish leaders from followers in this theory.

According to the trait leadership theory, unique leadership characteristics include intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity, and sociability (Plunkett et al., 2008). It also considers the physical traits of leaders, such as height, weight, speech fluency, and appearance, as traits of competent leaders (Sheerens, 2012). It appears that trait theory is a continuation of the Great Man theory. Like the Great Man theory, trait theory asserts a leader's ability on certain innate or inborn qualities, such as physical attractiveness and social and mental intelligence. To put it another way, the theory ignores followers and the circumstances around the relationship that makes the leader successful (Northouse, 2013). Furthermore, it does not consider specific leadership traits influencing leadership outcomes, such as performance,

productivity, and employee satisfaction (Northouse, 2007; 2013). These shortcomings led researchers to look for another Behavioral leadership theory.

3.2.4 Behavioral leadership theory (1940s-1950s)

The Behavioral leadership theory differs from the Great Man and Trait theory, implying that leaders are not born but made. Successful leadership is based on definable, learnable behavior. Instead of concentrating on a leader's mental, physical, or social traits, it emphasizes their behavior. Behavior theory argues that leaders are not born. According to Behavioral theory, the leader's effectiveness depends on the leader's behavior, which can be learned and developed through training (Uslu, 2019).

In contrast to Trait theory, Behavioral theory assumes that the leader's effectiveness does not depend on the leader's characteristics. However, it depends on the leader's behavior (Uslu, 2019). These leader behaviors are not innate and can be trained and learned. According to this theory, leadership effectiveness is determined by how the leader behaves (Northouse, 2010). Unlike the Great Man and Trait theories, the Behavioural theory assumes that the leadership position is not unique for some individuals with a distinctive trait. Still, it is the result of behaviors that bring the group to success, which also brings the leader's success (Amanchukwu, Stanley, & Ololube, 2015; Uslu, 2019).

Behavioral theories differ from trait theories in that they emphasize the leader's actions in the workplace. These theories proposed that different styles employed by effective and ineffective leaders produce different outcomes in terms of leadership. In his first school of thought among these diverse researchers, Kurt Lewin (1890–1947) proposed that leaders were products of their behaviors and that these behaviors could be taught or cultivated (Shriberg & Shriberg, 2011).

Ohio State University Leadership Studies provided a more detailed description of the Behavioral theory of leadership. According to the Behavioral leadership theory research conducted by Ohio State University, leaders can be formed via practice and education rather than being born. Ohio State University underwent a leadership behavior description using the leader behavior description questionnaire, which consisted of 150 statements regarding leadership behaviors. After a descriptive study, Ohio State Leadership Studies reported behaviors that affect leadership, such as task and relationship orientation (Demirtas & Karaca, 2020; Lindberg, 2022).

Following the identification of the two behaviors—Initiating structure and Consideration behavior—the Ohio University leadership studies classified leadership styles into four categories: leaders who place a high value on relationships and pay less attention to tasks; leaders who place a high attention to both dimensions; leaders who place a high value on relationships and pay less attention to tasks; and leaders who place a low attention on both dimensions (Lindberg, 2022; Beyene, 2016). According to them, the initiating structure indicates how much the leader is focused on task accomplishment. On the other hand, consideration structure suggests the extent to which the leader is given to subordinates, respecting their ideas and feelings, establishing mutual trust, giving attention, and so on (Lindberg, 2022).

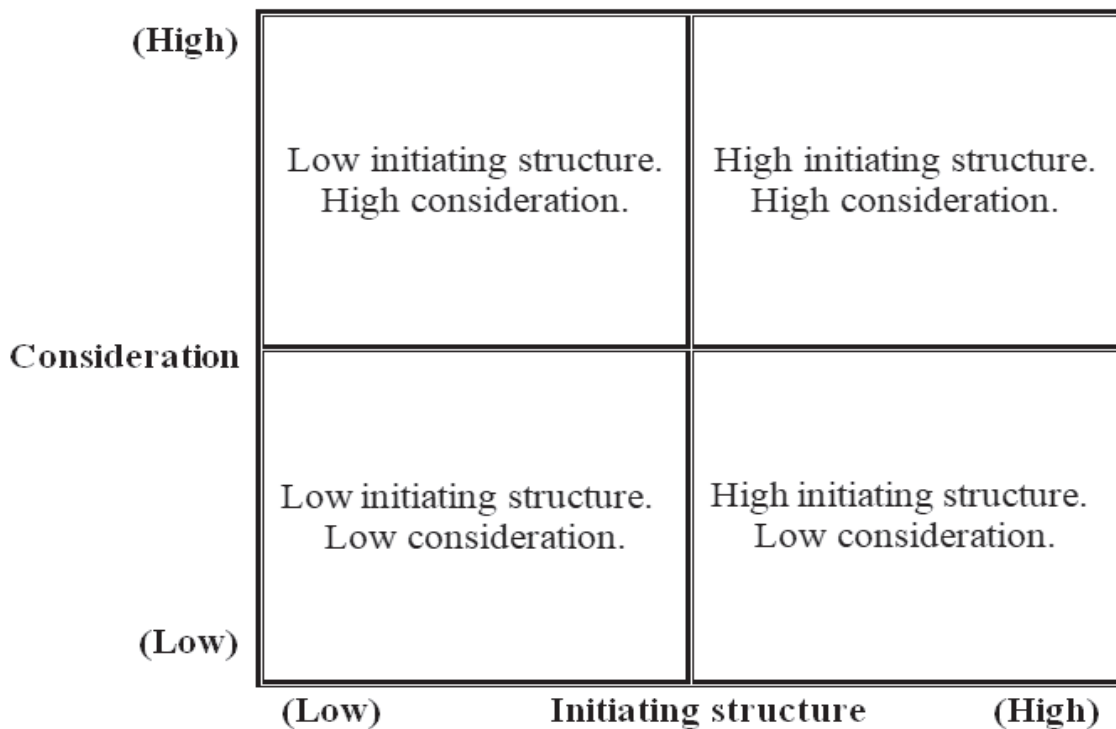


Figure 3-1 The Ohio State Leadership Studies’ leadership styles grid

After analyzing leadership behavior, Ohio University leadership studies concluded that leadership theory affects leadership performance in two categories: initiation structure and consideration behavior. The study also concluded that influential leaders exhibit high initiating structure and consideration levels. Moreover, the study argued that leadership could be

developed and learned, unlike the view of Great Man and Trait theories of leaders as born (Lindberg, 2022).

The primary evidence of the assumptions of the behavioral leadership theory of learned and developed practices shows that school leadership can be developed through training and practical experience. It is also evident that school leadership should pay attention to task achievement and subordinates' consideration. Although the theory assumes behaviors that develop leadership, it does not consider situational factors to explain leadership (Uslu, 2019; Harrison, 2018). This led the researchers to develop another leadership theory, Contingency or Situational leadership theory.

3.2.5 Contingency Leadership Theory (1960s)

The situational era's theory of leadership, called Contingency or Situational leadership, holds that a leader's relationship with their followers is greatly influenced by their surroundings (Safonov, Maslennikov & Lenska, 2018). According to contingency theory, there is no one right method of leadership; instead, each style should be tailored to the specific situation at hand. The hypothesis states that some people function best in specific environments but operate at their lowest level when not in their element. Unlike behavioral leadership theory, contingency theory focuses on leadership in particular situations. For this theory, leaders must know the specific situation and which leadership style will fit the situation (Uslu, 2019).

Fiedler created one of the earliest theories of contingency leadership in 1974. Fiedler's contingency theory states that selecting the best leader for the job rather than a leader's capacity for situational adaptation determines a leader's effectiveness (Fiedler, 1974). Fiedler outlined three important situational elements in his Contingency theory that determine whether a particular scenario is favorable to the leader. These include the way a leader interacts with his group members (leader-member relations), which suggests how much his followers trust him, the level of organization in the work his group is expected to complete (task structure), which shows how tasks are made clear to complete, and the power and authority that come with his position (position power), which describes the control that team leaders have over their members (Yukl, 2013; Northouse, 2016).

Although this leadership theory can work in different situations, it has limitations like other leadership theories. Among the limitations, Fiedler's model is not flexible on conditions and

suggests that one changes the leader if it does not fit the situation (Bhasin, 2020). Another area for improvement of the theory is the need for more clarity on measuring the performance of those in medium performance (Bhasin, 2020).

The key debates in leadership theories include whether leaders are born or produced, whether leadership is a set of attributes or personality characteristics, whether leadership consists of specific behaviors or abilities, and whether leadership is a process or a relationship. According to the review, leadership theories evolved through time, processes, and situational or environmental variables. Good leaders are not born but developed through time, procedure, and environment. Influential leaders can be produced by ongoing training, self-development, the collection of relevant experiences, and interaction with events in the workplace (Bass & Bass, 2008). This suggests that school leadership can be formed through practical training and the context in which it functions.

Understanding leadership theories and how they developed over time helps education leaders select and recruit appropriate people in the school leadership setup. It also enables the school community to know about the leadership process in the school. The reviewed literature also indicated that school leaders should be aware of the school environment to make it positive and impact teaching-learning processes. As the study is about transformational school leadership's role in improving student academic performance, the literature review helped the researcher understand how leadership theories are developed and their implication in the school setting. In addition, it allowed the researcher to identify an appropriate leadership style for an effective school based on the development of leadership theories.

3.3 THE LEADERSHIP STYLES

3.3.1 Introduction

Leadership style is a leader's observable behaviors to motivate people at work and inspire them toward organizational vision and goal achievement. It refers to the methods leaders use when dealing with subordinates to provide direction, implement plans, and keep staff motivated to perform organizational tasks. It is a way leaders interact with their subordinates to achieve common organizational goals. The strategies used by influential leaders change depending on the situation, the parties involved, and the intended result.

Leadership styles differ from leadership theory in that they focus on and describe leaders' behaviors in dealing with their subordinates. In contrast, leadership theory focuses on what makes successful leaders (Nawaz & Khan, 2016). In another way, the leadership style falls under the general umbrella of leadership theory.

There are different styles of leadership. Becker (2022), in his article, *The Common 11 Leadership Styles*, identified various types of leadership styles. Some examples of these leadership styles are bureaucratic leadership, visionary leadership, pacesetter leadership, situational leadership, authoritarian leadership, laissez-faire leadership, transformational leadership, transactional leadership, mentoring leadership, and democratic leadership. On the other hand, Demirtas and Karaca (2020), in their handbook of leadership styles, organized the main leadership styles as transformational, transactional, ethical, participative, servant, charismatic, authentic, and democratic leadership. Transformational and transactional leadership styles or approaches are prevalent among several leadership styles and approaches, and many academics extensively research written methodologies. Further information about both approaches to leadership is desired as they align with the study's research topic, which explores the impact of transformational leadership on students' academic achievement.

3.3.2 Transactional leadership

Transactional leadership is thought to arise when one thing is exchanged for another. According to Burns (1978:19), transactional leadership happens when someone initiates contact with others to exchange valued items. This leadership is based on how leaders promote followers' compliance through rewards and punishments (Wen, Ho, Kelana, Othman & Syed, 2019). Consequently, the leader awards or punishes followers based on the performance of the assigned tasks (Northouse, 2016; Odumeru & Ifeanyi, 2015). Through a rewards and punishment system, transactional leaders can keep followers motivated for the short term. Unlike transformational leaders, transactional leaders are not looking to change the future but focus on the immediate results based on temporary exchanges. Transactional leadership assumes that people perform better through a chain of command and should be monitored strictly (Sultan, Darum & Yao., 2015). However, this leadership style has many limitations, such as limiting innovation, inhibiting the development of leaders, giving no value to empathy, not motivating people to increase productivity, and not looking out of circle circumstances (Gaille, 2018). Leaders with this leadership emphasize immediate results, remain within the

existing structure of an organization, and measure success according to that organization's system of rewards and penalties. The primary priority of a transactional leader is ensuring that all operations run smoothly and that employees are compensated for their efforts rather than strategically leading a firm to a position of market leadership. These leaders are not status quo challengers; they mainly focus on maintaining the status quo (Xeninkou, 2017).

According to several sources (Bass, 1985; Northouse, 1997; Aamodt, 2016; Northouse, 2016), transactional leadership encompasses a variety of behaviors. These behaviors include contingent rewards, influencing behavior in which the leader clarifies the work needed, and using incentives or rewards to achieve results when expectations are met based on positive transactions. The following will describe these behaviors.

3.3.2.1 Contingent reward

The extent to which a leader facilitates positive interactions with followers is known as contingent reward. The leader sets the incentives for exceeding expectations and is transparent about what is expected of them (Bass, 1985). When followers perform at the anticipated levels, leaders clarify what is expected of them and what rewards they will earn. Leaders with a contingent leadership style reward when the set organizational goals are achieved and punish when performance is out of expectation (Bass, 1985; Aamodt, 2016).

3.3.2.2 Active Management by Exception

Management by exception refers to the degree to which a leader adapts their leadership style per the results of interactions with their followers. According to Howell and Avolio (1993), the timeliness of the leader's action is the primary factor distinguishing between active and passive exception handling. Before behavior causes significant issues, active leaders monitor follower behavior, foresee issues, and take appropriate action (Bass & Avolio, 2004). Passive leaders do not intervene unless the behavior causes issues. To sustain present performance levels, the leaders concentrate on identifying potential challenges throughout job execution and resolving them.

3.3.2.3 Passive Management by Exception

In this, a transactional leader intervenes only when performance is inconsistent with expectations. Punishment is used as a response to unacceptable performance. Leaders who

practice passive management by exceptions frequently avoid making decisions and only respond to significant issues to address them (Bass, 1995).

According to Bass (1998), transactional leaders are driven by simple things to measure and identify. In Bass's opinion, transactional leaders are less creative, innovative, or inventive than proactive ones; they also tend to be more conservative and reformist and less hesitant to find answers. Yukl (1999) also noted that transactional leadership requires a common denominator among unproductive leader behaviors. According to Bass, Avolio, Berson, and Jung (2003), a transactional leader communicates particular conformance norms, monitors for deviations, and rewards compliance.

According to a literature review (Burns, 2003), transactional and transformational leadership have many parallels. The transactional leadership style boosts followers' self-efficacy by encouraging them to see what needs to be done and giving them the authority to finish tasks. Leithwood and Steinbach (1992) noted that while transactional leadership increases school capacity, it requires the essential push of transformational leadership to achieve significant school development. As they investigated the influence and impact of merging school staff and students in leadership roles, Leithwood and Mascall concluded that the transactional approach might produce an effective learning environment for students (Leithwood & Mascall, 2008). However, the school environment is knowledge-intensive, which requires free thinking and innovative action toward the effectiveness of teaching-learning rather than forced influence, as argued by Leithwood and Mascall. It hampers the free flow of ideas and the development of quality human resources in the school environment (Basham, 2012).

Avolio and Burn also recognized another leadership style, *Laissez-faire*, which indicates a lack of leadership. According to the authors, *Laissez-faire* leadership is an avoidance of leadership exercise assuming things go (Burns, 1978; Avolio, 1999).

Avolio and Bass (1991) developed a full leadership model to relate and make leadership styles meaningful by combining all leadership styles. This full leadership model enables the authors to demonstrate the relationship between leadership styles, thus showing how leadership styles can be changed and developed over time.

Full-range leadership model (FRLM)

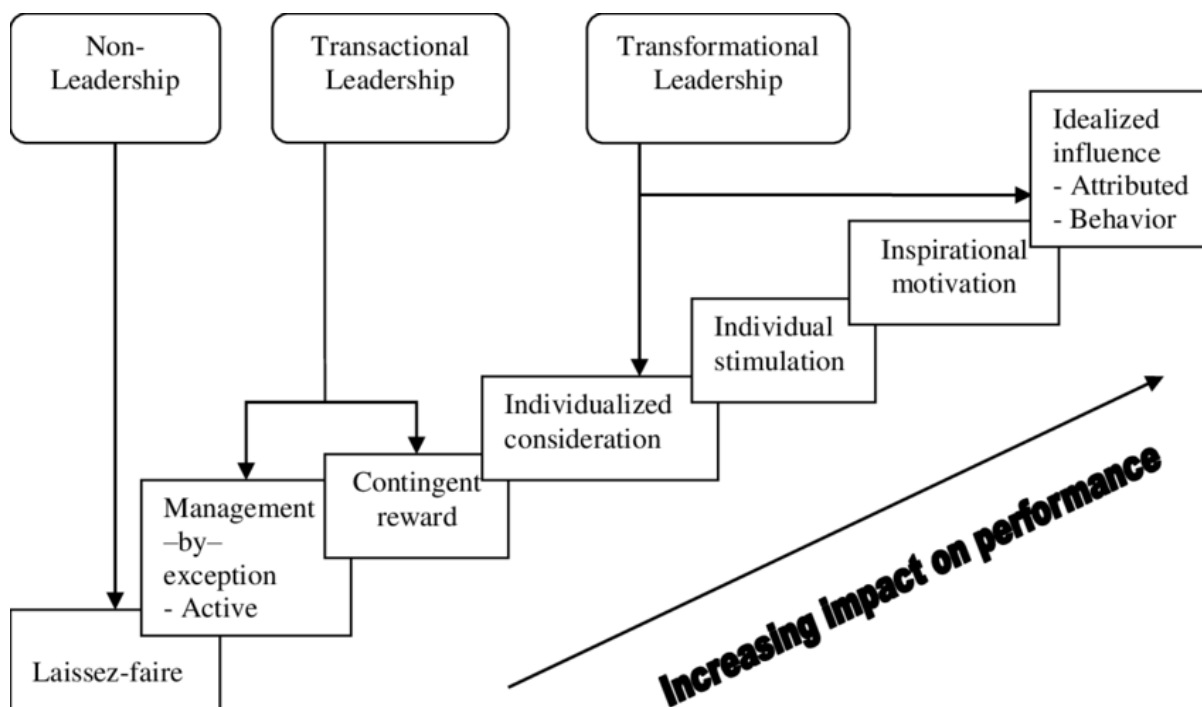


Fig. 3.2 Full-range leadership model by Avolio and Bass (Avolio & Bass, 1991).

3.3.3 Transformational Leadership

Burns (1978) introduced transformational leadership as a model in his book “*Leadership Concepts*.” Before Burns’ comprehensive elaboration, it was James Downton in 1973 who coined the term leadership for the first time. In his first work, Burns’ transformational leadership theory was used to analyze political leaders. Thus, Burns connected followership to the leadership function (Northouse, 1997). Transformational leadership has been defined by Burns as follows: “*Transformational leadership occurs when one or more people engage with others in a way that raises one another to higher levels of morality and motivation*” (p. 20). Additionally, Burns made an effort to differentiate between transactional and transformative leadership. Burns (1978:20) states, “*The process through which an individual interacts with others and establishes a connection that elevates the level of morality and motivation in both the leader and the follower is known as transformational leadership.*” To put it another way, a transformational leader inspires people to strive for transcendental objectives rather than their

own short-term interests to achieve success and self-actualization rather than safety and security. From Burns's explanations, transformational leadership is all about motivating and inspiring people to be leaders so that they transcend themselves to achieve organizational goals. It is believed that through these motivations, leaders can establish a sense of ownership within the organization, achieving organizational goals.

Bernard Bass (1990) elaborated on the concept of transformational leadership with more explanations (Nickerson, 2021). Therefore, Bass makes the following arguments: (i) people will follow an inspiration; (ii) someone with vision and passion may achieve great things; and (iii) the best way to complete tasks is to approach them with enthusiasm and energy. According to transformational leadership, employees must be inspired and motivated to perform to the best of their abilities. According to Wen et al. (2019), transformational leaders create and adopt a vision for a business that inspires people to be their best selves while exhibiting an open and sincere perspective.

Later, Bass (1985, 1990) broadened and reinterpreted Burns' idea of transformational leadership to encompass leadership in organizational contexts. According to Bass, a leader pushes followers to achieve more than what they originally planned to do. He maintained that increasing knowledge of the significance of results and strategies for obtaining them would motivate people this way. Bass went on to say that leaders inspire followers to put the needs of the team or the organization ahead of their own. Furthermore, according to Bass (1985), transformational leaders are thought to achieve outstanding performance inside an organization by inspiring their subordinates with an exciting future vision and ensuring that their aspirations align with the organization's goals.

According to Bass (1985) and Burns (1978), transformational leadership is the preferred approach for achieving outcomes that surpass initial expectations. To Burns (1978), transformational leaders create a reciprocal stimulation and elevation dynamic that can change followers into morally upright leaders. To accomplish this within the organization, Hickman conceptualized transformational leadership as a means of utilizing a variety of strategies, such as interaction-focused organizational design, the development of leadership and effective followership, the identification and development of core values and a unifying purpose, the liberation of human potential and the generation of increased capacity, and the creation and maintenance of a context for the development of human capacity. Hickman envisioned transformational leadership as a way to accomplish this within the organization through

interaction-focused organizational design, effective leadership and followership development, identifying and developing core values and a unifying purpose, liberating human potential and generating increased capacity, and creating and maintaining a context for building human capacity (Hickman, 1997).

Many scholars (Avolio & Gibbons, 1988; Bass, 1985; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Graham, 1988) assert that transformational leadership encourages followers to develop and perform above and beyond expectations. Transformational leadership is defined by Burns (1978) as the method in which "*leaders and their followers raise one another to greater levels of morality and motivation*" (p. 6). Burns's book is highly influential. This approach aims to increase the motivation of followers. Bass (1985) developed the concept further by examining its effects on performance and followers' motivation. According to Anderson (2017) and Burns (1978), transformational leadership is characterized by leaders who change their attitudes, convictions, and actions to motivate others to perform better (Anderson, 2017; Bass, 1999). One of the model's other goals was increasing internal organizational effectiveness (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Bass & Riggio, 2006). According to Bass and Avolio (1994), transformational leaders can persuade their followers to set higher expectations for themselves and their accomplishments. The behavior of leaders towards their followers in a way that facilitates successful organizational change is another definition of transformational leadership (Bass, 1985).

Transformational leadership models emphasize that transformational leaders can change their surroundings to accomplish their goals. According to Silins (1994), transformational school leaders accomplish this by encouraging innovation and pedagogical restructuring, emphasizing vision development, fostering collaborative engagement, and elevating followers to leadership roles.

According to Northouse (2004:130), "*Transformational leadership entails evaluating followers' motives, meeting their needs, and treating them as complete human beings.*" Transformational leaders take on the challenge of revitalizing or restructuring an organization. According to Yukl (2002), transformational leaders mobilize a commitment to a vision, identify the need for change, and create a strategy for bringing it to pass.

Avolio, Bass, and Jung (1999) claim that transformational leadership motivates staff members to go above and beyond the call of duty by highlighting the importance of the organization's overarching goals. Griffin (2013) also explained transformational leadership as leaders going beyond expectation through stimulation and motivating subordinates. Numerous studies

(Avolio & Gibbons, 1988; Bass, 1985; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Graham, 1988) have found that transformational leadership promotes followers' growth and performance beyond expectations. Additionally, Northouse (2016) and Bush (2018) contended that transformational leaders have a connection with their followers that exceeds expectations to achieve higher organizational goals.

According to Bass, quoted in Leithwood, a transformational leader possesses three qualities: consideration, creativity, and charisma. The leader uses their influence and charisma to empower subordinates and promote the growth of subordinate leadership abilities via cooperation, kindness, and support. Transformational leaders take risks and make themselves known instead of hiding in the shadows. According to Kouzes and Posner (2009), a transformational leader uses leadership techniques that include setting an example, inspiring a shared vision, motivating others, challenging the status quo, and modeling.

From the above arguments, it is possible to conclude that transformational leadership enables followers to release their potential. This is true when transformational leadership is implemented in schools. In schools, teachers are the primary actors in the teaching-learning process. If school principals explore transformational leadership styles, they motivate and deliver more than expected to improve the student's learning outcomes. Schools are knowledge institutions that require people to release their potential. This can be achieved by stimulating people to release their creativity, which can be done well through transformational leadership. Bass expanded upon Burns' theory, identifying five transformational leadership qualities: idealized behaviors, idealized attributes, intellectual stimulation, inspiring motivation, and individualized concern.

According to several studies (Antonakis, Avolio & Sivasubramaniam, 2003; Bass, 1999; Bass, 2000; Dartey-Baah, 2015), leaders with idealized attributes demonstrate socialized charismatic traits. According to Antonakis et al. (2003), a leader exhibiting this behavior is self-assured, assertive, and committed to moral principles. Like idealized traits, idealized behaviors, the second component of leadership, characterizes the charismatic deeds of leaders (Antonakis et al., 2003). These leaders prioritize conveying a clear vision and upholding principles and beliefs (Antonakis et al., 2003). The two behaviors are, therefore, commonly combined and referred to as idealized influence (Bass et al., 2003). A charismatic leader who exhibits idealized influence is trusted, respected, and admired by their followers, according to Bass et al. (2003). Later, Northouse (2016) noted that transformational leaders are proactive,

charismatic, and exemplary, and they lead through idealized influence, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.

According to Burns (1978), transformational leaders are agents of change who motivate their followers to pursue higher goals and alter their beliefs. Enhancing commitment and inspiring employees to reach their full potential are hallmarks of a transformational leader. Bass (1999) built upon Burn's transformational leadership paradigm by contrasting transformational and transactional leadership behaviors. Transformational leadership involves empowering and educating followers to make decisions independently without consulting superiors. According to Barnett, Craven, and Marsh (2005), followers who encounter transformational leadership have increased levels of self-efficacy. Bass (1999) described five leadership behaviors, whereas Kouzes and Posner (2003) proposed five strategies.

Bass's concepts of transformational leadership were enhanced by Kouzes and Posner, who emphasized that anyone can learn how to lead (Quin, Deris, Bischoff, & Johnson, 2015). Consequently, Kouzes and Posner (2003) developed five leadership techniques based on their expertise and in-depth research;

- **Enabling others to act**

This is how followers and leaders can work together to create a productive environment. To foster a collaborative work culture, leaders must develop trust and shared values with their followers (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). Leaders who foster a positive working atmosphere enable followers to feel good about their responsibilities and feel respected and dignified.

- **Modeling the Way**

This is the way leaders act according to their words and values. Followers respect those leaders who act according to their values and are the model for followers. If leaders perform according to their commitments, followers follow the leaders, taking them as exemplary and enabling them to deliver more. Kouzes and Posner (1995, 2002) claim that transformational leaders start by modeling behavior for the rest of the organization. This builds the commitment of followers. The authors also argued that leaders should set governance principles and maintain consistency between words and deeds (Kouzes & Posner, 2002).

- **Inspiring a shared vision**

Transformational leaders must compel their followers to follow the organization's vision. This way, they can raise followers' awareness and commitment to achieving these envisioned

organizational goals (Steinmann, Klug, & Maier, 2018). Leaders must internalize dreams where organizations are targeted to reach and generate enthusiasm and excitement for the shared vision of others through positive interaction (Kouzes & Posner, 1995; 2002).

- **Challenging the Process**

This is how leaders challenge the status quo. Transformational leaders are out-of-the-box thinkers ready to challenge the status quo rather than maintain it. They are risk-takers and learners through failures. Transformational leaders learn from challenges and transform them into opportunities, thus developing their skills and abilities to improve their organizations (Kouzes & Posner, 2002; 2017).

- **Encouraging the heart**

Leaders must understand and encourage followers to release their potential and exercise creativity. Encouraging and rewarding creativity and innovation leads followers to commit themselves and perform positively in the organization. According to Kouzes and Posner (1995, 2002), transformational leaders allow others to participate in planning and make decisions without restricting their choices. The scholars clarify that this empowers the followers to carry out their duties and reach their full potential.

School leadership should adopt a suitable style based on the evolution of leadership theories over time. As leadership is an influence, the ability of school leaders to influence subordinates towards attaining school goals is crucial for the effectiveness of school leadership. This requires understanding leadership theories and the flexibility to adopt suitable leadership styles. Meanwhile, understanding leadership theories allows school principals to increase their skills in personal leadership development.

3.4 BURNS' CONCEPT OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND ITS IMPLICATION FOR SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS

Burns (1978) defined transformational leadership in his seminal work and presented the idea. Burns introduced and proclaimed the evolution of transformational leadership in his well-known book "Leadership" (Burns, 1978, p. 2). In the book, Burns clearly defined two primary approaches of leadership, transactional and transformational, where both concepts differ in influencing followers. As leadership is an influence, the ways and methods of leader-follower interaction depend on the motivational strategy and leadership styles leaders deploy. To this

end, Burns explained that transactional leaders influence followers through transactions for performance, and transformational leadership influences followers through moral appraisal. In his work, Burns emphasized that transformational leadership occurs when leaders and followers raise each other's morality to its highest level (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1999; Northouse, 2016; Anderson, 2017). According to Burns, this motivation and morality appraisal leads to better organizational performance. Burns's view on transformational leadership indicates that increasing follower motivation is an essential element of transformational leadership that impacts organizational performance. Burns believes it is possible to bring about organizational changes leading to better performance through these motivations.

Burns's concept of transformational leadership was initially based on political and social leadership practices. However, Burns argued that the model can also effectively apply to other organizations (Burns, 1978). The author also clearly defined the difference between leadership styles and terms. According to Burns, transactional leadership is associated with the managerial practices of leadership in organizations. Burns further explained that such practices are based on the moral agreement and transactions between leaders and followers. Such transactions may exchange material or immaterial value recognitions based on the pre-agreed performance for specific task accomplishments. The author criticized the transactional leadership style for its severe limitations. The limitations include limiting innovation, inhibiting leadership development, giving no value to empathy, not motivating people for higher productivity, and not looking out of circle circumstances (Gaille, 2018). Furthermore, leaders with this leadership emphasize immediate results, stay within the existing structure of an organization, and measure success according to the organization's system of rewards and penalties. The primary priority of a transactional leader is ensuring that all operations run smoothly and that employees are compensated for their efforts rather than strategically leading an organization to a position of market leadership. These leaders are not status quo challengers; they mainly focus on maintaining the status quo (Xeninkou, 2017). Despite these shortcomings, Burns argued that styles may coexist and transactional leaders can be developed into transformational leaders over time.

Burns distinguished between transactional and transformative leadership approaches based on the constraints mentioned above. Unlike transactional leadership practices, transformational leadership focuses on leaders-followers relationships based on the influence of each other (Burns, 1978). Furthermore, the author made the case that transformational leadership transcends interactions between leaders and followers. Leaders with transformational

leadership behaviors and practices recognize their followers' potential knowledge and influence and exploit these potentials for organizational performance improvement (Burns, 1978). According to Burns (1978), transformational leadership encourages followers to maximize their prospective knowledge and realize their potential in order to create organizational success. It also recognizes the needs of each employee. The influence of transformational leadership is mutual benefits for leaders and followers, which results in both of them having a higher level of achievement. This mutual stimulation and elevation can change followers to the level of leaders and similarly appraise leaders to a level of moral agents (Burns, 1978).

Burns (2003), in his later works, further explained transformational leadership in light of organizational vision. Burns considered transformational leaders to be people with an intellectual vision of the organization. For him, transformational leaders in organizations have the potential to identify the vision of the organization and convey that vision to people working in the organization. According to Burns, vision is a key to transformational leadership. Leaders mobilize their followers toward organizational vision attainment, and thus, it is necessary to conceptualize and internalize the vision. The role of transformational leadership in an organization is to change the potential of followers and subordinates for better organizational performance. Burns (2003) said leaders must exercise initiative to shift followers' potential to higher organizational performance. According to Burns, "*Leaders take the initiative to mobilize people for participation in change processes, encouraging a sense of collective identity and collective efficacy, which in turn brings stronger feelings of self-worth and self-efficacy.*" Burns continued to advocate for the leadership's responsibilities. People can change themselves by pursuing transformational change (Burns, 2003, pp. 25–26).

Burns defines transformational leadership as the process by which leaders and followers collaborate to influence one another. For Burns, leadership is not only a top-down practice but also an interaction between the actors in influencing each other. Burns' book states, "*Transformational leadership happens when one or more people interact with others in a way that inspires and uplifts followers to greater moral and motivational levels*" (Burns, 1978, p. 20). Similarly, Burns argued that similar engagements as "*Transformational leadership refers to the process by which an individual engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and follower*" (Burns, 1978, p. 20).

Transformational leaders help their followers see beyond their interests to improve organizational effectiveness. To this end, Burns (2003) argued that with transformational

leadership, employees work enthusiastically to change the organization, sacrificing their wants, needs, desires, and so on to improve organizational performance. In addition, Burns (2003) made the following argument: "*The transformational leader inspires people to take action by helping them recognize their deepest desires and ideals, then combining them into a shared purpose that fulfills both the group's and the individual's higher purposes*" (Burns, 2003, p. 167).

When leaders practice transformational leadership, they inspire their followers to strive toward transcendental objectives rather than their short-term interests to achieve success and self-actualization rather than safety and security. According to Burns (1978), transformational leadership influences followers through relationships that enable them to cope with challenges. Transformational leaders can influence subordinates in a way that develops their moral values to the level that brings organizational change. From Burns's explanations, transformational leadership is all about motivating and inspiring people to lead so that they transcend themselves to achieve an organizational goal.

How leaders and followers interact is the foundation of Burns' transformative leadership theory. This interaction influences leaders and followers to the level where they challenge the status quo of organizations. Through influence, subordinates transcend self-interest to improve the performance of an organization. Considering schools as an essential organization where human power development occurs, the substantial influence between leaders and followers enhances school performance. In the school, the principals are vital leaders who are responsible for leading the school to its highest performance. In this case, followers or subordinates are teachers, students, and other school administrators.

Burns' transformational leadership theory indicates that leaders who implement a transformational leadership practice can influence followers to transcend their self-interest for better organizational performance. This shows that principals practicing transformational leadership can influence school subordinates for better student learning. Teachers are a critical factor in the teaching-learning process in the school. To maintain quality education, school principals should influence teachers so that they unleash their potential to change all school conditions in general and the academic outcome of students in particular. The primary problem schools face today is the low performance of students in their academic outcomes. As indicated in the research problem statement and the research question, students' academic performance is deteriorating from time to time, and the public is questioning the role of school leadership as

well as the commitment of teachers to change the result. Burns' transformational leadership theory and views are instrumental suggestions for changing school performance. As Burns theorized, school principals with transformational leadership styles can change students' academic performance through positive influence that brings their level to an excellent level of moral value. This motivational influence, in turn, increases the commitment of school subordinates to work enthusiastically to change student academic performance.

Burns' leadership theory is a pioneering work in transformational leadership. Transformational school principals must adhere to Burns' definition of transformational leadership, which involves influencing followers to the highest moral standard to encourage their staff members—especially teachers—to perform better in the classroom. Burns also defined the applicability of transformational leadership in any organization, and this served as a base for Bass and Leithwood to elaborate on its functionality in the education sector.

3.5 BASS'S TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP MODEL AND ITS IMPLICATION FOR SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

3.5.1 Introduction

The above section dealt with Burn's transformational leadership concepts and tried contextualizing their implications for school leadership. The current section deals with Bass' transformational leadership model and its impact on education leadership. This section thoroughly discusses Bass' transformational leadership model's basics, components, and implications for school effectiveness. Finally, the section is summarized with its impact on effective school leadership in light of the research question.

3.5.2 Bass' transformational leadership model

The Bass transformational leadership model was developed by Bernard M. Bass in 1985 through his work *'Leadership and Performance Beyond Expectations'* (1985). Bass added Burns's transformational leadership ideas and came up with the implication of the theory for followers' motivation and its impact on organizational performance. Bass explained how a leader affects his followers in his model. In order to include organizational leadership, Bass expanded and revised Burns' transformational leadership theory (1985, 1990). Several authors have advanced Bass's idea, stating that transformational leadership is best recognized for promoting organizational change that increases employees' productivity (Bass & Avolio, 1994;

Bass & Riggio, 2006). Alternatively, transformational leaders impact followers in a way that improves organizational outcomes, according to Bass and Avolio, who linked transformational leadership to the result (Bass & Avolio, 1994). "*One who motivates followers to do more than what they originally expected to do,*" according to Bass, is a leader (p. 20).

According to Bass (1985), transformational leadership entails more than just praising staff members for a job well done. According to Bass, another way that transformational leadership inspires followers and leaders to go above and beyond expectations is by "*...raising the level of awareness of followers about the performance and value of specified and idealized goals, getting followers to transcend their self-interest for the sake of the organization, and moving the followers to address higher level needs.*" (Bass,1985:20). Complementing the above arguments, Allen, Grigsby, and Peters (2015) explained that school principals can influence school climate by motivating teachers and students through inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation.

Bernard Bass (1990) further elaborated on the concept of transformational leadership with more explanations (Nickerson, 2021). Bass, therefore, argues that (i) people will follow someone who inspires them, (ii) someone with vision and passion may do great things, and (iii) bringing enthusiasm and energy to tasks is the best method to get things done. According to transformational leadership, employees need motivation and inspiration to unleash their potential at work. Hence, to inspire and bring out the best in others, transformational leaders develop and adopt a vision for their organization that reflects an inclusive and honest belief system (Wen et al., 2019).

Bass (cited in Leithwood, 1993) states that a transformational leader possesses three key attributes: consideration, creativity, and charisma. The leader utilizes their influence and charisma to empower subordinates and fosters the growth of subordinate leadership abilities through cooperation, compassion, and support (Leithwood, 1993). He maintained that increasing understanding of the significance of results and strategies for achieving them would motivate people this way. Bass went on to say that leaders inspire followers to put the needs of the group or the organization ahead of their own. Furthermore, Bass argued that transformational leaders are believed to achieve extraordinary performance within the organization by aligning the goals of their subordinates with those of the organization and providing an inspiring vision for the future (Bass, 1985).

Based on the foundational arguments and ideas of the transformational leadership of Burns and Bass, this study has taken transformational leadership as the best tool to increase overall school performance and student academic results, particularly when considering schools as an organization. There are numerous arguments about the effects of transformational leadership in school settings. According to Quin et al. (2015), school leadership can positively affect school change, increasing student academic outcomes. Transformational leadership does improve students' academic achievement in the classroom, as Burns and Bass contended when discussing the usefulness of transformational leadership in organizational performance. Changing school circumstances is primarily the responsibility of school leaders. Duke et al. (2006) contended that the lack of adequate and transformative school leadership lowers student academic achievement. Harris et al. (2003) argued about the role of school leaders in improved student learning, as effective school principals are visionaries about their schools and work towards improving students' learning outcomes.

Numerous studies have been conducted on the effects of leadership in general and transformational leadership in particular on student academic performance (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005; Finnigan, 2012; Hauserman & Stick, 2013; Shatzer et al., 2014; Quin et al., 2015; Boberg & Bourgeois, 2016; Leithwood, McCullough, 2016; Bush, 2018; Leithwood & Sun, 2018; Leithwood, Harris, and Hopkins, 2020). Transformational leadership has been proposed by Leithwood and Jantzi (2005) as a workable leadership approach that supports facilitative acts in schools, empowering teachers to provide their best efforts for school improvement. A study on teachers from three underperforming schools in Chicago, USA, was conducted qualitatively by Finnigan (2012). The results highlighted how principals' leadership practices, which motivate teachers, significantly impact students' academic outcomes in underperforming schools.

In a mixed-methods study design, Hauserman and Stick (2013) investigated how teachers in Alberta, Canada's public schools perceived the transformational leadership practices of their principals and how those practices affected students' academic performance. By encouraging and motivating teachers, administrators can positively impact students' academic achievement through transformational leadership methods, as the study's results unambiguously revealed. Similarly, Shatzer et al. (2014) used the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (Instructional Leadership) and the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Transformational Leadership) to administer a survey to investigate the distinct influence that school leaders have

on student accomplishment. The study showed that principals' leadership styles significantly and meaningfully affected their students' performance.

Quin et al. (2015) used a qualitative research methodology to examine the leadership behaviors required to raise academic success and create positive change in school organizations in ten district schools in Southwest Mississippi, USA. The study's results show that principals in high-achieving schools use all leadership strategies more often than those in lower-achieving schools. A multi-source, quantitative study was conducted by Boberg and Bourgeois (2016) to assess a model of integrated transformational leadership. According to the study's findings, integrated transformational leadership techniques significantly impact students' academic achievement. According to Leithwood and McCullough (2016), transformational school leadership can influence the school environment by setting goals, structuring the group, enhancing the curriculum, and nurturing employees. In addition, Bush (2018) contended that leadership is generally acknowledged as the second most significant component influencing student results in his research examining the worldwide viewpoint on school leadership development. According to Leithwood, Harris, and Hopkins (2020), school administrators have the most significant indirect impact on teaching and learning by controlling staff morale, productivity, and working conditions.

Researchers above agreed that there is a positive link between transformational leadership and students' academic outcomes, whether direct or indirect. Hallinger (2003) integrated transformational and instructional leadership to impact school performance. From these arguments, it is possible to conclude that the transformational leadership effect on organizational performance, as theorized by Burns and Bass, also works for the set-up of schools. Transformational leadership is known to transcend the higher moral value of commitment. This motivational belief in transformational leadership inspires teachers in schools to work enthusiastically to change the view of students to look at the larger picture (Northouse, 2016; Bush, 2018). As per Bass et al. (2003), transformational leaders can alter their followers' mindset by giving them an expansive view of the immense opportunities and pushing them towards an even better future.

Schools are organizations where the process of teaching and learning takes place. The main objective of schools is to provide quality education to their students that enhances their academic performance. The expected performance appraisal can affect the educational outcomes of the student. School principals, as leaders, must create an environment that

positively facilitates the teaching-learning process. Similarly, school principals have to generate enthusiasm and commitment for the school community, thus enabling them to enhance efforts in achieving school goals. It is argued that principals can inspire and motivate the community through transformational leadership practices (Bass, 1985). After examining the role of transformational leadership in the school system, Andersson (2017) concluded that transformational leadership influences teacher commitment, job satisfaction, and performance and promotes the success of the school as a whole. Furthermore, Anderson maintained that education leaders can successfully use transformational school leadership to change schools to satisfy new stakeholders' expectations.

According to Leithwood (1994), transformational leadership is best suited to fulfill the needs of 21st-century schools and has a positive influence on schools' ability to lead change in school restructuring programs. "Transformational leadership has been shown to have a positive correlation with improved student performance in reading, as well as being successful in energizing students, allowing them to transcend self-interest and embrace change." According to Allen et al. (2015:12), transformational leadership impacts the classroom. Shatzer et al. (2014) also argued that school leadership could significantly impact teaching and learning. The authors added that school principals positively impact student academic achievement by improving work conditions. Similarly, Day, Gu, and Sammons (2016) argued the role of school principals in changing students' learning outcomes.

Bass (1985) introduced the four elements of transformational leadership: idealized influence, individual consideration, intellectual stimulation, and inspirational motivation. The student's academic achievement was the dependent variable in the study, and these four factors were considered independent variables. These Bass transformational leadership dimensions and their implications for school effectiveness are discussed below.

3.5.3 Intellectual stimulation and its implications for improved school performance

Intellectual stimulation is one of the components of Bass's transformational leadership model and a way leaders stimulate the motivation and creativity of followers (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Northouse, 2016; Shrestha, 2020). Intellectual stimulation enables followers to rethink problems and develop solutions (Essuman, 2019). Transformational leadership with intellectual stimulation behavior engages followers in solving the organization's problems. Furthermore, such a leader encourages followers to take risks and lets them try the challenges

without considering failures (Essuman, 2019). Leaders with intellectual stimulation behavior of transformational leadership are out-of-box thinkers who challenge the status quo to develop pertinent solutions to organizations' challenges. Intellectual stimulation behavior enables followers to improve their performance and look for better ways of doing their tasks (Essuman, 2019).

School principals who exhibit an intellectual stimulation behavior of transformational leadership can stimulate teachers' creativity and knowledge for better student learning performance. Such principals can encourage teachers to develop better solutions to change school conditions and student academic results (Bass, 1985; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Barling, Christie & Hopton, 2011). The primary problem schools currently face in the study area is the low performance of the student's academic results as assessed by national test scores. As teachers are critical in changing students' academic progress, school principals can motivate and encourage teachers toward school goal achievement, as Burns (1978) and Bass (1985) theorized. School leaders should inspire teachers to question continuously problem-solving approaches and critically reflect on various aspects of school practices, mainly the academic performance appraisal (Bass, 1999). School principals can support the teachers and other school community members in changing school conditions favorable to school improvement through positive stimulation, allowing them to try new ways to create innovative solutions to educational matters and encouraging the followers to think independently and solve problems carefully. Bass (1990) argued that intellectual stimulation plays a role in developing and enabling followers to release their creativity, and it also allows followers to think of old problems in a new way. Louis et al. (2010) explained that school principals can intellectually stimulate teachers and other school subordinates to work enthusiastically toward student academic improvement. When teachers are stimulated and encouraged to continue to be open, creative, and continually improving, it is possible to ensure and encourage students to work hard and innovatively (Sun & Leithwood, 2017).

With intellectual stimulation behavior, principals can encourage teachers and other community members to think critically (Essuman, 2019). Suppose school principals encourage and motivate teachers to question and think critically. In that case, teachers release their energy to contribute their best to school improvement in general and students' academic performance in particular. Teachers are responsible for improving student learning outcomes. When principals encourage them to look for innovative solutions for student academic performance, they can think of ways to work enthusiastically and creatively. In this regard, Essuman (2019:48) argued

that “*when teachers are open, creative, constantly improving, they can encourage and ensure that students look at the world from a new and creative perspective.*” Bass (1990) theorized that transformational leaders are known to create employees who are unselfish, faithful, and devoted to the organization's performance. This indicates that school principals who implement transformational leadership with the behavior of intellectual stimulation can transform the school condition by encouraging teachers’ creativity toward better academic learning. When teachers feel free to think and act, they will be motivated and release their energy to improve school performance.

3.5.4 Individual consideration and its implications for improved student learning outcomes

Individual consideration, a critical transformational leadership behavior, is aimed at developing followers based on their unique needs and characteristics. This behavior, which involves leaders interacting with followers through listening, coaching, mentoring, and teaching (Essuman,2019), profoundly impacts followers' needs for better achievement and growth. It signifies leaders' recognition of followers' needs (Bass, 1985; Bass & Riggio, 2006). Through training, mentoring, and encouragement, transformational leaders foster organizational progress. They approach each follower as an individual, both personally and professionally (Bass, 2000; Dartey-Baah, 2015), exhibiting considerate, individualized leadership behavior.

School principals with an individualized consideration behavior of transformational leadership develop teachers and other followers in the school. Principals with this behavior emphasize teachers' individual needs to perform better (Sun & Leithwood, 2017). Creating an interpersonal connection enables teachers to perceive that they are accepted and motivates them to try their best for school effectiveness. Through individualized consideration behavior, school leaders can create environments where teachers and other school subordinates can feel good about their work and how it contributes to the greater community. In addition, school principals with individualized considerate behavior encourage teachers to release their skills by providing opportunities for professional development (Bass,1999; Dartey-Baah, 2015). Acknowledged teachers, in turn, can recognize the individual needs and talents of the students, thus encouraging creativity and innovative learning.

3.5.5 Idealized influence and its implications for school improvement

According to Northouse (2013), transformational leadership also involves idealized influence, which is the behavior of leaders linked to morality and ethics. According to Bass (1985), the leaders' moral commitments and integrity are demonstrated by the idealized influence behavior of transformational leadership. Leaders with idealized influence behaviors usually demonstrate shared values and collective mission towards their organizations and followers. With this behavior, leaders are consistent in their actions and exhibit exemplary behavior for followers. Essuman (2019) further argued that leaders with idealized influence are known by their followers as persistent, determined, and courageous. As *"leading by example is more effective than leading by the command,"* Kouzes and Posner (2012:17) emphasized the significance of having an idealized and influenced leadership style. Similarly, idealization is influenced by values, according to Kouzes and Posner (1995), who stated that values serve as a framework for the societal and personal goals that we pursue. In the leader-follower interaction, transformational leaders with idealized influence exhibit high moral values and solid ethical conduct (Shrestha, 2020). Shrestha (2020) further explained that the idealized attributes of transformational leadership are the charismatic qualities of leaders.

School principals exhibiting idealized influence behavior are considered exemplary role models by their teachers and can influence teachers and subordinates through shared values (Northouse, 2007). Such leaders are ideal in their actions and are admired by their followers (Rafferty & Griffin, 2004). They do what they say, are exemplary in their action, and are persistent (Bass, 1999). School leaders who are role models can mobilize teachers in a way that allows them to be models for their students. School principals with idealized behavior develop teachers and students to be loyal, self-interested, and dedicated to their values. According to Northouse (2016), leaders with idealized influence behavior are truthful, generous, humble, preserved, and with integrity (Kouzes & Posner, 2011; Bass et al., 2003). The principal role model behavior enables teachers to be role models to their students, which, in turn, encourages students to become role models and commit themselves to school values for better academic learning.

3.5.6 Inspirational Motivation and School Leadership

Inspirational motivation is another behavior of transformational leadership that enables leaders to motivate followers. Leaders with inspirational motivation behavior of transformational

leadership motivate and inspire their followers through energizing words (Bass, 1985; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Northouse, 2007; Shrestha, 2020). Bass and Avolio (1995) also argued that transformational leaders influence subordinates by motivating and inspiring them to achieve organizational goals. Such leaders develop and clearly articulate a vision and expectations for their follower's performance. Through such inspirational motivation, leaders can increase their organizational performance by setting new standards and new goals for the efforts of their followers (Bass, 1990). Creating and sharing a vision for the future and motivating followers to achieve that vision is an essential leadership practice to encourage people in the organization (Kouzes & Posner, 1995; 2007; 2012). According to Dartey-Baah (2015), leaders with inspiring motivation communicate, create, and stimulate shared responsibility in followers. People are more confident if they feel good about their future; they feel a sense of belonging and are more likely to commit to their organization's efforts.

School principals can inspire and motivate teachers by stating the school's vision and setting clear goals. Such school leaders are characterized by their enthusiasm and optimistic attitude toward the future and can lead teachers to be enthusiasts who spread optimism, thus motivating them to work hard. Transformational school principals can develop a vision for schools using inspirational motivation, encouraging teachers and the other school community while balancing an understanding of the needs to accomplish the assigned tasks (Bass & Riggio, 2006). The transformational leadership dimensions are summarized in the following figure.

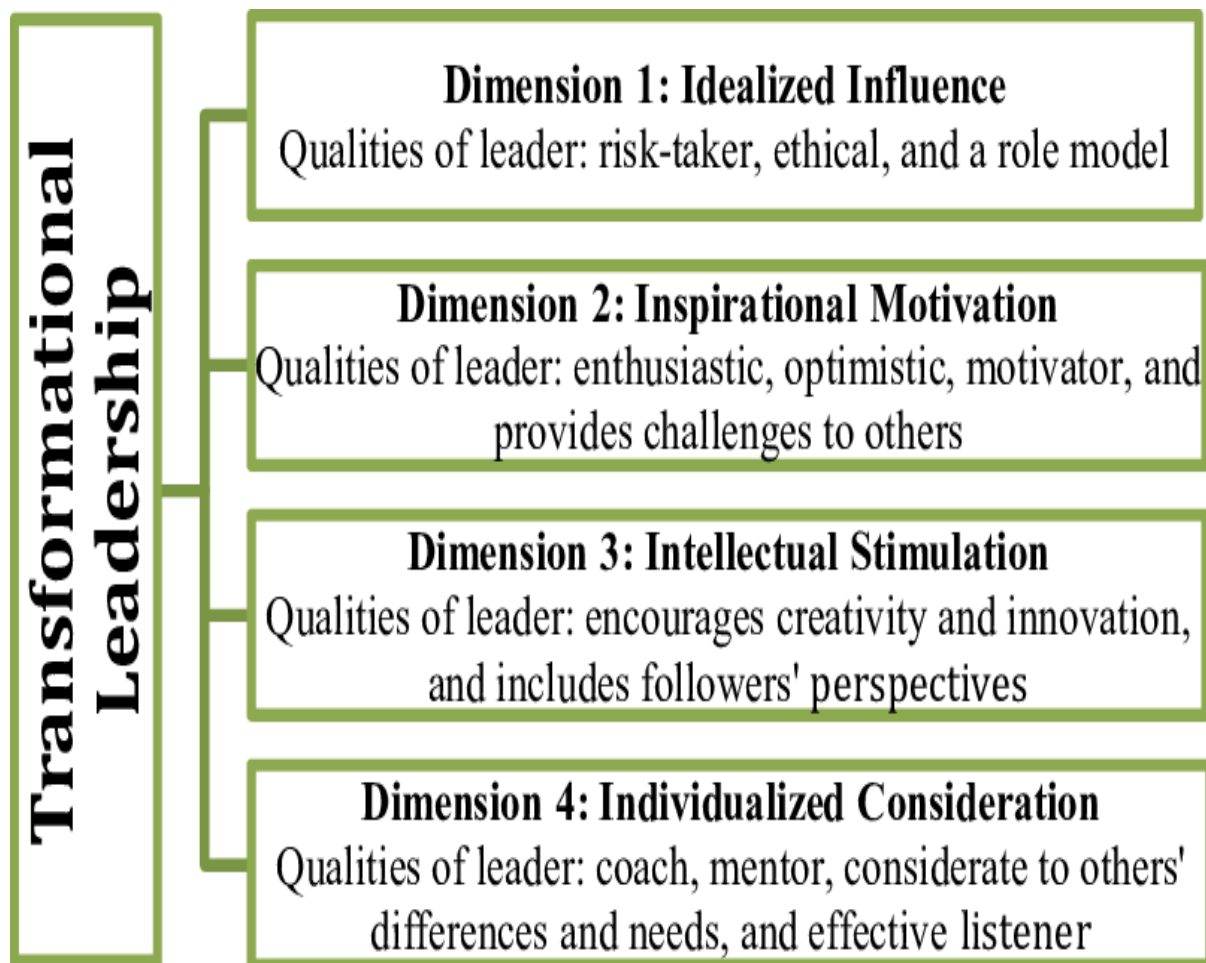


Fig 3.3. Theoretical framework (Bass & Riggio, 2006)

Based on Burns' transformational leadership theory, Bass came up with evidence that transformational leadership can move followers to perform beyond expectations. Bass developed a comprehensive Full Range of Leadership model and classified leadership styles based on the model. He identified dimensions of transformational leadership, which are measured using the *Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire* (MLQ). These transformational dimensions or components are discussed above and serve as independent variables for the study. School principals who demonstrate these dimensions have a role to play in changing the school environment in general and the academic performance of students in particular, as evidenced by different studies (Hauserman & Stick, 2013; Shatzer et al., 2014; Bush & Glover, 2014; Fullan, 2014; Allen et al., 2015; Sun & Leithwood, 2015; Quin et al., 2015; Boberg & Bourgeois, 2016; Leithwood, McCullough, 2016; Bush, 2018; Leithwood & Sun, 2018; Leithwood et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2019).

Bass further elaborated on the work of Burns and extended the model into a new paradigm of transformational leadership. Bass came up with the argument that transformational leadership enables followers to deliver beyond what is expected. He classified and elaborated leadership based on his Full Range of Leadership (FRL) model (Bass, 1998). Bass also identified dimensions of transformational leadership as idealized influence, inspirational, motivational, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, which are measured in the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). These four dimensions (4I) are thoroughly discussed above and serve as independent variables for the study. School principals must also motivate teachers according to performance. This indicates that school principals also must practice some transactional dimensions. Bass argued that transformational and transactional leadership can complement each other for organizational transformation.

School principals in Ethiopia are supposed to take on various responsibilities to uphold the standard of education. The roles of school leadership, education, and training policy (ETP, 1994) indicated its role and was elaborated by a national proclamation that aims to strengthen school administration and management (proclamation 217/2000). The mandate for education management, organization, public engagement, and financing came next (MOE, 2002). In the policy and proclamation, the emphasis is placed on the importance of principals in the administration and management of the school. The objectives of policy and the subsequent proclamation, as well as directives, mainly focus on education quality. Thus, it is anticipated that school principals would contribute to maintaining the standard of education in the classroom. School principals should engage in transformational leadership practices to fulfill their responsibilities. Most people agree that transformational educational leaders, such as school administrators, may motivate their staff members to achieve school goals by providing them with intellectual stimulation, idealized influence, individualized consideration, and inspirational motivation.

3.6 THE KENNETH LEITHWOOD MODEL OF TRANSFORMATIONAL SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

3.6.1 Introduction

Kenneth Leithwood's work on transformational leadership practices is fundamental for transformational school leadership. Leithwood (1994), building on the work of Burns (1978), Bass (1985), and Bass and Avolio (1994), established the transformational model of school

leadership. The works of Leithwood are known as instrumental in bridging the works of Burn and Bass in the field of education (Stewart, 2006). The critical distinction between Leithwood's and other transformational leadership models is that they focus on how school principals and teachers can improve the teaching and learning process. Leithwood also saw the necessity of a few transactional and managerial tasks, including staffing, providing instructional support, keeping an eye on school activities, and emphasizing community involvement for the stabilization and sustainability of schools, which other models have not considered. Some of these functions are instructional school leadership functions and are discussed separately.

According to Leithwood, school principals need to possess the Four I's of Transformational Leadership, as defined by Bass and Avolio (1994), to navigate the problems of the twenty-first century effectively. According to Stewart (2006), the Leithwood transformational school leadership model presupposes principals and teachers share leadership to provide individualized support, intellectual stimulation, and personal vision. Rather than exercising control, the principal fosters a collaborative culture to share and distribute leadership with the teachers and the school community. Leithwood contends that the head of the school has to attend to the requirements of each employee and provide them individualized attention, particularly those who require recognition. An effective school administrator must provide intellectual stimulation or the ability to think creatively about long-standing issues. An excellent school administrator must convey high standards to teachers and students through a strong and dynamic presence (inspiring motivation). Lastly, an effective principal must set an example for teachers to follow through with their successes and morally modeled behavior (idealized influence). The work of Leithwood (1994) indicated that principal leadership affects student achievement.

Setting directions, developing people, redesigning organizations, and improving the instructional program are some of the successful leadership practices that influence teaching learning outcomes that Leithwood and his associates categorized through the synthesis of prior research based on qualitative and quantitative data analysis (Leithwood, 2010; Leithwood & McCullough, 2016). Other similar findings also posited the above view of Leithwood et al. that school leadership through successful practice influences the school learning environment in general and student academic outcome in particular (Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008; Heck & Hallinger, 2009; Chang, 2011; Shatzer et al., 2013; Sun & Leithwood, 2015; Leithwood, 2017; Leithwood et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2019). The above views agree with Bass's transformational leadership factors and their essential attributes to enhance organizational performance.

In his review of educational leadership, Leithwood (2005) defined leadership as two core functions: setting directions and exercising influence. This indicates that school principals, in addition to influencing the school community, must set directions for teachers and other school subordinates.

On the other hand, after a thorough analysis and review of different theories and literature work, Leithwood categorized three basic school leadership practices, among others, as necessary to school performance. Accordingly, Leithwood defined these categories as “*determining the school mission, which includes defining and then communicating the school goals; managing the instructional programs, which include supervision and evaluation, instruction, coordinating the curriculum, and monitoring students’ progress; and promoting a positive school learning climate which encompasses protecting instructional time, maintaining high visibility, providing incentives for teachers, and providing incentives for learning*” (Leithwood, 2005, pp. 8-9). Leithwood further argued that these categories of leadership practices align with the transformational leadership behaviors and practices of Burns and Bass.

3.6.2 Setting directions

Setting directions includes leadership practices such as building a shared vision, fostering the acceptance of shared group goals, inspiring high-performance expectations, and communicating in all directions (Leithwood et al., 2010). In the leadership process, followers must understand their organizational goals and vision. Therefore, it is critical for leaders to give followers a clear understanding of the organization's vision, goals, activities, and targeted results (Hallinger & Heck, 2002). This follows by setting the direction for effective and efficient implementation of the targeted goals based on the organizational vision and mission.

Leithwood (2005) also explained that direction setting is about building a school vision, establishing goals, and demonstrating high-performance expectations. School principals must build teachers and other school communities on the school vision so that they can work together to achieve that vision. Leithwood and Jantzi (2010) explained that school leaders must set directions by designing school vision. This can happen when followers are motivated towards school goals achievement. According to goal-based theories, people at work will be motivated by goals that make them feel personally inspired. Bennis & Nanus (cited in Leithwood, 2005)

also argued that visioning the followers and establishing purpose can be enhanced by motivating organizational performance and promoting communication.

3.6.3 Developing people

Developing people is a center for transformational leadership. As leadership occurs in relationships with people, leaders must focus on growing their followers, allowing them to be responsible for their organization. Developing people can be possible through leadership practices such as offering followers individualized support, intellectual stimulation, and modeling values (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). These two practices, individualized support, and intellectual stimulation, are transformational leadership behaviors essential for developing people in the workplace.

Leaders can provide personalized support through personal attention to subordinates. Developing people in organizations enables them to be productive in moving toward the set directions. Leithwood and Jantzi (2005) argued that transformational leaders must build their followers personally and professionally by tapping into their intellectual and emotional states. Leithwood, Tomlinson, and Genge (1996:22) identified individualized support for flowers and was defined as '*ensuring equitable, humane, and considerate treatment of one's colleagues, providing support for personal and professional development of staff, developing close knowledge of their colleagues, recognizing good work and effort, and fostering varied approaches to change.*'

Providing intellectual stimulation enables leaders to optimize the personal development and growth of the follower. Bass and Bass (2008) argued the importance of intellectual stimulation since transformational leaders intellectually stimulate their followers to become more innovative and creative. Leaders also have to motivate and empower the capacity of subordinates to be able to face challenges. Leithwood, Jantzi, and Fernandez (1994) argued that transformative leaders empower teachers by providing intellectual stimulation and creating a positive school climate. Leithwood et al. (1994) further contended that leaders must create appropriate conditions and collaborative opportunities so that teachers can engage in capacity building, thereby increasing their performance.

3.6.4 Redesigning of the organization

Redesigning the organization indicates the leader's role in developing an effective organization that supports the performance of subordinates in organizations. According to Leithwood and Jantzi (2006), redesigning the organization includes establishing essential organizational routines, systems, and structures that enhance the collaborative work culture and collective learning. Developing a productive and positive culture in the school is a vital school leadership practice (Sergiovanni, 2007). Leithwood, Jantzi, and Steinbach (1999) explained that successful schools have a solid functional culture designed to build an excellent school.

Transformational school leaders are known to design organizations that foster motivation and commitment. Leithwood et al. (1994) described the dimensions of redesigning organizations in terms of culture building in the school as strengthening school culture, fostering collaborative school culture, and promoting shared decision-making practices. School leaders can build such a positive school culture based on school vision. This, in turn, enables leaders to exploit the collective efforts of the school community towards school goal achievement.

3.6.5 School principals as instructional leaders

According to Robinson (2010), instructional leadership refers to profound leadership practices in the school that involve planning, evaluation, coordination, and improvement of teaching and learning. Leithwood, in his transformational school leadership, categorized successful school leadership practices into four, as discussed above. Among these, improving or managing the instructional program is the one. Although transformational leadership is known to be effective for better school performance, school principals also have to play an instructional leadership role to improve teaching and learning practices in the school. Different scholars argue that transformational school principals are also instructional leaders (Hallinger, 2003; Leithwood et al., 2004; Leithwood et al., 2006; Stewart, 2006; Leithwood, Harris, and Hopkins, 2008; Robinson, 2010, 2011; Menon, 2014; Hallinger, 2018; Aas & Paulsen, 2019; Sebastian et al., 2019). Stewart (2006) explained that instructional leadership is focused on school goals, curriculum, instruction, and school environment, while transformational school leadership is focused on restructuring the school by improving school conditions. As school principals are responsible for overall school activities, it is essential to practice instructional roles for better school performance.

Leithwood and Jantzi (1999) explained instructional leaders as teachers and school administrators who focused on teaching and learning behaviors to improve student achievement. Leithwood and Jantzi (1999) consequently explained that instructional, transformational, and, to some extent, transactional leadership practices must be evident for student achievement to be successful and occur in a partnership between district leaders, administrators, and teachers.

Robinson (2011) argued that instructional leadership at school is focused on a vision focused on student learning. School leadership should work directly with teachers to ensure continual improvement and best practices in their teaching. Robinson further argued the importance of the role of principals as instructional leaders, as “*Student-centered leadership requires direct involvement with teachers in the business of improving teaching and learning*” (Robinson, 2011, p. 22). Principals lead instructional practices and influence teachers through assessments, informal conversations, and guided learning opportunities. It is widely agreed that school leaders have a student-centered vision for their school. School leaders put enhanced student learning at the center of their school leadership, which can happen through instructional leadership practices. Revisiting the school vision should be a yearly task in which input from all stakeholders, including teachers, students, parents, and community members, is taken into account. To this end, Healy (2009) stated, “*Taking a school from mediocre to great requires a leader who has a vision and is focused on that vision*” (p. 30). Most importantly, the school's vision must be directly related to student learning and the search for ways to improve learning. Robinson argued the importance of instructional school leadership as '*achieving vision requires their work to be deeply informed about improving learning and teaching. That is why we must return education to educational leadership*' (Robinson, 2011, p. 155). Robinson's argument indicates that transformational school leadership should take teaching and learning goals at the center. Lemoine and Greer (2014:20) further stated that '*without the involved direction of the principal, the faculty of schools will never accomplish the task of meeting the needs of students and helping them progress.*' Integrating transformational and instructional leadership models will provide the most effective school system (Menon, 2014). Menon contended that although transformational leadership has proven to be a dynamic and effective leadership style in schools, it is not enough to use this approach alone. Hence, Menon (2014: 524) suggested that “*transformational leadership practices are insufficient for effectiveness unless combined with additional leadership behaviors such as those related to instructional leadership.*”

There is agreement, and research findings indicate that the school principal must be a strong instructional leader. Within the area of instructional leadership, Hallinger's work (2003) was considered notable in terms of his collaboration on the development of the most thoroughly tested model, which consisted of three components of leadership practice: (1) defining school mission, (2) managing the instructional program, and (3) promoting school climate. Similarly, Sergiovanni (1991) defined instructional leadership as principals who could develop educational programs to help enhance teaching and learning.

The above argument indicates that transformational school principals should also have an instructional role. This will be a good solution for those who argue that school principals do not directly impact student academic improvement. Although some scholars say that the role of school principals in improving student educational outcomes is indirect, it is believed that their role is essential to improving student academic outcomes in different ways.

Leithwood's model was based on Burns and Bass' transformational leadership theories and models. Leithwood brought attention to previous works on transformational leadership in political, military, and business organizations into school setup. The Leithwood transformational leadership model bridged the works of Burns and Bass, particularly in education. The model highlighted some leadership functions, such as transactional and managerial functions, for school effectiveness. Leithwood's transformational leadership model for an effective school is the foundation of this study's leadership. The dimensions the scholars argued about align with transformational leadership behaviors and support transformational leadership effectiveness in the school setting. Arguments and explanations also indicate that transformational school principals must practice the instructional role for better performance.

Leithwood agrees that Bass's transformational leadership dimensions, such as idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration, are important leadership behaviors and skills in the educational setting. In addition to these behaviors, Leithwood argued that transformational school principals must share leadership among teachers and other school subordinates. According to him, leadership can be shared among subordinates through individual support, intellectual stimulation, and personal vision (Stewart, 2006).

The Leithwood transformational leadership model and its suggestions are in line with and essential for this study. The model suggestions complement the study questions and objectives on the transformational role of the school leadership to improve the student's academic

outcomes. Schools are organizations in which different actors work in a complex system. Such a complex system requires organized leadership with some important managerial and, most importantly, instructional leadership functions. This can be possible through shared leadership practice among school subordinates. Leithwood's transformational school leadership model suggests principals must share leadership with teachers and other school subordinates for effectiveness. This also complements and supports the study objectives, as the school leadership policy and Ethiopian school directives demand that the leadership practice of school principals be integrative and participatory. School principals must establish a common understanding between subordinates for a positive teaching and learning environment. To this end, Hallinger (2003) argued that leadership is an organizational entity rather than a single individual's responsibility. These arguments support Leithwood's idea of sharing leadership among stakeholders. In general, Leithwood's transformational school leadership model complements the transformational models of Burns and Bass and could serve as one of the theoretical foundations of the study.

3.7 SUMMARY

In chapter three, the theoretical framework for the study was discussed based on the existing theories and assumptions on transformational leadership. The study's theoretical framework is based on the transformational leadership theories of Burns, Bass, and Leithwood Kenneth, as well as leadership styles and the developments of the transformational leadership model in the context of education. These theories and models are based on the relationship and influence between leaders and followers for increased organizational performance. The rationale behind taking these theories and models as a framework emanates from research works and arguments about transformational leadership effectiveness for organizational performance in general and education setup in particular. In addition, transformational leadership focuses on productive relationships that result in increased organizational performance. In the school context, the role of transformational school leaders is to influence teachers and the school community to commit themselves to a higher level of student academic performance. The discussion in the chapter allowed the researcher to understand how a suitable leadership model was developed in the education sector. The theoretical underpinnings discussed above explain how transformational leadership developed and how it is practicable in education. Understanding leadership theories and models is essential for school leadership to be effective. Today, schools operate in a

dynamic situation with technological advancement and demand for learning. Knowing the problem and deploying an appropriate leadership style makes school leadership effective. Burns' transformational leadership theory and later works of Bass's transformational model enabled the researcher to understand how transformational leadership developed and its basic principles and dimensions. These dimensions are the essential independent variables taken into account in the study. Leithwood's model and work have given a clear picture of the practicability of transformational leadership in the educational system. Leithwood bridged the work of Burns and Bass and brought transformational leadership to the education set-up. These theories and models are the essential theoretical foundations for the study and lay the ground for the research question of what roles transformational school leadership plays in student academic effectiveness.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous Chapter, chapter 3, discussed the study's theoretical framework. The current chapter presents essential details about the research methodology and methods employed for the study. It thoroughly discusses the study's aims, objectives, research methods, and approach. Furthermore, it discusses the target population, techniques of target population selection, sampling techniques and sample size, instrumentation, and data collection procedures. It also discusses data analysis, processing methods, and data presentation techniques. The chosen research methods discuss the research's trustworthiness, validity, and reliability. In conclusion, this chapter discusses the ethical considerations and procedures used to maintain research ethics.

4.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

A research paradigm is the beliefs and agreements about how the problem should be understood and addressed (Kuhn, 1970). Paradigms are general frameworks or viewpoints that provide ways of making assumptions about the nature of reality, as explained by Bubbie (1998). Similarly, Patton (2002) presented a paradigm describing a worldview informed by philosophical assumptions about social reality. Guba (1990) explained that paradigm deals with

three basic questions: Ontology- what the reality is, Epistemology- how we know what we know, and methodology- how we study the world. Similarly, Johnson and Christensen (2019) explained the paradigm as beliefs on how the researcher views the world when searching for an answer to the question under study. The framework of beliefs and assumptions enables the researcher to overlook the issues in the real world. According to Johnson and Christensen (2019), the paradigm is expressed in the researcher's view of reality (ontology), the researcher's view of knowledge development (epistemology), the role of values (axiology), and how the researcher considers research methods (methodology). Creswell (2014:6) further argued that *“paradigm is the basic beliefs of the researcher which guide the overall research process.”*

Guba (1990) also classified research paradigms as post-positivism, constructivism, transformative, and pragmatics, as Creswell (2014) reported. The post-positivism paradigm is often associated with quantitative methods and emphasizes precision, generalisability, dependability, and reproducibility. On the other hand, the constructivism paradigm is a method linked to qualitative methodologies, wherein the researcher constructs subjective meanings of the phenomenon by drawing as much as possible from the participants' perspectives in informal discussions (Creswell, 2013; Creswell & Clark, 2011). Alternatively, a transformative worldview emerged from the conviction that conventional research methods suit ordinary people, but marginalized persons do not fit typical research methods.

The pragmatic paradigm places more emphasis on actions and outcomes than the postpositivist view of cause and effect. It places more emphasis on the problem than the methods, viewing the solution as an essential consideration rather than the method of getting there. According to this paradigm, the solution might be found by mixing multiple approaches, methods, and techniques (Creswell, 2013; Creswell & Clark, 2011). Pragmatism is predicated on the idea that researchers ought to employ the philosophical and methodological strategy that is most effective for the specific study issue under investigation (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). It is frequently linked to mixed-methods or multiple-methods studies (Creswell & Clark, 2011; Morgan, 2013; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009), where the outcomes and research topics are given more weight than the techniques.

The study aims to find an answer to the question of what roles transformational school principals play in affecting student academic performance. In this case, an appropriate approach to finding the answer is to view transformational school leadership in the real world. In this study, the researcher understood that the reality of searching for answers to the research

problem falls under a pragmatic research paradigm, and consequently, the researcher adopted this paradigm. According to the pragmatist view, reality is constantly negotiated, debated, and interpreted (Cresswell, 2009; Lukenchuk, 2013:). The best method to use is the one that solves the problem according to the arguments of pragmatists (Cohen et al., 2018). Cresswell (2014) explained that the pragmatic paradigm is associated with mixed-method research.

4.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

A research approach implies plans and procedures for specific research and includes steps from broad assumptions to detailed data collection methods, analysis, and interpretation (Taherdoost, 2022). An appropriate approach for a particular study depends on its philosophical assumption. The intellectual foundation for this specific study falls under pragmatism, which implies a holistic approach to finding an answer to research questions (Creswell, 2014).

This study employed a mixed methodology research approach, which involves a research design that combines quantitative and qualitative methods (Creswell, 2013; Creswell & Creswell, 2017). This approach combines quantitative research with qualitative elements to answer the research question (Hafsa, 2019; George, 2021). The researcher used this method as it has numerous advantages over single methods (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018; Hafsa, 2019). A mixed-method approach enabled the researcher to draw a holistic conclusion on the matter under study more effectively than a single-method approach. George (2022) further contended the advantages of using mixed methods in his study. According to the scholar, the benefits of using a mixed methods research approach include enabling the researcher to come up with a pertinent generalization of the research outcome from two sources of data, helping the researcher to contextualize with multiple sources of data, and come with a more decadent conclusion, and increasing the credibility of the study outcome. Data triangulation through mixed-method research methods is essential for drawing a credible conclusion on the research outcome.

The mixed method also allowed the researcher to answer research questions more meaningfully, combining particularity with generality (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018; Dawadi, Shrestha & Giri, 2021). According to Denscombe (2014), a mixed-method approach is essential to increase data accuracy and reliability through triangulation, thus reducing bias in the research. Cohen et al. (2018) explained the importance of mixed research methodology over a single method in a holistic manner. These scholars argued its significance in terms of a

comprehensive and complete understanding of phenomena. In addition, they agreed that a mixed-method approach enables the researcher to answer research questions more meaningfully, combining particularity with generality. The chosen approach enabled the researcher to answer the question: What is the role of the principal's transformational leadership in students' academic performance in the Sidama region of Ethiopia? Combining quantitative data with principals' and teachers' perspectives through interview discussions also allowed the researcher to ascertain principals' and teachers' comprehension and perception of transformational leadership and its implications on student academic performance. The researcher agreed with the scholar's view and deployed this methodology as it enabled the answer to the research question to be comprehensive and holistic.

Poth and Munce (2020) also argued that the mixed-method approach confirms data reliability and cross-validation of the findings. According to Creed, Freeman, Robinson, and Woodley (2004), a mixed-method approach comprehensively answers the research question: What role do school principal leadership styles have on student academic performance? avoiding the limitations of using a single approach. Therefore, the researcher chose a mixed-method approach to conduct this study based on its complementary strengths.

4.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is the overall strategy of the study that guides the entire data collection and analysis process. It provides an overall framework for data collection (Leedy, 1997; McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). McMillan and Schumacher further argued that the research design is a plan that shows how the research data is collected and analyzed. Denzin and Lincoln (2011) considered research design as a strategy. Trochim (2006), in turn, explained research design as the research structure, regarded as the 'glue' that holds together all the essential elements in a research project. According to Creswell, research design is a plan or proposal to conduct research (Creswell, 2009). Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2012) described research design as a plan to collect research data to come up with a pertinent answer to the research questions. Similarly, Bryman (2006) describes the research design as a plan for collecting research data to answer the research questions and a framework for collecting and analyzing data.

Creswell (2014) states that there are various types of mixed method research designs, such as embedded mixed methods, multiphase mixed methods, transformational mixed methods, explanatory sequential mixed methods, exploratory sequential mixed methods, and convergent

parallel mixed methods. Explanatory sequential mixed methods, exploratory sequential mixed methods, and convergent parallel mixed techniques are the most commonly utilized (Dawadi et al., 2021). This study used a convergent parallel mixed research design.

The parallel convergent mixed research design is a type of mixed research design that collects quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously. In this study design, more quantitative than qualitative data are gathered, and qualitative data are seen as complementary or supporting quantitative data (George, 2022). Concurrent triangulation of data from two sources was carried out, in which the researcher simultaneously gathers quantitative and qualitative data and evaluates the outcomes, drawing conclusions based on the findings and whether the data complement each other from both sources (Creswell, 2009).

The convergent parallel mixed methods design enabled the researcher to determine if the data were convergent or divergent. The reason for choosing this design is that it saves time and also allows the researcher to substantiate the findings. Furthermore, data from both sources can be collected simultaneously, making integration easy. The data integration provided an excellent opportunity to validate and explain the relationship between the two sources. The convergent parallel mixed study design allowed the researcher to gain a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the transformational leadership practices of school principals and their impact on student academic performance (Creswell, 2009). Integration, validation, and contrasting the data from both strands allowed the researcher to further analyze, discuss, and recommend the study results. The chosen research design enabled the researcher to follow the appropriate methods and procedures to find an answer to the research question in the study.

4.5 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

4.5.1 Introduction

In the above section, the study provided the methodological and logistic procedures used for the study. The researcher used a convergent parallel concurrent methods research design to find the answer to the research question. The current section discusses the study participants' target population, sample, and sampling procedures for the quantitative and qualitative phases. To search for an answer that leads to a possible conclusion about the study, the researcher used an appropriate method for population and sampling purposes.

4.5.2 Study population

The whole group from which the researcher hopes to conclude is referred to as the population in a research study. Furthermore, McMillan and Schumacher (2014) contended that a sample is a subset of participants representative of a population. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2014), a sample is the group from which the researcher will gather data. Kothari (2006:109-110) defined the study population as '*all elements in any field of inquiry constitute a universe or population.*' Kothari (2006) also argued that a sample design is a definite plan for obtaining a sample from a given population. It refers to the technique or procedure the researcher would adopt to select sample items. Because only a portion of the population could be accommodated for the study, the researcher selected a sample from the population for each phase. The study population comprised teachers and principals of public secondary schools. The study's target populations were the 5956 teachers and 95 school principals from these secondary schools in the Sidama region.

4.5.3 Sample and sampling procedures for Phase 1: The quantitative phase

As the study area is secondary schools, the target population was selected based on its academic performance in the national examination test. Among secondary schools in the study area, high- and low-performance category schools were selected based on the result of the three-year National examination. According to the Regional Education Bureau, 95 public secondary schools are in the Sidama region. In these schools, 5956 teachers are involved in the teaching process. Among 95 regional public secondary schools, 24 (25%) secondary schools (grades 9-12) were selected using a purposive sampling technique. In each school, all principals and vice principals were targeted. Proportional and simple random sampling techniques were used to select teachers from the selected schools. This method of sampling gives equal chances to any subject in the population.

The sample size is the appropriate proportion of the target study group that would provide information in the study that would allow generalization of enabling the target group (Creswell, 2012; Fraenkel et al., 2012). The sample size of the study population of teachers was selected based on the statistical formula derived from www.surveymonkey.com as;

$$\text{Sample size} = \frac{z^2 \times p(1-p) / e^2}{1 + (z^2 \times p(1-p) / e^2 \times N)}$$

Where;

N = population size

e = Margin of error (percentage in decimal form); accepted error margin = 5%

z = z-score = 1.96, (for desired confidence level 95%, z- score is 1.96)

p standard deviation based on population proportion of expected prevalence, normally 50% or .5

$$\text{Sample size} = \frac{\frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.5(1-0.5)}{(0.05)^2}}{1 + \frac{1.96^2 \times 0.5(1-0.5)}{(0.05)^2 \times 5956}} = 362.$$

Therefore, 362 teachers were selected as study subjects based on simple and proportional random techniques that considered gender during the selection.

4.5.4 Sample and sampling procedures for Phase 2: The qualitative phase

For phase two, 10 principals and 20 teachers, a total of 30 participants, were interviewed. These participants were selected from 10 secondary schools based on their academic performance. The participants were selected purposefully, taking into account their stay at the school. Therefore, purposive sampling techniques allowed the researcher to include the views of the participants from high—and low-performing schools.

4.6 INSTRUMENTATION AND DATA COLLECTION

4.6.1 Introduction

Instrumentation and data collection are techniques, tools, and methods deployed in the research process. Instrumentation refers to tools or mechanisms the researcher attempts to measure in the study. Different instrumentation and data collection methods exist. Some methods include questionnaires, interviews, focused group discussions, and document analysis (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). This section discusses instrumentation and data collection mechanisms for

quantitative and qualitative phases. Data recording and processing techniques were also discussed.

4.6.2 Instrumentation and data collection in Phase 1: The quantitative phase

Quantitative data collection is the method of collecting data that can be converted into numerical values, and the latter can be analyzed using an appropriate statistical method. Most of the time, quantitative data are used to measure the variables in the study to understand the relationship between the study variables (Voelkel & Kretzschmar, 2021). Quantitative data can be collected using quantitative methods such as numbers, frequencies, means, standard deviations, etc. Quantitative data collection is essential as it provides verifiable information.

Instruments for quantitative data collection include questionnaires, interviews, observation, document review, probability sampling, etc. (Voelkel & Kretzschmar, 2021). For the current study's quantitative phase, the researcher employed a questionnaire and a review of document data. According to Aryal (2022), the questionnaire is a quantitative data-collecting tool comprising a set of questions and possible replies. It can be given to research participants and returned to the researcher immediately or via mail.

The use of a questionnaire for quantitative data collection has numerous advantages. These include saving time in data collection, being relatively inexpensive when compared to other tools, uniformity for the respondents, being free of bias of the interviewer, allowing thinking and responding to the questions, and enabling the researcher to reach the respondents easily (Taherdoost, 2021; Aryal, 2022).

The quantitative phase employed the Multi-Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), which Bass (1985) created and modified by Bass and Avolio (2000) to assess transformational leadership. The researcher adjusted the MLQ for the study and added some additional information. The questionnaire described leadership styles in descriptive statements. The descriptive statements were organized under the four transformational leadership factors: Idealized influence (IF), Inspirational motivation (IM), Intellectual stimulation (IS), and individualized consideration (IC). Respondents were asked to rate the descriptive statements on a Likert scale of 1-5, with 1 being the least descriptive and five being the most descriptive of the statements (1= Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Often, 5 = Always). In a Likert scale, the respondent is asked to respond to each statement using several descriptors, usually four or five (Kothari, 2006). The

questionnaire had two sections. The first section focuses on the background and biographical details of the participants, which gives a clear picture of the study's independent variables. The next section of the study instrument contained closed-ended items to rate respondents about school leadership roles and styles in the respective schools.

Data collection in the quantitative phase took place in two phases. The first step was the pilot test, which was used to test the validity of the instrument's content. This also allowed the researcher to modify the instrument before distributing it for the next phase (Creswell, 2014). The second step was distributing the amended questionnaire to school principals and teachers after a consecutive consultation and briefing on its importance and general guidelines.

4.6.3 Instrumentation and data collection in Phase 2: The qualitative phase

Qualitative data are nominal and descriptive non-numeric data types expressed in words or sentences (Taherdoost, 2021). According to Taherdoost (2021), qualitative data is used to answer questions such as “why and how” in the research study and expresses the respondents' feelings, perceptions, and emotions about the variables in the study. Qualitative data can be collected using structured, semi-structured, and unstructured approaches. Qualitative data collection methods include recording audiotapes, sketches, notes, and photographs (Taherdoost, 2021). Taherdoost (2021) further explained that qualitative data collection methods include observations, document reviews, and interviews.

In the qualitative phase, structured and semi-structured open-ended interview questions were conducted for selected principals and teachers (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). This allowed the researcher to investigate and understand leadership effectiveness as perceived by school principals and teachers. The researcher interviewed the selected respondents one-on-one to clarify the quantitative data. In this phase, 10 principals and 20 teachers, a total of 30 participants, were interviewed. These participants were selected from 10 secondary schools based on their academic performance. Participants were selected purposefully, taking into account their stay at school. An audio tape recorder allowed the researcher to transcribe and code data during the individual interview sessions during data analysis. These open-ended questions allowed the researcher to gain in-depth insight into the perceptions of principals and teachers on school leadership roles to maintain student academic performance.

4.6.4 Data processing and recording

In research methodology, data processing implies collecting and translating research data into valuable and usable information (Kumar, 2018). Data processing involves editing, coding, classifying, tabulating, charting, and diagramming research data. A researcher converts the collected data into a meaningful and readable format in data processing. These formats include graphs, charts, or other tools appropriate for data design. Data processing enables the researcher to gain insight into the collected data, and the latter generates better results that can answer the research questions. Data processing can convert the information collected into a meaningful format.

The researcher prepared the collected data to eliminate redundancy and errors. Then, all the collected data were checked to ensure they were accurate, consistent, uniform, complete, and ready for further analysis.

Coding of the data is a necessary step in the research methodology. Coding is the process or operation in which data or responses are organized into classes or categories, and numerals or other symbols are given to each item according to the class in which it falls. This can usually be done during the questionnaire design stage. Coding enables the researcher to analyze the data collected easily. The researcher had given a number as a code to identify descriptive numeric and non-numeric data. The processed and recorded data were entered into an Excel sheet and then into SPSS for further analysis.

The above section discussed instrumentation and data collection techniques for quantitative and qualitative phases. The study instrument for the quantitative phase was developed based on the Multi Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), which was adjusted with additional items that could measure transformational leadership behaviors of school principals. The research questionnaire was developed with a descriptive statement of the Likert scales 1-5 showing the level of agreement. The qualitative data collection instruments and procedures are also discussed in the section. The study used a structured and semi-structured open-ended interview question administered to selected principals and teachers. Data recording and processing from both phases were discussed. Data coding and entering it into an Excel sheet and then SPSS for further analysis were the key issues addressed in the above section.

4.7 DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.7.1 Introduction

Data analysis summarizes, describes, and evaluates the data collected using an appropriate statistical tool. Kelley (2022) explained data analysis as cleaning, changing, processing raw data, and extracting actionable information. Data analysis requires analytic techniques, explanations, and data display (Kelley, 2022). In this section, data analysis techniques for both phases are discussed.

4.7.2 Data Analysis and presentation in Phase 1: The Quantitative phase

In the quantitative phase, quantitative data analysis was conducted. Quantitative data analysis implies the analysis of data that can be organized in the form of numbers, whether numeric or categorical (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014).

SPSS and MS Excel were used to enter the data gathered during the quantitative phase. The Likert scale was used to assign numbers to closed-ended questions. By analyzing the data in terms of frequencies, percentages, means, and weighted means, the researcher verified the transformational practices of the school principals and their impact on the student's academic achievement in the study area.

Data validation and appropriate coding were meticulously checked, ensuring the accuracy and reliability of the data. The Likert scale was utilized to provide numerical values to closed-ended questions, which were then used to produce descriptive and inferential statistics. The quantitative data were then presented in tables, graphs, and charts. These were again analyzed using the mean and standard deviation of the score range, providing a comprehensive overview of the data.

4.7.3 Data analysis in Phase 2: The qualitative phase

In the qualitative phase, data was collected from the selected respondents, which were school principals and teachers, as mentioned in the above section. In this phase, the researcher conducted interviews with 30 participants, which comprised 10 principals and 20 teachers from 10 schools. During the interview, an audio tape recording was performed. The recorded data from the interviewees was organized and documented in tables. This enabled the researcher to identify specific issues from the original data and correctly transcribe them. Data were

reviewed repeatedly to understand participants' words (Creswell, 2009). The reviewed data were organized in light of the research questions. The participants' responses were grouped in tables as summary sheets (Creswell, 2009). Based on the views of the participants, themes were identified.

Data transcribed, reviewed, and organized as previously described were coded carefully to maintain confidentiality and research ethics. Interpretation and analysis of the findings were carried out. Participants were given specific numbers as pseudonyms to ensure anonymity and respect their privacy. The recorded response was coded and analyzed, compared with the research question, and organized for further analysis. Reading the transcripts repeatedly was undertaken to better understand the respondents' opinions, demonstrating a commitment to understanding the participants' perspectives.

4.7.4 Triangulation of the data from the two phases

Triangulation captures multiple voices and truths about the topic rather than using the one 'right' result (Braun & Clarke, 2013). In the triangulation, the views and perspectives from two different samples (in Phase 1 and Phase 2, respectively) were used to compare the findings from the two samples. Document analysis of student test results from national examinations was done to correlate the results with leadership effectiveness.

The above section discusses data analysis procedures for the quantitative and qualitative phases. The study used MS Excel and the statistical package for social science (SPSS) tools to capture and interpret the data. Close-ended questions in the quantitative phase were coded and assigned numbers based on the Likert scales 1-5, where one means strongly disagree, and five means strongly agree. Data collected using semi-structured interview questions were transcribed, coded, and analyzed. This allowed the researcher to compare the respondent's responses using the transformational school leadership effectiveness questionnaire based on the research questions.

4.8 VALIDITY, RELIABILITY, AND TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY

4.8.1 Introduction

According to Whiston (2012), validity is gathering relevant data for measuring devices. The extent to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure is known as its validity (Kothari, 2006). It speaks to how a technique captures the essence of what it is meant to capture. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2014), validity is also related to the appropriateness of interpretation techniques, data gathering, and analysis.

Reliability refers to the measuring instrument's stability and consistency over time. In other words, reliability is the ability of instruments to give similar results when applied at different times. It is seen as the degree to which a test is free from measurement errors since the more measurement errors occur, the less reliable the test is (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001; McMillan & Schumacher, 2014)). The consistency with which a method measures something is known as reliability. The measurement is considered reliable if the same result can be consistently achieved using the same techniques under the same circumstances. According to Kothari (2006), a measuring instrument is reliable if it provides consistent results under consecutive testing. The consistency of results in time, in different observers, and in parts of the test itself allows the researcher to overcome the reliability error. Trustworthiness is the assessment of the quality of the research (Anney, 2014). This section discussed the validity and reliability of the data in the quantitative phase and the trustworthiness of the data in the qualitative phase.

4.8.2 Validity and reliability of the data from the quantitative phase

In quantitative research, validity denotes an instrument's purpose (Jackson, 2015). According to Babbie (2007), validity can alternatively be defined as a measure's ability to represent the idea that it is intended to assess fairly. The capacity to infer causal linkages from the data gathered is known as internal validity. By ensuring that changes in the dependent variables would only come from the independent variable and not from other competing factors, the researcher attempted to preserve internal validity in this study. To ensure the validity of the research instrument, the instrument was developed under the close guidance of an advisor. It was carried out to check how well the results correspond to established theories and other measures of the same concept.

The research sample was generalized to other or bigger demographics and situations using external validity, according to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2017). The researcher did this by carefully choosing the sampling strategies that would work best to create a sample that was representative of the study population. Careful consideration had been given to variables that could impact external validity and generalizability, including participants (respondents), circumstance, time, intervention, and measures. To ensure a convenient time for distributing surveys and conducting one-on-one interviews, the researcher effectively regulated these elements by corresponding with the respondents before their visit.

The capacity to make judgments based on data analysis is known as conclusion validity (Cohen et al., 2017). To ensure that the data analysis procedure satisfies the requirements outlined for the validity of the conclusions, the researcher enlisted the assistance of a reputable statistician. Additionally, the researcher's supervisor ensured that the findings drawn were only based on the reports from the data analysis.

The researcher also noted the validity of the measures, including convergent, face, and content validity. The researcher examined the questionnaire's face validity by determining whether or not its questions could be interpreted as measuring what they were supposed to. To ensure the content's validity, the researcher ensured that every aspect of transformational school leadership was well covered in the questions. Lastly, the researcher ensured that the variables or statements in the questionnaire had the same or comparable constructs to attain the measure's convergent validity.

4.8.2.1 Pilot test

The pilot study indicates a small study that determines the feasibility of the study. It also determines whether the questionnaire is reliable or not to administer. It helps to improve the questionnaire if there is a clarity problem or any shortcomings observed during the test (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2016; Bassell, Lambert, & Friedman, 2019)). Creswell (2012) argued for the importance of the pilot test because it explores people's experiences.

It is primarily argued that for a small sample, 10% of the total sample population and more are feasible for the sample study (Hill, 2010; Van Belle, 2011). The pilot test was administered to 12 principals (more than 10% of the principal respondents). Similarly, 44 teachers (more than 10% of 350 total respondents) had participated in the pilot test. The pilot feedback and the test result indicated that the instrument could be applied to study subjects.

4.8.2.2. *Reliability of the Data*

The reliability of the data indicates how accurate and complete it is. The researcher assessed the internal consistency of the instrument using Cronbach's Alpha. According to George and Malley (2019), when the Cronbach Alpha score is more than 0.7, it implies that the test items are reliable. The variables under investigation (IF, IM, IS, and IC) were the basis for the reliability test. The following tables display the findings.

Table 4.1a. Reliability test of data from 350 respondents/teachers, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=50)

Independent and Dependent Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items	Leveled as to George and Mallery
TIF	0.828	13	Good
TIM	0.828	13	Good
TIS	0.854	13	Good
TIC	0.891	11	Good
Overall	0.929	50	Very Good

Source: Computed from survey data, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

Table 4.1b. Reliability test of the data of 91 respondents/principals, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=48)

Independent and Dependent Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items	Leveled as to George and Mallery
PIF	0.907	11	Very Good
PIM	0.830	13	Good
PIS	0.859	12	Good
PIC	0.863	12	Good
Overall	0.938	48	Very Good

Source: Computed from survey data, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

Therefore, the reliability test results revealed that the items in the research instruments are reliable, indicating appropriate internal consistency. The validity of the instrument content was also managed based on the professionals' comments.

4.8.2.3. *Validity of the data*

The validity of the research data is essential to determining the quality of the research. According to Middleton (2019), the data's validity indicates a measure's consistency and accuracy. The accuracy of the measurement is also a basis for determining the accuracy of the research outcome. According to Jain and Chetty (2021), structural equation modeling (SEM) is a good technique for evaluating validity measurement. SEM analysis provides the researcher with evidence of how accurately the results can be interpreted.

The convergence validity of a construct is commonly applied to determine its validity. Convergent validity refers to how well the variables under investigation are intercorrelated (Jain and Chetty, 2021, 2022). Furthermore, it explains how well the test measures the concept to be measured. The extracted average variance (AVE) is commonly used to determine the convergent validity (Sujati & Akhyar, 2020). The Kaiser-Varimax rotation method was used for factor analysis, transforming factor loading into the simplest interpretation pattern (Kaiser, 1958). It is agreed that the factor analysis loading value of 0.5 and above demonstrates a significant construct between variables (Ahmad, 2016; Hair, Hair, Hult, Ringle & Sarstedt, 2021; Hair, Hair, Hult, Ringle & Sarstedt, 2021). The results are presented in the following tables.

Table 4.2a: Convergent Validity for the Principals' component based on loading factors (using SPSS) and AVE on constructs from the standardized estimate (using AMOS), Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

V	factor loads
PIF	0.811
PIM	0.571
PIS	0.809
PIC	0.935
SAP2	0.897

Source: Authors' calculation, 2024. Extraction Method: Principal component analysis Varimax Rotation with Kaiser normalization, Sidama region, Ethiopia.

Table 4.2b: Convergent Validity for the teacher component based on loading factors (using SPSS) and AVE on constructs from Standardized estimate (using AMOS), Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

V	Factor loads
TIF	0.663
TIM	0.891
TIS	0.701
TIC	0.765
SAP1	0.881

Source: Authors' calculation, 2024. Extraction Method: Teachers Component Analysis Varimax Rotation with Kaiser Normalization, Sidama region, Ethiopia.

The results of the above factor analysis showed a positive relation between the variables. They indicated that the model accurately measures the principals' intention to influence student academic performance through transformational leadership.

4.8.3 Trustworthiness of the data from the qualitative phase

The study achieved trustworthiness by focusing on credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Guba (1981), in his first work, discussed the trustworthiness criteria of qualitative research. According to him, the credibility of qualitative research indicates the actual value of the study. This is about how much research work is genuine (Guba, 1981). This explains the confidence of the research findings about the original data collected and interpreted (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Transferability indicates the extent to which a research finding can apply (Chowdhury, 2015). Guba argued that transferability is the applicability of the findings in other settings. Dependability indicates the consistency and repeatability of findings over time (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). It explains that if some other researchers were to analyze the collected data, the results of the findings would be similar. On the other hand, confirmability indicates the neutrality of the research findings, indicating that it is free of researcher bias (Chowdhury, 2015). This is all about neutrality in research work.

Another step to ensure trustworthiness was maintaining the study bias drawbacks, which might be response, interviewer, or sample bias (Panzeri, Magri & Carraro, 2008). The selection of individuals who are not typical of the study subjects is known as sampling bias. The researcher classified the sampling groups according to age, educational background, and experience level to account for various viewpoints. Interviewer prejudice is another research bias based on moderators' attitudes toward interview subjects. The researcher made an effort to create a clear interview guide and followed it closely during the interview to prevent any interviewer bias based on the demographics or stereotypes of the respondents. When interviewees refuse to provide honest answers to questions for various reasons, response bias results. Among the factors are the need to end the interview quickly, favoring the interviewer, and perceived societal norms. To reduce response bias, the researcher ensured the interview questions were sensitive and pertinent, kept them brief and to the point, and used straightforward, impartial language (Arias, Navarro, Elfanagely & Elfanagely, 2023).

The researcher conducted structured and semi-structured interviews to ensure that the researched phenomenon is understood from and within multiple realities. The investigator utilized various data sources during the qualitative stage of the investigation to guarantee reliability. To establish trustworthiness, the researcher carried out an extended interaction with participants to elucidate the concepts of interview tools. Literature reviews and interviews were conducted to determine whether the sources produced similar conclusions on face validity. The transcripts of the interviews were conducted with each interviewee once they had finished to ensure that there were no factual inaccuracies. The researcher classified the transcripts into groups independently during the coding procedure. As a result, the researcher got to know the data better. The researcher tried to ensure trustworthiness in this phase by avoiding generalizations. To ensure transferability, the researcher described the content of the data and the phenomenon in the question so that it would be a meaningful observation for outsiders. Respondents were also selected through purposive sampling to maximize information from a few participants (Cohen et al., 2017). Data triangulation was also done to reduce researcher bias to ensure confirmability.

The above section discusses research validity, reliability, and trustworthiness issues in this mixed research method. The researcher implemented different mechanisms to maintain the study's validity, reliability, and trustworthiness. In the quantitative phase, the research instruments were prepared under the supervisor's close guidance, and the results' consistency was checked repeatedly to maintain the study's validity and reliability. To ensure

trustworthiness, the researcher had taken strict measures during data coding. To ensure face validity, the researcher tried to check different sources in the literature to see whether the conclusions were similar to theories and similar findings.

4.9. RESEARCH ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

4.9.1 Introduction

This section discussed ethical issues related to research. Research ethics refers to rules of behavior that help dictate what is acceptable within any profession (O’Leary, 2010). In the study, ethical considerations were considered critical. The section discussed ethical issues in the mixed research methods, such as anonymity and confidentiality, informed consent, and permission to conduct the research thoroughly.

4.9.2 Anonymity and Confidentiality

Ensuring confidentiality entails ensuring that the names of study participants and their schools remain private and that no one else is permitted to view or handle any of the data submitted aside from the researcher. It allows participants to assert their right to limit how their personal information is used and to withhold from the researcher the source of any information that respondents choose to reveal (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2013). The survey did not include the respondents' full names. Throughout the study, integrity and honesty were strictly upheld. Participants received assurances that the study would not use any of the information they submitted to identify them. The researcher has ensured that no participant identities or information will be disclosed to the public (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014).

4.9.3 Informed consent

Potential participants must give their informed permission and be given a chance to determine whether or not to engage in the study, according to Leady and Ormrod (2001:101–108) (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). In informed consent, respondents should have the opportunity to understand the procedures to be followed in the research and the risks and demands that may be made upon them, as Leady and Ormrod (2001) argued. The researcher informed the respondents that they could withdraw from the study anytime (Creswell, 2013).

The benefits of the research were explained to participants so they could make their own decisions based on the information.

4.9.4 Permission to conduct research

In order to conduct research under the supervision of the research study supervisor assigned by the University of South Africa, initial informed consent was obtained by asking for ethical clearance from the university. The researcher obtained formal permission from the Sidama Region Education Bureau to access specific secondary schools to gather data after receiving ethical clearance to conduct the study. Similarly, the permission letter was sent to the Woreda Education Office and the schools chosen to conduct the study. Formal letters of consent outlining the study's purpose were sent to all participants.

In the above section, ethical considerations for the research were discussed. The researcher critically managed the ethical issues of research. The researcher got approval from all the relevant authorities to conduct the study. The researcher first spoke with all relevant parties lawfully. Every participant was given a clear and concise explanation of the study's goal. It is ensured that any communication with concerned bodies is made voluntarily. Both the respondents' identities and the information they provided were kept private. The researcher did not reveal the participants' identities during the analysis and interpretation phases. Any personal identity was kept coded, names were disassociated, and numbers and other codes were used instead (Creswell, 2009).

4.10 SUMMARY

In the chapter above, the research methodology for the study was discussed. The study adopted a convergent parallel mixed research design as a strategy. In this research design, the researcher collected both quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously and underwent a separate analysis. The convergent parallel mixed research design allowed the researcher to have a deeper and broader understanding of the transformational leadership practices of school principals in affecting student academic performance (Creswell, 2009). The study population was selected according to the research question, and the study subjects were identified using appropriate sampling techniques. Purposive sampling approaches are used to select study

subjects. This allowed the researcher to select study subjects based on student's academic performance at secondary school, leaving national tests. The chapter also discussed data collection and analysis procedures. Instruments for data collection were prepared based on Bass's MLQ and modified in light of research questions and objectives. Data collection for both phases was carried out simultaneously but analyzed separately. Data presentation and analysis for quantitative and qualitative phases, data triangulation, validity, anonymity, and ethical considerations are important issues covered in the above chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The study methodology was covered in Chapter 4, which laid the groundwork for data gathering, presentation, and analysis. The preceding chapter included a detailed discussion of the study's aims and objectives, research methodologies, and research strategies. Furthermore, the target population, methods for selecting the target population, sampling strategies, sample size, instrumentation, and data collection processes were covered. In addition, methods for data analysis, processing, and presentation were discussed.

The current chapter presents and examines the research data from the quantitative and qualitative phases. The chapter begins by presenting and analyzing the demographic data of both the principal and teacher respondents. The data on students' academic performance over the four years was also presented. Quantitative data was collected from selected school principals and teachers through structured questionnaires. Student academic performance was obtained from the Sidama National State Education Bureau through secondary data and open-ended interviews conducted with selected principals and teachers. The quantitative and qualitative data from principals and teachers were organized in light of research and sub-research questions. The SPSS 25 version was used in the chapter to analyze the respondents' biographical profiles, evaluate the variables based on their assessments, and determine the validity and reliability of the research tool. The quantitative results have been presented and organized by descriptive statistics in frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations using tables, correlational, and linear multiple regression outputs. In contrast, the qualitative results were presented verbatim in participant quotes. Finally, the triangulation

of data from quantitative and qualitative sources was undertaken. The chapter ended with a summary.

5.2 QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

5.2.1 Introduction

Structured questionnaires were administered to the two groups of respondents, principals, and teachers, selected from 24 public secondary schools in the Sidama region. Schools were selected based on the student's academic performance in the national test for four consecutive years (2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022). The total sample for the two groups was 91 principals (all principals and vice principals from the selected schools included) and 362 teachers sampled based on an appropriate sampling ratio, as explained in the methodology chapter.

Of the 91 principals who participated in the study, all (91) completed and returned the questionnaire, which makes the return rate 100%. Three hundred sixty-two questionnaires were distributed to teachers, of which 350 were filled out and returned with a rate of 96.67 %. Therefore, the return rate for both respondents was high.

5.2.2 Presentation and analysis of the biographical data of the respondents

The basic biographic information included in the questionnaire was age, sex, education status, and experience. The respondents' experience was classified as total years of experience, experience in the current school, and experience with the current principals. The respondents were asked and rated the number of students in the school and the academic performance of the students based on the secondary school leaving test.

5.2.2.1 Biographic data of the principal participants

A total of 91 principals returned the filled questionnaire. Among these principals, 25 (27.5%) were principals, and 66 (72.5%) were vice principals, indicating that most respondents are vice principals.

Table 5.1: Position of respondents as principal or vice principal, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=91)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	principal	25	26.9	27.5	27.5
	vice principal	66	71.0	72.5	100.0
	Total	91	97.8	100.0	

Source: Computed from survey data, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

Among the general principal respondents, 76 (83.5%) were male principals, and 15(16.5%) were female principals. This suggests that, in contrast to Ministry of Education directives supporting female school leaders, most study participants were male principals (MoE, 2021).

Table 5.2 Gender of the principals, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=91)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	76	81.7	83.5	83.5
	Female	15	16.1	16.5	100.0
	Total	91	97.8	100.0	

Source: Computed from survey data, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

The analysis of respondent principals' ages shows that 59.3% are between 30 and 39 years old, 25.3% are 40-49, 5.5% are under 30, and 9.9% are above 50 years old. Most principals fall within the 30-50 age range, while a smaller percentage is below 30 or older than 50.

Table 5.3: Age of the respondents, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=91)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Below 30 years	5	5.4	5.5	5.5
	30-39 years	54	58.1	59.3	64.8
	40-49 years	23	24.7	25.3	90.1
	above 50 years	9	9.7	9.9	100.0
	Total	91	97.8	100.0	

Source: Computed from survey data, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

The academic qualification of the principal plays a vital role in practicing transformational school leadership to improve students' academic performance. The analysis of the principals' academic qualifications reveals that the majority, comprising 63.7%, held a bachelor's degree, while 36.3% possessed a master's degree. According to the Ministry of Education of Ethiopia (MoE, 2021), secondary school principals must have a Master's degree.

Table 5.4: Principal academic qualification, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=91)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Degree	33	35.5	36.3	36.3
	Master's degree	58	62.4	63.7	100.0
	Total	91	97.8	100.0	

Source: Computed from survey data, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

The experience of principals is essential for effective school leadership. More experienced principals are better suited to the school environment to exercise leadership styles appropriate for effective student learning. Respondents were asked to indicate their experience in years as categorized on the questionnaire. The experience of the principals was classified as total years of experience, total years of experience as a principal, and experience as a principal in a current school. This categorization helped the researcher understand the principal's leadership practice. The findings are presented in Tables 5, 6, and 7 below. Table 5 reveals that the majority of respondents' principals had a total experience of over ten (10) years, with 53.8% having 16 or more years of experience and 31.9% having 11-15 years of experience. This indicates that over 85% of principals have significant experience practicing transformational leadership to improve school performance. In contrast, 12.1% of the principals had 6-10 years of total experience, while only 2.2% had 1-5 years of experience.

Table 5.5: Total years of experience of the principal, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=91)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1-5 years	2	2.2	2.2	2.2
	6-10 years	11	11.8	12.1	14.3
	11-15 years	29	31.2	31.9	46.2
	16 and above	49	52.7	53.8	100.0
	Total	91	97.8	100.0	

Source: Computed from survey data, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

As indicated in Table 6 and Figure 5.5 above, most respondents had over seven years of experience as school principals. Of the principals, 35.2% reported having 11 or more years of experience, while an equivalent proportion mentioned having 7-10 years of experience. Principals with seven or more years of experience constituted 70.4% of the respondents.

Table 5.6: Experience as a Principal, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=91)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1-3 years	6	6.5	6.6	6.6
	4-6 years	21	22.6	23.1	29.7
	7-10 years	32	34.4	35.2	64.8
	11 and above years	32	34.4	35.2	100.0
	Total	91	97.8	100.0	

Source: Computed from survey data, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

The survey data indicate that 40.7% of the respondent principals had 3 to 5 years of experience at their current school, while 37.4% had six or more years of experience. On the other hand, 20.9% of the respondents had 1-2 years of experience in the current school.

Table 5.7: Experience in the current school, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=91)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1-2 years	19	20.4	20.9	20.9
	3-5 years	37	39.8	40.7	61.5
	Six and above years	35	36.6	37.4	98.9
	Total	91	97.8	100.0	

Source: Computed from survey data, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

5.2.2.2 Biographic data of the teacher participants

The questionnaires were delivered to 362 teachers, and 350 were completed and returned, with a 96.67% response rate. Demographic data from 350 teachers were analyzed using SPSS 25 with descriptive statistics. The questionnaire contained demographic information such as gender, age, academic qualification, total years of experience, experience at the current school, and experience with the current principal.

The descriptive statistics on the biographic data indicate that 86% of the respondents were male, while only 13.4% were female teachers. This shows that the number of female teachers in the region's secondary schools is smaller than that of male teachers.

Table 5.8: Gender of the teachers surveyed, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=350)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	303	86.6	86.6	86.6
	Female	47	13.4	13.4	100.0
	Total	350	100.0	100.0	

Source: Computed from survey data, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

The analysis of the age of the respondent teachers shows that most were between 30 and 40 years old. Of the teachers who responded, 45.4% fell within the age range of 40-49. In particular, a substantial proportion of 27.1% comprised teachers under 30. Within the population surveyed, 17.1% of teachers were between 40 and 49, while 10.3% were 50 or older.

Table 5.9: Age of the respondent teachers, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=350)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Below 30 years	95	27.1	27.1	27.1
	30- 39 years	159	45.4	45.4	72.6
	40-49 years	60	17.1	17.1	89.7
	50 and above years	36	10.3	10.3	100.0
	Total	350	100.0	100.0	

Source: Computed from survey data, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

The analysis of teachers' academic qualifications showed that most teachers were bachelor's degree holders, totaling 224 (64 %) individuals. Additionally, 34.6% possessed Master's degrees. Notably, a small percentage (1.4%) had diploma-level qualifications, rendering them ineligible to teach in secondary schools.

Table 5.10: Academic qualification of teacher respondents, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=350)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Diploma	5	1.4	1.4	1.4
	Degree	224	64.0	64.0	65.4
	Master's degree	121	34.6	34.6	100.0
	Total	350	100.0	100.0	

Source: Computed from survey data, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

Among the respondent teachers, 37.1% had a total experience of 16 years or more. Subsequently, 26.6% had 11-15 years of experience, while 24.9% had 6-10 years of experience. Furthermore, 11.4% (40 teachers) reported having 1-5 years of experience.

Table 5.11: Total years of experience, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=350)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1-5 years	40	11.4	11.4	11.4
	6-10 years	87	24.9	24.9	36.3
	11-15 years	93	26.6	26.6	62.9
	16 and above years	130	37.1	37.1	100.0
	Total	350	100.0	100.0	

Source: Compute from survey data, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

Among the teachers surveyed, 109 (31.1%) had 7-10 years of experience in the current school, while 105(30.0%) had 4-6 years of experience. Furthermore, 70 (20%) had more than 11 years of experience, and 66 (18.9%) had 1-3 years of experience.

Table 5.12: Experience of the respondent teachers in the current school, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=350)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1-3 years	66	18.9	18.9	18.9
	4-6 years	105	30.0	30.0	48.9
	7-10 years	109	31.1	31.1	80.0
	11 and above years	70	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	350	100.0	100.0	

Source: Computed from survey data, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

When asked about their duration of working with the current principal, 44.3% of the teachers responded with 3-5 years, while 37.7% indicated six years or more. Additionally, 18.0% had worked with the current principal for 1-2 years. Understanding the teachers' experience gave the researcher a clear picture of the teachers' perceptions of the principal's transformational leadership practice in the school. The more teachers work with their principals, the better they understand their leadership practice.

Table 5.13: Teacher experience with the current principal, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=350)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1-2 years	63	18.0	18.0	18.0
	3-5 years	155	44.3	44.3	62.3
	Six and above years	132	37.7	37.7	100.0
	Total	350	100.0	100.0	

Source: Computed from survey data, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

5.2.3. Students' Academic Performance (SAP)

Student academic performance data was obtained from the Sidama Region Education Bureau. The four-year result of the student's academic performance in secondary school leaving the national test was taken and categorized for further analysis. Principals and teachers were asked to rate student academic performance based on the number of student scores.

The scoring system for the national secondary school test is based on seven (7) subjects for natural science and weighs 700 points. Similarly, six (6) subjects are taken for the social sciences students, weighing 600 points. Therefore, the student's academic performance was classified as 500-700, 400-499, 300-399, 200-299, and below 200. The rates were given for the categorized intervals. Thus, five is given for the 500-700 interval, 4 for the 400-499 interval, 3 for the 300-399 interval, 2 for the 200-299 interval, and 1 for below 200 points. The number of students who scored the points in each category was taken as a basis for categorization and evaluation of the academic performance of the students. In the four-year academic years (2019, 2020, 2021, 2022), student performance was analyzed, and the average was taken and rated on a scale of 1-5 for further correlational analysis. The average data of 24 selected schools are presented in the table below. The grading scale for the principals and teachers of each school was also organized under SPSS 25 for further correlational analysis to understand the transformational leadership practices of the school principal and their effect on the student's academic performance.

Table 5.14 Academic performance of students, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

School code	500-700 (5)	400-499 (4)	300-399 (3)	200-299 (2)	199 and below (1)
01	1	8	169	206	387
02	4	32	122	126	160
03	0	2	12	81	168
04	0	0	2	46	129
05	0	2	32	143	324
06	0	5	51	77	214
07	0	1	94	231	298
08	2	16	56	116	373
09	0	0	2	32	250
10	3	26	116	162	176
11	1	7	88	88	509
12	12	195	705	493	447
13	1	15	136	283	345
14	1	16	47	76	119
15	0	16	196	241	482
16	3	25	148	150	478
17	0	6	46	89	214
18	1	26	30	86	360
19	0	3	36	79	104
20	0	0	0	19	136
21	1	9	66	67	146
22	0	10	172	186	81
23	1	22	58	55	392
24	4	53	182	203	348
Total	35	495	2565	3335	6640

Source: Secondary data from Regional Education Bureau, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

The data above revealed that most students (6,640) scored below 200 points. Similarly, 3,335 students scored between 200 and 299 points, falling short of the required threshold. On the contrary, only 35 students obtained scores above 500 points, widely considered an outstanding achievement on the national test.

5.2.4 Presentation and analysis of quantitative data

The study's objectives and the research sub-questions formed the basis for the quantitative data presentation and analysis. As Chapters 1 and 4 mentioned, the sub-research questions were to determine how principals understood and applied transformational leadership and how teachers

perceived it. Additionally, the questions sought to determine whether transformational leadership practices of school principals could impact students' academic performance, what differences existed between high- and low-performing schools regarding principals' leadership styles, and how best to use transformational school leadership to improve student academic performance.

The study aimed to characterize the notion of transformational leadership, ascertain the opinions of principals and teachers regarding transformational leadership and its impact on student's academic achievement, identify the variations in principal leadership styles in high—and low-performing schools, and identify strategies by which principals can improve students' academic performance through these approaches.

The study's independent and dependent variables were used to develop the research instrument designed to address the aforementioned sub-research questions and objectives. Four elements of transformational leadership were the study's independent variables: idealized influence (IF), inspirational motivation (IM), intellectual stimulation (IS), individualized consideration (IC), and transformational leadership as a whole (TL). To identify the perception of the principals from the perception of the teachers, the researcher used the initial 'P' for the principals (such as PIF, PIM, PIM, PIC) and 'T' for the teachers (such as TIF, TIM, TIS, TIC, TTL). The dependent variable, the student's academic performance, was assigned as 'SAP' to identify the teachers' perception of the principals; SAP1 was used to measure the teachers' perception, and SAP2 was used to measure the principals' perception. Principals and teachers were asked to answer for each item of variables on a 5-point Likert scale (1= Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Often, 5 = Always).

5.2.4.1 Perception of principals about their transformational leadership practices

The researcher sought to answer the question of how much principals understand and practice transformational leadership. To this end, principals were asked to rate their transformational leadership practices based on the four components of transformational leadership, which are independent variables of the study. The principals' responses in each element and the overall transformational leadership component were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. The results were compared with the student's academic performance through correlational analysis.

a) Principals idealized influence understanding and practices

Idealized influence is the transformational leadership practice of principals that indicates the exemplary influence of principals on followers (Northouse, 2013). School principals must instill pride in teachers and other followers to make the school successful. Being a role model and exemplary makes teachers work enthusiastically to improve students’ academic performance (Northouse, 2007). Principals were asked to express their agreement on how often they practice idealized behavior to influence students’ academic performance based on the Likert scale 1-5. The results are presented below.

Table 5.15: Response of the principals to the idealized influence, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=91)

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
As a principal, I instill pride in others for being associated with me/create an environment that makes subordinates feel good	91	3.25	1.131
I go beyond self-interest for the good of the group	91	3.53	1.026
I act in ways that build others' respect for me	91	3.56	1.195
I display a sense of power and confidence.	91	3.49	1.205
I talk about my most important values and beliefs.	91	3.55	1.003
I specify the importance of having a strong sense of purpose.	91	3.37	1.082
I consider the moral and ethical consequences of decisions.	91	3.44	1.077
I emphasize the importance of having a collective sense of mission	91	3.45	1.176
I lead by acting as a role model for staff and students	91	3.23	1.146
I am always concerned about school staff and students	91	3.02	1.145
Show respect for staff	91	3.22	1.114
Valid N (listwise)	91	3.37	0.80

Source: Computed from survey data, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

The above table indicated that the principals agreed, based on 11 items under idealized influence, that they practice idealized influence behavior with an overall mean above 3.37.

Acting in ways that build the respect of others for him, talking about the most important values and beliefs about himself, and going beyond self-interest for the good of the group were the items that strongly agreed with the mean values 3.56, 3.55, and 3.53, respectively. Meanwhile, the principal’s agreement concerning staff and students, respect for staff, acting as a role model, instilling pride in others, or creating an environment that makes subordinates feel good showed an agreement level less than the average mean value. It is believed that the principals can build a spirit of cooperation among stakeholders through idealized influence.

b) Principals’ inspirational motivation practices

The dimensions of inspirational motivation of transformational leadership enable principals to inspire teachers and students toward better academic learning (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Northouse, 2016; Shrestha, 2020). Through inspirational motivation practices, principals can share the school's vision with teachers and the school community. Through it, principals can also instill enthusiasm and commitment in teachers. Principals were asked to rate their inspirational motivation practices of 13 items of inspirational motivation practices.

Table 5.16: Response of the principals to the component of inspirational motivation, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=91)

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I talk enthusiastically/passionately about what needs to be accomplished.	91	3.43	1.045
I articulate a compelling vision for the future.	91	3.49	1.099
I express confidence that the goals will be achieved.	91	3.55	1.046
I talk optimistically about the future.	91	3.22	1.227
I use a different mechanism to communicate vision.	91	3.21	1.140
I always discuss the most important values and beliefs.	91	3.15	1.074
Articulates and communicates the vision of the school to the followers	91	3.30	1.016
Set high-level goals for student academic success	91	3.52	1.037
Express confidence that the goals will be achieved	91	3.24	1.186
Create an exciting image of what is essential to consider	91	3.63	1.040
It helps the followers feel appreciated	91	3.16	1.176
Hold high expectations for student learning outcomes	91	3.04	1.021
Encourages teachers’ participation in decision-making about school improvement	91	3.34	1.128
Valid N (listwise)	91	3.34	.647

Source: Computed from survey data, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

In the above table, the principals agreed on the inspirational motivation practices with an overall mean value of 3.35 and a standard deviation of 0.647. The principals, as per the table above, strongly agreed on several items related to inspirational motivation practices. These included creating an exciting image (mean value: 3.63), building confidence in school goals (mean value: 3.55), setting high-level academic targets (mean value: 3.52), articulating a compelling vision (mean value: 3.49) and engaging in enthusiastic discussions (mean value: 3.43). The overall mean value for their inspirational motivation practices was 3.35, with a standard deviation of 0.647. Principals perceived a lower rate on items such as having high expectations of the student's academic result, focusing on essential values and beliefs, supporting followers toward appreciation, enthusiastically talking about the future, and using different mechanisms to communicate vision.

c) Intellectual stimulation practices of principals (IS)

The component of intellectual stimulation of transformational leadership helps school leaders motivate teachers' creativity and problem-solving ability to improve student academic performance (Northouse, 2016; Shrestha, 2020). Intellectual practices of principals are believed to influence teachers' commitment to a better student learning outcome. The principals were asked to agree on the 12 items under the intellectual stimulation factor and how often they practice on the items under the component. The results are presented in the table below.

Table 5.17: Perception of principals about intellectual stimulation practices, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=91)

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I re-examine critical assumptions to question whether they are appropriate.	91	3.49	1.089
I seek different perspectives when solving problems.	91	3.53	1.058
I get others to look at problems from many different angles	91	3.15	1.182
I suggest new ways of looking at how to complete assignments	91	3.21	1.049
I always seek different opinions from individuals in solving problems	91	3.24	1.015
I let teachers look at problems from different angles	91	3.35	1.015
Encourages out-box thinking	91	3.54	1.068
Stimulates ideas from teachers to challenge the status quo	91	3.18	1.198
Values ideas from teachers	91	3.68	.987
Encourages critical thinking and innovation	91	3.47	1.058
Develops ideas for teachers' professional development	91	3.45	1.098
Encourage teachers to set new ways to improve student's learning outcome	91	3.55	.834
Valid N (listwise)	91	3.40	.663

Source: Computed from survey data, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

In the provided table, the principals shared their perception of intellectual stimulation practices, resulting in an overall mean of 3.40 and a standard deviation of 0.663. In particular, the principals agreed on various items related to intellectual stimulation, exceeding the average. These items include valuing teacher ideas (mean value: 3.68), encouraging innovative thinking (mean value: 3.55), promoting new ideas for students' academic performance (mean value: 3.54), seeking diverse perspectives for problem-solving (mean value: 3.49), re-evaluating critical assumptions (mean value: 3.47), encouraging critical thinking and innovation (mean value: 3.45), and fostering ideas for teachers' professional development (mean value: 3.45). This indicated that principals have focused on encouraging teachers to think critically and innovate to improve students' academic results. On the other hand, the agreement of the principals was lower than the mean value on the items, such as getting others to look at different perspectives, suggesting new ways to complete assignments, seeking different opinions to solve the problem, stimulating teachers' ideas to challenge the status quo, and allowing teachers to consider issues from various angles.

d) Individualized Consideration Practices of Principals (IC)

Individualized considerate behavior of transformational leadership enables principals to influence teachers' commitment to a better school environment and student academic learning (Sun & Leithwood, 2017). Principals were asked to rate 12 items under individual consideration, showing their level of agreement on how often they practiced the items. The results are presented in the table below.

Table 5.18: Principals individualized consideration practices, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=91)

Descriptive statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I spend time teaching and coaching	91	3.14	1.039
I treat others as individuals rather than just a member of a group	91	3.15	1.219
I consider an individual to have different needs, abilities, and aspirations from others	91	3.63	1.018
I help others to develop their strengths	91	3.51	1.109
Appreciate the performance of individuals	91	3.35	1.109
Understand the needs of the staff and assist them accordingly	91	3.47	.899
Provide individuals with different needs and aspirations	91	3.20	1.147
Emphasize and discuss the needs, abilities, and aspirations of followers	91	3.45	1.036
Come along with teachers and students	91	3.52	1.205
Give attention to different needs of teachers towards school goal accomplishments	91	3.49	1.251
Regularly provides the resources needed for teacher professional development	91	3.55	1.057
Encourages teachers' individual professional development	91	3.14	1.039
Valid N (listwise)	91	3.38	.64600

Source: Computed from survey data, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

The principals expressed their perception of individualized consideration behavior in the table above. They showed strong agreement in several items, surpassing the average mean value of 3.38. These items include considering the different needs of individuals (mean value: 3.63), providing necessary resources for teacher professional development (mean value: 3.55), accompanying teachers and students (mean value: 3.52), assisting others in developing their strengths (mean value: 3.51), paying attention to the diverse needs of teachers (mean value:

3.49), and engaging in discussions about others' aspirations (mean value: 3.45). The descriptive statistics of the table indicate an overall mean value of 3.38 and a standard deviation of 0.646 for individualized consideration behavior. However, principals showed less agreement on items such as encouraging teachers' professional development, teaching and coaching, treating teachers individually rather than in groups, and considering individual teachers' different needs and aspirations.

5.2.4.2 Perception of teachers about transformational leadership practices of principals

To understand teachers' perceptions and understandings of transformational leadership and school principals' practices, the researcher asked teachers to express their agreement status by rating how often their principal practices transformational leadership. The four factors of transformational leadership were independent variables. Teacher responses to each item of the transformational leadership components were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. The results were further compared with the student's academic performance through correlational analysis.

a) Teacher response to the idealized influence practice of principals

Teachers were asked to express their level of agreement about how often school principals practice idealized behavior to influence student academic performance at their school (Gitoho, Kamau, & Muchara, 2016). The response was based on the Likert scale of 1-5. The results are presented below.

Table 5.19: Teacher response to the idealized influence of principals, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=350)

Descriptive statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
My principal Displays high moral values	350	3.68	.952
Acts according to his words	350	3.64	1.061
Exercises high expectations	350	3.66	1.058
Fosters trust and respect in teachers	350	3.19	1.206
Demonstrates high ethical values	350	3.45	1.106
Articulates values that promote student academic success	350	3.46	1.124
Demonstrates necessary skills and competencies on the job	350	3.51	1.140
His attitude toward school vision encourages teachers and students	350	3.58	1.070
Shows high integrity	350	3.49	1.117
The principals' manner made me to be pleasant of being school member	350	3.61	1.062
Is exemplary	350	3.24	1.178
He is a source of my professional development	350	3.26	1.206
Displays energy and enthusiasm for own work	350	3.74	.945
Valid N (listwise)	350	3.48	0.61525

Source: Computed from survey data, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

As the table above indicates, most teachers perceive the principal to practice transformational leadership behaviors at their school. The overall mean value is 3.48, with a standard deviation of 0.615. Teachers expressed strong agreement on various aspects of the principal's leadership, including demonstrating high integrity (mean value: 3.49), possessing necessary skills and competencies (mean value: 3.51), promoting the school's vision (mean value: 3.58), displaying good manners (mean value: 3.61), acting consistently (mean value: 3.64), having high expectations (mean value: 3.66) and exhibiting high moral values (mean value: 3.68). Additionally, teachers noted the principal's energy and enthusiasm for their work, with an average mean of 3.74. However, there were areas where teachers responded less favorably, such as fostering trust and respect (mean value: 3.19), being an exemplary figure (mean value: 3.24), serving as a source of professional development (mean value: 3.26), demonstrating high ethical values (mean value: 3.45) and articulating values for student academic success (mean value: 3.46).

b) Teacher response to the inspirational motivation practice of principals.

School principals with transformational leadership styles can inspire and motivate teachers through inspirational motivation so that teachers can impact the performance of learning outcomes of students (Ikedimma & Okorji, 2023). Through inspirational motivation, school principals can generate enthusiasm and commitment toward school goal achievement (Abdullah, Ling & Sufi, 2018). Teachers were requested to indicate whether or not they agreed with the frequency with which their principals used inspirational motivation and the potential effects on students' academic achievement. The table below displays the outcomes of the responses, which were given on a five-point Likert scale from 1 to 5.

Table 5.20: Teacher response to the principal’s inspirational motivation practice, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=350)

Descriptive statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Always talks enthusiastically about the academic objectives and outcomes of the school	350	3.48	1.096
Inspires confidence in teachers	350	3.51	1.109
Talks and looks hopeful about the future of the school as relating student performance	350	3.49	1.088
Inspires team spirit among teachers and staff members	350	3.50	1.099
Ensures that staff members enjoy working in groups/teams to enhance teaching and learning	350	3.30	1.197
Ensures that we have adequate involvement in decision-making related to programs and instruction.	350	3.40	1.136
Motivates a sense of purpose in teachers.	350	3.52	.989
Describes a clear vision to improve student academic performance.	350	3.47	1.037
Has instituted programs that inspire teachers to deliver as expected.	350	3.55	.976
Exhibits commitment to the academic goals of the school.	350	3.61	1.047
Gives encouragement and support to staff members aimed at improving students' academic achievement.	350	3.53	1.091
Regularly encourages us to evaluate our progress toward achieving school goals	350	3.57	.998
Communicates school vision to staff and students	350	3.48	.992
Valid N (listwise)	350	3.48	0.61345

Source: Computed from survey data, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

The results in the above table showed that teachers had agreed with most of the items that school principals consistently demonstrate inspirational motivation practices, as perceived by teachers. The mean average value for these practices is 3.48, with a standard deviation of 0.613. Teachers strongly agree with the principals' ability to envision the future of the school through student performance, inspire team spirit among teachers and staff, instill confidence, foster a sense of purpose, provide encouragement and support for improved academic achievement, organize inspiring programs, promote self-evaluation of progress towards school goals, and exhibit commitment to educational objectives. These items have respective mean values of 3.61, 3.57, 3.55, 3.53, 3.52, 3.51, 3.50, and 3.49. However, teachers rated relatively lower mean values for ensuring enjoyable group work, promoting participation in decision-making, and articulating a clear vision for academic improvement, with mean values of 3.30, 3.40, and 3.47, respectively. In general, teachers highly regard the inspirational motivation practices of the principals, with a strong alignment between their perceptions and the demonstrated behaviors. The teacher's response to the inspirational motivation component of the principal in transformational leadership indicated that principals often exhibit a transformational leadership practice.

c) Teacher response to the intellectual stimulation practice of the principal.

The intellectual stimulation of transformational leadership enables school principals to encourage teacher creativity to improve student academic performance (Essuman, 2019). Principals who exhibit intellectual stimulation behavior encourage people to think outside the box and bring solutions for better academic performance. Principals are believed to be able to change the deterioration of student academic performance through intellectual stimulation in the study area. Teachers were asked to show their level of agreement with items of intellectual stimulation based on the Likert scale of 1 to 5, and the results of the responses were presented in the table below.

Table 5.21: Teacher response to the principal's intellectual stimulation practice, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=350)

Descriptive statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviati on
Stimulates ideas and creativity from teachers.	350	3.59	1.025
Encourages teachers to be innovative and creative.	350	3.65	1.068
Stimulates teachers to think about what they are doing for students' academic success.	350	3.66	1.052
Encourages me to try new practices consistent with my interests	350	3.26	1.174
Stimulates new ideas relevant to student academic performance	350	3.45	1.090
They urge staff to be imaginative and creative.	350	3.48	1.135
Supports critical thinking that guides effective teaching and learning	350	3.50	1.157
Injects the appropriate enthusiasm and energy to execute teaching and learning activities well.	350	3.55	1.050
Entertains different opinions when solving problems related to teaching and learning	350	3.56	1.066
Design new techniques for looking at how to complete academic assignments that will enhance student performance	350	3.60	1.074
Encourage teachers and students to look at academic challenges from many different angles and work to challenge the problems	350	3.37	1.175
Has the capacity to solve the problems	350	3.46	1.124
Challenges status quo	350	3.59	.958
Valid N (listwise)	350	3.50	0.671

Source: Computed from survey data, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

The table above provides information on teachers' agreement with the intellectual stimulation behaviors demonstrated by the principal in their transformational leadership practice. With an overall mean value of 3.50 and a standard deviation of 0.6713, teachers expressed strong agreement on these behaviors.

Teachers consistently rated various elements above the overall mean, indicating their endorsement of the principal's approach. These elements include injecting the appropriate enthusiasm and energy into teaching and learning activities (mean value: 3.55), entertaining different opinions when solving problems related to teaching and learning (mean value: 3.56),

challenging the status quo (mean value: 3.59), stimulating ideas and creativity from teachers (mean value: 3.59), designing new techniques to enhance student performance in academic assignments (mean value: 3.60), encouraging teachers to be innovative and creative (mean value: 3.65), and stimulating teachers to think critically about their contributions to student academic success (mean value: 3.66).

Teachers responded below the overall mean value for items such as encouraging teachers to try new practices consistent with their interests, enabling teachers and students to look at academic challenges from many different angles, working on challenging the problems, stimulating new ideas relevant to students' academic performance, demonstrating the ability to solve the problems and encourages staff to be imaginative and creative with mean values 3.26, 3.37, 3.45, 3.46, and 3.48 respectively. Teachers' responses indicated that school principals practice the intellectual stimulation behavior of transformational leadership often in their respective schools. However, teachers were rated relatively lower in agreement, especially on items that encourage creativity.

d) Teacher response to the practice of individualized consideration of the principal

Individualized consideration of the principal enables teachers to perform at total capacity. Through individualized consideration, principals can identify the unique needs of each teacher and support teacher professional development (Sun & Leithwood, 2017). Teachers were asked to respond to their level of agreement on the items and how often their principal practices individualized consideration behavior of transformational leadership. The results are presented in the table below.

Table 5.22: Teacher response to the individualized consideration practice of the principal, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=350)

Descriptive statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Always appreciate teachers and other staff for their successful work	350	3.51	1.112
Pay attention to teachers' needs and assist them accordingly	350	3.66	.979
Listens to teachers' concern	350	3.70	1.091
Creates new opportunities for teachers	350	3.57	1.155
Mentor teachers to improve personal and professional growth	350	3.65	1.031
Coaches and advises teachers and students on academic issues	350	3.56	1.024
Understand that each teacher and student has different needs, abilities, and aspirations from others.	350	3.69	1.064
Appreciate the performance of individual teachers	350	3.70	1.080
Encourages my professional development	350	3.39	1.135
Provides moral support by making me feel appreciated for my contribution to the school	350	3.32	1.082
Encourages me to pursue my own goals for professional learning.	350	3.25	1.186
Valid N (listwise)	350	3.53	0.6048

Source: Computed from Survey Data, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

In the table above, teachers agreed with the principals' transformational leadership individualized consideration with an overall mean value of 3.53 and a standard deviation of 0.6048. Teachers had responded with their agreement above the overall mean value on the items such as coaching and advising teachers and students on academic issues, creating new opportunities for teachers, mentoring teachers to improve personal and professional growth, paying attention to teachers' needs, and assist them accordingly, understanding that each teacher and students have different needs, abilities, and aspirations from others, appreciating performance of individual teachers, and listening to teachers concern with mean values 3.56, 3.57, 3.65, 3.66, 3.69, 3.70, and 3.70 respectively. On the other hand, teachers responded below the overall mean value for items such as encouraging teachers to pursue their own professional learning goals, providing moral support by making me feel appreciated for my contribution to the school, promoting the professional development of teachers, and appreciating teachers and other staff for their successful work with mean values 3.25, 3.32, 3.39, and 3.51 respectively. Teachers responded to their agreement on items such as recognizing the performance of individual teachers and listening to teacher concerns with a mean value of 3.70, indicating that principals pay high attention to individual teachers' concerns. The overall mean value of 3.50

of the teacher responses indicated that teachers agree that principals often practice individualized transformational leadership behavior.

5.2.4.3 Transformational leadership practices of principals and student academic performance as self-perceived

The preceding sections expounded upon the principal's leadership practices, which were informed by their self-perception. The response to the question of whether the principal's transformational leadership practices impact students' academic performance will be covered in this part. Pearson's correlation coefficient was utilized in the study to assess the degree of association between the independent and dependent variables. The relationship between the two data sets can be determined using Pearson's correlation coefficient, whose value typically ranges from -1 to 1 (Turney, 2024). Below zero indicates a negative correlation, and above zero indicates a positive relation. The test results are presented in the following tables.

Table 5.23: Weighted mean and standard deviation of all variables, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=91)

Descriptive statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
PIF	91	1.00	4.82	3.3741	.80610
PIM	91	1.38	4.69	3.3413	.64675
PIS	91	1.50	4.75	3.4037	.66254
PIC	91	1.92	4.83	3.3842	.64600
PTL	91	1.79	4.67	3.3821	.55546
SAP2	91	1.00	4.00	3.0440	.63091
Valid N (listwise)	91				

Source: Computed from survey data, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

Table 5.24: Pearson’s correlation matrix analysis, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=91)

		Correlations					
		PIF	PIM	PIS	PIC	PTL	SAP2
PIF	Pearson Correlation	1	.251*	.514**	.735**	.818**	.706**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.017	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	91	91	91	91	91	91
PIM	Pearson Correlation	.251*	1	.294**	.465**	.598**	.499**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.017		.005	.000	.000	.000
	N	91	91	91	91	91	91
PIS	Pearson Correlation	.514**	.294**	1	.773**	.810**	.632**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.005		.000	.000	.000
	N	91	91	91	91	91	91
PIC	Pearson Correlation	.735**	.465**	.773**	1	.938**	.760**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	91	91	91	91	91	91
PTL	Pearson Correlation	.818**	.598**	.810**	.938**	1	.827**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	91	91	91	91	91	91
SAP2	Pearson Correlation	.706**	.499**	.632**	.760**	.827**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	91	91	91	91	91	91

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Computed from survey data, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

Pearson's correlation analysis above revealed significant and positive relationships between the independent variables (transformational leadership components) and the dependent variable (students' academic performance). The correlation values ranged from $r = .251$ ($p < .05$) to $r = .938$ ($p < .01$) for transformational leadership factors.

The idealized influence of the principals exhibited positive correlations with all other factors but a lower correlation with the motivational component of inspiration ($r = .251$, $p < .05$). It had higher correlations with overall transformational leadership practices ($r = .818$, $p < .01$) and individualized consideration ($r = .715$, $p < .01$) of the principals. Furthermore, it showed a strong positive correlation with student academic performance ($r = .706$, $p < .01$).

The inspirational motivation of the principals showed positive correlations with all other factors but a relatively lower correlation with idealized influence and intellectual stimulation.

Its correlation with intellectual stimulation was $r = .294$ ($p < .01$), while its overall correlation with the other factors was $r = .499$ ($p < .01$).

The intellectual stimulation factor of the principals exhibited positive correlations with all aspects, except a lower correlation with inspirational motivation ($r = .465$, $p < .01$). It showed a strong correlation with overall transformational leadership practices ($r = .80$, $p < .01$) and a positive and strong correlation with student academic performance ($r = .632$, $p < .01$).

Individualized consideration, as a factor of principals, showed a positive and significant association with all the factors analyzed. It had the most substantial positive relationship with overall transformational leadership practices ($r = .938$, $p < .01$) and also emerged as the factor with the most significant positive relationship with the academic performance of students ($r = .760$, $p < .01$).

In summary, Pearson's correlation coefficient analysis demonstrated a significant correlation between the independent variables (transformational leadership components) and the dependent variable (students' academic performance). It indicated that principals' transformational leadership positively influenced student academic performance, with an overall correlation value of $r = .827$ ($p < .01$).

5.2.4.4 Teachers' Perception of Principal's Transformational Leadership Practices and Students' Academic Performance

The above section presented the principal's leadership practices based on the teachers' perceptions and responses. The result revealed that teachers agreed that their principals often practice transformational leadership. This section discussed whether the principal's transformational leadership practices are related to student academic performance as perceived by teachers. The study used Pearson's correlation coefficient to assess the degree of association between the independent and dependent variables. The tables below display the test results.

Table 5.25: Weighted mean and standard deviation of all variables for the Teachers' Response, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=350)

Descriptive statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
TIF	350	1.31	4.77	3.4864	0.61525
TIM	350	1.69	4.69	3.4801	0.61345
TIS	350	0.85	5.00	3.4974	0.67135
TIC	350	1.00	5.00	3.5318	0.74833
SAP	350	1.00	5.00	3.1800	0.60480
Valid N (listwise)	350				

Source: Computed from survey data, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

Table 5.26: Pearson's correlation matrix analysis for teachers' response, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=350)

		Correlations					
		TIF	TIM	TIS	TIC	TL	SAP
TIF	Pearson Correlation	1	.463**	.230**	.398**	.665**	.567**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	350	350	350	350	350	350
TIM	Pearson Correlation	.463**	1	.630**	.640**	.885**	.696**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	350	350	350	350	350	350
TIS	Pearson Correlation	.230**	.630**	1	.352**	.720**	.554**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	350	350	350	350	350	350
TIC	Pearson Correlation	.398**	.640**	.352**	1	.798**	.583**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	350	350	350	350	350	350
TL	Pearson Correlation	.665**	.885**	.720**	.798**	1	.779**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	350	350	350	350	350	350
SAP	Pearson Correlation	.567**	.696**	.554**	.583**	.779**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	350	350	350	350	350	350

** The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Computed from survey data, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

The results of Pearson's correlation analysis, based on teacher responses in the table, revealed significant and positive relationships between independent variables (transformational leadership components: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration) and the academic performance of students. The correlation values for transformational leadership factors ranged from $r = .230$ to $r = .885$ ($p < .01$). Idealized influence had a lower correlation with intellectual stimulation but higher correlations with overall transformational leadership practices and inspirational motivation ($r = .230$ and $.665$, respectively, $p < .01$). It also showed a strong positive correlation with academic performance ($r = .567$, $p < .01$).

In line with teacher responses, inspirational motivation exhibited positive correlations with all other factors, particularly with overall transformational leadership practices ($r = .885$, $p < .01$). It also had a strong correlation with academic performance ($r = .696$, $p < .01$).

Teacher responses also indicated that intellectual stimulation showed positive correlations with all factors, except a lower correlation with idealized influence ($r = .230$, $p < .01$). It had a strong correlation with overall transformational leadership practices ($r = .720$, $p < .01$) and a positive correlation with student academic performance ($r = .554$, $p < .01$).

Similarly, individualized consideration demonstrated a positive and significant association with all factors, particularly with overall transformational leadership practices ($r = .798$, $p < .01$). It also exhibited a positive relationship with student academic performance ($r = .583$, $p < .01$).

Based on teacher responses, Pearson's correlation analysis provided evidence of significant and positive relationships between transformational leadership components and student academic performance. These findings suggest that the principal's transformational leadership positively influences educational performance, as indicated by an overall correlation value of $r = .779$ ($p < .01$).

5.2.4.5 Multicollinearity test for principals' perception of transformational leadership

Multicollinearity indicates the appearance of interrelations between independent variables (Hayes, 2023). Multicollinearity can be analyzed through a multiple-regression model. The variance inflation factor (VIF) measures the amount of collinearity (Hayes, 2023). Multicollinearity is said to occur when the VIF value is higher than 5. Usually, for a better

multicollinearity existence, the tolerance value should be greater than 0.2, and the variance inflation factor (VIF) should not exceed 10.

Table 5.27: Variation inflation factor for the model, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=91)

Model		Coefficients					Collinearity Statistics	
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
		B	Std. Error	Beta				
1	(Constant)	-.120	.255		-.470	.640		
	PIF	.308	.072	.393	4.285	.000	.441	2.270
	PIM	.242	.069	.249	3.535	.001	.751	1.332
	PIS	.195	.093	.205	2.095	.039	.389	2.569
	PIC	.193	.131	.197	1.474	.144	.207	4.826

a. Dependent Variable: SAP2

Source: Model Output, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

Based on the information provided in the table, it can be concluded that there is no significant collinearity problem among the independent variables in the study. Collinearity among the variables exceeds the threshold of 0.2, while the variance inflation factor (VIF) remains below 10, indicating no substantial collinearity concerns.

5.2.4.6 Multicollinearity test for teachers' perception of transformational leadership

The multicollinearity test for the teacher component is indicated in the table below.

Table 5.28: Variation inflation factor for the model, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=350)

Model		Coefficients ^a					Collinearity Statistics	
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
		B	Std. Error	Beta				
1	(Constant)	-.136	.146		-.931	.353		
	TIF	.299	.038	.304	7.933	.000	.764	1.309
	TIM	.273	.054	.277	5.043	.000	.370	2.702
	TIS	.215	.039	.239	5.506	.000	.595	1.681
	TIC	.162	.036	.200	4.533	.000	.574	1.743

a. Dependent variable: SAP1

Source: Model output, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

The table above indicates that the collinearity among the independent variables is more significant than 0.2, and the variance inflation factor (VIF) is less than 10. This further demonstrates that there is no collinearity problem between the independent variables in the study.

5.2.4.7 Linearity test for the principal component

The linearity test determines the linearity status between the independent and dependent variables (Lind, Marchal & Wathen, 2019). It describes how the relationship between the variables changes when the other variables change. The linearity test for the independent variable, the transformational leadership practices of the principal in its components such as IF, IM, IS, IC, and PTL, and the dependent variable, the academic performance of the students (SAP2), were analyzed under SPSS 25. The results are presented below the plot graph.

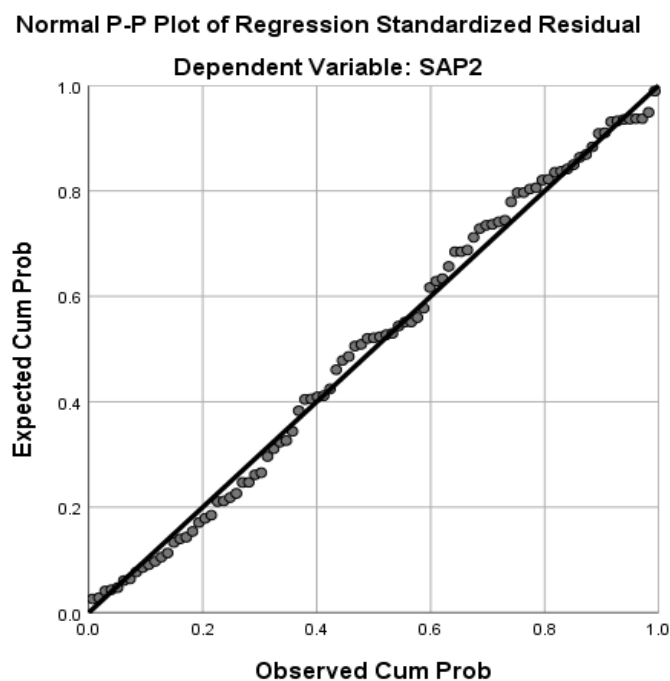


Fig. 5. 1: Normality plot of the standardized residual (principal component), N=91
Source: Model output, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

The scatterplot in the figure above demonstrates a solid and positive linear relationship between the independent variable (the principal's transformational leadership practice) and the dependent variable (the student's academic performance), as indicated by the closely clustered points aligning along the diagonal line.

5.2.4.8 Linearity test for the teacher component

The linearity test for the independent variable, based on the data of the teacher's response to transformational leadership practices of the principal such as TIF, TIM, TIS, TIC, and TTL, and the dependent variable, the academic performance of students (SAP1) was analyzed under SPSS 25. The results are presented below the plot graph.

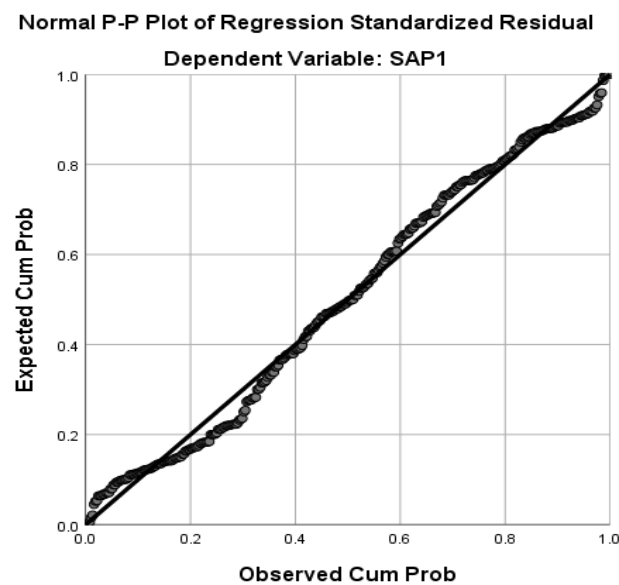


Fig. 5.2: Normality plot of the standardized residual (teacher component), N=350
Source: Model output, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

A strong linear relationship between the dependent variable (student academic performance) and the independent variable (principal transformational leadership practice) is demonstrated visually in the above picture by the densely grouped points aligned along the diagonal.

5.2.4.9 Normality Test for the Principal Component

A normality test was deployed to determine whether the sample data used had been drawn from a normally distributed population. It is agreed that the bell-shaped density curve describes the standard normal distribution, indicating no significant impact on the mean value (Mishra, Pandey, Singh, Gupta, Sahu, & Keshri, 2019). The results of the normality test are presented in the figure below.

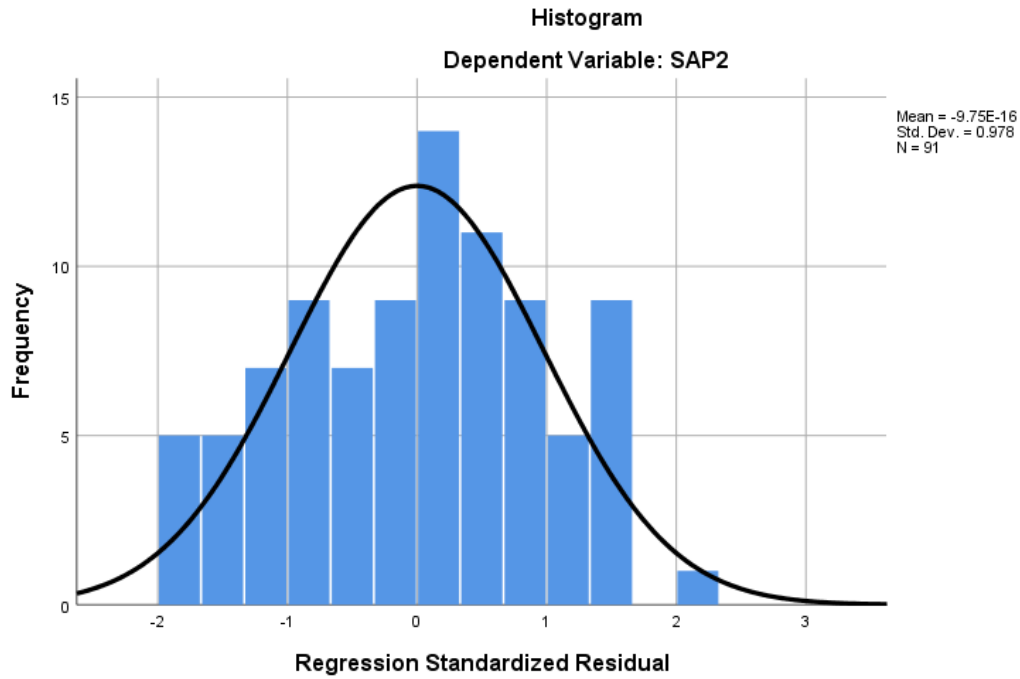


Fig. 5.3: Regression Standardized Residuals (Principal component), N=91

Source: Model output, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

5.2.4.10 Normality test for teacher response

The results of the normality test of the teacher response are presented in the following figure.

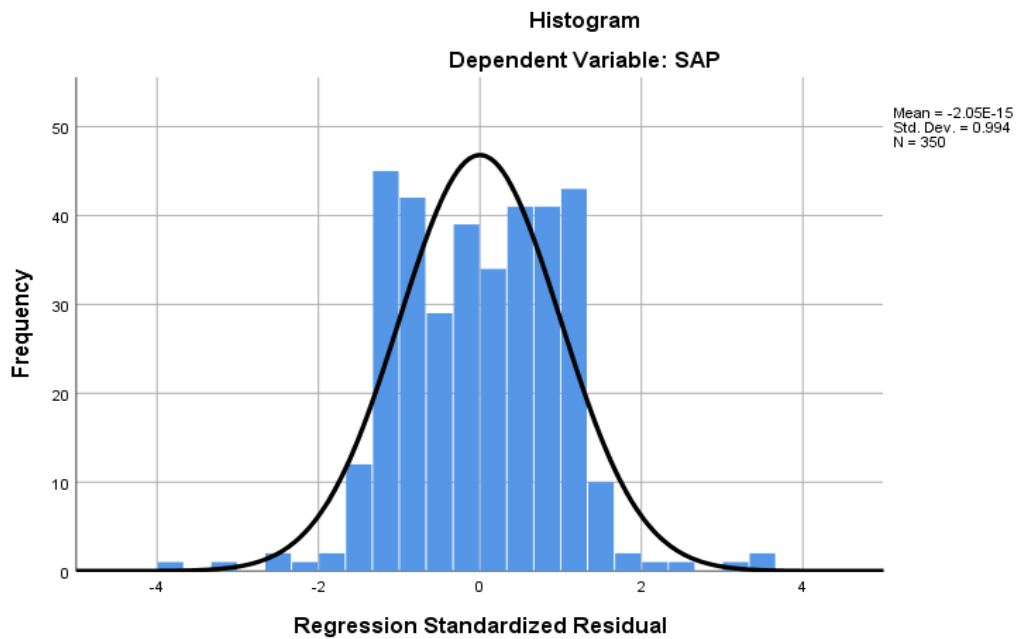


Fig. 5.4: Regression Standardized Residuals (teacher component), N=350

Source: Model output, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

5.2.4.11 Autocorrelation test for the principal component

Autocorrelation indicates the degree of correlation between the values of the same variables across different observations over time in the data. Autocorrelation can usually be measured using the Durbin-Watson test in a statistical regression analysis. The Durbin-Watson test value of around 2 is the most accepted. It is also agreed that Durbin-Watson test values in the range of 1.5 to 2.5 are relatively accepted. The autocorrelation test result is presented in the table below.

Table 5.29: Regression Standardized Residuals (Principal component), Sidama Region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=91)

Model Summary ^b					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.836 ^a	.699	.682	.35592	2.195
a. Predictors: (constant), PIC, PIM, PIF, PIS					
b. Dependent Variable: Dependent SAP2					

Source: Model output, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

The autocorrelation test performed above showed a Durbin-Watson test value of 2.195, close to the acceptable range of 1.5 to 2.5. This indicates that there is no significant autocorrelation among the error terms.

5.2.4.12 Autocorrelation test for the teacher component

The autocorrelation test result for the teacher component is presented in the table below.

Table 5.30: Regression Standardized Residuals (teacher component), Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=350)

Model Summary ^b					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.784 ^a	.614	.609	.37796	2.042
a. Predictors: (constant), TIC, TIM, TIF, TIS					
b. Dependent Variable: Dependent SAP1					

Source: Model output, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

The autocorrelation test conducted above revealed a Durbin-Watson test value of 2.042, close to the expected value of 2.0. This suggests the absence of significant autocorrelation among the error terms.

5.2.4.13 Summary of the regression model for the principal component

Regression enables the researcher to understand how changes in the independent variables affect the dependent variable (Bevans, 2023). According to Bevans (2023), multiple linear regression estimates the relationship between two or more independent variables and one dependent variable. The multiple linear regression value of the model summary is presented in the table below.

Table 5.31: Linear Multiple Regression Model (Model of Fitness) for the principal component, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=91)

Model Summary ^b				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.836 ^a	.699	.682	.35592
a. Predictors: (constant), PIC, PIM, PIF, PIS				
b. Dependent Variable: Dependent SAP2				

Source: Model output, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

The table above shows a solid and positive relationship between the dependent variable, the academic performance of students, and the independent variable, the transformational leadership practices of the principals (IF, IM, IS, IC), with a regression coefficient value (R) of .836. The R-square value of .699 indicates that changes in the principal's transformational leadership practices account for approximately 69.9% of the variation in student academic performance. This highlights the significant role of transformational leadership by principals in influencing student educational outcomes. The remaining 30% of the variation is attributed to factors outside the scope of this study. An R-square value of 0.5 or higher is generally considered indicative of a strong relationship in the model.

5.2.4.14 Summary of the regression model for the teacher component

The multiple linear regression value of the model summary is presented in the table below.

Table 5.32: Linear Multiple Regression Model (Model of Fitness) for the teacher component, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=350)

Model Summary ^b				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.784 ^a	.614	.609	.37796
a. Predictors: (constant), TIC, TIM, TIF, TIS				
b. Dependent Variable: Dependent SAP1				

Source: Model output, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

The table above reveals a regression coefficient value (R) of .784, indicating a strong relationship between the dependent variable (academic performance of students) and the independent variable (transformational leadership practices of school principals) as reported by teachers (TIF, TTIM, IS, TIC). Furthermore, the R-square value of .614 signifies that 61.4% of the variation in student academic performance can be attributed to changes in the transformational leadership practices of the principal. This underscores the significant role principals' leadership practices play in influencing student educational outcomes. The remaining 38.6% of the variation is attributed to factors beyond the scope of this study. An R-square value of 0.5 or higher is generally considered indicative of an effective relationship in the model. In particular, based on teacher perception, the impact of school principals on student academic performance is less than how principals perceive it.

5.2.4.15 Analysis of variance (ANOVA) for the principal component

The ANOVA analysis for the principal component is presented in the table below.

Table 5.33: ANOVA analysis for the principal component, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=91)

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	25.056	5	5.011	39.557	.000 ^b
	Residual	10.768	85	.127		
	Total	35.824	90			
a. Dependent variable: SAP2						
b. Predictors: (constant), PTL, PIM, PIS, PIC, PIF						

Source: Model output, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

The ANOVA analysis in the table above reveals that the model's overall significance is 0.000, indicating that it is statistically significant at the chosen significance level (e.g., 0.05). Furthermore, the F ratio of 39.557 exceeds 1, providing further evidence that the data fit the model well.

5.2.4.16 Analysis of variance (ANOVA) for the teacher component

The ANOVA analysis for the teacher component is presented in the table below.

Table 5.34: ANOVA analysis for the teacher component, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=350)

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	78.376	4	19.594	137.162	.000 ^b
	Residual	49.284	345	.143		
	Total	127.660	349			

a. Dependent variable: SAP1
b. Predictors: (constant), TIC, TIS, TIF, TIM

Source: Model output, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

The ANOVA analysis in the table above shows that the model has a statistically significant significance level of 0.000, below the selected P-value (0.05). Additionally, the F ratio of 137.162, greater than 1, suggests that the data fit well with the model.

5.2.5. Transformational Leadership Practices of Principals in High- and Low-performing Schools

Determining whether there is a substantial difference between the transformational leadership techniques of school principals in the better-performing and low-performing schools in the study area is one of the research questions and the objective. Quin, Deris, Bischoff, and Johnson (2015) contended that principals in schools with higher performance levels demonstrate more transformative leadership qualities than those with lower performance levels. Bishara (2017) further argued that student test scores are higher in schools with greater effectiveness of school leadership. On the other hand, Duke, Tucker, Salmonowicz, and Levy (2006) argued that a lack of adequate and transformative school leadership results in a poor school environment, leading to poor performance.

On the other hand, Harris, Day, Hopkins, Hadfield, Hargreaves, and Chapman (2019) and Ibrahim (2021) argued that quality school leadership has the potential to change students' academic performance and that there are apparent differences in student academic performance based on the leadership styles explored. Moreover, Finnigan and Stewart (2009) argued that it is expected to observe transformational leadership behaviors in better-performing schools.

To obtain an answer to the above question, the researcher categorized the schools under the study based on the academic performance of the students in the respective schools. Students' academic performance data were taken from the Sidama National State Education Bureau. The average result of the four-year secondary school leaving test for each school was taken for comparison. Based on average performance, schools were classified as relatively higher and lower performing.

5.2.5.1 Response of the principals of high-performing schools

Five (5) schools of the better performing and five (5) of the lower performing were taken to understand the extent of the difference. Principals' and teachers' responses from each category of schools were organized, analyzed, and presented using SPSS 25. The mean value and standard deviation were used to identify the transformational leadership practices of the school principals based on their self-perception and teacher perception. The responses of twenty (20) principals from five (5) better-performing schools were analyzed using SPSS 25. The results are presented in the table below.

Table 5.35: Response of better-performing school principals to their transformational leadership practices, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=20)

Descriptive statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
PIF	20	3.7910	.56346
PIM	20	3.7685	.53157
PIS	20	3.8740	.55876
PIC	20	3.9455	.49618
PTL	20	3.8645	.42037
Valid N (listwise)	20		

Source: Computed from survey data, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

In the table above, the principals of the best-performing schools exhibit more robust transformational leadership practices compared to the overall survey results. Their perceptions have a higher average mean of 3.86 (standard deviation = 0.42), surpassing the overall survey mean of 3.38 (standard deviation = 0.55). Specifically, the perception of individualized consideration by principals (mean value 3.94) is higher than the overall perception of the survey (mean value 3.38). Similarly, principals from higher performing schools show higher mean values: PIF = 3.70, PIM = 3.77, PIS = 3.87, compared to the mean values of the overall survey: PIF = 3.70, PIM = 3.34, PIS = 3.40, and PIC = 3.38.

5.2.5.2 Response of the Principals of the lower performing schools

The principals' responses of five schools that were less effective in the student's academic performance were analyzed to understand how they practice transformational leadership behaviors in their schools. Responses from 21 principals were analyzed and presented in the table below.

Table 5.36: Response of low-performing school principals to their transformational leadership practices, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=21)

Descriptive statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
PIF	21	2.8790	.75126
PIM	21	2.8638	.72964
PIS	21	2.8933	.70716
PIC	21	2.8133	.49443
PTL	21	2.8571	.53242
Valid N (listwise)	21		

Source: Computed from survey data, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

Based on the table above, it is evident that principals of low-performing schools reported lower levels of practicing transformational leadership, with an overall mean value of 2.86 and a standard deviation of 0.53. This mean value is significantly lower than the mean value reported by the principal of the highest-performing school, which is 3.86. Similarly, the mean value of principals from the lowest-performing schools is lower than the overall mean value of the principals' survey, which is 3.38. Furthermore, the responses of the principals of schools with lower performance were more or less similar for all factors.

5.2.5.3 Teacher Response to Transformational Leadership Practices of Principals in high performing schools

To understand teachers' perceptions of transformational leadership practices by principals of high-performing and low-performing schools, teachers' responses from five (5) better-performing and five (5) lower-performing schools were analyzed and presented separately. The results are presented as follows.

Table 5.37: Teacher response to principal leadership practices of higher-performing schools, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=83)

Descriptive statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
TIF	83	3.5423	.62634
TIM	83	3.5859	.62067
TIS	83	3.5905	.61397
TIC	83	3.6649	.73057
TL	83	3.5976	.51766
Valid N (listwise)	83		

Source: Computed from survey data, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

The table above includes responses from 83 teachers in high-performing schools regarding the transformational leadership practices of their principals. The analysis shows that the average mean value for teacher responses is 3.6 (standard deviation = 0.52). This indicates no significant difference in transformational leadership practices among principals in high-performing schools compared to the overall survey, with an average mean value of 3.53 (standard deviation = 0.60). The mean values for each component of transformational leadership align closely between high-performing schools and the overall survey: TIF = 3.54, TIM = 3.58, TIS = 3.59, TIC = 3.66. These findings suggest that, based on teacher perceptions, there are no significant differences in transformational school leadership practices between high-performing schools and the overall survey.

5.2.5.4 Teacher Response to Transformational Leadership Practices of Principals in lower performing schools

The purpose of the analysis and presentation of the replies from seventy-two teachers at lower-performing schools was to determine whether there was a discernible difference in the leadership styles of high-performing and low-performing schools concerning the academic achievement of their students. The table below displays the findings.

Table 5.38: Response of low-performing school teachers to principal transformational leadership practices, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024 (N=72)

Descriptive statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
TIF	72	3.5315	.61551
TIM	72	3.5993	.55363
TIS	72	3.5001	.71380
TIC	72	3.7661	.58808
TL	72	3.6006	.41605
Valid N (listwise)	72		

Source: Computed data from the survey, Sidama region, Ethiopia, 2024

Teachers in low-performing schools rated the transformational leadership behavior of their principals with an average mean value of 3.60 (standard deviation = 0.416). The mean value for individualized consideration was similar among teachers. Interestingly, there was no significant difference between the overall mean value of the survey and the mean value of teacher responses from low-performing schools regarding student academic performance.

Analysis of teacher responses from high- and low-performing schools regarding student academic performance indicated no significant difference in principal leadership practice. This finding contrasts the principal's perception of better transformational leadership practice in a high-performing school. However, teachers in these schools strongly agreed on the positive roles of transformational school leadership for better academic learning. The perception difference between principals and teachers regarding principal leadership practices in high- and low-performing schools requires further study.

The transformational leadership practices of the principals and their impact on the student's academic achievement were examined and presented using quantitative data in the section above. Suitable statistical methods, such as SPSS 25, were used to analyze primary data from the survey findings. These included the principals' self-assessment and the teacher's perception of the principal's leadership behavior and practices. Secondary data on student academic performance for four consecutive years (2019,2020,2021 and 2022) was obtained from the Sidama National State Education Bureau. Secondary data from the bureau was further analyzed to get the average performance value and weighted average for further analysis.

Analysis of principal self-perception on their transformational leadership practices showed that most principals agreed that they often practice transformational leadership behaviors in their respective schools. Similarly, most teachers agreed that principals practice transformational leadership often in their respective schools.

The potential impacts of the principals' transformational leadership practice on the student's academic achievement were evaluated based on the opinions of the principals and teachers. The Pearson's correlation coefficient indicated that transformational leadership practices implemented by principals had a noteworthy effect on students' academic performance. Based on Pearson's correlation coefficient analysis, the transformational leadership of the principal had a positive influence on the academic performance of the students, with an overall correlation value of $r = .827$ at $p < .01$. Similarly, with an overall correlation value of $r = .779$ at $p < .01$, the Pearson correlation coefficient of teachers' responses regarding the impact of the principal's transformational leadership on students' academic performance demonstrated that the principal's transformational leadership had a positive influence on students' academic performance.

On the other hand, depending on the student's academic achievement, an analysis was done to determine whether the principals of high-performing and low-performing schools might have different transformational leadership practices. The principal's self-perception revealed a noteworthy variation in leadership approaches across schools with high and low performance levels. However, teachers from high- and low-performing schools did not indicate any appreciable variations in their approaches to leadership in their responses.

5.3 ANALYSE AND PRESENTATION OF QUALITATIVE DATA

5.3.1 Introduction

The previous section analyzed and presented quantitative data. This section covers the process for gathering qualitative data, the people who participate in it, the techniques used to handle it, and the way the data are presented. The study questions and objectives were the basis for developing the open-ended interview questions. The goals of the interview questions were to clarify the questionnaire and, if necessary, fill in any gaps.

5.3.2 Characteristics of the qualitative data participants

For the qualitative phase, the researcher selected ten (10) schools based on the academic performance of the students of the respective schools. To this end, five (5) schools of the best-performing category and five (5) schools of the lower-performing category were selected. Five principals from the better-performing schools and five from the lower-performing category were chosen for the interview, a total of ten (10) principals. Similarly, ten (10) teachers from the better performing category and ten (10) from the lower performing, a total of twenty (20) teachers were selected.

All principals interviewed were male, indicating that the number of female principals is smaller and is not distributed evenly. The principals who participated in the interview were all principals (head). No deputy principals participated. Most of the principals interviewed had more than ten years of experience as a principal, indicating a good experience in school leadership. The age of the principals interviewed shows that they were all over 40. Their level of education revealed that all the principals interviewed were Master's degree holders.

The biographical data of the teachers interviewed showed that seventeen (17) were male teachers, and three (3) were female teachers. Like the principal's experience, most of the teachers interviewed had more than 15 years of general experience and had worked for more than two (2) years with the current principal. Among the interviewed teachers, eight (8) had a Master's degree, and twelve (12) held a Bachelor's degree.

The researcher assigned numbers and letters to code schools in the interview. Similarly, the researcher used the number and letter code for each participant. The letter 'P' was used to identify the principal response of the teachers, while the letter 'T' was used for the teachers. The researcher recorded the interview using audio-tape recording. The data recorded from the

interviewers was organized and documented for further analysis. The researcher reviewed the recorded data repeatedly to understand what the participants said (Creswell, 2009). The data reviewed were organized in light of research questions and objectives. The data was transcribed, and the responses were grouped into each category of transformational leadership for further analysis. The researcher read the transcribed manuscripts repeatedly to understand the respondent's perceptions. Schools and participants were presented with the following codes.

Table 5.39: Label of participants for the interview

Teacher participant	Principal participant
T01	P01
T02	P02
T03	P03
T04	P04
T05	P05
T06	P06
T07	P07
T08	P08
T09	P09
T10	P10
T11	
T12	
T13	
T14	
T15	
T16	
T17	
T18	
T19	
T20	

5.3.3 Analysis and presentation of qualitative data

Qualitative data was examined and presented based on the research objectives and sub-questions. The researcher employed qualitative data analysis techniques to address the study objectives and queries. All respondents' opinions were organized under transformational leadership factors, which are independent variables, as well as the effects of the leadership behavior of school principals on student academic performance, which is a dependent variable. The self-perception of the principal and the perception of teachers on the transformational

leadership practices of the principal and their effects on the academic performance of the students were analyzed and presented separately and consecutively.

5.3.3.1 Perception of principals about idealized influence practices

Idealized influence is one of the transformational leadership factors in which the leader demonstrates high moral values and integrity among followers (Gill, 2006:52-53; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Northouse, 2007; Northouse, 1016). School principals with idealized influence behavior can mobilize teachers' efforts toward school goal achievement by instilling pride and moral values among them. Shrestha (2020) states that transformational leaders exhibit high moral values and solid ethical conduct when interacting with their subordinates.

Principals were asked how much they understand transformational leadership and how often they practice it. All the principals in the interview responded that they practice transformational leadership behavior in their respective schools. Regarding idealized influence, principals responded that they try to behave in a way that influences teachers and other school stakeholders. When responding to his knowledge and behavior regarding idealized influence, P09 mentioned it.

'As a principal, I will take full responsibility and risk at work and start early at school.... I respect teachers and students. I try to act as my words so that the teachers follow me. Teachers must be honest, and I follow my words to make them believe in me. '

P04 also agreed with the above principle in understanding and practicing transformational leadership. P04 replied that he uses different mechanisms to build trust and a positive relationship with followers in such a way,

'I follow my plan and act according to my words. I use my time correctly to be exemplary for teachers and students. I always honor teachers and students for their performance. I always have a school day and go home late. I always have a responsibility and am on the side of teachers. '

In his response, P01 explained that he demonstrates transparency and integrity in the school and discussed the importance of building trust between teachers and the school community.

'Teachers seek truth and honesty. Therefore, I try to live in my words. My willingness to demonstrate high moral values, such as getting ahead in taking responsibility at school, being punctual, recognizing followers for

their efforts, and participating teachers on the crucial school agenda, made teachers trust me. '

P03 joined P01 and discussed the understanding of transformational school leadership. He says truthfulness and honesty are essential to influencing teachers and students to achieve school goals. He also replied in this way.

'I always try to establish new approaches to influence teachers. Taking exemplary action among the stallholders made me trust them.'

The interview discussion with P07, P02, P05, P08, and P06 also revealed that the principals understood transformational leadership well. Similarly, the discussion showed that school principals try to practice idealized influence behavior of transformational leadership to various extents. Some explained in detail the activities they undergo to influence their followers. Others explained that they practice idealized influence behavior at their school but are short of the activity list.

The principals of the better-performing schools explained their transformational roles better than those of the lower-performing schools. The better-performing school principals presented detailed activities under idealized influence behavior. On the other hand, principals from lower-performing schools discussed their idealized influence roles in general. When detailed activities were asked, they could not discuss the key idealized influence behaviors. Moreover, they tried to discuss aspirations rather than pertinent actions. It indicated a clear gap in understanding and expressing the essential values they practice in their respective schools to demonstrate idealized influence between principals of better-performing schools and principals from lower-performing schools.

5.3.3.2 Understanding and perception of principals to inspiration motivation

The inspirational motivation behavior of transformational leadership indicates the leader's ability to articulate and inspire vision among followers ((Northouse, 2007; Shrestha, 2020). School leaders demonstrating inspirational motivation can mobilize followers towards higher performance. School principals who demonstrate inspirational motivation can inspire and motivate teachers toward a better learning outcome. According to Bass & Riggio (2006), leaders with inspirational motivation behavior can instill encouragement in followers so that they can look at the big picture.

Principals were asked to discuss their understanding and practice of inspirational motivation. All principals who participated in the interview expressed their knowledge and practices of transformational leadership in various ways. Principals of better-performing schools discussed the inspirational motivation behavior of transformational leadership in more detail than principals of lower-performing schools.

P01 discussed the mechanism he deployed to inspire the vision of schools to teachers and other stakeholders. According to him,

'First of all, I worked to build consensus on the common goal among school stakeholders, i.e., improving student academic performance as a major task. Taking the improvement of the learning outcome of the students at the center, I worked to inspire the commitment of the teachers to accomplish their task based on the school's vision.'

P01 further explained how he designed and introduced the school vision to stakeholders. He used a mechanism such as displaying the school's vision and mission statement so that everyone, teachers, students, and other stakeholders can quickly memorize it. When P01 was asked to explain further what specific mechanism is designed to change students' academic performance, he explained that.

'... through the communication of teachers and students about the importance of targeting in the larger picture, the organization of additional support classes, the encouragement of the peer support system, the provision of an appropriate input important for the teaching-learning processes, we worked to change the mentality of the students to demonstrate better academic learning.'

When discussing inspirational motivation practices, P02 and P08 replied that they made all stakeholders internalize the vision of the schools through continued discussion. They added that the school vision is posted so stakeholders can visualize it daily. P03 also joined the above reply and expressed in such a way,

'I used a different mechanism to introduce the vision of the and make it follow the school community. To improve the student's academic performance, the school established different mechanisms, such as organizing additional tutorial classes, peer learning, or support teams.'

P04 discussed supporting P03 and explained his school's mechanisms to inspire and motivate teachers and students for a better learning outcome. According to P04, the school community has participated since vision formulation and continued to evaluate its implementation. P04

explained that the school has been using different mechanisms to improve students' academic performance and expressed in his words such in a way,

'First, the school analyzed the students' academic results for three years and identified the gap. The school then set a plan for each subject and assigned teachers based on their experience and talents. Additionally, the school organized additional tutorial classes and support teams. The school also worked to provide important input for teaching and learning. Finally, performance should be evaluated periodically, and action should be taken based on performance continually. It is through this mechanism that we have been working.'

Other respondents also discussed their practice of inspirational motivation in different ways. All agreed that they have been practicing inspirational motivation in their respective schools. Some respondents, such as P09, P07, P08, and P06, discussed that although they were practicing the inspirational motivation roles, some teachers were not being inspired and motivated rather than claiming different benefits such as low salaries and lack of unique benefits for teachers. Furthermore, they claimed that students and their family history are key factors for low academic performance. Furthermore, their discussion focused on the other factors rather than school leadership for student academic performance.

5.3.3.3 Principal understanding and perception in the practice of intellectual stimulation

Intellectual stimulation indicates the leader's role in promoting intelligence and creativity in problem-solving (Shrestha, 2020). Bass and Riggio (2006) argued that leaders can encourage and stimulate creativity and innovativeness in their followers through intellectual stimulation. School principals who practice intellectual stimulation can motivate teachers' creativity to improve student academic performance.

The researcher discussed the topic with the principals through the interview questions, which were based on the items of intellectual stimulation. P10 explained that he uses different mechanisms to encourage the creativity and innovation of teachers. He said that he provides the necessary input for teachers' creative activity. He explained that he lets teachers try their way and bring solutions for a better learning outcome. P04 replied to his intellectual stimulation practices as P10 in such a way,

'I encouraged teachers to become creative in their teaching methodology. I also provided them with the necessary input for the activity. The school also

organized special creativity clubs, such as the ICT club so that teachers could engage with it. As a school leader, I am open to teachers' ideas.'

The interview discussion with P02 revealed that the principals practicing intellectual stimulation encourage teachers to conduct action research. P02 confirmed this in such a way,

'I always encourage teachers to conduct action research to improve student academic performance. My school allows teachers to conduct action research and other creativity activities.'

P04 also argued that teachers are recognized based on student academic performance. The interview discussion with P03 and P07 also agreed with the above arguments that principals use different mechanisms to stimulate the creativity of teachers and other stakeholders. However, initiatives and actions to practice intellectual stimulation differ from principal to principal. Principals from better-performing schools discussed the activities of their intellectual stimulation practice more elaboratively and in detail. Principals of lower-performing schools expressed their intellectual stimulation practices but with less detailed activities and initiatives. This showed a discernible difference in the transformational leadership practices of high-performing and low-performing schools regarding students' academic achievement. The above investigation validated the quantitative data analysis of the principal's transformational leadership practice. Additionally, it corroborated the quantitative data findings indicating that higher-performing and lower-performing schools varied in how student academic performance is influenced.

5.3.3.4 Principal understanding and perception in the practice of individualized consideration

Individualized consideration indicates that the leader knows every follower's requirements and worries (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Gill, 2006). Leaders who exhibit individualized consideration understand that followers have different needs for accomplishment and personal growth. According to Barling, Christie, and Hopton (2011), leaders who act thoughtfully and individually with their followers can help them reach their full potential.

The researcher discussed their individualized consideration behavior practice with the selected principals based on the interview items regarding individualized consideration. All principals in the interview tried to express their practices on individualized consideration in various forms. P02 confirmed that he designed a mechanism to identify and support the different needs

of teachers and other stakeholders. He explained that he usually uses continuous professional development (CPD) to develop teachers' professional capacity. The principal also explained that he usually assesses the individual teachers' needs and aspirations and designs mechanisms to support them based on the assessment. P01, P07, P08, and P09 also explained their individualized consideration in agreement with P02. All agreed that they continue to follow the concerns of each teacher and organize the support mechanism for each of them in a school capacity. However, all interviewees mentioned that even though the principals identify and support teachers based on their needs, that does not satisfy the teachers. Teachers need more support and consideration, but schools lack resources.

The interview discussion with principals revealed that principals practice individualized consideration factors of transformational leadership in various ranges. Most understood transformational leadership well and practiced transformational leadership components with detailed activities. Some principals, especially from lower-performing schools, could not express the detailed practices of transformational leadership behaviors. The interview discussion also showed that school leaders designed a different mechanism to improve students' academic performance.

5.3.3.5 Principal transformational leadership practices and their effects on student academic performance

The principals were asked to talk about how transformational leadership helped them raise the academic achievement of their students. All principals in the interview discussed that they believe their leadership practices positively affect student academic performance. P02 clarified that he employed inspirational motivation to encourage and motivate teachers to dedicate themselves to raising the academic achievement of their students. Similarly, P01 and P10 mentioned that their leadership styles affect overall school performance. In addition, they expressed that their transformational leadership practices affected school performance by building a positive work culture in their respective schools. According to the respondents, as teachers participate, motivate them, and commit themselves to better school performance, there is a significant improvement in students' academic performance.

P03, P04, and P06 also responded in support of the transformational leadership role in the school to positively change the learning outcome. They explained that the more they implement

transformational leadership styles, the more they could mobilize the school community toward improvement. P09 and PP07 repeated the importance of transformational leadership practice to improve school. They did, however, assert that principals require additional training in management and leadership in education, particularly in transformational school leadership.

5.3.3.6 Teacher understanding and perception of the idealized influence practice of principals

The idealized influence behavior of principals enables teachers to consider their principals as role models inspired by the moral values of the principal at work (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Principals practicing idealized influence could mobilize school stakeholders toward implementing the school vision. Twenty (20) teachers participated in the interview discussion. The transcribed interview discussion is summarized below.

In discussing the idealized influence practice of the principal, T017 agreed that the principal in his school practices the idealized influence behavior frequently. He (T17) mentioned the positive practice of idealized influence as

'Our principal always tries to create a positive environment for teachers. He always shows up to school, and his punctuality made me commit. His ethical behavior is exemplary for the entire school community.'

T03 also argued with T17's view and explained the principal's role as an idealized influence. According to T03, their principal demonstrates positive and exemplary behavior toward teachers, such as respecting teachers, showing integrity and discipline, being punctual, and acting according to his words.

T12, on the other hand, explained that his principal is dedicated to his duty and demonstrates the behavior that teachers and students respect him. T02 also argued that his principal is committed to his duty and takes actions that enable him to follow the principal. T19, T10, T14, T09, T11, and T18 all agreed that their principals demonstrated the moral values that led them to commit to achieving the school's objectives. T10 explained that the school principals idealized practice as

'He is not acting as a boss but as a humble person. He is very dedicated to his responsibility and demonstrates a moral value that allows teachers to commit themselves to achieving school goals. He influences teachers through an exemplary role rather than punishment.'

Contrary to the above, T01 disagreed with his principal's idealized influence behavior practice. According to T01, his principal does not demonstrate idealized influence behavior at work and is expressed as

'Our principal does not practice idealized behavior. He does not build a team; rather, he works independently. He uses force rather than influencing teachers. Therefore, I do not consider him a model.'

T15 also replied that he does not consider his principal a model for many reasons. According to T15, the principal demonstrates insignificant moral values to teachers. He further explained that his principal does not have leadership experience. The other teachers who responded agreed that principals need appropriate training to practice it consistently. Although most teachers responded that principals experience practicing idealized influence in their respective schools, their understanding of idealized influence behavior differs. Some are explained well with detailed examples, but some are explained without detailed explanations. This indicates a gap between teachers in understanding their principal's leadership practices.

5.3.3.7 Teacher understanding and perception of the practice of inspirational motivation of principals

Leaders can inspire followers by articulating a compelling vision. Inspirational motivation is how a leader communicates with subordinates to develop high expectations through motivation (Northouse, 2007; Shrestha, 2020). School administrators can motivate and inspire teachers by demonstrating inspiring motivation practice. Principals with the most inspirational motivation can optimize teacher performance by setting high school goals to improve student academic performance (Kouzes and Posner, 2007).

Teachers were asked to discuss the role of inspirational motivation for their principals based on different elements. T11 responded that the principal inspires and motivates teachers by introducing a big picture through school vision,

'Our principal motivates teachers in different ways. He motivates teachers based on performance and encourages competition among teachers. The principal also builds a team spirit among teachers, making him liked and admired by teachers. He set out a plan to increase student academic performance.'

T08 also joined his response in support of T11 on the role of the principal in inspirational motivation. T17 explained that the principal organized the teaching-learning mechanism to motivate teachers and students. According to T08, the principal had made improving student academic performance the main task. Based on the set goal, the principal mobilized all teachers to achieve the set goal. T08 also discussed that the principal's way of leadership made teachers work enthusiastically to improve students' academic results.

T02 also discussed and explained the inspirational motivation roles of the principals as

'Our principal inspires and motivates us to commit to evaluating student academic performance. He always supervises, encourages, and coaches the students so that they look at the bigger picture. He also encourages teachers to commit themselves to improving student academic performance. Committed to maintaining students' academic discipline. He assigns teachers based on academic performance.'

T13, in his way, discussed the inspirational motivation of the school principal as follows;

'My principal inspires teachers by acknowledging good performance. Our teacher uses different mechanisms to improve students' academic performance, such as organizing peer learning in the framework of Top-5, Top-10, and class-level tutorial programs.'

Teachers such as T12, T03, T09, T18, and T20 similarly explained the principal's inspirational motivation practice. They all agreed that the principals of their respective schools practiced inspirational motivation but to various extents. According to the respondents, there was a significant improvement in the student's academic performance when the principals experienced inspirational motivation. T10 mainly explained the inspirational role of the principal as

'Our principal is action-oriented and has set a big goal for the school. Motivates teachers to inspire enthusiasm. Our principal supports and coaches students based on academic performance. He also provides appropriate input to improve student academic performance.'

However, teachers such as T02, T08, and T17 responded that they do not have complete confidence in inspiring inspirational motivation practices. T01 specifically explained that the school's principals actively act rather than influence inspiring motivation. Furthermore, T17 explained that no specific strategy is designed to improve students' academic performance. Moreover, T17 explained that he could not believe that transformational leadership practice

was in their school. All teachers in this category appear to lack confidence in their leadership. This result is congruent with the quantitative analysis of which transformational leadership practices are less in lower-performing schools.

5.3.3.8 Teacher understanding and perception of the practice of intellectual stimulation of principals

Intellectual stimulation indicates that leaders practice to stimulate creativity and innovation among stakeholders. Leaders can promote and encourage creativity and innovativeness in their followers through intellectual stimulation (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Tims, Bakker, and Xanthopoulou (2011) argued the importance of intellectual stimulation since it promotes a culture where followers are active thinkers. Furthermore, Cherry (2020) argued that transformational leaders can encourage creativity and challenge the status quo through intellectual inspiration.

Teachers discussed the intellectual stimulation practices of their respective school principals. T13 explained the central role of intellectual stimulation as stimulating teachers to look at creative activities that change students' academic performance. T08 also argued that the principal's role is such that the principal encourages creativity and supports the teachers' initiatives. T10 also mentioned that the principal encourages teachers to be creative and innovative. In addition, he argued that the principal recognizes and supports the teacher's creative efforts and new ideas. In another way, T12 explained that the principal awards the teachers' creative work and encourages the best-performing students to participate in the creativity activities. Similarly, T02, T00, T19, and T20 also argued the role of intellectual stimulation of the principal.

On the other hand, T15, T01, and T9 responded that principals do not significantly practice intellectual stimulation. According to the respondents, principals do not take appropriate action to promote teachers' creativity. Also, the principals of their respective schools do not engage teachers in creative activities. They further explained that the principals do not allocate creative activity resources to teachers.

The above responses revealed that principals practice intellectual stimulation behavior in varying ranges. In terms of student academic performance, principals from better-performing

schools practiced it better than those from lower-performing schools. This indicated a clear gap in transformational leadership practice based on schools' overall academic performance.

5.3.3.9 Teacher understanding and perception of the practice of individualized consideration of principals

According to Bass (1990), each follower's needs in terms of development and achievement varied. In addition to becoming mentors or coaches, leaders can individually respond to each follower's needs and listen to their needs and concerns (Gill, 2006). Individualized, considerate leaders coach, mentor, and assist followers in fostering organizational progress (Dartey-Baah, 2015).

Teachers were asked to discuss the practice of individualized consideration of principals in their respective schools. T08 explained that the principal pays attention to each teacher's needs and appreciates the teachers' concerns. T11, on his side, said that although principals listen to teachers, they do not take pertinent action to support individual teachers. T02, T03, T09, T15, T05, and T19 agreed on the principal practice of individualized consideration but could not express what relevant action was taken to consider individual needs and aspirations.

On the other hand, T04, T05, and T14 discussed that they had never seen a principal's individual consideration practices. According to the respondents, principals are not ready to support teachers' needs. The respondents added that principals lack leadership experience to engage and identify each teacher's needs.

From the above discussion, it is possible to understand that principals practice individualized considerate behavior of transformational leadership to varying extents. As agreed by most teachers, principals from better-performing schools have a good experience in engaging and identifying the needs of each teacher. Additionally, teachers' understanding of their principals' leadership practice is better for higher-performing school teachers. On the other hand, teachers from lower-performing schools could not confidently explain the practice of individualized consideration of their respective principals.

5.3.3.10 Teacher understanding and perception of the transformational leadership practice of principals and its effect on student academic performance

The researcher asked teachers how they understand and perceive principals' transformational leadership role and their influence on students' academic performance. All teachers discussed that the principal's leadership style positively influenced the students' academic performance. They also agreed that principals enthusiastically work to improve students' learning outcomes when they motivate them.

The teachers in the interview explained that in schools where the principals are experienced and exercise transformational leadership, the student's academic results are improving. They also argued that they will not discharge their responsibility enthusiastically if school leadership is not transformative and participatory. However, teachers from low-performing schools in student academic performance denied school principals' role in improving student academic performance.

5.4. TRIANGULATION OF QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE DATA

5.4.1 Introduction

The last two sections covered quantitative and qualitative data analysis and presentation. The triangulation of the quantitative and qualitative data categories is the topic of this section. Principal and teacher interviews provide qualitative information combined with the numerical data gathered from questionnaires and secondary sources. The researcher considered the study questions and objectives when triangulating the data. Qualitative and quantitative data were compared and contrasted to determine the similarities and differences in the participant principals' perceptions of transformational leadership approaches. Data from both quantitative and qualitative sources were triangulated to close the gaps.

5.4.2 Principals and Teachers' Understanding and Perception of Principal's Idealized Influence Practice

It is believed that the idealized influence behavior of transformational leadership enables leaders to model themselves so that followers consider them exemplary and high-moral-value

leaders (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Northouse, 2007; Northouse, 2016). Principals who practice idealized influence behavior regularly can influence teachers and the school community to improve students' academic performance.

Based on the research questions and objectives, the quantitative data was analyzed to understand the idealized influence of school principals on their practice in their respective schools. Quantitative data analysis revealed that school principals practice idealized influence in various ranges. Most principals agreed that they practice idealized influence behavior of transformational leadership in their respective schools. Similarly, quantitative data analysis of teacher responses showed that most teachers agreed that principals practice idealized influence behavior often in their respective schools. However, qualitative data analysis of the principals' responses revealed that they practice idealized influence in their respective schools. Qualitative data analysis from teacher interviews also demonstrated that principals experience idealized influence in their respective schools in varying ranges.

The findings of the qualitative data analysis were consistent with the findings of the quantitative data analysis. Furthermore, the qualitative data revealed additional information on how principals and teachers understood transformational leadership practices. Additionally, qualitative data findings of teachers' discussions revealed that principals practice less idealized influence behavior in lower-performing schools on student academic performance. This finding was consistent with the quantitative data of the principals, which showed a difference in the practice of idealized influence between the higher and lower-performing schools.

5.4.3 Understanding and perception of principals and teachers about the practice of inspirational motivation of the principal

The second factor of transformational leadership is inspirational motivation. Inspirational motivation indicates the leader's ability to articulate the vision and inspire followers. Transformational leaders inspire and motivate subordinates toward organizational effectiveness through compelling vision ((Northouse, 2007; Shrestha, 2020). School principals can mobilize the efforts of teachers and other stakeholders to achieve the school goal accomplishment through inspirational motivation.

In the previous section, quantitative data from principals and teachers were analyzed and presented to understand better the understanding and practice of inspirational motivation in

their schools. Similarly, quantitative data were analyzed and presented from the teachers' responses to the principal's inspirational motivation practice. Most principals responded that they often practice inspirational motivation in their respective schools. Furthermore, the principals responded that there is a significant difference between the best and lowest-performing school principals practicing inspirational motivation. The quantitative data analysis of the teachers also revealed that they agreed that the principals of their respective schools practiced inspirational motivation.

Qualitative data analysis from the interview discussion with the principal revealed that the principals understand transformational leadership well and its components. It also showed that most principals practice inspirational motivation often in their respective schools. On the other hand, analysis of teacher interview data revealed that principals practice inspirational motivation in various ways. According to the qualitative data analysis of teachers, principals practice inspirational motivation most often in those schools that perform better in students' academic performance.

The qualitative data findings are consistent with the quantitative data findings in the inspirational motivation practice of the principals. Furthermore, the qualitative data analysis of the response revealed additional information on the inspirational motivation practice of the principal in the highest and lowest-performing schools. Quantitative data analysis of teachers had not shown significant differences in inspirational motivation practices of principals between higher performing and lower school principals. However, qualitative data analysis from teachers revealed that principals of better-performing schools in students' academic performance practice inspirational motivation more often than principals of lower-performing schools. This response agreed with the response of the principals in both the quantitative data set and the qualitative data set.

5.4.4 The understanding and perception of principals and teachers about the practice of intellectual stimulation of the principal

Intellectual stimulation is transformational leadership behavior in that the leader promotes intelligence and creativity in problem-solving (Shrestha, 2020). Transformational leaders can challenge the status quo through intellectual stimulation. School principals can stimulate teachers' creativity for school improvement through intellectual stimulation practices.

Quantitative data analysis of the principals' and teachers' responses in the previous section showed that principals practice intellectual stimulation in various ways in their schools. Many of the principals responded that they often do so. Similarly, teachers agreed that their principals usually practice intellectual stimulation.

Qualitative data analysis from the principal and teacher interviews revealed the quantitative data findings above similarly and explained that principals practice intellectual stimulation to support teachers' creativity. However, the principals of the better-performing schools discussed the intellectual stimulation activities they have been practicing. The principals of the lower performing schools discussed how they used to practice behavior of intellectual stimulation, but their discussion was short of detailed activities.

Qualitative data analysis and findings on the principal's intellectual stimulation practice align with quantitative data analysis and conclusions. However, qualitative data from teachers revealed more information about the difference in leadership practice between better-performing and lower-performing schools. Some teachers in the interview discussed that principals from better-performing schools engage and stimulate better than those from lower-performing schools. The finding was consistent with the principals' self-perceptions about their intellectual stimulation.

5.4.5 Principals' and teachers' understanding and perception of the practice of individualized consideration of the principal.

Leaders can attend to each follower's needs and concerns through individualized consideration. This is a way in which leaders recognize and acknowledge the personal needs of each follower (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Barling et al., 2011). It is agreed that transformational school leadership that experiences individualized behavior can increase students' academic outcomes by motivating teachers' efforts.

In the previous section, the quantitative data from the responses of the principals and teachers were analyzed and presented. Quantitative data analysis of the reaction of principals has shown that principals practice individualized consideration often in their schools. Quantitative data also showed a difference in the leadership practice of individualized consideration behavior between better-performing and lower-performing schools. Quantitative data analysis also

revealed that the transformational leadership practice of principals had a positive and significant influence on student academic performance.

The qualitative data analysis in the current section also revealed that most principals demonstrate individualized consideration practices; principals further discussed the activities they implemented to practice individualized consideration. On the other hand, teachers agreed that principals practice individualized consideration behavior, but in varying ranges. The discussion revealed that the principals of the better-performing schools demonstrated individualized consideration more than those of the lower-performing schools in students' academic performance.

Qualitative data analysis and findings agree with quantitative data analysis and conclusions. Qualitative data from principals and teachers revealed more information about the practice of individualized consideration by the principal. The principals discussed in detail how they set up a plan to meet the needs and concerns of the individual teachers. The principals of the best-performing schools discussed the measures they had taken to consider the needs of the teachers in more detail. On the other hand, teachers discussed that the principals in the better-performing schools practice individualized consideration better than those in the lower-performing schools.

In this section, the collection, analysis, and presentation of both quantitative and qualitative data were carried out. Data analysis and presentation from both quantitative and qualitative sets showed that principals practice transformational leadership, and its factors in the study area vary. Most principals concurred that transformational leadership is frequently used in their schools. The analysis of the teacher's response also coincided with the principal's argument about transformational leadership practices. Data analysis from both sets also revealed a good understanding of transformational leadership practice in schools in the study area.

Data analysis and presentation also revealed a difference in the principal's leadership practice in schools based on student academic performance. According to the response of the principals, the principals of the better-performing schools practice transformational leadership better than those of the lower-performing schools. Quantitative data analysis of teachers' responses did not indicate much difference in principal leadership practice between better-performing and lower-performing schools. However, the qualitative analysis and presentation of teachers' data stated the difference between the schools. Qualitative data analysis by teachers revealed that principals practice transformational leadership more often in better-performing schools than in

lower-performing ones. The discussion also indicated the need for principals to be trained to practice transformational leadership with full knowledge.

Quantitative and qualitative data analysis showed that principals' leadership favorably influenced students' academic performance and the overall school climate. The results of the analysis and presentation indicated a strong and significant correlation between students' academic achievement and principals' leadership styles.

5.5 SUMMARY

Both quantitative and qualitative methodologies were employed in the study to obtain data. Ninety-one principals, vice principals, and 362 teachers from 24 schools participated in the quantitative data collection. The questionnaire was distributed to the above subjects, and all 91 principals (100%) returned the completed questionnaire, while 350 teachers (96.7%) returned the completed questionnaire. Ten (10) schools were selected for the qualitative study. Ten (10) principals and twenty (20) teachers participated in the interview. Secondary data on the student's academic performance was accessed from the Sidama National State Education Bureau. The analysis and presentation of quantitative and qualitative data sets demonstrated that most principals in secondary schools in the national regional state of Sidama applied transformational leadership. The study additionally revealed differences in principals' leadership practices based on the school's overall performance and the student's academic achievement. The principals of the better-performing schools demonstrated transformational leadership better than those of the less-performing schools. The literature review indicated that transformational school leadership improves the teaching-learning process and student academic performance. The data analysis from both sources demonstrated a favorable and significant relationship between principal transformational leadership behaviors, independent variables, and student academic performance, a dependent variable. The following chapter will discuss the study's findings and results in more detail.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION TO THE STUDY

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Data presentation and analysis were performed in the previous chapter, Chapter 5. This chapter presents a summary of the findings, a discussion, and recommendations based on the findings. It also discusses the study's contribution to existing knowledge, practice, and policy formulation and offers suggestions for future research related to the study topic. The chapter concluded with a discussion of the study's limitations.

6.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The study examined how transformational school leadership affected students' academic performance in the Sidama National Regional State. The study was divided into six chapters based on the research questions and the ensuing objectives. An overview of the study is given in Chapter One, along with a concise introduction, the problem statement, the reasons behind the research, the research questions, and the objectives. The literature on notions of leadership, transformational leadership, educational leadership, the value of education, and the role of school leadership in preserving the quality of education was examined in Chapter 2. The study's theoretical framework was covered in chapter three, while the research methodology was described in chapter four. The presentation and analysis of the research findings from the study's quantitative and qualitative phases were covered in Chapter 5. Chapter Six, the last chapter, summarizes the research, discusses the conclusions, offers suggestions, and discusses the study's significance. Below is a summary of the topics covered in each chapter.

An outline of the study is provided in the first chapter. This includes the background of the study (cf. par 1.1), the rationale for the study (cf. par 1.2), the statement of the problem (cf. par 1.3), research questions and objectives (cf. par 1.4). On the other hand, the research methodology (cf. par 1.5) described the research paradigm (cf. par 1.5.2), the research approach (cf. par 1.5.3), and the research design (1.5.4). Furthermore, Chapter One presented the study population and sampling procedures (cf. par 1.5.5), which further highlighted sample and sampling procedures for the quantitative phase (cf. par 1.5.5.1) and qualitative phase (cf. par

1.5.5.2). Moreover, Chapter One provided instrumentation and data collection techniques (cf. par 1.5.6), which further presented details on the instrumentation and data collection in the quantitative phase (cf. par 1.5.6.1) and qualitative phase (cf. par 1.5.6.2). Data analysis procedures were presented in the chapter (cf. par 1.5.7), which further provided information on data analysis and presentation in the quantitative phase (cf. par 1.5.7.1), qualitative phase (1.5.7.2), and triangulation of data from both phases (cf. par 1.5.7.3).

In chapter one, the validity, reliability, and trustworthiness of the study (cf. par 1.6) were discussed with details on the validity, reliability of the data from the quantitative phase (cf. par 1.6.1), and trustworthiness of the data from the qualitative phase (cf. par 1.6.2). Research ethical considerations (cf. par 1.7) that further discussed details on anonymity and confidentiality (cf. par 1.7.1), informed consent (1.7.2), and research permission (cf. par 1.7.3) were a part of chapter one. The chapter ended with a discussion of the contribution of the study (cf. par 1.8), limitations and delimitations of the study (cf. par 1.9), definitions of key concepts (cf. par 1.10), as well as the study structure (cf. par 1.11).

Chapter Two reviewed the literature related to the study. In it, the concept of leadership was discussed (cf. par 2.2) from the perspectives of different scholars and summarized with an understanding of the concepts of leadership holistically. Additionally, transformational leadership (cf. par 2.4.3) was discussed in the chapter, which further highlighted the components of transformational leadership, such as idealized influence (cf. par 2.4.3.1), inspirational motivation (cf. par 2.4.3.2), intellectual stimulation (cf. par 2.4.3.3), and individualized consideration (cf. par 2.4.3.4). The chapter further reviewed school leadership (cf. par 2.5), transformational leadership practices in schools (cf. par 2.6), instructional leadership at school (2.7), educational quality (cf. par 2.8), which are further detailed as indicators of education quality (cf. par 2.8.2), factors affecting education quality (cf. par 2.8.3), the possible link between transformational school leadership and student academic achievement (cf. par 2.9).

Chapter three discussed the theoretical underpinnings of the study in light of different theories and research works (cf. par 3.1). In the chapter, the leadership theories were discussed in light of their historical era as a Great man theory (cf. par 3.2.2), which believes leaders are born; trait theory (cf. par 3.2.3), which considers leaders as either born or made; behavioral leadership theory (cf. par 3.2.4), which argued that leaders are not born, but developed through time, and contingency theory of leadership (cf. par 3.2.5) that claims there is no single way of

leadership development. On the other hand, chapter three discussed different types of leadership styles (cf. par 3.3), such as transactional leadership (cf. par 3.3.2), which is further elaborated in contingent reward (cf. par 3.3.2.1), active management by exception (cf. par 3.3.2.2) and passive management by exception (cf. par 3.3.2.3).

The chapter discussed Burns' transformational leadership concepts and their implications for school effectiveness (cf. par 3.4). Furthermore, the chapter discussed Bass' transformational leadership model and its impact on school leadership (cf. par 3.5), which is further detailed as Bass' transformational leadership model (3.5.2) and its components (cf. par 3.5.3; 3.5.4; 3.5.5; 3.5.6). On the other hand, the chapter highlighted the Kenneth Leithwood model of transformational school leadership (cf. par 3.6) and elaborated its categories (cf. par 3.6.2; 3.6.3; 3.6.4). The chapter also discussed the role of principals as instructional leaders (cf. par 3.6.5).

Chapter Four presented details about the research methodology. The chapter discussed the research paradigm (cf. par 4.2), the research approach (cf. par 4.3), and the research design (cf. par 4.4). The study population and sampling procedures were discussed in the chapter (cf. par 4.5). The study population (cf. par 4.5.2), sample size, and sampling procedures for the quantitative and qualitative phases (cf. par 4.5.3; 4.5.4) were part of the discussion in the chapter. Furthermore, instrumentation and data collection procedures were discussed (cf. par 4.6) in detail, as were instrumentation and data collection in quantitative and qualitative phases (cf. par 4.6.2; 4.6.3). The presentation and analysis of data from quantitative and qualitative phases (cf. par 4.7.2; 4.7.3), as well as the triangulation of the data from quantitative and qualitative phases (4.7.4), were discussed in the chapter. The issues related to the study's validity, reliability, and trustworthiness (cf. par 4.8.2; 4.8.3) were discussed. The chapter concluded by discussing the ethical considerations of the research (cf. par 4.9.2; 4.9.3; 4.9.4).

Chapter Five dealt with the presentation and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data. The presentation and analysis of data from both phases were based on the objectives and questions of the study (cf. par 1.4; 5.2.5). The chapter also presented biographic data of the respondents as the principal and the teacher respondents (cf. par 5.2.2.1; 5.2.2.2). Quantitative and qualitative data were given according to study objectives and questions (cf. par 1.4; 5.2.5; 5.3). Data from both quantitative and qualitative sources were triangulated to complement the findings (cf. par 5.4).

6.3 DISCUSSING THE FINDINGS FROM THE STUDY

6.3.1 Introduction

The study was guided by the main research question: **What is the role of the principal's transformational leadership practice in students' academic performance in the Sidama region of Ethiopia?** Five sub-questions were derived from the study question and five study objectives. The study's findings were discussed based on the objectives drawn from the research questions and the study's primary aim.

6.3.2 Findings from Biographic Data Analysis

The analysis of the biographic data of the respondents indicated that most of the principals in the study area were male, contrary to the Ministry of Education guidelines promoting female leaders in schools. It also revealed that most principals are between 30 and 50 years old. When the ages of the principals are more significant, it allows the principals to have experience in the school leadership. The principals' academic qualifications show that most principals had a bachelor's degree, 63.7%, while 36.3% had a master's degree. According to the Ethiopian Ministry of Education (MoE, 2021), secondary school principals must have a master's degree qualification. Data on the academic qualifications of the principals had shown that it is necessary to train the principals at school according to the required qualifications. The data on the experience of the principals in the study area indicated that over 70% of the principals have experience of 7 years and over. This showed that most of the principals of the respondents have good leadership experience at school.

On the other hand, teachers' biographic data indicated that the majority of the teachers who participated were male, 86%, indicating that the number of female teachers in the region's secondary schools is too small compared to the number of male teachers. The surveyed data analysis showed that most of the teachers are less than 40 years old, which gives an advantage to teachers' availability in the region's education system. On the contrary, the availability of lower-aged teachers in the system indicated less experienced teachers in secondary schools in the study area, indicating the need for further training. The analysis and presentation of biographic data revealed that more female principals and teachers must be trained and deployed in Ethiopian secondary schools and the study area.

6.3.3 Findings regarding the first research objective: Describing the concept of transformational leadership

The study's first objective was to describe the concept of transformational leadership. According to the examined literature, there are several viewpoints and opinions on leadership in general and transformational leadership in particular. The reviewed literature revealed that transformational leadership is a process where leaders influence a group of people to motivate them toward organizational goal attainment. It is further argued that transformational leaders can influence followers through the four components of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.

The findings of the reviewed literature also explained that school leadership is an influence, dynamics, empowerment, and proactivity for school reform and the improved academic performance of students). On the other hand, transformational school leadership is agreed to be a viable leadership style to foster student academic performance.

Finding 1: Transformational leadership is an effective leadership style to improve student academic performance.

6.3.4 Findings regarding the second research objective: To determine the understanding and perception of principals and teachers about transformational leadership practices of principals and their effect on student academic performance in the Sidama region of Ethiopia.

The study's second objective was to determine the principals' and teachers' perceptions of the principal's transformational leadership practice and its effect on students' academic performance in the Sidama region of Ethiopia. Based on this objective, the researcher conducted the survey questionnaire and semi-structured interviews with principals and teachers. The survey questionnaire was organized according to the transformational leadership components. The findings about this objective were organized into the respective transformational leadership components as follows.

6.3.4.1 Principals and teachers' understanding and perception of principals' idealized influence practice.

To understand the perception and understanding of the principal of the idealized influence behavior practices of transformational leadership in his school, 11 items were discussed through questionnaires and interviews. Similarly, 13 items were administered to teachers to determine their level of argument on the idealized influence practices of the principals. The study findings revealed that principals practice idealized influence behavior of transformational leadership. Principals agreed above the mean value for the items, such as acting in ways that build the respect of others for him, talking about the most important values and beliefs about himself, and going beyond self-interest for the good of the group. Similarly, the study findings of teachers' perceptions indicated that teachers had shown agreement that principals practice idealized influence in their respective schools. The study findings also revealed that teachers had shown strong agreement about principals' idealized influence above the mean value on aspects such as demonstrating high integrity, possessing necessary skills and competencies, promoting the school's vision, displaying good manners, acting consistently, having high expectations and exhibiting high moral values. Based on teachers' perceptions, the study revealed that principals practice a lesser exemplary role, engage in professional development initiatives, and articulate ethical values than other aspects of idealized influence. On the other hand, qualitative data analysis from principal and teacher interviews showed that principals practice idealized, influenced transformational leadership behaviors in their respective schools. Various research studies and practical applications corroborate the findings about the principals' idealized influence impact practices. Riffe, Lacy, Watson, and Fico (2019) have revealed a significant relationship between the idealized influence practices of principals and teacher job satisfaction, which positively impacts students' academic performance. The above findings are supported by Osagie and Momoh (2016), who agreed that the principals' idealized influence practices often influence students' educational outcomes. The results of Gyansah (2020), Beyene (2016), and Musyoki (2022), which revealed that school principals conduct idealized influence that enables teachers to be motivated toward school goal attainment, confirm the findings above.

Findings 2.1: Quantitative and qualitative data presentation and analysis indicated that the principal practices idealized influence transformational leadership behavior in their respective schools.

6.3.4.2 Principals and Teachers' Understanding and Perception of principals' inspirational motivation practice.

To understand the perception and understanding of the inspirational motivation of the principal, 13 items of inspirational motivation practices were administered to the principals and teachers. The study findings revealed that principals practice inspirational motivation. The principals had shown strong agreement on items like creating an exciting image, building confidence in school goals, setting high-level academic targets, articulating a compelling vision, and engaging in enthusiastic discussions. Similarly, the study findings of teacher perceptions indicated that teachers had shown agreement that principals practice inspirational motivation behavior. The findings of teachers' perceptions also showed strong agreement for items such as envisioning the future of the school regarding student performance, inspiring team spirit among teachers and staff, instilling confidence, fostering a sense of purpose, providing encouragement and support for improved academic achievement, organize inspiring programs, promote self-evaluation of progress towards school goals, and demonstrate commitment to academic objectives. The perception rate of the inspirational motivation of the principal was consistent with the findings of Osagie and Momoh (2016), which found that principals practice inspirational motivation often, with a mean value of 3.27. These findings agree with those of Mendez-Keegan (2019). In his doctoral thesis, Mendez-Keegan (2019) argued that the inspirational motivation of the principal enables teachers to work enthusiastically to improve students' academic performance. The findings also support leadership theories that leaders inspire and motivate their followers to improve organizational performance (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Northouse, 2016).

Finding 2.2: The presentation and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data from principals and teachers revealed that principals engage in inspirational motivation behavior in secondary schools in the Sidama region.

6.3.4.3 Principals and Teachers' Understanding and Perception of principals' intellectual stimulation practice.

Principals and teachers were asked to rate their understanding and practice of intellectual stimulation behavior of transformational leadership in their respective schools. Based on the

12-element Likert scale, principals expressed their agreement on how often they practice the intellectual stimulation behavior of transformational leadership in their respective schools. The principals agreed that they practiced intellectual stimulation behaviors in their respective schools. The principals had shown strong agreement that they practice most often on items such as valuing teacher ideas, encouraging innovative thinking, promoting new ideas for students' academic performance, seeking diverse perspectives for problem-solving, reevaluating critical assumptions, encouraging critical thinking and innovation, and fostering ideas for teachers' professional development. These findings indicated that principals practice transformational leadership, encouraging teachers to think critically and innovate to improve student academic performance. Furthermore, the study's findings revealed that the school's principal practices most intellectual stimulation behaviors in their schools. Most of the principals interviewed also agreed that they practice intellectual stimulation behaviors often.

On the other hand, the findings of teachers' perceptions based on the 13 items of transformational leadership intellectual stimulation behaviors showed that teachers agreed that their principals practiced intellectual stimulation behaviors in their respective schools. Teachers had shown strong agreement about principal practices on items such as injecting the appropriate enthusiasm and energy into teaching and learning activities, entertaining different opinions when solving problems related to teaching and learning, challenging the status quo, stimulating ideas and creativity from teachers, designing new techniques to enhance student performance in academic assignments, encouraging teachers to be innovative and creative, and stimulating teachers to think critically about their contributions to student academic success. The study findings of the teachers' interview also revealed that most teachers agreed that school principals practice intellectual stimulation often. The above result is more or less similar to the findings of Osagie and Momoh (2016) that emerge with the findings of the principal's intellectual stimulation practice on the Likert scale with a mean value of 3.53 and a standard deviation of 0.22. The findings are also supported by Musyoki (2022). In his doctoral thesis, Musyoki argued that most teachers agreed that their principals practice intellectual stimulation, with a mean value of 4.15 and a standard deviation of 0.83. Ikedimma and Okorji (2023) argued that principals can inspire teachers' commitment and improve students' academic performance.

Finding 2.3: According to a review of quantitative and qualitative data derived from principals' and teachers' perspectives, school principals engage in intellectual stimulation transformational leadership behaviors.

6.3.4.4 Principals' and Teachers' Understanding and Perception of the principal's individualized consideration practice.

Principals and teachers were asked how they perceive the principal practices of the fourth component of transformational leadership behavior, individualized consideration, based on the Likert scale items. Principals responded to individual consideration behaviors with 12 items and agreed that they practice individual considerate behavior. Principals had further shown strong agreement for the items such as considering the different needs of individuals, providing necessary resources for teacher professional development, accompanying teachers and students, assisting others in developing their strengths, paying attention to the diverse needs of teachers, and engaging in discussions about others' aspirations.

On the other hand, teachers expressed their agreement with the individual consideration practices of the principals. Teachers had responded with their agreement above the overall mean value on the items such as coaching and advising teachers and students on academic issues, creating new opportunities for teachers, mentoring teachers to improve personal and professional growth, paying attention to teachers' needs, and assisting them accordingly, understanding that each teacher and students have different needs, abilities, and aspirations from others, appreciating the performance of individual teachers, and listening to teachers concern. Both teachers and principals had shown strong agreement about the principals' individualized consideration practices in most items. The interviews with principals and teachers also revealed that principals practice individual considerate behavior in various ways, from school to school. The findings of the principal individual consideration are supported by the findings of Osagie and Momoh (2016), Gyansah (2020), and Musyoki (2022). These results also posited Gyansah's (2020) findings, in which his mixed-method research on the effects of school heads on students' academic performance indicated that most teachers agreed that principals practice individualized consideration in their schools, with an average mean value of 3.7.

Finding 2.4: According to quantitative and qualitative data analysis from principals' and teachers' perspectives, school principals exhibit varied degrees of individualized considerate, transformative leadership behavior.

6.3.5 Findings regarding the third research objective: To establish what possible impact the transformational leadership style of school principals may have on student academic achievement

The third objective of the study was to determine what possible effects the transformational leadership practices of principals have on student academic performance. The reviewed literature showed that transformational leadership positively affects students' academic performance. The study used Pearson's correlation coefficient to measure the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable to understand the effects of the principals' leadership practice on student academic performance. The result of Pearson's correlation analysis based on the perception of the principal revealed significant and positive relationships between the principal's transformational leadership practice and the academic performance of the students. Furthermore, the idealized influence of the principals exhibited positive correlations with all other factors and showed a strong positive correlation with student academic performance. Riffe, Lacy, Watson, and Fico (2019) have revealed a significant relationship between the idealized influence practices of principals and teacher job satisfaction, which positively impacts students' academic performance. The findings are also supported by Osagie and Momoh (2016), who agreed that the principals' idealized influence practices often influence the students' academic outcomes.

Similarly, the inspirational motivation of the principals showed positive correlations with all other factors and a positive relationship with the student's academic performance. The result was consistent with the findings of Osagie and Momoh (2016), which found that principals practice inspirational motivation often. The findings also support leadership theories that leaders inspire and motivate their followers to improve organizational performance (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Northouse, 2016). Intellectual stimulation and the principals' individualized consideration factor showed positive correlations with all aspects and strong positive relationships with the student's academic performance.

The linear multiple regression results based on principals' perceptions revealed that 69.9% of the variation in student academic performance is accounted for by changes in the principal's transformational leadership practices, indicating the significant role of transformational leadership by principals in influencing student academic outcomes.

On the other hand, Pearson's correlation analysis of teachers' perceptions revealed significant and positive relationships between the principal transformational leadership practices and

students' academic performance. All components of transformational leadership (Idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration) showed a positive relationship between the principals' transformational practices and the student's academic performance. Different research results support the above findings. Through a descriptive survey, Ebete and Ejims (2020) came out with research results that indicated transformational leadership by principals enabled high productivity, improved student achievement, and practical school goals. The findings of Osagie and Momoh (2016), Gyansah (2020), and Musyoki (2022) all indicated that transformational leadership practice by principals has a positive and significant influence on students' academic performance.

Pearson's correlation analysis, based on teacher responses, provided evidence of significant and positive relationships between transformational leadership components and student academic performance. Linear multiple regression of teacher perception showed that 61.4% of the variation in student academic performance can be attributed to changes in the transformational leadership practices of the principal. These findings suggest that the transformational leadership practice of the principal has a positive influence on academic performance, as indicated by an overall correlation value of $r = .779$ ($p < .01$). The findings are consistent with the findings of Marzano et al., 2005, Osagie and Momoh (2016), Buenvenida and Ramos (2019), Gyansah (2020), and Musyoki (2022). All of these agreed that the transformational leadership practices of the school principal positively influence teachers and other school stakeholders, which increases students' academic performance. Marzano et al., 2005 specifically argued that a boost in a principal's transformational leadership skills by one standard deviation would improve student achievement by 10% on standard tests.

Finding 3: The principal's transformational leadership practice strongly and positively influences student academic performance.

6.3.6 Findings regarding the fourth research objective: To establish if there is a significant difference in principal leadership practices between high-performing and low-performing schools in the Sidama region of Ethiopia

The fourth objective of the study was to determine whether there is a significant difference in the transformational leadership practice of the principal between high-performing and low-performing schools in terms of student academic performance. The reviewed literature revealed

that transformational leadership positively affects student academic performance. Similarly, it is argued that the student academic performance is higher in the schools where the principal practices transformational leadership.

The study's results based on principals' perceptions of a better-performing school showed that principals practice transformational leadership behavior in schools with a higher average mean value than other schools. Similarly, teachers from better-performing schools agreed that principals practice transformational leadership most frequently.

On the other hand, the study results from the perceptions of principals from lower-performing schools revealed that they practice transformational leadership less frequently than better-performing schools. However, the perceptions of the teachers from lower-performing schools did not show a significant difference in principal leadership practice.

Finding 4: Principals in better-performing schools practice transformational leadership more frequently than principals in lower-performing schools, indicating significant differences in the leadership practices between higher-performing and lower-performing schools.

6.3.7 Findings regarding the fifth research objective: To find out how the school principal can increase student outcomes through transformational leadership in the Sidama region of Ethiopia.

The fifth study objective was to determine how the school principal can increase student academic performance through transformational leadership. The reviewed literature indicated that school principals can increase student academic performance by practicing transformational leadership. The study analysis also revealed a significant positive relationship between the principal transformational leadership practice and student academic performance. The study further revealed that student academic performance is higher in schools where principals practice transformational leadership most frequently.

Finding 5: Principals can increase student academic performance by practicing transformational leadership behaviors frequently in their schools.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE STUDY

6.4.1 Introduction

This section deals with the study's recommendations. The recommendations focused on the transformational leadership role of the principal to increase student academic performance. They were based on the study's findings and presented according to the objectives.

6.4.2 Recommendation for the first objective: To describe the concept of transformational leadership.

The reviewed literature revealed that transformational leadership is a process in which leaders influence a group of people to raise their motivation toward organizational goal attainment. The study further argued that transformational leaders can influence followers through the four components of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. The school principal must integrate the four transformational leadership components to improve student academic performance. The findings of the reviewed literature also explained that school leadership is an influence, dynamics, empowerment, and proactivity for school reform and the improved academic performance of students. On the other hand, transformational school leadership is agreed to be a viable leadership style to foster student academic performance.

Recommendation 1: School principals must practice transformational leadership to change the deteriorating result of student academic performance.

6.4.3 Recommendations for the second objective: Principals and teachers' understanding and perception of transformational leadership practices of principals and their effect on student academic performance in the Sidama region of Ethiopia.

The results of the study showed that principals of schools have differing levels of understanding and application of transformational leadership behaviors in their schools. On the other hand, the study indicated that the transformational leadership practices of the principals have a strong and significant relationship with the student's academic performance. Transformational leadership enables principals to positively influence teachers and other school subordinates to improve overall school performance and student academic performance. Furthermore, the principal's transformational leadership practice is more frequent in schools where students perform better academically. Based on these findings, the study recommends that school principals practice transformational leadership behaviors frequently to change deteriorating student academic performance in the Sidama region. Furthermore, school principals and teachers need appropriate training to increase their understanding and practices of transformational leadership.

Recommendation 2: School principals need to understand more and practice transformational leadership in their respective schools to improve student academic performance.

6.4.4 Recommendations for the third research objective: To establish what possible impact the transformational leadership style of school principals may have on student academic achievement.

The study revealed significant positive relationships between the principal transformational leadership practice and students' academic performance. According to the linear multiple regression analysis, about 70% of the variation in student academic performance is accounted for by changes in the principal's transformational leadership practices, indicating the significant role of transformational leadership by principals in influencing student academic outcomes. Therefore, the study recommends that it felt necessary to be aware of the principals to practice transformational leadership to change the deteriorating student academic outcome in the region.

Recommendation 3: The regional education bureau has to promote transformational leadership practices in schools to improve student academic performance.

6.4.5 Recommendations for the fourth objective: To establish if there is a significant difference in principal leadership practices between high-performing and low-performing schools in the Sidama region of Ethiopia.

This study revealed that principals practice transformational leadership in better-performing schools, often with a higher average mean value than other schools. Similarly, better-performing school teachers agreed that their principal frequently practiced transformational leadership. At the same time, the study analysis showed that principals of lower-performing schools practiced transformational leadership less regularly than those of better-performing schools. Therefore, the study results indicated a significant difference in principal leadership practices between high and low-performing schools in the Sidama region of Ethiopia.

Recommendation 4: The regional education bureau must frequently train and recruit principals to practice transformational leadership.

6.4.6 Recommendations for the fifth research objective: To find out how the school principal can increase student outcomes through transformational leadership in the Sidama region of Ethiopia.

The study revealed a positive and significant relationship between principal transformational leadership practice and student academic performance. The study further revealed that student academic performance is higher in schools where principals practice transformational leadership most frequently. These findings indicated that principals can increase student academic performance by practicing transformational leadership in their schools. Principals should also focus on activities aimed at improving student academic achievement.

Recommendation 5: Principals must focus on transformational leadership behaviors that aim to improve student academic performance.

6.5 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

The previous section discussed the study recommendations based on the findings. This section discusses the study's contribution to theory, policy, and practical action for school principals. Based on the study's findings, the study's contribution to existing theories and models was also discussed. It also discusses how the study addresses policymakers' need to take pertinent action to improve student academic performance. Finally, the contribution of the study findings to the practical application of transformational leadership in schools was discussed.

6.5.1 Contribution to Knowledge

This study was based on the existing transformational leadership theories and models. The study's fundamental theoretical underpinnings were the transformational leadership theories or models of Burns (1978), Bass (1985), and Leithwood Kenneth (1990). The study's contribution to existing knowledge is based on its findings, which guided the researcher in developing a model that hoped to improve the student's academic performance.

The study findings revealed a positive and significant relationship between principal transformational leadership practices and student academic performance. This finding supports and adds to the existing theories of Burns (1978) and Bass (1985), which argue that transformational leadership is a vital leadership style for increasing organizational performance. It also supports and adds to the practicability of transformational leadership in the education setting.

The study also revealed that the principals of the best-performing schools demonstrated transformational leadership more frequently than those of the poorest-performing schools. This finding also contributed to the existing theory and practice, indicating a clear gap in leadership practice between schools based on their academic performance.

The linear multiple regression analysis of the study indicated that about 70% of the variation in student academic performance is accounted for by changes in the principal's transformational leadership practices, indicating the significant role of transformational leadership by principals in influencing student academic outcomes. This finding implied that the role of principals in maintaining the quality of education is prominent. It also contributed to existing theories and practices in indicating to what extent school principals contribute to improving student

academic outcomes. A model that was believed to enhance student academic performance through transformational leadership was created by the researcher based on the findings.

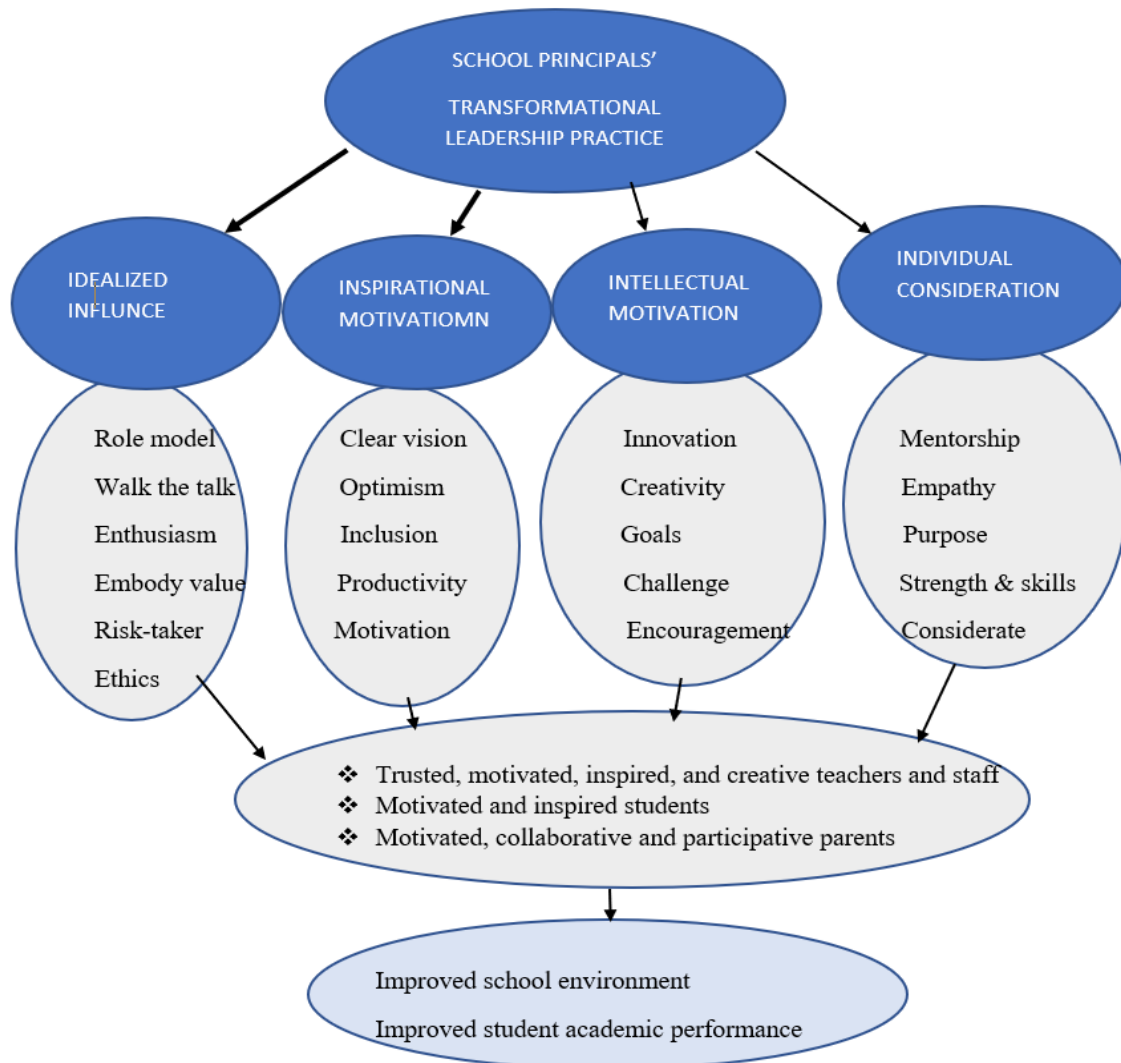


Figure 6.1. The Model construct for improved student academic performance (the researcher)

6.5.2 Contribution to policy formulation

The study's findings contribute to formulating and implementing policies in different ways. The main problem in the education sector in the study area is the poor academic performance of the students. The public is questioning education policy and its implementation. Parents are examining, in particular, the effectiveness of school leadership in improving student academic performance.

Policymakers need to be aware that the leadership practice of school principals can change the school environment and, therefore, the student's academic performance. The study findings revealed that the principal's transformational leadership practice is significantly associated with student academic performance. School principals practicing transformational leadership behaviors have the potential to influence teachers and school subordinates to do their best to improve student academic performance. On the other hand, where the student's educational performance is lower, the principal transformational leadership practice is also lower. These findings require policymakers to take appropriate action in training and recruiting school principals to ensure transformational leadership practices in schools. The study findings further make the Ministry of Education and Universities aware of the need to introduce a transformational leadership training institution to train school principals. The study also revealed that the number of female principals is low. Therefore, the regional education bureau should consider the training and deployment of female principals in schools.

6.5.3 Contribution to Practice

The study result indicated that principals can improve the general school environment, mainly student academic performance, by practicing transformational leadership. School principals should model themselves for teachers and students to instill pride in them. Principals' transformational leadership behavior motivates and encourages teachers and students, enabling them to work enthusiastically to achieve school goals. Inspiring teachers and students about their future improves students' academic outcomes. The findings also allow school principals to demonstrate commitment to the school's educational goals.

6.6 RECOMMENDATION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The study aimed to determine the role that the transformational leadership practice of school principals plays in student academic performance in the Sidama region of Ethiopia. The study findings revealed that the school principals in the Sidama region practice transformational leadership. The study also indicated that the transformational leadership practice of the principals has a strong and positive effect on student academic performance. Similarly, there is a difference in transformational leadership practices between better and lower-performing schools in terms of student academic performance based on the principals' perception.

However, data analysis of teacher perception of lower-performing schools did not show significant differences in the principal transformational leadership practice. This indicated that more studies are needed on the principal transformational leadership practice among higher-performing and lower-performing schools that involve more teachers and students.

This study is limited to the regional state of Sidama, Ethiopia. Low student performance on the national test is a national problem. Therefore, this study suggests undertaking a similar study that includes the remaining regions. On the other hand, this study is limited to public secondary schools. Thus, this study further indicates that private secondary schools should be included in a survey on the effect of transformational leadership practices on students' academic achievement in secondary schools.

Teachers play a crucial role as instructional leaders in schools. Principal leadership practices play a significant role in motivating and inspiring teachers to provide effective teaching to their students. This indicates that teachers themselves are the leaders of their students. Therefore, this study suggested studying the influence of teachers' transformational leadership on student academic performance. The study also suggests considering controlled variables such as the student's family background, IQ, the availability of trained teachers, and the school infrastructure for an effective teaching-learning process.

6.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

There are different factors and stakeholders responsible for maintaining the quality of education. This study is limited to the perception of principals and teachers about the transformational leadership practice of school principals and its effects on student academic performance in public secondary schools in the Sidama region. Among the factors affecting education quality, the study is limited to the principal's leadership practice. On the other hand, the study did not include the supervisors' perceptions of the respective education offices and students. Private secondary schools were not part of this study, and their participation would have contributed to the transformational leadership practices of the principals.

Some respondents needed to be more confident in rating and explaining their principal transformational leadership practices for fear of consequences, although the researcher tried to define anonymity measures. Few respondents considered the study a means of evaluating the

principal and hesitated to rate it correctly. Similarly, only some teachers responded that they needed help understanding the intent of the questionnaire.

6.8 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Education is an instrument that maintains every nation's economic, social, and political development. To play its role, the quality of education should be maintained at all levels. Quality education is believed to make a difference between nations regarding economic and technological advancement. As measured by national tests, the quality of education is deteriorating in Ethiopia, in general, and in the study area, in particular. Today, there is great concern about the quality of education in the country and the study area.

Different factors affect the quality of education. School leadership and management are the most critical factors that affect student learning, among other factors. There is an argument that school leadership has a role in influencing all other factors about education quality, such as developing people, building commitment to change, creating the conditions for growth in teachers, and relating to outside forces that continually acquire and target resources.

Transformational leadership is believed to be the preferred style to produce results beyond expectations and improve organizational performance. It is argued that the leadership style of school principals plays a significant role in improving student academic performance. Transformational school leadership is believed to influence school effectiveness. Principals practicing transformational leadership can positively impact teachers to do their best to improve students' educational outcomes.

The study sought to answer the role of principals' transformational leadership styles in student academic performance. Based on the research questions, a convergent parallel mixed research design was used to arrive at findings for the research objectives. The study involved 91 principals and 362 teachers from 24 public secondary schools.

Data presentation and analysis from quantitative and qualitative sources indicated that most principals practice transformational leadership in the Sidama region of Ethiopian secondary schools. Furthermore, the study revealed a significant difference in the principals' leadership practices of the best and lowest-performing schools regarding student academic performance in the study area.

The study findings indicated that the regional education bureau should train and deploy transformational leadership principals to improve the region's deteriorating student academic outcomes. Action is also needed to train principals.

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ANNEXURES

Appendix-A



UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 2023/09/06

Ref: **2023/09/06/14771942/01/AM**

Dear Mr DD Dukamo

Name: Mr DD Dukamo

Student No.:14771942

Decision: Ethics Approval from
2023/09/06 to 2028/09/06

Researcher(s): Name: Mr DD Dukamo
E-mail address: 14771942@mylife.unisa.ac.za:
Telephone: +251935979156

Supervisor(s): Name: Prof R J (Nico) Botha
E-mail address: botharj@unisa.ac.za
Telephone: 0824116361

Title of research:

The role of transformational leadership on students' academic performance: A case study in the Sidama region of Ethiopia

Qualification: PhD Education Management

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for the period 2023/09/06 to 2028/09/06.

*The **low risk** application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on 2023/09/06 in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.*

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to the relevant guidelines set out in the Unisa Covid-19 position statement on research ethics attached.
2. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.



University of South Africa
Preller Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa
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3. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee.
4. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
5. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing.
6. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
7. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.
8. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date **2028/09/06**. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Note:

*The reference number **2023/09/06/14771942/01/AM** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.*

Kind regards,



Prof AT Motlhabane
CHAIRPERSON: CEDU RERC
motlhat@unisa.ac.za



Prof Mpine Makoe
EXECUTIVE DEAN
qakisme@unisa.ac.za

 Approved - decision template – updated 16 Feb 2017

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Letter of Permission

Sidama National Regional State Bureau of Education

Hawassa

My name is Dessie Dalkie Dukamo, and I am undertaking research as part of my doctoral thesis in Education Management (Doctor of Education in Education Management) at UNISA (University of South Africa) under the supervision of Prof.RJ BOTHA. The title of my thesis is: “The Role of Transformational Leadership in Students’ Academic Performance: A Case Study in the Sidama Region of Ethiopia.”

The purpose of the study is to determine the role of transformational leadership by the principal on students’ academic performance in the Sidama region of Ethiopia. The study searches for an answer to the role transformational school leadership plays in affecting students' academic performance based on student’s academic performance on the secondary school leaving national test. The study findings will contribute to improving transformational leadership practices of school principals towards students’ academic improvement.

The research project will be conducted in the twenty-four (24) public secondary schools purposefully selected based on the secondary school leaving national test scores. All principals and 362 teachers from these schools will participate in the study. The data collection involves questionnaires and interviews. Ten principals and twenty teachers will be selected from 10 schools for the interview. Participation in the study is entirely voluntary. They have the right

to withdraw from this study at any time. All participating schools and individuals are guaranteed anonymity. There is no potential risk in participating in the study.

I promise your good bureau that all information obtained will be used solely for this study and that it will be handled in the strictest confidence.

To complete the research study, I seek your support and approval to conduct the research project at those selected schools under your good Bureau.

Do not hesitate to contact my supervisor for more information regarding my request. His contact details are as follows:

Prof.RJ BOTHA

Phone: 0824116361

Email: botharj@unisa.ac.za

University of South Africa

Department of Educational Leadership and Management

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully

Dessie Dalkie Dukamo

Student no: 14771942

Mobile no: 251-935979156

E-mail: 14771942@mylife.unisa.ac.za



Appendix-C

Letter of Permission

----- Woreda Education office

Subject: Permission to conduct research Study

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Dessie Dalkie Dukamo, and I am undertaking research as part of my doctoral thesis in Education Management (Doctor of Education in Education Management) at UNISA (University of South Africa) under the supervision of Prof.RJ BOTHA. The title of my thesis is: “The Role of Transformational Leadership in Students’ Academic Performance: A Case Study in the Sidama Region of Ethiopia.”

The study's purpose is to determine the role of transformational leadership by the principal on students’ academic performance in the Sidama region of Ethiopia. The findings will improve the transformational leadership practices of school principals in enhancing students’ academic performance.

I want to conduct the research at the selected public secondary schools in your woreda. The data collection involves questionnaires and interviews with principals and selected teachers. The schools were selected through purposive sampling techniques based on the performance of the national test at grade 12 for four consecutive years.

Teachers' and principals' participation in this study is voluntary. They have the right to withdraw from it at any time. There is no potential risk in participating in the study. I promise your good office that you will use all information obtained solely for this study and handle it

in the strictest confidence. A copy of the study result will be available to your office through the regional education bureau.

Do not hesitate to contact my supervisor for more information regarding my request. His contact details are as follows:

Prof.RJ BOTHA

Phone: 0824116361

Email: botharj@unisa.ac.za

University of South Africa

Department of Educational Leadership and Management

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully

Dessie Dalkie Dukamo

Student no: 14771942

Mobile no: 251-935979156

E-mail: 14771942@mylife.unisa.ac.za



Appendix-D

Letter to School Principal

Subject: Permission to conduct research Study

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Dessie Dalkie Dukamo, and I am undertaking research as part of my doctoral thesis in Education Management (Doctor of Education in Education Management) at UNISA (University of South Africa) under the supervision of Prof.RJ BOTHA. The title of my thesis is: “The Role of Transformational Leadership in Students’ Academic Performance: A Case Study in the Sidama Region of Ethiopia.”

The study's purpose is to determine the role of transformational leadership by the principal on students’ academic performance in the Sidama region of Ethiopia. The findings will improve the transformational leadership practices of school principals in enhancing students’ academic performance.

The data collection involves questionnaires and interviews with principals and selected teachers. Your school was chosen for the study based on purposive sampling techniques. Participation in this research is entirely voluntary. You have the right to withdraw from this study at any time. All participating schools and individuals are guaranteed anonymity. I will assure you that the data obtained will be used solely for this study and that it will be handled in the strictest confidence. A copy of the study result will be available to your office through the regional education bureau.

Do not hesitate to contact my supervisor for more information regarding my request. His contact details are as follows:

Prof.RJ BOTHA

Phone: 0824116361

Email: botharj@unisa.ac.za

University of South Africa

Department of Educational Leadership and Management

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully

Dessie Dalkie Dukamo

Student no: 14771942

Mobile no: 251-935979156

E-mail: 14771942@mylife.unisa.ac.za



Appendix-E

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA (UNISA)

Request for Participation (Principals)

Dear principal,

My name is Dessie Dalkie Dukamo, and I am undertaking research as part of my doctoral thesis in Education Management at the University of South Africa (UNISA) under the supervision of Prof.RJ BOTHA. The study's title is; "The Role of Transformational Leadership in Students' Academic Performance: A Case Study in the Sidama Region of Ethiopia." You are one of the study subjects of 24 secondary school principals selected through purposive sampling methods.

The purpose of the study is to determine the role of transformational leadership by the principal on students' academic performance in the Sidama region of Ethiopia. The study searches for an answer to what roles transformational school leadership plays in affecting students' academic performance. The study's findings will contribute to improving transformational leadership practices of school principals towards students' academic improvement. Your detailed contact information is accessed from the Education Bureau. Therefore, you are kindly invited to participate in the study.

The study involves questionnaires and semi-structured interview questions. Audio tape recordings will be administered for the interviews. The questions are about transformational school practices based on the four essential dimensions/components of transformational leadership. The questionnaire takes about an hour, and the interview questions take about 40 minutes.

Participating in this study is voluntary, and you are not obligated to consent to participate. You may withdraw from this research at any time, and your responses will only be included in the data if already analyzed.

Data gathered from individual teachers will remain confidential. The information supplied will not be used for appraisal in your workplace. Your participation adds value to improving education quality and students' academic performance through school leadership development.

Participating in this study has no potential risk. Your anonymity and confidentiality are guaranteed. I promise to use all information obtained for this study and handle it in the strictest confidence. All the data collected will be stored and managed securely. Privacy is protected during the publication of the research results or its parts, and the names of participants are not included. No separate incentives or costs are incurred for participation.

This study has received written approval from the Research Ethics Review Committee of CEDU. The researcher can make it available at any time if needed. The study findings will be available through the Education Bureau of the Sidama region. A copy of the study result will be available to your office through the regional education bureau.

For more information regarding my request, please contact my supervisor. His contact details are as follows:

Prof.RJ BOTHA

Phone: 0824116361

Email: botharj@unisa.ac.za

University of South Africa

Department of Educational Leadership and Management

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully

Dessie Dalkie Dukamo

Student no: 14771942

Mobile no: 251-935979156

E-mail: 14771942@mylife.unisa.ac.za

CONSENT/ASSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY (Return slip)

If you understand the request and agree to participate in the study, please sign the consent form below.

I, _____ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to participate in this research has informed me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits, and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or explained to me) and understood the study described in the information sheet.

I have been able to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw anytime.

The findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications, and/or conference proceedings, but my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the recording during the interview.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname (please print) _____

Participant Signature

Date

Researcher's Name & Surname (please print) _____

Researcher's signature

Date



Appendix-F

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA (UNISA) Request for Participation (Teachers)

Dear teacher,

My name is Dessie Dalkie Dukamo, and I am undertaking research as part of my doctoral thesis in Education Management at the University of South Africa (UNISA) under the supervision of Prof.RJ BOTHA. The study's title is; “The Role of Transformational Leadership in Students’ Academic Performance: A Case Study in the Sidama Region of Ethiopia.” You are one of the study subjects of 24 secondary school principals selected through purposive sampling methods.

The purpose of the study is to determine the role of transformational leadership by the principal on students’ academic performance in the Sidama region of Ethiopia. The study searches for an answer to what roles transformational school leadership plays in affecting students’ academic performance. The study findings will contribute to improving transformational leadership practices of school principals towards students’ academic improvement. Your detailed contact information is accessed from the Education Bureau. Therefore, you are kindly invited to participate in the study.

The study involves questionnaires and structured and semi-structured interview questions. Audio tape recordings will be administered for the interviews. The questions are about transformational school practices based on the four essential dimensions/components of transformational leadership. The questionnaire takes about an hour, and the interview questions take about 40 minutes.

Participating in this study is voluntary, and you are not obligated to consent to participate. You may withdraw from this research at any time, and your responses will not be included in the data unless already analyzed.

Data gathered from individual teachers will remain confidential. The information supplied will not be used for appraisal in your workplace. Your participation adds value to improving education quality and students’ academic performance through school leadership development.

Participating in this study carries no potential risk. Your anonymity and confidentiality are guaranteed. I promise to use all information obtained for this study and handle it in the strictest confidence. All the data collected will be stored and managed securely. Privacy is protected during the publication of the research results or its parts, and the names of participants are not included. No separate incentives or costs are incurred for participation.

This study has received written approval from the CEDU Research Ethics Review Committee. The researcher can make it available at any time if needed. The study findings will be available through the Sidama region's Education Bureau.

A copy of the study results will be available to your office through the regional education bureau.

Do not hesitate to contact my supervisor for more information regarding my request. His contact details are as follows:

Prof.RJ BOTHA

Phone: 0824116361

Email: botharj@unisa.ac.za

University of South Africa

Department of Educational Leadership and Management

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully

Dessie Dalkie Dukamo

Student no: 14771942

Mobile no: 251-935979156

E-mail: 14771942@mylife.unisa.ac.za

CONSENT/ASSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY (Return slip)

If you understand the request and agree to participate in the study, please sign the consent form below.

I, _____ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to participate in this research has informed me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits, and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or explained to me) and understood the study described in the information sheet.

I have been able to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw anytime.

The findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications, and/or conference proceedings, but my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the recording during the interview.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname (please print) _____

Participant Signature

Date

Researcher's Name & Surname (please print) _____

Researcher's signature

Date



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA (UNISA)
Questionnaire for Principals

Dear principal,

The objective of his study is to explore the use of transformational school leadership to improve students' academic performance in Ethiopian secondary schools: the case of the Sidama region. The study outcomes will strengthen transformational school leadership in maintaining education quality.

I assure you that all the information you supply will be treated confidentially. Your honest and strict response to the questions helped me obtain realistic study results, which led to an appropriate recommendation. Thank you for taking the time to answer the following questions.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Please respond for the following items by (√) or X)

1. Your position

Principal () Vice principal ()

2. Gender

Male [] Female []

3. How old are you?

Below 30 years []
30 – 39 years []
40 – 49 years []
50 and above years []

4. What is your academic qualification?

Diploma []
Bachelor []
Masters []
Others (specify)

5. Total years of experience

1-5 years [] 6- 10 years []
11-15 years [] 16 and above []

6. Total years of service as a principal or Vice Principal

1-3 years [] 4- 6 years []
7-10 years [] 10 and above []

7. How many years have you served as principal in this school?

1-2 years [] 3- 5 years []
6 years above []

8. Total number of students sat for grade 12th National Examination
2018 ----- 2019 2020..... 2021
9. Percentage of students scored pass mark and above (illegible to join university)
2018 ----- 2019 2020..... 2021

SECTION B: Transformational leadership dimensions/behaviors of school principals

This survey questionnaire measures the transformational leadership level of school principals in secondary schools of the Sidama Region of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. The questionnaire is a self-assessment tool based on MLQ adjusted for this study purpose, which enables learning and leadership development. Be honest in filling out the questionnaire. The rating scale ranges from 1- 5, with 1= Never, 2= Rarely, 3= Sometimes, 4= Often, and 5= **Almost always**. Respond to the items below by ticking \surd or X.

1. Idealized influence

As a principal,

		1	2	3	4	5
1	As a principal, I instill pride in others for being associated with me and creating an environment that makes subordinates feel good.					
2	I go beyond self-interest for the good of the group.					
3	I act in ways that build others' respect for me.					
4	I display a sense of power and confidence.					
5	I talk about my most important values and beliefs.					
6	I specify the importance of having a strong sense of purpose.					
7	I consider the moral and ethical consequences of decisions.					
8	I emphasize the importance of having a collective sense of mission.					
9	I lead by acting as a role model to staff and students.					
10	I am always concerned about school staff and students.					
11	Show respect for staff.					

2. Inspirational Motivation

As a principal,

		1	2	3	4	5
1	I talk enthusiastically/passionately about what needs to be accomplished.					
2	I articulate a compelling vision of the future.					
3	I express confidence that goals will be achieved.					
4	I talk optimistically about the future.					
5	I use different mechanisms to communicate vision.					
6	I always discuss the most important values and beliefs.					
7	Articulates and communicates the school vision to the followers.					
8	Set high-level goals for students' academic success.					
9	Express confidence that the goals will be accomplished.					
10	Create an exciting image of what is essential to be considered.					
11	Helps the followers feel appreciated					
12	Hold high expectations for students' learning outcomes.					
13	Encourages teachers' participation in decision-making about school improvement.					

3. Intellectual Stimulation

As a principal,

		1	2	3	4	5
1	I re-examine critical assumptions to question whether they are appropriate.					
2	I seek differing perspectives when solving problems.					
3	I get others to look at problems from many different angles.					
4	I suggest new ways of looking at how to complete assignments.					
5	I always seek different opinions from individuals when solving problems.					
6	I let teachers look at problems from different angles.					
7	Encourages out-box thinking					
8	Stimulates ideas from the teachers to challenge the status quo					
9	Values ideas from teachers					
10	Encourages critical thinking and innovation					
11	Develops ideas for teachers' professional development					

12	Encourage teachers to set new ways to improve student's learning outcomes.					
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4. Individualized Consideration

As a principal,

		1	2	3	4	5
1	I spend time teaching and coaching.					
2	I treat others as individuals rather than just a member of a group.					
3	I consider an individual as having different needs, abilities, and aspirations from others.					
4	I help others to develop their strengths.					
5	Appreciate the performance of individuals.					
6	Understand the needs of the staff and assist them accordingly.					
7	Provide individuals with different needs and aspirations.					
8	Emphasize and discuss the needs, abilities, and aspirations of followers.					
9	Come along with teachers and students.					
10	Give attention to the different needs of teachers about school goal accomplishments.					
11	Regularly provides the resources needed for teachers' professional development.					
12	Encourages teachers' individual professional development					



Appendix-H

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA (UNISA) Questionnaire for Teachers

Dear teacher,

My name is Dessie Dalkie Dukamo, and I am undertaking research as part of my doctoral thesis in Education Management at the University of South Africa (UNISA). The title of the study is “The Role of Transformational Leadership on Students’ Academic Performance: A Case Study in the Sidama Region of Ethiopia.” You are one of the study subjects of 362 teachers selected through purposive sampling methods.

The purpose of the study is to determine the role of transformational leadership by the principal on students’ academic performance in the Sidama region of Ethiopia. The study searches for an answer to what roles transformational school leadership plays in affecting student’s academic performance. The study's findings will contribute to improving transformational leadership practices of school principals towards students’ academic improvement. Therefore, you are kindly invited to participate in the study.

Data gathered from individual teachers will remain confidential. No information supplied will be used for any appraisal in your workplace. You may withdraw from this research at any time, and your responses will not be included in the data unless already analyzed.

I promise to use all information obtained for this study and handle it in the strictest confidence.

The questionnaire has two sections. Section A contains basic demographic information about your principals' transformational leadership practices. Please answer the question strictly and honestly by ticking \surd or **X**.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. Gender

Male [] Female []

2. How old are you?

Below 30 years []
30 – 39 years []

- 40 – 49 years []
 50 and above years []

3. What is your academic qualification?

- Diploma []
 Bachelor []
 Masters []
 Others (specify)

4. Total years of experience

- 1-5 years [] 6- 10 years []
 11-15 years [] 16 and above []

5. Total years of service as a principal or Vice Principal

- 1-3 years [] 4- 6 years []
 7-10 years [] 10 and above []

6. How many years have you served in this school?

- 1-3 years [] 4- 6 years [] 7- 10 years []
 11 years and above []

7. How many years have you been with the current principal?

- 1-2 years [] 3- 5 years [] 5 and above years []

SECTION B: Transformational leadership dimensions/behaviors of school principals

This survey questionnaire measures the transformational leadership level of school principals in secondary schools of the Sidama Region of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Be honest in filling out the questionnaire. The rating scale ranges from 1- 5, with 1 Never, 2= Rarely, 3= Sometimes, 4= Often, and 5= **Almost always**. Respond to the items below by ticking √ or X.

1. Idealized influence

My principal,

		1	2	3	4	5
1	My principal Displays high moral values.					
2	Acts according to his words.					
3	Exercises high expectations.					
4	Fosters trust and respect in teachers.					
5	Demonstrates high ethical values.					
6	Articulates values that promote students’ academic success.					

7	Demonstrates necessary skills and competencies on the job					
8	His attitude toward school vision encourages teachers and students.					
9	Shows high integrity					
10	The principal's manner made me pleasant to be a school member.					
11	Is exemplary.					
12	He is a source of my professional development.					
13	Displays energy and enthusiasm for own work.					

2. Inspirational Motivation

My principal,

		1	2	3	4	5
1	Always talks enthusiastically about the academic objectives and outcomes of the school.					
2	Inspires confidence in teachers.					
3	Talks and looks hopeful about the school's future regarding students' performance.					
4	Inspires team spirit among teachers and staff members.					
5	Ensures that staff members enjoy working in groups/teams to enhance teaching and learning.					
6	Ensures that we have adequate involvement in decision-making related to programs and instruction.					
7	Motivates a sense of purpose in teachers.					
8	Articulates a clear vision for students' academic performance improvement.					
9	Has instituted programs that inspire teachers to deliver as expected.					
10	Exhibits commitment to the academic goals of the school.					
11	Gives encouragement and support to staff members aimed at improving students' academic achievement.					
12	Regularly encourages us to evaluate our progress toward achieving school goals.					
13	Communicates school vision to staff and students					

3. Intellectual Stimulation

My principal,

		1	2	3	4	5
1	Stimulates ideas and creativity from teachers					
2	Encourages teachers to be innovative and creative					

3	Stimulates teachers to think about what they are doing for students' academic success.					
4	Encourages me to try new practices consistent with my interests					
5	Stimulates new ideas relevant to students 'academic performance					
6	She/he urges staff to be imaginative and creative.					
7	supports critical thinking that guide effective teaching and learning					
8	Injects the appropriate enthusiasm and energy to execute teaching and learning activities well.					
9	Entertains different opinions when solving problems relating to teaching and learning					
10	Design new techniques for completing academic assignments that will enhance students' performance.					
11	Encourages teachers and students to look at academic challenges from many different angles and work to challenge the problems.					
12	Has the capacity to solve the problems					
13	Challenges status quo					

4. Individualized Consideration

My principal,

		1	2	3	4	5
1	Always appreciates teachers and other staff for their successful work.					
2	Pay attention to teachers' needs and assist them accordingly.					
3	Listens to teachers' concern					
4	Creates new opportunities for teachers					
5	Mentor teachers to improve personal and professional growth.					
6	Coaches and advises teachers and students on academic issues.					

7	Understand that each teacher and student has different needs, abilities, and aspirations from others.					
8	Appreciate the performance of individual teachers.					
9	Encourages my professional development					
10	Provides moral support by making me feel appreciated for my contribution to the school					
11	Encourages me to pursue my own goals for professional learning.					



Appendix- I

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA (UNISA)

Interview questions for principals

1. What specific mechanisms do you use to instill pride in teachers and students?
2. Do you have specific mechanisms to appreciate teachers?
3. Explain how you demonstrate yourself as a model to followers.
4. What specific goals do you set to improve the student's academic performance?
5. What mechanisms do you use to inspire the schools' vision to teachers and other school subordinates?
6. How do you inspire teachers to participate in decision-making and matters associated with academic performance?
7. Discuss how you set high-level goals for your teachers.
8. What mechanisms do you have to encourage teachers to find solutions for students' academic success?
9. Do you let teachers seek solutions for the problems on their way? Explain in detail.
10. Explain mechanisms of stimulating ideas to teachers and other school subordinates.
11. Describe the coaching mechanisms of teachers.
12. Do you have a specific mechanism to differentiate each teacher's needs and aspirations?
Discuss in detail.
13. Discuss how you assist teachers based on their needs.



Appendix- J

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA (UNISA)

Interview questions for teachers

1. What moral values did your principal demonstrate for teachers and students? Discuss briefly
2. Do you consider your principal as a model? If yes or no, reason it out briefly.
3. what motivational strategies do your principals deploy to enable you to perform your job as expected?
4. Do your principals install unique programs that improve students learning outcomes? What initiatives have your school principal adopted to stimulate teachers and students academically?
5. Do you think the above initiatives impacted student's learning outcomes? If yes, how does this stimulation affect students' academic performance?
6. Does your principal stimulate creativity and ideas from teachers?
7. What mechanisms does your principal use to encourage teachers' creativity and innovation?
8. If so, explain it in detail.
9. What systems of support have your principal in place for the professional growth of teachers and staff of this school?
10. Does your principal listen to the teacher's concern?
11. How does your teacher appreciate individually the teacher's hard work?