



Lived experiences of secondary school principals in practicing teacher leadership

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ABSTRACT

The goal of this phenomenological case study was to explain secondary school principals' lived experiences with teacher leadership. A qualitative research approach and a phenomenological case study strategy were used to achieve this goal. Purposive and convenient samplings were used to collect data from four secondary school principals, five vice principals, and three experienced teachers. The main data collection tools were semi-structured interview guides, documents, and unstructured conversational interviews. The findings demonstrated a theoretically positive attitude about teacher leadership. Teacher leadership was formally expressed in the form of headship, unit leaders, and formally designated coordination of clubs and programs. It was also found that schools had different leadership techniques and practices depending on individual leadership ideologies, contextual variables, and follower orientations. The current educational environment necessitates the use of a participative teacher leadership strategy, which requires teachers to receive school leadership training in order to expand their involvement from the classroom to school-wide activities. As a result, it is concluded that teacher leadership should be practiced by providing full opportunity for teachers to play their full responsibilities in school leadership. Furthermore, motivation systems should be in place to encourage teachers to participate in school leadership activities.

Keywords: Lived experiences, Principals, Perceptions, Secondary schools, Teacher leadership, Vice principals

INTRODUCTION

Participatory, shared, collaborative, and distributed school governance have all been used to describe school governance that includes teachers in the decision making process (Harris, 2003; Koosha, et al., 2015), and all have been used to describe school governance that includes teachers in the decision-making process (Wenner & Campbell, 2016). York-Barr and Duke (2004) based on a two-

decade meta-analysis, describe teacher leadership as a team leadership and cooperation that allows teachers to include and influence others to improve students' learning and accomplishment. Teacher leadership is becoming more widely recognized as a key option or vehicle (Muijs & Harris, 2006) for school reform and improvement (Aliakbari & Sadeghi, 2014), to improve teaching and learning, the entire school environment, and the profession (Khan & Malik, 2013; Nappi, 2014; Uribe-Florez et al., 2014), and has received increased recognition in general education (Whitehead & Greenier,

2019).

Providing opportunities for teachers to take on leadership roles has a measurable positive impact on students, schools, and the teaching profession (Coggins & McGovern, 2015). Teacher leadership, according to the literature, is not a fantasy, but rather a strong reality that may increase teaching quality and the overall school atmosphere (Khan & Malik, 2013). Teachers should not only concentrate on teaching and learning in the classroom, but also on things that occurs both inside and outside the school (Association for Curriculum Development (ASCD), 2014; Hamazh et al., 2016). Muijs and Harris (2006) categorized teacher leadership as formal (including administration and educational responsibilities) and informal (focusing on coaching, mentoring, and leading action research) in their study on teacher leadership in the UK setting (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000; Killion, et al., 2016). This shows that teachers have a wide range of duties in the classroom, necessitating the establishment, development, and practice of teacher leadership in a school wide setting.

Teacher leadership takes the form of dispersed leadership, which recognizes that leadership is not just the domain of those at the top, but can be practiced by anybody in the school (Frost & Harris, 2003). As individual leadership limitations (Muijs & Harris, 2007) have become more apparent, distributed forms of leadership that foster teacher leadership are getting piqued interest (Liljenberg, 2016). According to Day and Sammons (2016), school leaders (who are assigned) may face challenges in ensuring consistent high quality teaching and learning, integrating a broad and balanced curriculum, managing behavior, resources, and the environment, establishing the school as a professional learning community, and forming partnerships to promote learning support and new learning opportunities. To address these and other issues, building sustainable teacher leadership and empowering teachers to go beyond their classroom management position can help to distribute or share power across the staff, as well as put teachers at the center of school improvement (Berry et al., 2005).

There is a strong sense that teachers are extremely accountable, probably the key, and on the spot to handle school related problems, hence teacher leadership in schools appears to have a great impact over other leadership styles. Teacher leadership is increasingly being viewed as a realistic option for tackling the complex character of schools while also involving teachers more fully in applying their skills to develop the profession and

increase student performance, according to research and evidence-based practice (Danielson, 2007; Crowther, 2009; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009; Aspen Institute, 2014; Darling-Hammond, 2016).

Teachers in schools, on the other hand, are thought to be able to play an important role in leadership activities, despite the fact that the leadership position appears to be solely the responsibility of appointed school principals. Assuming leadership to be achieved through an individualized approach is not beneficial in today's society. Teachers' participation is not only crucial, but more so than ever before. Furthermore, while teacher leadership has been shown to be an effective approach for school improvement and student learning achievement (Kilinç, et al., 2015), little has been done or explored in schools and little is known about how teacher leadership manifests itself in action (Lee-Piggott, 2014; Muijs & Harris, 2006; Peokert, 2012; Xie & Shen, 2013; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Furthermore, it appears to be less commonly practiced and regarded differently, necessitating additional investigation (Hamazh et al., 2016).

Despite the fact that numerous studies on instructional leadership (Matebe, 2014), leadership styles (Aytaged, 2016; Alemu & Getnet, 2017), the role of school principals, leadership effectiveness and challenges (Mitiku & Mitiku, 2017), and related issues have been conducted in our country, Ethiopia, the recommended ideas derived from research results have remained malfunctioned and shelved. According to the researchers' understanding, very few, if any, studies directly relevant to teacher leadership have been undertaken. Asrat (2017) investigated shared and distributed leadership, both of which share some traits with teacher leadership.

As a result, four significant gaps were found in order to carry out this research. First, there is no well-known research on teacher leadership that can provide a foundational understanding of the topic. Second, the key practical expressions of teacher leadership in actual workplaces, which this study focuses on, are not identified. Third, school leaders' training and their ability to encourage collaborative leadership should be reassessed. Fourth, there is a need to understand the connection between conceptual and practical knowledge that teachers, principals, and other stakeholders have about teacher leadership, thus this study will look into it.

As a result, the experiences of secondary school principals are explained and explored in this study in order to determine the practical status of teachers in school-wide leadership roles beyond classroom management practices and to propose mechanisms for improving their full range of school leadership responsiveness for improved school performance. Based on the stated problem above this study was intended to answer the following leading questions.

- How was teacher leadership perceived by principals and teachers in secondary schools?
- To what extent teacher leadership was practiced and manifested in secondary schools?
- Are there differences among selected secondary schools in practicing teacher leadership?
- What principals and teachers suggest in enhancing teacher leadership in their respective schools?

Objectives of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to explicate the lived experiences of secondary school principals in practicing teacher leadership. Under this main objective, the following specific objectives were designed.

- To identify principals' and teachers' perceptions of teacher leadership in secondary schools.
- To explore the practices and manifestations of teacher leadership in secondary schools
- To explain the differences among selected schools in practicing teacher leadership in their respective schools.
- To know what principals and teachers suggest to enhance teacher leadership in their schools.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

This case study is guided by an interpretivism research paradigm. This paradigm allows researchers to comprehend and evaluate daily occurrences (events), experiences, and social structures, as well as the values that people place on these phenomena (Christensen et al., 2015; Creswell, 2009; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). The qualitative approach and phenomenological case study design were used since they were compatible with the chosen paradigm and the study's objective. The primary goal of qualitative research, according to (Kumar, 2011; Tracy, 2013), is to comprehend, explain, investigate, discover, and clarify situations, feelings, perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs, and experiences of a group of people. Thus, the interpretative paradigm, qualitative approach, and phenomenological case study design drive this case study.

Sampling and Sampling Techniques

In most circumstances, establishing the population from whom samples can be gathered is not required in qualitative research because qualitative studies are intensely focused on unique conditions and making generalizations to the community is not the goal (Cohen, et al., 2018; Hatch, 2002;). In this regard, the purpose of this phenomenological case study was to explain secondary school principals' lived experiences in exercising teacher leadership in their particular schools. To that end, the optimum sample evaluated were teachers, principals and vice-principals, taken from 4 secondary and preparatory schools. In so doing, all principals and vice-principals (N=9) were chosen on the basis of their ability to meet the study's purpose and respond to the research questions. In addition, due to their willingness to participate in the study, three teachers were included in casual conversation interviews (Table 1).

Table 1: Target population, samples, and sampling techniques

| Name of the college | Number of teachers in the school | | | Number of teachers in formal position assignment | | | Number of principals and vice-principals leading schools | | | Samples taken and Sampling technique |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|-----|-----|--|---|----|--|---|----|---|
| | M | F | T | M | F | T | M | F | T | |
| Abrehawo atsibha | 141 | 86 | 227 | 18 | 3 | 21 | 4 | - | 4 | Purposive sampling was used to select 12 participants of which 4 principals, 5 VP and 3 teachers conveniently |
| Fitawrari | 59 | 24 | 83 | 16 | 2 | 18 | 2 | - | 2 | |
| Yizengaw | 28 | 13 | 41 | 8 | 1 | 9 | 2 | - | 2 | |
| Tenta | 25 | 5 | 30 | 6 | 1 | 7 | 2 | - | 2 | |
| Sar Midir | 253 | 128 | 381 | 48 | 7 | 55 | 10 | - | 10 | |

Note: The data were collected from each school. Formal positions are unit leaders and department heads (purposive sampling to select principals and vice-principals and convenience sampling were used to select teachers)

As indicated above, the four selected secondary schools had a total of 381 teachers, 55 (14.44%) of whom were formally assigned in leadership positions (headship, unit leader, and coordinators), and 10 assigned school leaders, including four principals and five vice principals at the time of data collection. Four principals, five vice principals, and three experienced teachers took part in a formal and informal conversational interview for the study. As indicated in the Table 1 above, purposive sampling was used to select nine participants of which four principals, and five VP and three teachers were included conveniently.

Data Collection Instruments, Procedure and Analysis

In order to answer the research questions and attain the study's goals, qualitative data was gathered. As explained somewhere above, data for this study were gathered through semi-structured in-depth interviews, documents, and informal conversational interviews. All of the items in the interview were carefully adapted from previously tested and used instruments in other research to meet the context and nature of this case study. Through the informal conversational interview method, information from experienced teachers (N=3) in the field who wanted to express to the researcher that they thought would

be relevant to the study was incorporated. This occurred in order to substantiate and enhance the information gathered from the principals.

The semi-structured interview items were divided into four major thematic areas (principals' and teachers' perceptions of teacher leadership, practices and manifestations of teacher leadership, variations among schools in the implementation of teacher leadership, and suggestions to improve teacher leadership), each of which contained important specifics. All respondents were approached with caution and detail, and unambiguous information was gathered in a one-on-one and face-to-face interactive way. Each interview lasted between 45 minutes to an hour, depending on the interviewee's explanation interest. To make the procedure more thorough, probing questions were asked in the middle of each interview. Each school's numerical data was used, including interviewee profiles, school minutes, and other related research and books. To support or contradict the data gathered during the formal interview, the best picked extra ideas from the informal conversational interviews were incorporated. Furthermore, for the purposes of anonymity and ethical reasons, interviews are coded as follows (Table 2).

Table 2: Codes provided for interviewees.

| No | Interviewee | Codes |
|----|---|--------------------------------|
| 1 | Principal and vice principal from Abrehawoatsibha secondary school | P1 and VP1a, VP1b respectively |
| 2 | Principal and vice principal from Fitawrari Yizengaw secondary school | P2 and VP2 respectively |
| 3 | Principal and vice principal from Tenta secondary school | P3 and VP3 respectively |
| 4 | Principal and vice principal from Sar Midir secondary school | P4 and VP4 respectively |
| 5 | Teachers (informal conversational interview participant) | T1, T2, and T3 respectively |

Note: The entire interview was done using the local language (Amharic) and the responses are reported in English.

order to demonstrate parallels and contrasts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This part focuses on the information gathered through interviewees, documents, and casual conversational interviews, all of which are backed up by relevant literature. Furthermore, the obtained findings are presented alongside the results in conjunction with the findings of other studies in

Demographic Characteristics of Interviewees

Some helpful demographic data from interviewees is presented in the table below. The following are the most important demographics (area of study, level of education, and work experience) for this case study (Table 3).

Table 3: General demographic characteristics of interviewees.

| Characteristics | No and % | Principals | | | Vice principals | | | Teachers | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|------------|----|----|-----------------|----|-----|----------|-------|-------|-------|
| | | M | F | T | M | F | T | M | F | T | |
| Field of studies | EPDM and school leadership | No | 2 | - | 2 | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 |
| | | % | 50 | - | 50 | - | - | - | 33.33 | - | 33.33 |
| | Subjective and Academic courses | No | 2 | - | 2 | 5 | - | 5 | 2 | - | 2 |
| | % | 50 | - | 50 | 100 | - | 100 | 66.67 | - | 66.67 | |
| Level of education | BA Degree (first degree) | No | 1 | - | 1 | 4 | - | 4 | 2 | - | 2 |
| | | % | 25 | - | 25 | 80 | - | 80 | 66.67 | - | 66.67 |
| | MA (Second Degree) | No | 3 | - | 3 | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | - | 1 |
| | % | 75 | - | 75 | 20 | - | 20 | 33.33 | - | 33.33 | |
| Work experience (in principal ship, teaching and other) | Less than 5 years | No | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - |
| | | % | - | - | - | 20 | - | 20 | - | - | - |
| | 6 to 10 years | No | 1 | - | 1 | 2 | - | 2 | - | - | - |
| | | % | 25 | - | 25 | 40 | - | 40 | - | - | - |
| | 11- 15 years | No | 1 | - | 1 | 2 | - | 2 | - | - | - |
| | | % | 25 | - | 25 | 40 | - | 40 | - | - | - |
| More than 16 years | No | 2 | - | 2 | - | - | - | 3 | - | 3 | |
| | % | 50 | - | 50 | - | - | - | 100 | - | 100 | |

As stated in the table above, the study included a total of 12 interviewees, including 4 principals (one from each school), 5 vice principals (2 from one school and the remaining 3 from each three), and 3 teachers. Two principals and one teacher studied EDPM, while the other two principals, all five vice-principals, and two teachers focused on specific

subjects of study (e.g. English, Amharic). In terms of education, one principal, four vice principals, and two teachers held bachelor degrees, while three principals, one vice principal, and one teacher held masters degrees (second-degree holders). Each interviewee's job experience ranged from 5 to 16 years and beyond. One vice principal has less than

five years of experience, while the other one principal and two vice principals have between six and ten years of experience. The other three principals and two vice principals have a combined experience of more than 11 years. All teacher interviewees were worked for at least 16 years.

Based on the foregoing information, it is reasonable to conclude that all of the interviewees, regardless of their differences, may have valid knowledge on

school leadership systems.

Results from Interview Responses, Documents, and Informal Conversation Interviews

In the following part the data obtained from interviews, documents, and informal conversational interviews are explained and interpreted together (Table 4).

Table 4: Major themes and specific points under each theme.

| No | Major themes | Specific points | Remark |
|----|--|---|---|
| 1 | Principals and teachers perceptions towards TL | Understanding teacher leadership Views in terms of Conventional vs. Teacher leadership Teachers interest in leadership activities | *All the responses, documents, informal discussions are reported integrated based on these thematic bases |
| 2 | Manifestations and practices of TL | Who are teacher leaders? Formal leadership positions in schools Informal leadership positions in schools | |
| 3 | Variations across schools in practicing TL | What makes the difference? Sources of differences. Choosing leadership approaches | |
| 4 | Future suggestions in enhancing TL | Enhancing teacher leadership over the individualistic leadership approach Benefits of exercising teacher leadership | |

Perception on Teacher Leadership

Things, settings, contexts, and the like are perceived differently by different people. Principals' leadership ideology may influence how they see their school. In this case study, principals, vice principals, and teachers were asked about their perceptions on teacher leadership in order to learn about their personal experiences with it. Teachers were questioned about their perceptions of teacher leadership, their experiences with teacher leadership versus traditional leadership, and their interest in school leadership activities. All of the interviewees were reacting to express their own perspectives, experiences, and facts.

How do you see teacher leadership? Was the first interview question. All interviewees agreed that the function of collaborative or participative leadership leads to improvement in this regard. They all said, virtually in the same way, that the more teachers involved, the better the school will be. From the practice they cited, this appears to be theoretical.

One of the principals (P1) explained that:

I understand that teachers have a role to play in supporting school leadership. Teachers are the primary decision-makers in both instructional and administrative matters. It could be clapping with one

hand if teachers are not involved. I believe that most teachers, regardless of their willingness to work happily to put it into practice, know what role they should play in their respective schools."

P2 also responded in the following way.

I understand that teacher leadership entails involving teachers in decision-making processes (such as planning, organizing, leading, directing, and controlling). However, not all teachers may be equally involved in these activities. These roles are most likely to be filled by experienced and formally assigned teachers in some school-based activities. Some teachers despise being in charge."

A vice-principal who worked for 10 years in the position responded that (VP3).

"It was a great idea to promote teachers to positions of leadership outside of the classroom. No one objects to the premise that 'all teachers are leaders'; the question is who is willing to accept leadership responsibilities. I am fully aware of what can be accomplished in schools when teachers collaborate with one another and are given leaders. Teacher leadership, in my opinion, entails teachers participating in all aspects of the school's activities in order to contribute. However, the majority of teachers are unwilling to assume leadership roles in schools."

An informal conversation with a teacher who worked for 25 years in teaching was different from the others (T2). He explained that “School principals and vice principals are formally assigned to lead their schools. If teachers wanted to participate in some school activities on their own time, principals might not be pleased. Because school principals are the top managers and decision-makers, it appears that they regard themselves as the sole person responsible for the school. Teachers, including myself, believe that our primary responsibility is to teach the subject that we have been assigned to teach according to the schedule.”

T1 is an English teacher and he taught English for 15 years in primary and secondary schools. He started his response appreciating the idea.

“However, teacher leadership is an important leadership approach in which every teacher can get an opportunity to work in leading schools beyond the classroom teaching and learning practice; most of the time, traditional forms of leadership predominate in schools. Teachers, principals, and others are strongly linked to the traditional form of leadership, which emphasizes individually assigned school leaders' responsibility and does not require teachers to participate in leadership activities.”

To sum up, attitudes and perceptions on teacher leadership are mixed, with the majority of people having a good stance on the theoretical perspectives. Legally assigned leaders, such as principals, vice principals, and teachers in a properly established position, are seen as having sole responsibility for leadership. Teachers are selected through meetings and procedures, according to the school minutes. This demonstrates that teachers are less ready to take on leadership roles unless they are nominated by their peers.

Manifestations and Practices of Teacher Leadership

The second theme was on understanding how teacher leadership appeared and was practiced in each school. Questions like, “Who are teacher leaders?” come to mind. And, as interviewees and informal discussion participants were asked, what are the formal and informal leadership positions in schools?

Principals (P2) and (P4) reacted in an almost similar way and the idea forwarded by P4 was quoted as follows.

“Teacher leaders with limited responsibilities are

those who are responsible for taking assignments/activities from the school as a result of a decision made by the school principal or in collaboration with the staff. Teachers who are assigned as department heads, unit leaders, or program coordinators are the formally assigned leaders in charge of the position's activities. Some teachers may participate in task leadership without formal assignments and thus be considered informal leaders. All teachers are classroom managers who lead the classroom, but it is not considered as formal leadership.”

Besides, VP1a responded as follows:

“Teacher leaders are selected by the staff through an election process. Formal leaders who support the school administration include department heads, unit leaders, coordinators, co-curricular club leaders, and PTA member teachers. Although it is not significant some teachers like to involve in social leadership activities that may be considered as informal leaders. Formal leaders are working as per the duties and responsibilities identified in school administration guidelines and policies.”

T3 is surprisingly responded in the following way.

“It is common practice in schools to create departments, unit leaders, clubs, and other formally recognized arrangements based on government school administration guidelines. These formal arrangements must be organized by a main likes or dislikes. In my experience, I don't see that most teachers are willingly exercising leadership except few individuals. It is normative that teachers should be assigned in one way or another to act as a leader even in a restricted manner.”

Teacher leadership is demonstrated and practiced in both formal and informal settings for VP4. Teacher leadership, he claims, takes the shape of a formal leading position assigned by higher officials and an informal leadership role demonstrated by teachers' readiness to support formal leaders in schools on the one hand and social affairs on the other.

VP1b reacted how he was challenged in his leadership while involving teachers in school activities. He explained as follows:

“All teachers are aware that by default, organizing departments, unit leaders, clubs, and other cultures exist. However, the practice of organizing these positions, as well as informal teacher assignments, cannot be accomplished at this time. Sometimes selecting and assigning each of the heads and coordinators might take 2 or 3 meetings because of

lack of interest among teachers, lack of competent teachers, lack of willingness, and the like. Therefore, for me, I don't think that teacher leadership is in practice at my school."

Thus, formal teacher leadership was dominant than the informal one. To that effect, teacher leadership was not practiced in secondary schools to the expected level.

Variations among Schools in Practicing Teacher Leadership

Regardless of the basic principles to be followed, leadership is context-based. With varying degrees of these constructs, leadership flexibility is intended to be compatible with the changing nature of leaders, situations, and followers.

Interviewees were asked about the differences in leadership between schools and how teacher leadership was implemented.

P3 who is MA in EDPM and worked for 17 years in principalship responded as follows.

"While the fundamental pillars of leadership are nearly identical, people's leadership capacity, personal and psychological orientation may differ. Our leadership room is determined by the context and type of followers. I've worked in five different primary and secondary schools over the course of my career. They are all unique. Secondary schools are extremely complex, with a large number of teachers and students, and they necessitate advanced leadership abilities. Teachers in certain schools are very involved and provide a lot of help, whereas in others the opposite is true. Teachers, in my experience, are more destructive than constructive at this time."

All of the principals' reports backed up what P3 stated. The majority of them agreed that there was no single optimum leadership style for managing schools. It is ideal to have a blend of context-based leadership. T2 responded comparing the school leaders worked with in the past 25 years.

"In the last 25 years, I have worked with ten principals. My principals fit within the autocratic, democratic, and dilettante typologies, in my opinion. However, each has its own set of strengths and disadvantages. Any of them lacked something. Some people want to collaborate with educators. Some students choose to ignore their teachers and make their own judgments. Therefore it is simply better to say that there is no uniform leadership style in different schools. Even the school I am working now is very much different when I compare it with other

secondary schools."

Amongst vice-principals VP2 explained the sources of differences of leadership and approaches of leadership as follows.

"Schools have some similarities and some differences in terms of leadership. Differences could be due to individual characteristics, group nature, or institutional factors. Each member of the school community (principals, teachers, students, and administrative staff) behaves differently, necessitating diverse leadership styles. The sort of leadership to be used is determined by the amount of readiness, dedication, and maturity of the teachers. In short, leadership varies based on the specific context, followers' type, and the leaders' orientations."

The majority of answers confirmed that there are differences in leadership across schools. Except for the formal designations of selected teachers in leadership positions, teacher leadership was not purposefully applied in all schools.

Future Suggestions to Enhance Teacher Leadership

Teacher leadership is based on the idea that it allows all teachers to participate actively in bringing about significant change in any educational setting. The mere description of teacher leadership in theory will not demonstrate the extent to which it leads to genuine school improvement. To that end, if teacher leadership is proven to be more significant than traditional leadership typologies, it should be developed and exercised to profit from it. As a result, interviewees were asked to provide their thoughts on what they consider to be vital for future development.

Interviewees had nearly identical suggestions, and the following viewpoints were chosen to avoid repeating ideas.

The public's perception of teacher leadership should be determined first and foremost. The perspectives of all stakeholders (teachers, students, administrators, and education-related government officials) should be recognized so that categories of perceptions among individuals and groups can be critically assessed as a benchmark operation.

Knowing about ideologies, ideas, and viewpoints allow us to act in ways that are consistent with them and put them to the test. To that purpose, educational stakeholders should be aware of the theoretical basis, expected and assumed benefits, and practical manifestations of teacher leadership. It is vital to be aware of the issue and knowledgeable about it.

School leadership training should be created and executed at all levels of education, beginning with elementary schools and progressing to higher education institutions. Officials from higher education, experts, and stakeholder groups from all levels of education (Woreda, Zone, Region, and Ministry of Education) should be involved in the shift from traditional individualistic leadership to collaborative teacher leadership.

Simply teaching that teachers should participate in leadership activities will not heal the gap between teachers and teacher leadership that has arisen. Teacher leadership should be viewed in conjunction with motivation strategies (either monetary career development or psychological attitudinal change). Besides, teacher leadership politics should be recognized by the government in the same way that political leadership is. That is, a teachers' leaders stock should be formed, containing qualified and skilled teacher leaders, so that teachers can serve and contribute in school leadership roles.

In this difficult time, when the number of students is rapidly increasing, the number of youth delinquents in schools and higher education institutions is increasing, and global culture is changing due to illegal technology use, the need for teachers to be fully involved in all school activities appears to be the only medical option. As a result, they should be recognized for the role they can play in leadership outside of the classroom.

DISCUSSION

In order to answer the research questions posed at the onset, the outcomes of this case study interview were mostly recounted according to each subject topic. In this section, the findings are examined in light of important previous research findings in the field.

The perceptions of teacher leadership held by the participants in the study (principals, vice-principals, and teachers) were found to be inconsistent and varied from person to person. Most interviewees saw teacher leadership as an important leadership approach in theory, but they believe that in practice, the traditional (individualistic) leadership vested in assigned school leaders (principals, vice-principals, and heads) cannot be replaced. In contrast to these ideas, Harris and Muijs stated in their evaluation of the literature that "successful leadership is not always primarily the duty of the head teacher, but can be distributed among the employees within the school."

Teacher interviewees focused on the usual legal assignment of teachers in leading tasks and claim that involving teachers in the actual leadership activities is challenging and needs a strong commitment from the teachers' side and true promise from the government bodies. Similarly, according to Lee-Piggott, the extent to which teacher leadership thrives in any school is determined by factors such as principal support and school culture.

According to Edward, the majority of teachers identified as classroom focused, which is similar to the findings of this study. They are capable of leading in the classroom, but their influence is limited to their immediate surroundings and classmates. However, York-Barr and Duke found that teachers exercise leadership through a variety of informal and formal channels, such as serving as union representatives, department heads, and mentors, in their study. Muijs and Harris classified teacher leadership into two types, based on York-Barr and Duke's findings: first, formal leadership, which includes the head of the department, subject coordinator, and key stage coordinator; and second, informal leadership, which includes coaching, mentoring, and leading action research. Teachers took up the positions of department chair, headmaster, master teacher, and union leader, according to Kelley. The majority of research findings support these findings, indicating that teacher leadership is based on both formal and informal teacher responsibilities.

Cemaloğlu and Duran conducted a study on teacher leadership perceptions in Turkish culture, and found that school administrators, teachers, students, and parents had similar views on the qualities, attitudes, and behaviors of teacher leaders, with slight deviations. Some attributes, such as being informed and a leader, are attributed to teacher leaders by school administrators and teachers, whereas kids value reliability, fairness, and equality more. Teachers who are personable and impressive, on the other hand, are seen as leaders by parents. The study discovered that teacher leaders improve student learning, serve as role models, and encourage good collaboration among colleagues. As a result, teacher leaders might be defined as individuals who have the ability to inspire others to follow them.

Another study (Uribe-Florez, et al., 2014) looked at the perspectives of teacher leaders and administrators on teacher leadership and discovered that there are some common ground between teacher leaders and administrators. However, in order to improve teaching and learning, several perceptions between teacher leaders and administrators must be addressed.

Except for shared leadership concepts, there were major differences in leadership activities among schools. According to Lambert, there may be many styles and levels of leadership. Despite the fact that it is practically difficult due to individual differences among school leaders, it is already established that collaborative teacher leadership contributes to effectiveness. The normative traditional kind of leadership is strongly associated with school leadership. Leadership is widely regarded to be the responsibility of legally appointed officials. Grant et al. on the other hand, noted that the concept of teacher leadership is embedded in a distributed leadership theoretical framing, which emphasizes that leadership does not have to be limited to the position of principal, but can be spread across a range of people who work at various levels within a school. They also stressed that involving teachers in the leadership process does not render the school principal's role obsolete.

In terms of the existence of distinct leadership typologies, Kale and Zdelen found that teacher leaders used different leadership styles. They were shown to be democratic and participatory in high socioeconomic school environments, but autocratic and repressive during class. Teachers with a tenure of one to ten years show a more authoritative and traditional leadership style. Karagianni and Montgomery observed that leadership styles can differ in terms of their emphasis on personality traits, relational impact, cognitive and/or emotional ability, group orientation, and appeal to self-versus collective interests.

Finally, interviewees say that teacher leadership, particularly in secondary schools, is critical in this challenging period. Teacher leadership argues that if teachers are willing and given the opportunity, they have the capacity and are in a good position to positively influence school reform (Anderson, 2016). Teachers who report having more control over school policy and more autonomy in their professions are more likely to stay in the classroom and feel invested in their careers and schools (Berry, et al., 2010). Increases in the number of students and teachers throughout time, occurrences of technical complications around the world, and the modernization of schools of thought are all evidence that teacher leadership is important in today's educational situations. As a result, teachers should be encouraged to participate in leadership activities.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results obtained the following conclusions are made.

Principals and vice-principals viewed teacher leadership positively, at least in theory. Teachers also believe they may play a beneficial part in school activities, despite the fact that traditional leadership dominates daily responsibilities. As a result, despite its poor implementation, teacher leadership is perceived as almost good. The formal assignments of teachers in headship, unit leaders, and coordinating positions appeared to be the only presumed roles of teachers in leadership activities in terms of expressions of teacher leadership. Teachers' informal and willing participation was not done to the required level in schools. Individualistic leadership typically takes precedence over other participative leadership approaches. It is plausible to conclude that disparities in situations, personal motivations, and philosophical views compelled leaders to act differently. As a result, it appears that discrepancies will continue indefinitely in order to be compatible with the current situation. To be more explicit, through formal assignments of teacher leaders, teacher leadership was also applied in various degrees among the selected schools. It was also argued that, theoretically, teacher leadership is a useful alternative in complications that necessitate the most amount of contact between teachers with the least amount of work. Thus, it is critical to put theoretical concepts about teacher leadership into practice through active participation of teachers. To exercise teacher leadership, motivation, training, government action, and genuine stakeholder involvement are required.

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