Leadership Practices and Problems in Keg. Andarge W/giorgis Memorial Secondary School

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1. Background of the study

Political, military, academic, athletic, scientific and business leaders through out history have forged the standard and style of living, the greatness and destines of countries and continents. There have been good and bad leaders, rich and poor leaders, young and old leaders. There are many leaders in our world today and regardless of the vocational areas they serve, they have several common characteristics: all are highly motivated persons who strive for high objectives for their followers and set high standard of performance for themselves, they are curious, energetic and challenged by the unsolved problem surrounding them.

As further pointed out by Terry and Franklin (1994:327), the most successful leaders of any organization perform tasks and act in a way that provides followers with satisfaction and fulfillment in performing the work required and reaching the objective. Thus, Leaders give vision to their followers and leading is a necessary ingredient of successful management. From this point of view, the school leadership is expected to take a great care about the way of leading, aimed at increasing the performance of the school and to achieve the overall objective of the organization. Despite this fact, considerable leadership problems are observed in most schools including the school under study. However, to the knowledge of the student researcher, no detail study has been undertaken in this area. As a result, the researcher is motivated to conduct research under the title "Leadership Practices and Problems in Andarge W/Giorgis Memorial Secondary School", and investigate whether there is transparent, visionary and supportive leadership system in the school.

Concerning the background the school was established in sep. 1997 G.C by the name called Keg. Andarge Memorial Secondary School in Gulele Sub-City. Currently the school has 86 employees with the objective of providing quality education to society.

2. Statement of the problem

Leadership is the managerial ability to accomplish organizational goals by working with and through people. This implies that, a leader (manager) holds a special place in the system of management, because she/he leads and accomplishes organizational activities, and we can say that organizations grow, develop and prosper because of effective leadership. On other hand, lack of effective leadership is the reason for the failure of many organizations. Indeed, leadership makes the difference between successes and failures.

Even if the school management is saying, "we believe our management encourages discussion on both academic issue and extra curricular activities to solve problems", But they are not in a position to implement what they are saying (K.A.M.S.S.M 1997:4)

Frequently heard that, the staff members of the school under study don't have confidence on the leadership of their school. These staffs informally complain that there is lack of open discussion between the management and staff, they work with the relatives' suggestions and ideas; comments of the employees' are not given due attention. Some also say that the leadership of the school is not willing and ready to provide essential benefits. Thus, these are some of the main factors that affect the Effectiveness of the school. The purpose of this study is therefore to investigate and prove and/or disprove the fact through research. Accordingly, the study gives due emphasis to the basic research questions indicated below.

3. Research questions

Based on statement of the problem the student researcher will try to seek answers for the following basic research questions.

1. What are the major leadership styles that are practiced in Andarge W/Giorgis Memorial Secondary School at present?
2. To what extent are the staffs satisfied with leadership practices of the school?
3. Do the managers of the school possess the necessary leadership qualities and skills that enable to manage the organization?
4. What are the major factors that influence the role of leadership in the school?
5. What major problem do leaders face as they work with staff members?
6. What actions need to be taken to create a conducive working environment in the school?

These are, thus, the core questions that the research undertaking tries to answer.

4. Objective of the study

The general objective of the study is to investigate the extent of current leadership practices hampering the teaching-learning processes in the school and suggest remedial measures. The study, specifically, intends to achieve the following objectives.

- ❖ identify the leadership style predominantly used by the school management;
- ❖ identify the major currently prevailing leadership skill gaps;
- ❖ identify factors that influence leadership practices in the school;
- ❖ investigate the effects of the current leadership practices on productivity and morals of the teachers;
- ❖ identify major problems that the school leadership faces; and
- ❖ propose the measures that need to be taken to fill the existing gap;

5. Research Design and Methodology

All employees at Keg. Andarge Memorial Secondary School is considered as a target population of the study. Among the total population of 86, 54 teachers and 32 administrative staff were included in the study, 40% of them are selected as a sample respondents. In order to select sample respondents' simple random sampling techniques is used. This makes all member of the population to have equal chance of being selected.

All relevant and useful primary as well as secondary data were employed in this study. In order to come up with the required result, the researcher used questionnaire and interview as a data collection tools. The researcher used descriptive statistics in order to analyze and interpret the data. Thus, frequencies and percentages were used to summarize and interpret the data collected from the sample respondents.

6. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter summarizes the main findings of the study and forwards recommendations based on the conclusions.

6.1 Summary of Findings

The study was designed to examine the leadership practices and problems in Keg. Andarge W/Giorgis Memorial Secondary School. It was also intended to suggest possible solutions to the problems identified in order to enhance the successful implementations of leaders in the school.

To collect the relevant data for the study, the researcher has distributed questionnaires to thirty-five selected representative populations. The responses given by the respondents have been analyzed and interpreted. Therefore, on the basis of the data collected, the study has come up with the following findings.

> ➢ The general information inferred from the data show the leadership style most preferred by the employees is democratic leadership style;

- As confirmed by the majority of the respondents the communication of the school's leadership with the employees is limited;
- It is evident from the study that the school leaders are autocrats;
- The study indicates that, leaders in the school are not ready to provide conducive work environment to the employees;
- According to the study, the majority of the respondents' degree of interest towards their work is average. Also, employees in the school under study have no senses of belongingness for their compound because of lack of dedicated manager (leader).

6.2 Conclusions

On the basis of the findings stated above, the following conclusions can be drawn.

- The finding shows that the majority of the employees are young teachers between ages 20-29, and they are degree holders. This enables the school to achieve its goals and objectives of providing quality education to the society.
- The study indicates that, currently the activity of leadership is not the same as the preferred leadership style by the majority of the respondents. This has hampered the teaching-learning process.
- Analysis of the data reveals that job satisfaction of employees is average. This indicates that the ability of leaders to enhance motivation of workers is low. Low motivation results in low productivity and lowered performance.
- On the basis of the findings above, it can be concluded that, leader's attitude towards workers as mentioned by the majority of employees is not positive. This may affect the working condition of the employees.
- According to the finding, the school leaders do not communicate with their subordinates frequently. This might cause absence of unity between leaders and employees. It is better to prepare a picnic or get together program within the staffs. It will maintain the opportunity to form unity in the school.

6.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study and the conclusions drawn, the researcher has forwarded the following recommendations and possible solutions for the problems identified.

> ➢ Substantial effort should be made by leaders of the school to retain and upgrade their managerial knowledge and skills. This is crucial to influence a group of followers.

> ➢ It is advisable that the management of the school should give attention for the employee's benefits.

> ➢ Since the major activity of leaders is influencing a group of followers, or motivating his/her subordinate towards the organization's goal and objectives, thus leaders should communicate their subordinates smoothly and friendly.

> ➢ Leaders of the school should communicate their subordinate frequently. Because, whenever leaders communicate their subordinate closely. Employees will be free to discuss all the ambiguities they have. It helps to avoid job dissatisfaction.

> ➢ Since the majority of employees are not satisfied with their working environment the leaders should start to make attractive (conducive) working environment.

> ➢ In order to achieve the school's goal effectively and efficiently, the leader's style has to be democratic that is preferred by the majority of the respondents.

> ➢ Finally, to improve leadership practice in the school, owners of the school and the respected body should improve the above points.

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