THE LINK BETWEEN SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP STYLES AND TEACHERS' READINESS LEVEL IN WOLAITA ZONE SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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Abstract

The study aimed to assess the practice and challenges of situational leadership styles concerning teachers' readiness levels in primary schools of Wolaita Zone administration. Mixed research design through concurrent strategy was instrumental. A total of 250 teachers and 55 school principals from 20 secondary schools were selected through systematic random and availability sampling techniques respectively to fill out the questionnaire. Besides, 5 senior teachers and 6 secondary school supervisors were interviewed. Both descriptive and inferential statistics are employed to analyze quantitative data, whereas qualitative data is analyzed in narrations. The findings revealed that Wolaita zone administration primary school principals were practicing coaching style under situational leadership style as the dominant style and directing as the second dominant style of leadership. The level of teacher maturity of readiness was fallen into level three as primary and level four as secondary in carrying out the four major teachers' tasks dimensions. The relationship between situational leadership styles and teachers' readiness levels was very weak. It can conclude that most secondary school teachers should focus on supportive behavior and coaching to enhance quality education. It recommends that secondary school principals in the area of study should have to use style three (supportive behavior) as primary and style four as secondary style to serve the needs of teachers. Principals also ought to use style two (coaching) and style one (directing) in the situation when new jobs are introduced and for those teachers newly enter the school system. Long terms and short terms training were recommended to increase leaders' leadership competencies, as well as awareness creation on situational leadership model.

Keywords: Leadership, leadership style, situational leadership, teachers' readiness level.

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Introduction

The situational theory stated that different situations require a different style of leadership to enhance the best possible results (Schweicle, 2014). The best leadership is an icon in securing positive school and learner outcomes (Bush & Glover, 2014). According to the authors, situational leadership style is one of the convenient models of leadership approaches in which it enables school leaders to meet the diversified context of the school. As Teshome (2017), an effective leader adapts his/her style of leadership based on the context or situation that existed. According to Yukl (2008), situational leadership is defined as a contingency that specifies the appropriate type of leadership behavior for different levels of subordinate "maturity" about the task. As Northouse (2013), situational leadership theory proposes that effective leadership requires a rational consideration of the situation and a fitting response, rather than a charismatic leader with a large group of dedicated followers. The Situational Leadership Model (SLM) suggests that there is no "one size fits all" approach to leadership, depending on the situation, varying styles of leadership is necessary. Nevertheless, leaders must prioritize tasks and the readiness level of their followers by analyzing the group's ability and willingness.

Hersey and Blanchard argue (Esther, 2011) which stated as the level of direction and support the leaders provide in the situational leadership model is considered the major factor that influences individual responses. Hence, the classification of SL four: directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating based on the two leader behaviors: Directing (telling) style-(S1): this category specifically deals with the provision of specific direction on the roles and the and thoroughly looks for the followers' performance for the provision of frequent feedback on the followers result.

A leader gives instructions about what and how goals are to be achieved by the subordinates and then supervises them carefully, (Esther, 2011, Northouse, 2013). Coaching (selling) style-(S2): This is the second category of situational leadership praising the right behavior under the leader's question or suggestion and continuing to direct task execution; followers have established some skills but are frequently unsatisfied due to unmet expectations; which decreases there level of commitment. In this approach, the leader focuses communication on both achieving goals and meeting subordinates' socio-emotional needs (Northouse, 2013). Supporting (participating) style-(S3): This entails the participatory approach of decision-making by leaders and followers. Facilitation encouragement and support are the major roles of leaders. This helps followers to manage and control their daily decisions but remains available to facilitate problem-solving (Esther, 2011). Delegating style-(S4): This is the style in which followers act independently without the interference of leaders with the appropriate resources to get the job done. On this level, the followers have understood the task they are committed to and are highly motivated (Esther, 2011; Northouse, 2013).

The readiness level that leaders should develop for their followers can be two types to be thrilled and self-determining. One is competence which includes the knowledge and skills a follower bears to a specific goal or task. The other is Commitment which indicates the followers' motivation and confidence in that goal or task to be accomplished (Northouse, 2013).

Depending on these two dimensions there are four subordinates' developmental levels. Readiness Level (R1): low competence with high commitment, the follower lack ability but is motivated. For example, a newcomer worker for a certain

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task does not accumulate experience on that task but is excited about the job and willing to learn (Northouse, 2013). Readiness Level (R2): when the followers acquire some competence with low commitment, the followers have some ability but are not motivated. Those followers have little experience with the task but due to unmet expectations, they lose motivation to work on the task (Yukl, 2008). Readiness Level (R3): implies moderate competence with various commitments, followers have the ability but are not confident to utilize it. These followers often know what to do but are in self-doubt, which makes them insecure about doing the task given (Esther, 2011). Readiness Level (R4): high in both competence and commitment, followers have the competence to perform and are confident. They are high in knowledge as well as the ability to work without supervision, (Northouse, 2013).

Currently, Ethiopia made an effort to ensure the provision of quality education for all citizens as a reform (MoE, 2010). In fostering this, school leaders have expected to play an essential role at the school level (Teshome, 2017). In light of this, secondary school leaders are in a vital position to put a benchmark in cultivating a better citizen of the future. On the other hand, Ethiopia adopted contemporary models of leadership without contextualizing from the Western world and its implementation get the problems (Tensae, 2018). The aforementioned problems drive from a lack of proper understanding of the leadership required to a specific situation and missing critical assessment. On the other hand, various scholars locally researched the different themes which are quite different from the research at hand. For instance, Mesfin (2019) conducted a study on the relationship between school principals' leadership style and school performance in secondary school and identified the school principal's well-organized in-service training on leadership and management,

which resulted in expected outcomes at the school level. Mengesha (2019) analyzed the knowledge and practice of leaders on transformational leadership and the result revealed that transformational leadership was not properly exercised and utilized in the sampled institution. The same is happening in school leadership practice in which school leaders tend to try the same style to apply the different situations without enough diagnosis of their style, the maturity of their teachers, and the task aimed to carry out. This confirms Tesfaye and Zerihun's (2014) leadership effectiveness is not at its required position to transform public schools, into being globally competent and coping with change. Therefore, this study is aimed to assess the link between situational leadership style and teacher readiness in secondary schools at Wolaita Zone administration. As indicated in the above-reviewed research, all research focuses simply on leadership styles, not on situational leadership Models. Thus this research is unique to the local studies conducted by different scholars and is expected to fill the identified research gaps.

The situational leadership style is one of the preferred models in school to meet diverse needs of leadership while in the practice of school leadership, the model is not utilized as much as expected (Yukl, 2008). From my professional observation, there is a serious problem in the Wolaita Zone administrations secondary school in which principals are unable to select the best alternative leadership style based on the context and change their style concerning various situations. Such practice highly affects the school's effectiveness and efficiency outcome. Therefore, assessing the status of the practice of situational leadership utilization in primary schools at the site is very important. Thus, the following basic questions were formulated.

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1. What is the dominant situational leadership behavior exhibited in Wolaita Zone secondary schools?
2. Is there a significant association between situational leadership styles and teachers' readiness levels in Wolaita Zone secondary schools?
3. What are the challenges faced by secondary school leaders of Wolaita Zone in implementing situational leadership styles?

Design, Methodology, and Materials

Research Design: This study used mixed research design through concurrent strategy. In addition, a mixed approach is taken as a cornerstone for social science research, (Creswell and Plano, 2011). It enables the examination of current practices related to the issue undertaken study (Creswell, 2012). As Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2012), the mixed design enables the investigator to gather quantitative and qualitative data and used it to display the current status of practice, effect, and relationship, and help to draw possible findings on existing conditions and valid general conclusion about the issue. On the other hand, to strengthen and elaborate the quantitative data result, qualitative data was analyzed and interpreted after the result of quantitative data. According to Hoover and Krishnamurti, (2010), the mixed method of data for research can extract facts concerned with the issue under investigation. Moreover, it increases confidence in the finding of the research (Caruth, 2013).

Sources of Data: In this study, only primary data sources were employed to obtain reliable information about the link between situational leadership with teacher readiness level. The major sources of primary data were teachers and school principals of secondary schools of Wolaita zone administration since the principals lead schools while teachers are led. Moreover, journals, books, policy documents, theses, and proceedings were the secondary sources of the study.

Sample and sampling techniques: A total of 250 teachers and 55 school principals from 20 secondary schools in the Wolaita Zone administration were selected through systematic random and availability sampling techniques respectively to fill out the questionnaire. Besides, 5 senior teachers and 6 secondary school supervisors were interviewed. The study conducted a pilot study on 3 secondary schools left for the pilot test. To determine the overall sample size, the Yamane formula $n=N/(1+N(e^2))$ was employed (Yamane, 1967). Therefore, $n=N/(1+N(e^2))=356/(1+356(\llbracket(0.05)\rrbracket^2))=356/(1+356(0.0025))=188$; n=study sample size, N=study population and e=estimated margin of error.

Instruments of Data Collection: Structured questionnaires were prepared for both principals and teacher respondents with a Likert scale. The same questionnaires were utilized for all respondents. In that case, all respondents were exposed to the same questions and the same system of coding their responses (Maria & Nadia, 2005). Questionnaires are used to get large amounts of data from a large number of respondents within a relatively shorter time and at a minimum cost. The questionnaires were prepared in English language and then translate into Amharic and Wolaitigna. So the respondents can easily understand what the questionnaire items mean. The interview was also one of the instruments used to collect the data and was designed to gather data from some senior teachers and school supervisor participants. Thus, this tool is designed to get more information about situational leadership styles in practice and their challenges in implementation.

Pilot Testing: The purpose of the pilot test in this study was to check the validity and reliability of the questionnaire items. Three secondary schools were selected for the pilot test. From these schools, 30

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teachers and 6 principals were selected with simple random sampling for piloting the questionnaire.

Reliability: To measure the consistency and accuracy of the tool, Cranach's alpha was computed for each of the following components of the questionnaire. Thus, the four situational leadership styles: situational leadership style one, situational leadership style two, situational leadership style three, and situational leadership style four, as well as, for each teacher's readiness to do instructional activities, instructional feedback, making a conducive learning environment and non-instructional activities checked independently. To accept the reliability of the instrument Cronbach alpha should be ≥0.70, taken as a rule of thumb (McMillan and Schumacher, 2010).

Table 1: Reliability Statistics: Cronbach's Alpha of the Pilot Test

Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Situational leadership style One	.833	5
Situational leadership style Two	.887	5
Situational leadership style Three	.860	5
Situational leadership style Four	.812	5
Teachers' readiness to do instructional activities	.817	6
Teachers' readiness to make conducive learning environment	.822	7
Teachers' readiness to do instructional feedback	.831	8
Teachers' readiness to do non-instructional activities	.789	8
Challenges of situational leadership style implementation	.841	8
Total	.826	57

Source: Survey Data 2022

From the above table, the value of Cronbach's alpha for the nine main components questionnaire falls in the value range of 0.789 to 0.887. Thus, most of the instrument items components fulfill the reliability requirement of Cronbach's which is ≥ 0.70; which is taken as good reliability. This implies all the scales included in the items of the instrument can meet the minimum requirement. The test results of Cronbach's alpha, related to situational leadership and teachers' readiness (Overall Cronbach's Alpha value) able to fit the reliability test value is 0.826; which implies very good reliability.

Data Gathering Procedure and Analysis: To collect the quantitative data, survey questionnaires were instrumental, while the semi-structured question was prepared to interview senior teachers and supervisors. The interview was conducted depending on the results of quantitative data acquired through questionnaires. The collected data were presented and analyzed on the base of data type, (quantitative data and qualitative data). The quantitative data were presented by the use of tables that incorporates various statistical tools. Similarly, the qualitative data obtained through semi-structured interviews were organized according to the themes. Since the research design was mixed, thus, qualitative data was used to support the result from the interpretation of the quantitative data (Creswell, 2012).

The analysis of data included descriptive and inferential statistics. The data obtained with a close-ended questionnaire was tallied, tabulated, and filled into SPSS. To this end frequency, percentage, and mean were between descriptive statistics employed. The data were analyzed with the aid of the software called statistical package for social science (SPSS), version

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24. The independent sample t-test was applied to test the independence of sample teachers and principals. To do so, tests of significance were done between the means of the variable of leadership styles and the means of the variable of teachers' maturity levels (Gay, Mills, and Airasian, 2012). To check the relationship between situational leadership styles and teachers' readiness levels, the Pearson correlation was employed (Healey, 2009).

Ethical Considerations: Various efforts were made to avoid unnecessary biases and ensure the objective analysis and interpretation of the collected data. Therefore, the study gave due respect to the rights, needs, values, and desires of the respondents in the course of conducting this study. According to APA (2010), one must be careful not to exploit persons over whom one has supervisory, evaluative, or other authority such as clients, patients, supervisees, employees, or organizational clients when using the information in his/her research. The researcher was also assured that the information obtained from the respondents was used for research purposes only. The secrecy and confidentiality of the respondents were respected up to the end of the entry work (APA, 2010). Moreover, the researcher got a formal letter from Wolaita Sodo University, department of educational planning and management and every research activity was carried out after permission from Zonal and Woredas education offices and secondary schools.

Table2: Response on situational leadership style one (SL1)

Variables	Position	Mean	SD	DF	F	Sig.
Leader clearly defines the roles	*Teachers*	*3.36*	*1.42*	*249*	*0.251*	*0.000****
	Principals	*3.38*	*1.43*	*54*		
Leader clearly defines the tasks	*Teachers*	*3.41*	*1.39*	*249*	*5.634*	*0.000****
	Principals	*3.08*	*1.46*	*54*		
Leader supervises teachers closely	*Teachers*	*3.37*	*1.42*	*249*	*0.165*	*0.000****
	Principals	*2.70*	*1.40*	*54*		
Decisions are made by school leader	*Teachers*	*3.63*	*1.14*	*249*	*.340*	*0.000****
	Principals	*3.35*	*1.30*	*54*		
Communication is one-way	*Teachers*	*3.87*	*1.25*	*249*		
	Principals	*3.15*	*1.31*	*54*	*0.116*	*0.000****

Note: [** if p<0.05, and *** if p<0.001] SD Standard Deviation , Source Survey Data, 2022

Table 2 above shows the analysis of the first variables of situational leadership style. The first variable entails 5 domains. Between, the first domain is "Leader takes the suggestion of teachers to define the role". The table depicts, the highest mean and SD scores of (4.34, 1.04), (and 4.03, 1.19) have been held in the first variable from teachers and principals categories respectively. The respective t-test value (2.251) at P<0.01 could also show that the existing significant difference in the practices of the first variable between different work groups probably due to reasons other than chance with 305 (n-2) degree of freedom has been immersed from the analysis. The finding indicated that there is an agreement that school leaders used the behavior in defining the role of teachers in some situations.

The second variable under the same table was "Leader takes the suggestion to define the tasks". The result portrays, the highest mean and SD scores of (4.17, 0.980), (4.23, 1.12) have been gained in the

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second domain from teachers and principals categories respectively The corresponding F value (5.112) at P<0.01 could show that the significant difference in the second variable between the two groups of respondents not merely by chance because of some other reason. From the finding, it can infer that school leaders exhibit behavior moderately in taking the suggestion to define tasks,

On the same table, "Leader supervises teachers on selected tasks" is the third

domain. The result illustrates that the highest mean and SD scores 3.88, 1.30; and 3.13, 1.51 were confirmed by teachers and principals respectively. The respective t-test value (1.065) at P<0.01 revealed the existing significance difference between the two respondents was not by chance. This indicates that teachers believe their leaders use close supervisory behavior moderately, whereas principals perceive that they were not using this behavior properly.

Table 3. Response on situational leadership style two (SL2)

Variables	Position	Mean	SD	DF	t-test	Sig.
Leader takes suggestion of teachers' to define the role	Teachers	4.34	1.04	249	2.251	0.000***
	Principals	4.03	1.19	54		
Leader takes suggestion to define the tasks	Teachers	4.17	0.98	249	5.634	0.000***
	Principals	4.23	1.12	54		
Leader supervises teachers on selected tasks	Teachers	3.88	1.30	249	1.165	0.000***
	Principals	3.43	1.51	54		
Decisions are made by participating teachers	Teachers	3.88	1.04	249	.340	0.000***
	Principals	4.08	1.37	54		
Communication is more one-way	Teachers	4.32	0.86	249		
	Principals	3.85	1.27	54	0.116	0.000***

*Note: [** if p<0.05, and *** if p<0.001] SD Standard Deviation , Source Survey Data, 2022*

In Table 3 above the variable which is "Decisions are made by participating teachers" under situational leadership style considered the fourth domain. Accordingly, the mean and SD scores of 3.88, 1.04, and 4.08, 1.37 were obtained from teachers and principals respectively. It indicates that more or fewer teachers were invited to participate in the decision-making process at the school level. The mean and SD scores of (4.32, 0.86) and (3.85, 1.27) obtained from teachers and principals revealed that one-way communication was highly exhibited at sampled school level and teachers confirmed the result in a favorable way than principals under the fifth variable. The corresponding t-test value of (0.340, at p<0.001) and (0.116) at P<0.01 and (0.

116, at p<0.01) depicts the significant difference between the groups respectively in the fourth and fifth domains.

In the below Table 4, there is the description of situational leadership type three that the in this table related to behaviors of leaders who practice style three. The first item concerned with leaders focuses on finding out why teachers refuse to do things. Both teachers and school leaders responded with mean and SD values of (2.77, 2.09); and (2.95, 1.17) respectively not favorably rated. This indicates that leaders do not focus more on solving the problems that hinder teachers to do things, so enable teachers to do things by themselves. The conforming t-test value of (0.451, at p<0.001) depicts the significant difference between the

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groups respectively in the first domain under situational leadership behavior in three domains.

From the same table above, the second variable focuses on cooperation between leaders and teachers. Accordingly, the mean and SD values (2.50, 0.99) and (2.45, 1.13) respectively confirmed strongly disagree on cooperation and

teamwork at the school level. Despite the cooperation of the school community strengthening the work culture of the school, it is not properly realized in the sampled school. The t-test value of (4.634, at p<0.001) depicts the significant difference between the groups respectively in the second domain.

Table 4: Response on Situational leadership style three (S3)

Variables	Position	Mean	SD	DF	t-test	Sig.
Leader focuses why teachers are refuse to do	Teachers	2.77	1.09	249	0.451	0.000**
	Principals	2.95	1.17	54		
Leader works to cooperate teachers	Teachers	2.50	0.99	249	4.634	0.000**
	Principals	2.48	1.13	54		
Leader listening to the teachers	Teachers	2.61	1.14	249	0.365	0.000**
	Principals	2.93	1.07	54		
Leader praises to what teachers do	Teachers	2.34	1.04	249	.540	0.000**
	Principals	2.88	1.48	54		
Leader making the teachers feel good	Teachers	2.45	1.11	249		
	Principals	3.00	1.37	54	0.416	0.000**

*Note: [** if p<0.05, and *** if p<0.001] SD Standard Deviation , Source Survey Data, 2022*

In any case, school leaders do not listen to their teachers so they determine what to be done and how it is to be done independently of the leaders. This is confirmed by the mean and SD values (2.61, 1.14) and (2.93, 1.07) respectively. The corresponding t-test values 0.395 and P<0.001 reveals the significant difference between the groups.

Praising the best-performing teacher will increase the commitment of the teacher and motivate them for further assignments and better results in the school. Even though school principals have some positive responses on the same issue, as indicated in the finding, most of the time school principals also do not give praise for what teachers do in the school in the fairway. This can be stoke-back the teachers' sustainable participation, those in maturity level three. The result also revealed that the mean and SD values

(2.34, 1.04) and (2.88, 1.48) confirmed the same reality respectively. The t-test score (0.540, at P<0.001 level) depicts a significant level of difference between the groups.

Leaders do not work to make teachers feel good in their working areas as indicated in the finding. This is also confirmed by the Mean and SD values (2.45, 1.11) and (3.00. 1.37) respectively. Despite the very slight difference obtained from the school principals' side, as indicated in the result, the school leaders do not work to support teachers so as feel comfortable and self-dependent at the workplace.

To put it in a nutshell, from the above finding one can understand that the school leaders at the research site do not properly realize and implement situational leadership style three. This does not confirm with Northouse (2013) who stated that a leader using style three gives

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subordinates control of day-to-day decisions but remains available to facilitate problem-solving, and they are quick to give recognition and social support to subordinates.

Table 5 below describes the delegation style under situational leadership (SL4). This style deals empowerment of followers to act independently on the resource decision to get the work done

Accordingly, the finding of the first item of table 5 reveals that leaders have no trust in their teachers doing things well alone as indicated in the mean and SD values (2.23, 1.08) and (2.98, 1.44) respectively even though leaders have slight positive responses. This indicated that school leaders do not have trust in their teachers

to do things alone; so these leaders do not pass the responsibility by delegating mature teachers for different tasks. The corresponding t-test value (1.252) at P<0.001 level depicts the significant difference between the two groups.

In the same table 5 item two, leaders did not permit teachers to make decisions independently, and this is indicated by mean and SD scores (2.55, 1.01) and (2.65, 1.15) from teachers and principals respectively. This implies that the school leaders highly interfere in the decisions taken by a teacher which highly affects the teaching-learning process. The confirming t-test score of 4.634 at a P<0.001 level of significance reveals the significant difference between the groups.

Table 5: Response on situational leadership style four (S4)

Variables	Position	Mean	SD	DF	F	Sig.
Leader has high amount of trust teachers do well	*Teachers*	**2.23**	**1.08**	*249*	*1.251*	*0.000****
	Principals	**2.98**	**1.44**	*54*		
Leader involves only in the decisions made by	*Teachers*	**2.55**	**1.01**	*249*	*4.634*	*0.000****
	Principals	**2.65**	**1.15**	*54*		
The execution of the decision is by teachers	*Teachers*	**2.33**	**1.20**	*249*	*0.465*	*0.000****
	Principals	**2.55**	**1.15**	*54*		
Leader involves in the problem solving process	*Teachers*	**2.19**	**0.99**	*249*	*.540*	*0.000****
	Principals	**2.48**	**0.96**	*54*		
Leader delegates all tasks for each teachers	*Teachers*	**2.43**	**1.37**	*249*		
	Principals	**2.75**	**1.17**	*54*	*0.216*	*0.000****

Note: [** if p<0.05, and *** if p<0.001], SD Standard Deviation , Source Survey Data, 2022

The execution of decisions is also not independent of leaders' engagement, as shown by mean and SD scores (2.33, 1.20) and (2.55, 1.15) rated by teachers and principals respectively. This implies that school principals do not use situational leadership style four while making and executing decisions in sampled schools. The corresponding t-test score (0.465) at P<0.001 level of significance shows a significant difference between the groups.

Taking the initiative to solve the school problem and looking for a solution for the problem empower the teacher's innovative capacity and motivate them to further studies. As indicated in this finding, most

school leaders do not empower teachers to enable teachers to solve problems faced at the workplace. This finding was confirmed by the mean and SD scores (2.19, 0.99) and (2.48, 0.96) rated by teachers and principals respectively. The t-test score (0.540) at P<0.001 level of significance reveals the significant difference between the groups.

In the same vein, school leaders are unable to delegate most teachers for most tasks. This can be understood from the mean and SD scores (2.43, 1.37) and (2.75, 1.17) rated by teachers and principals respectively. The corresponding t-test (0.216) at P< 0.001 level of significance

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depicts significant differences between the groups. To sum up, as indicated in the findings at sampled schools situational

leadership behavior is not well implemented and realized.

Table 6: Response to rate the four readiness level dimensions

Variables	Position	Mean	SD	Average Mean	DF	F	Sig.
Readiness level-1	*Teachers*	2.14	0.77	2.14	*249*	*2.251*	*0.000****
	Principals	2.15	0.86		*54*		
Readiness level-2	*Teachers*	2.74	1.04	2.72	*249*	*3.634*	*0.000****
	Principals	2.63	1.23		*54*		
Readiness level-3	*Teachers*	4.31	0.70	4.23	*249*	*0.765*	*0.340*
	Principals	4.25	0.71		*54*		
Readiness level-4	*Teachers*	3.61	0.92	3.55	*249*	*.640*	*0.546*
	Principals	3.70	0.98		*54*		

Note: [** if p<0.05, and *** if p<0.001] Source Survey Data, 2022

As indicated in the above table, teacher maturity level three dimensions is highly accepted by the majority of participants with the mean and SD scores of (4.31, 0.70) and (4.25, 0.71) rated by teachers and principals respectively, and the average mean score of (4.23) which implies moderate competence with high commitment. The corresponding t-test score (0.765) at P>0.001 level reveals the non-significant difference between the two groups. These subordinates repeatedly know what to do but are uncertain, which makes them insecure about doing the task given (Esther, 2011).

Readiness Level (R4): high in both competence and commitment, followers have the competence to perform and are committed to performing the task given. They are extraordinary in knowledge as well as the ability to work without being supervised, (Northouse, 2013). From the

above finding, the second maturity level exhibited in the sampled schools was readiness level four as indicated in the mean and SD scores (3.61, 0.90) and (3,70 and 0,98) with the average mean of (3.55). The corresponding t-test value (0.640) at P>0.001 level reveals the non-significant difference between the two groups.

The Relationship between Leadership Styles and Readiness Levels

The correlation coefficient analysis was employed to extract the extent to which situational leadership styles matched to teachers' readiness levels by principals in primary school leadership practice. To do so, the correlation matrix table below carried out with the software SPSS version 21. The correlation used in this study was Pearson correlation with an equation $\hat{\rho} = \sum(x - \bar{x})(y - \bar{y})/\sqrt{\sum[(x - \bar{x})^2][(y - \bar{y})^2]}$.

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Table 7: Correlation between Situational Leadership Styles and Teachers' Readiness Levels

Situational Leadership Style					
Categories of Readiness Level		**SLS1**	**SLS2**	**SLS3**	**SLS4**
Readiness Level one	Pearson Correlation	.081		.061	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.507	.217**	.407	.217**
Readiness level two	Pearson Correlation	.005	.867**	.005	.867**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.064	.000	.064
Readiness level three		.661		.661	
		-.085		-.085	
Readiness level four	Pearson Correlation	.244	-.080	.244	-.080
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.410	-.059	0.410	-.059

Source: Survey Data, 2020. Note: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 7 presents the results of the correlation calculation between situational leadership style two and teachers' readiness level two (Maturity). As can be seen from the Table, a substantial positive relationship was found between Situational leadership style and teacher maturity level (r = 0.867; p<0.01). This is in line with a research finding, by Omer, Göknur, and Atılhan (2014), that asserts teachers' maturity or readiness increases when the leadership is situational. This finding is also consistent with the observational investigation by Omer et al., (2014).

About the correlation between Readiness level three and situational leadership style three, it was found to be moderately high, and positive (r = 0.661; p>0.01). This implies that the apparent situational leadership style three used by principals in secondary schools impacted straightforwardly teachers' readiness. In line with this finding, there is an investigation that demonstrated a linear correlation between situational leadership and teacher readiness and maturity level (Clinebell, 2013). Furthermore, there is a slight and positive relationship between situational leadership three and readiness level four with (r=0.244, p>0.05). In addition, there was a weak connection between situational leadership style one and readiness level one (r=- 0.081; p> 0.01) which is low. The low scores on teachers' readiness imply that teachers had low thankfulness and enthusiastic connection to the academic responsibility or the school (Allen & Meyer, 1991).

Table 8: Response on the Challenges of Leadership hinder Teacher Readiness Level

Variables	*Position*	*Mean*	*SD*	*Average Mean*	*DF*	*t-test*	*Sig.*
Lack of necessary qualification	*Teachers*	4.22	1.02	3.81	*249*	*2.251*	*0.000******
	Principals	3.00	1.28		*54*		
Principals graduated with other than educational leadership	*Teachers*	4.46	1.16	3.97	*249*	*3.634*	*0.000******
	Principals	3.48	1.24		*54*		
Lack of knowledge of work to be done	*Teachers*	4.01	1.07	3.93	*249*	*0.765*	*0.340*
	Principals	3.85	1.49		*54*		
Lack of knowledge on school	*Teachers*	4.42	1.01	4.21	*249*	*.640*	*0.546*

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settings	*Principals*	4.00	1.20		*54*		
Lack of training on SL-Model	*Teachers*	4.60	1.18	*4.45*	*249*	*1.239*	*0.465*
	Principals	4.30	1.04		*54*		
Lack of ability to do diagnosis own self style	*Teachers*	4.41	1.20	*4.07*	*249*	*.879*	*0.002*
	Principals	3.73	1.39		*54*		

*Note: [** if p<0.05, and *** if p<0.001] Source Survey Data, 2022*

The above table presents the major challenges that hinder the implementation of situational leadership style in realizing the level of teacher readiness (Maturity). Qualified school leaders have the knowledge and expertise to lead teaching and learning activities effectively. They know how to engage teachers in teaching-learning to improve the quality of education (Zewdu, 2018). Accordingly, as indicated in the above table, "lack of necessary and required qualification of school leaders" was confirmed as the major challenge of sampled schools with the mean and SD scores (4.22, 1.02) and (3.40) rated by teachers and principals respectively. The average mean score is (3.81). The corresponding t-test (2.251) a P< 0.001 level of significance reveals the significant difference between the groups. This indicates that more of the school leaders were equipped with the required knowledge and skills to lead the schools and it also affect the implementation of situational leadership styles.

Concerning qualitative data the teachers and supervisors confirmed:

The qualification of most sampled secondary school principals is below the standard level. Most importantly, the nomination of school principals is not on the base of merits and qualifications rather it depends on the political viewpoint of the candidate. Both quantitative and qualitative findings tell the same facts.

Specialization is the practice of an individual or business focusing their productive capacity (knowledge, skills, attitude, and resources on a limited set of institutional services. It is important because it greatly improves individual and institutional efficiency and effectiveness. Assigning the right person to the right place enhances quality professional service delivery and satisfies the customers as well (Ayalew & Gemechis, 2012). As indicated in the above table, the majority of the sampled school leaders were assigned from another field of studies to lead the school without any additional educational leadership training that confirmed the mean and SD scores (4.46, 1.16) and (3.48, 1.24) rated by teachers and principals respectively. The average mean score is (3.97). The corresponding t-test score (3.634) at P<0,001 level depicts that significant difference between the groups. Thus, nominating the school leaders without considering specialization in the school is considered the major challenge of leadership that hamper teacher readiness and maturity level.

The interview participants (teachers and supervisors) confirmed that:

Almost all the school principals in the sampled school do not qualify for the leadership requirement at the school level and are nominated from another field of discipline. Despite being nominated from another field of study, there is no well-organized training for assigned school leaders. Thus, the school leaders do not

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have the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitude about leadership approaches.

Effective leaders work with others to translate their knowledge into initiatives that benefit their followers and the organization. They show the way through their actions and behaviors and they share their knowledge freely and proactively (Abebayew, 2016). As described in the above finding, the school leaders lacked knowledge of the work to be done which was confirmed in the mean and SD scores (4.01, 1.02) and (3.85, 1.49) and the average mean score of 3.93 as rated by teachers and principals respectively. The t-test value (.760), p>0,001 level shows the positive and non-significant difference between the groups. Thus, lack of knowledge of the work to be done is considered the major challenge of leadership that hinder the teacher readiness level of maturity in sampled schools.

In the interview, both teachers and supervisors said:

In the sampled schools, the majority of school leaders miss the required knowledge and skills to lead the institution. There is no continuous professional development (CPD) program used to develop school leaders' capacity, skills, and attitude to lead the schools efficiently and effectively, and bring better service to schools.

According to Northouse (2013), knowledge does much more than just help, students improve their thinking skills: It makes learning easier. Those with a rich base of factual knowledge in leadership find it easier to learn. The school leaders need to know how to set school and lead the school in a better way. The finding in the table above revealed that the school leaders missing knowledge of the school setting was confirmed with mean and SD values (4.42. 1.01) and (4.20, 1.24) with an average mean score of (4.21) rated by teachers and principals respectively. The corresponding t-test (0.640) P>0.001 level reveals a non-significant difference

between the groups. Hence, the variable is considered as the major challenge of leadership that hinder teacher readiness and maturity level in sampled schools.

As indicated in the interview with teachers and supervisors revealed:

The majority of school leaders lack the proper knowledge to lead the school strategically. This also has a significant effect on the school performance and student academic achievement of students.

As Abebayew (2016), the best strategy for school principals to improve their capabilities, inspire their teams and achieve outstanding educational outcomes is through well-organized school leadership skills training. Successful school leaders can transform academic institutions, enhance value creation, create efficiencies, and engage their employees to deliver better results. Accordingly, as indicated in the finding, there is no timely and well-organized training for school leaders in line with the situational leadership model with mean and SD scores of (4.60, 1.18) and (4.30, 1.04) with the average mean value of (4.45) rated by teachers and principals respectively. The corresponding t-test (1.239) at P>0.001 level depicts a non-significant difference between the groups. Thus, missing a well-organized leadership training program is considered the major challenge of leadership that affects teachers' readiness and maturity level.

In interview, the teachers and supervisors said:

Despite school leaders nominated from different fields of study, strengthening their school leadership there is no well-organized leadership training program. Hence, this also affects the work of school leaders to properly implement the goals and objectives of the schools. Both the quantitative and qualitative findings confirm the same fact.

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Conclusion

Leadership is vital in enhancing school development and quality education. Thus, while school leaders practice situational leadership, they are expected to identify the demands of situations to adjust their behaviors about the needs of leadership style in the context of institutions. Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn. School principals practiced situational leadership style two–coaching (selling) style as the predominant style and style one–directing (telling) as the second dominant style of leadership. Depending on the analysis of the maturity level of teachers, to carry out the four major teachers' tasks like instructional activities, making a conducive learning environment, instructional feedback, and non-instructional activities were found to be readiness level three as primary and readiness level four as secondary readiness level. The results of correlation coefficient analysis show a positive relationship between the four styles and the four maturity levels at a statistically significant level of difference. Besides the qualification of school leaders and field of study, the ability to diagnose the level of teacher readiness or maturity, proper training programs, and knowledge to lead the academic institutions understanding the real setting of school was considered as the major challenges of school leaders that hinder the readiness level of teachers at sampled schools.

Policy Implications

Strengthening academic leaders of the secondary school: The current study reveals that, one of the major challenges of the current academic leaders in sampled secondary schools is continuing to look for direction from the government other than having the confidence to give strategic solutions to the problems. It has paramount importance of building up the leadership of school principals to increase institutional efficiency and effectiveness.

In this regards establishing a strong leadership training center is highly recommended to the regional government.

Recognize the role of professional organizations of school leaders: Professional organizations of school leaders provide a forum for dialogue, knowledge sharing, and dissemination of best practices among professionals and between professionals and policymakers. Thus, facilitating the best experience sharing from the best leadership institution needs to be in place to increase the performance of the school and the academic achievement of students

Provide options and support for career development for school leaders (In-service training): It can help avoid principal stress and make school leadership a more effective and attractive career option. The regional and zonal education offices need to facilitate continuous professional development programs for school leaders.

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