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RESEARCH ARTICLE

FACTORS THAT AFFECT INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP ROLE IN IMPROVING STUDENTS ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF ILU ABABOR ZONE.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to assess factors affecting instructional leadership in secondary schools of Ilu Ababor administrative zone. The research methods were both quantitative and qualitative. Out of 14 districts, 6 districts were selected by random sampling from six geographically clustered district administrations. Then again, teachers (234) and principals (18) of secondary schools as research participants were selected first by stratified sampling and then by lottery method and purposive sampling respectively to complete the questionnaire, 6 supervisors, 42 (male = 34, female = 8) zone and district education experts and 42 parent teachers associations were selected by purposive sampling technique to participate in the interview sessions. Besides, focus groups discussions were held with 42 department heads by random sampling technique. Consequently, the total participants in the study were 384. The collected data was analysed using statistical software (SPSS) version 20. To analyse the data from questionnaires, descriptive statistical analysis like frequencies, percentile, mean values, and standard deviation were used. The findings of the study indicated that the major factors affecting instructional leadership were lack of instructional materials; poor communication with school staff and stakeholders of the school; lack of in-service training in the area of instructional leadership; lack of courage and commitment by instructional leaders to perform instructional activities; interference by district education supervisors and others in decision making process; inconsistency operation of instructional activities and lack of cooperation of teachers; insufficient utilization of available instructional materials; and shortage of time for school principals to perform instructional activities. In conclusion, due to the above mentioned problems, instructional leadership performances in secondary schools of Ilu Ababor administrative zone were lagging behind the set goals and targets in secondary schools. Based on the findings, it is recommended that Ministry of Education , Regional Education Bureau, Zone Education office, and District administrations

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should have to work towards capacity building for secondary school principals so that principals will be well equipped with basic knowledge and skills on the instructional leadership theories and practices.

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Introduction:-

Back Ground of the Study:-

One of the challenges facing schools is the demand for the provision of quality education. Schools are being challenged by educational reformers to implement teaching and learning strategies that will prove quality education. As the calls for the provision of quality education are growing louder, the linkage between school leadership and the quality of teaching and learning in school is a growing concern as well (Botha, J.C. 2011). According to Harris (2011), the most important factor in the success of the schools is the quality of leadership of the head teacher. The operative notion is that the quality of teaching and learning is largely dependent upon an individual or group that exercises supervisory responsibility for the core business of schools; namely, curriculum, teaching and learning Fullan (2001).

Instructional leadership is defined as leadership that puts teaching and learning in the school as a priority in order to improve students' learning (Botha, J., 2011). Instructional leadership encompasses "those actions that the principal takes or delegates to others, to promote students learning. It comprises the following tasks: defining the purpose of schooling; setting school wide goals; providing the resources needed for learning to occur; supervising and evaluating teachers; coordinating staff development programmes; and creating collegial relationships with and among teachers (Dimmock & Wildy, 1993).

The instructional leadership of the principal relates to the core activities of the school, which are teaching and learning in the classroom. It also involves beliefs, decisions, strategies and tactics which the principals utilize to ensure instructional effectiveness in each classroom. Instructional leadership occurs when the principal provides direction, resources and support both to the educators and the learners, with the aim of improving learning and teaching, hence improving students' achievement. A good principal as instructional leader paves the way for good learning and teaching, and ensures that there is at all times a sound culture of learning and teaching in the school (Van Deventer and Kruger 2003).

The instructional leader should create a shared sense of purpose in the school, nurture continuous improvement through school development planning, develop a school culture aimed at innovation and the improvement of teaching and learning, coordinate the curriculum and monitor learner outcomes, shape the reward structure of the school, organize and monitor a wide range of activities and be a visible presence in the school (Wing, 2013).

The principal is a key agent in the school improvement so as to bring effective student academic achievement. He or she is responsible for promoting a healthy culture and climate, for supporting teacher leadership, for building and sustaining the school improvement teams, and for planning, organizing and monitoring school improvement endeavours ((Zenebe Baraki, 1992). His or her role is characterized by instructional, transformational and managerial leadership responsibilities (Wing, 2013). In this regard the principal's role as instructional leader relates directly to student achievement and its improvement. To unpack this role requires a comprehensive understanding of the many facets and functions of instructional leadership (Van Deventer & Kruger 2003).

Principals are, as instructional leaders, responsible for linking their daily on-the-job tasks to the goals for student achievement (Girvin 2005). Instructional leadership affects the core activity of the school, namely teaching and learning. It involves the decisions, strategies and tactics which principals employ to ensure instructional effectiveness in the classroom. In this respect the principal should provide direction, resources and support to both the educators and the learners (Kruger & Van Deventer, 2003). The principals, as instructional leaders, should ensure that the school's instructional program coheres with the curriculum, envisions the instructional goals, sets high academic standards, stays informed of education policies and legislation, is sensitive to the educators' instructional problems, makes frequent classroom visits to monitor the quality of instruction, creates incentives for learning, and maintains student discipline so that an orderly environment for instruction is maintained (Ayalew, Shibeshi. (2000).

On the whole, principals as instructional leaders are accountable for ensuring a sound culture of teaching and learning in the school. Instructional leadership should not be seen as a separate function distinct from the principal's managerial duties; instead, the most direct way for a school principal to exercise instructional leadership is through the managerial tasks he or she engages in every day.

In a nutshell, the principal as instructional leader has a task that is multifaceted, combining task and people-oriented management tasks to create a school environment in which teaching and learning can be effectively realized, whereby a spirit of cooperation among the learners and the staff is established, and the academic achievement of the learners is sustained and continuously improved (Kruger & Van Deventer, 2003). The National Education Policy of 1994 in Ethiopia identifies instructional leadership by head teachers as a priority in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning in schools. Thus, this study aims to identify factors affecting the effectiveness of instructional leadership on the teaching and learning process.

Hill (2002) suggests that, for schools to improve student outcomes, principals need to devote more time to establishing preconditions and interventions directed at improving teaching and learning, and reduce time devoted to administrative and managerial roles. This should be the major point against which an effective school leader should be evaluated. Munro (2002) recommends that principals need to be leaders in learning rather than just leaders of learning. He further suggests that principals ought to understand contemporary theories of learning, have an explicit personal theory of learning, and be able to utilize this knowledge. In short, they need to emphasize instruction if their target is to bring about improvement in learners' achievement.

Statement of the Problem:-

The role of the principal has become more complex, overloaded and unclear in the past decade. Fullan (2001) asserts that the role of the principal has been in a state of transition, progressing from the principal as an instructional leader or master teacher, to the principal as a transactional leader and, most recently, to the role of transformational leader. The duties of principals extend beyond that of instructional leaders to one that is administrative and managerial. However, as research findings in developing countries stressed that the principal's day is filled with political activities, and actions of management scheduling, reporting, and handling relations with parents and community, dealing with multiple crisis and special situations that are inevitable in schools (Fink and Resnick, 2001). Most principals spend relatively little time in classrooms and even less in analyzing instruction with teachers. They may arrange time for teachers' meetings and professional development, but they rarely provide intellectual leadership for growth in teaching skills. The role of principals as instructional leadership is still in the state of transition from administrative emphasis to more instructional, democratic and participatory leadership (Marks and Printy, 2003). The pressure of globalization and social expectation is inducing principals to take the lead in the instructional activities such as setting goals, leading academic programs, examining and evaluating teachers' performance.

Schools of developing countries including Ethiopia which manifest limited concern for instructional leadership activities have been criticized for wastage of instructional time, when teachers leave classes for various reasons and the minimum participation of parents in following up students' learning progress. With regards to the quality of education learners perform extremely poorly in their academic achievement. In addition to this research also indicates a very low level of competence in core subjects (Firdisa, 2008). Furthermore, Firdisa (2008) states that the government has not fully succeeded in providing the training and continuous professional development for principals as well as teachers with sufficient and appropriate access to instructional leadership roles. These problems can be generally attributed to the secondary schools principals' limited skills and abilities in leading instructional programs and factors which influence principals' instructional leadership function.

As we know inadequate provision of instructional leadership by the head teachers will impact negatively on the teaching and learning process and consequently led to poor students' academic achievement. The situation is worse in the secondary schools of Ilu Ababor zone. Furthermore, the annual reports from the Ministry of Education and Ilu Ababor zone education office particularly with regards to secondary schools principal's instructional leadership roles is characterized by spending of relatively little time for instructional leadership; school principals did not have adequate knowledge and skills in instructional leadership; absence of introducing principals with appropriate instructional leadership role behaviours and skills; and non-existence of appointees of principals on the basis of experience and merit were some of the major problems listed.

Besides, this research will emphasize on the focus area of principals, factors affecting their performance, the extent to which they have been practising instructional leadership and the status of students' achievement in the secondary schools in Ilu Ababor Zone. Secondary Schools in Ilu Ababor zone have a problem on students' academic achievement. Therefore, students' academic achievement considered as a serious issue and this made a timely area of interest for this study.

Thus, the basic research questions that the researchers seek to answer are as follows:

1. What are the status of principals' instructional leadership in managing teaching and learning process in secondary schools of Ilu Ababor Zone?
2. What are the factors affecting the instructional leadership's role of the school principals in the study area?
3. To what extent the principals promote teachers' professional development in the study area?

Objective of the Study:-

General Objective:-

To identify factors affecting the instructional leadership's role and the extent of principals in applying instructional leadership to improve students' academic achievement in secondary schools of Ilu Ababor zone.

Specific Objectives:-

1. To examine the status of principals' professional leadership in managing teaching and learning process for students academic achievement in the secondary schools of Ilu Ababor Zone.
2. To investigate the factors affecting the instructional leadership's role of the school principals in the study area.
3. To scrutinize the extent of principals leadership in promoting teachers' professional development in the study area.

Significance of the Study:-

This study will identify factors that affect instructional leadership's role in secondary schools of Ilu Ababor Zone. It will recommend possible solutions to the challenges facing the secondary schools instructional leadership's role that hopefully contribute to better students' academic achievement. Furthermore, it will inform the school leaders' performance gap in the instructional leadership's role. The study will hopefully inform higher official and policy makers to have clear insight into the existing pitfalls in instructional leadership's role. It will also inform the District /woreda and Zone education officials' about the dominant factors so that appropriate measures that enhance instructional leadership could possibly be taken based on the findings and recommendations. Finally, it will also serve as a spring board for other researchers to carry out in-depth studies.

Review of Related Literature:-

Definition of Instructional Leadership:-

Instructional leadership can be defined as those actions that principals take, or delegate to others, to Promote growth in students' learning (the concepts 'learner' and 'student' will be used interchangeably). In practice, this means that the principal ensures educational achievement by making instructional quality to the top priority of the school. Fullan(1991) explains that instructional leadership is an active, collaborative form of leadership where the principal works with teachers to shape the school as a work place in relation to shared goals, teacher collaboration, teacher learning opportunities, teacher certainty, teacher commitment, and student learning. Instructional leaders spend most of their time in dealing strictly with curricula matters rather than administrative functions.

The principals as instructional leader should at all times strive for excellence in teaching and learning with the sole purpose of improving student achievement. Principals should serve foremost as instructional leaders in schools, and that their commitment to instructional improvement should not only be strongly articulated but should be reinforced with experience in the classroom(Glanz,2006).In order to secure legitimacy in the eyes of the teachers, principals should have sufficient teaching experience and should understand with firsthand experience the instructional challenges faced by teachers. Instructional leadership demands high standards of academic excellence: setting high expectations for learner success; having knowledge and experience with effective teaching or instructional strategies. Glanz,(2006) pointed out that instructional leadership is thus about encouraging best practices in teaching. Principals should become familiar with innovative theories and practices and motivate teachers to model them in classrooms

Concept and Evolution of Instructional Leadership :-

Educators have labored to find out the relationship between school leadership and student achievement and have dispelled the perception that there is no significant relationship between school leadership and student learning. Waters, T. Marzano, R. McNulty, B (2003), in their meta analysis of 70 studies found out a substantial relationship between leadership and student achievement. They stated that the average effect size (expressed as a correlation) between leadership and student achievement is .25. These researchers also found out that 21 leadership responsibilities were significantly correlated with student achievement. Out of these, more than half of them have something to do with what we call instructional leadership. In a similar manner, Leithwood and Riehl (2003) stated that leadership explains actually nearly one- quarter of the total effect of all school factors.

Now a days the role of leadership to student achievement can be considered as well established. The question rather is what type of leadership is more effective and impactful to student learning in general and student achievement in particular? Instructional leadership is a product of such concern by educators and the public.

The concept instructional leader' is a relatively new concept that emerged in the early 1980's that called for a shift of emphasis from principals being managers or administrators to instructional or academic leaders. This shift was influenced largely by research which found that effective schools usually had principals who stressed the importance of instruction (Brookover and Lezotte, 1982). Instructional leadership also made inroads to the discourse of educational leadership with the increasing importance placed on academic standards and the need for schools to be accountable. Traditionally, principals were expected to be managers of school buildings and focus on handling routines like teacher evaluation, budgeting, scheduling, and facilities maintenance. During the eighties, there was a shift in attention to educational roles with both teachers and principals receiving emphasis. A prevailing assumption of this era was that the principal should become directly involved with the teaching and learning processes. Principals were required to "intervene" to ensure that teachers focused on the central mission of the School leadership is not something new or intrusive concern. It is what it always has been; the application of reason, logic, Values to the achievement of educational objectives via the development of available resources(Holmes,1993). Thus, School leaders are those persons, occupying various roles in the schools goals. So, school leaders are viewed as holding the key to resolve a numbers of problems currently facing the schools.

Successful school leadership is one of the key conventional terms where the success of a school is being celebrated. In this regard, research and practice have a great deal to say about the importance of school leadership with regard to its impact on school improvement and ultimately on students achievement. For example, Harris and Bennett(cited in Harris, et al,2003) have argued that the importance of leadership in securing sustainable school improvement has been demonstrated in both research and practice. Teddlie and Reynolds (cited in Brundrett, M.et al, 2003) on their part have indicated that, for many, the term leadership has become centrally synonymous with school effectiveness. School leadership is a connected and crucial issue of what is meant by successful, quality school for the present and future.

Factors Affecting Instructional Leadership Performance:-

Many contextual factors negatively affect instructional Leadership performance. However, the type as well as the intensity of the problem is not the same in every school. For example, Bush and Bell(2003) assert, shortage of highly educated work force is found as critical problems of those economically advanced countries, while scarcity of resource for more investment in education has created a dividing line between those developed and developing nations in the world (MOE,2007). Such factors can be classified into personal characteristics, organizational characteristics and district or zone education department characteristics

Research Methodology:-**Research Design:-**

Survey research design was employed for this study. Survey research is considered a method of systematic data collection (Borg & Gall, 2002). The purpose of survey research is to describe specific characteristics of a large group of persons, objects, or institutions (Jaeger, 1988). Surveys are one of the most commonly used methods of descriptive research in education and the other behavioural sciences. A survey involves the gathering of limited data from a relatively large number of cases at a particular time. This method is frequently employed to indicate prevailing conditions or particular trends. It is not concerned with characteristics of individuals as individuals, but it is concerned with providing information about population variables In this design there is questionnaire, interview guide, and focus group discussion guide will be employed The research design chosen for this study is relevant because they are plan,

structure and strategy conceived to obtain answers to the research questions. It is also presumed that the outcome of this study will not be the generalization of the result obtained, but give a profound understanding of the experiences from the perspectives of the selected participants for this study.

Research Method:-

Research methods were include a mixed Approach/ quantitative and qualitative/. The Research methods commonly denote a specific procedure, tool or technique used by the researcher to generate and analyse data (Schram, 2003). Cohen and Manion(2002) , define methods as the range of approaches used in research to gather the data that are used as a basis for inference and interpretation, for explanation and prediction.

Sources of Data:-

Primary sources of data are teachers, principals, PTAs, and educational experts. The secondary sources of data were include documents such as annual reports of the school and performance evaluations

Sample Size and Sampling techniques:-

There might be variations in the issue to be addressed among zonal areas, 1st the districts were clustered in to geographical locations. Accordingly, (43%) of the districts were selected out of 14 districts by simple random sampling techniques. The next step is to select schools to represent each districts . Hence, out of 43 secondary schools in the zone, 6 secondary schools were selected by quota sampling to represent each district. The heads/principals of the sample schools were selected by purposive sampling techniques because they have detailed information about the organization and management of the schools. From the total of 411 teachers of the sample schools, 267 of them were selected first by stratified Random sampling with the combination of simple random sampling techniques. From the total of 72 Department heads, 36 of them were included in the study by simple random sampling techniques. With regard to supervisors/6/ and 42 district and zonal educational experts/ TDP/, all of them were included in the study by purposive sampling. From each sample schools 7 parent teachers' association members with a total of 42 were included for focus group discussion. In general, 411 participants were included in the study.

Table 1:- Distribution of the target population and the sample size.

No	District name	Schools	Teachers			Dep't heads			Principals			Supervisors			Educational Experts /districts & Zone/TDP/			PTA		
			Pop	Samp	%	Pop	Samp	%	Pop	Samp	%	Pop	Samp	%	Pop	Samp	%	Pop	Samp	%
1	Bure	Bure	64	42	65	12	6	50	3	3	100	1	1	100	7	7	100	7	7	100
2	Alle	Gore	68	44	65	12	6	50	3	3	100	1	1	100	7	7	100	7	7	100
3	Mettu	Mettu	98	64	65	12	6	50	3	3	100	1	1	100	7	7	100	7	7	100
4	Darimu	Darimu	57	37	65	12	6	50	3	3	100	1	1	100	7	7	100	7	7	100
5	Hurumu	Hurumu	62	40	65	12	6	50	3	3	100	1	1	100	7	7	100	7	7	100
6	Becho	Becho	62	40	65	12	6	50	3	3	100	1	1	100	7	7	100	7	7	100
Total			411	267	65	72	36	50	18	18	100	6	6	100	42	42	100	42	42	100

Source: Ilu Ababor Zone Education Department 2008/2016 secondary schools statistical report/unpublished

Instruments for Data Collection:-

Four basic instruments were used for collecting data for this study. These involve: questionnaire, interview, document analysis and focused group discussion.

Questionnaire:-

Questionnaire was prepared in English for teachers and school principals. The elements of the questionnaire would be personal information, information related to current management practices, needs assessment, planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation systems in the school.

Interviews:-

The elements of interviews about policy frame works, strategies, objectives, current management practices, major problems, types of skills provided and the status of community participation and other stakeholders. Structured interview questions were used for data gathering in the study. The structured interview questions were administered for supervisors, PTAs and educational experts.

Focus Group Discussion:-

Wellington (1996) stated a focus group discussion among a number of small groups has been considered as a good instrument to get versatile information. Therefore, the researchers used focus group discussion to get in-depth and reliable information from Department heads each sample schools by simple random sampling.

Observation:-

It was designed to observe events in their natural settings which may reveal information that respondents provide or do not. It provides the researchers team with a wide scope for witnessing the school centres, the availability of facilities and existing realities. The key elements of observation in the study were the availability of infrastructural facilities and the involvement of local agencies and community participation in the management of the school. Observation was used to cross check the responses provided by the respondents through questionnaire, interviews, and focus group discussion.

Data Collection Procedure:-

The data collection would be undertaken through the following procedures

Step One: Orientation for enumerators/data collectors

Step Two: Distribution of questionnaire for principals and teachers

Step Three: Focus group discussion with Department heads by enumerators

Step Four: Interview with Zonal education department experts

Step Five: Interview with districts education office experts and supervisors

Step Six: Interview with PTA members

Pilot Study:-

A pilot study was conducted as a preliminary step to avoid errors. Its main objective is to detect possible weakness related to ambiguity due to poor morphological formulation and it enabled researchers to make the necessary corrections and adjustments. To this end, the draft questionnaire was administered to 17 randomly selected teachers and 3 heads of Abdi Bori secondary school. After the questionnaires filled out and returned, the reliability & validity of the items were measured by using Cronbach's alpha method with the help of SPSS version 20. Accordingly using Chronbach alpha, reliability of the questionnaire designed to be filled by teachers and department heads has got a reliability coefficient of 0.86. This shows that the questionnaire designed for teachers has got a reliability. According to Cohen, et.al (2005) it is possible to use instruments with reliability coefficient of 0.7 and above. On the basis of obtained reliability coefficient, i.e. the feedbacks from a pilot study, the reliability coefficient obtained 0.86. This result show that the instrument was reliable, and for validity issues our senior staffs provided their valuable comments, some improvements were made on instructions and sequences of few items. Hence, the questionnaire was corrected, refined and made ready for final study by improving three items.

Ethical Considerations:-

Throughout conducting this study, the researchers were emphasized ethical considerations. The cooperation of the Ilu Ababor Zone education office, the district's, the school administrators and participating teachers were vital in this research.

In this regard, a research permit was obtained from Mettu University after approval by the Research and Technology Transfer Directorate. Then the Education office of Ilu Ababor Zone and the selected districts education offices were communicated to get letter of research approval to gather data from selected sites before the beginning of data collecting process for the study. Passing through these steps the research approval letters from district education offices were obtained and presented to school principals before facing respondents to gather data. Finally, the research participants were asked to give their informed consent prior looking for their responses. They were informed that information obtained from them would presented secretly and used for the purpose of the specified study by ensuring the participants to use the collected data solely for the academic purpose or research purpose.

Document Analysis:-

According to Best and Kahn (2006), document analysis serves to add knowledge to research and explains certain social events. In this study, sources of documentary data included the Director's circulars, statutory instruments, books, and bulletins. Document analysis included studying excerpts, quotations or entire passages from organizational, memoranda and correspondence and open-ended oral and/or written responses. Document analysis was concerned with the explanation of the current nature and state of instructional leadership in high schools. This data collection strategy helped the researchers to gather more knowledge for the study and to explain certain events pertaining to the high school head's instructional leadership. Since data contained in documents can be distorted and irrelevant (Best and Kahn, 2006) the researcher ensured that the documents used were subjected to a thorough scrutiny. Document analysis was used to triangulate where possible what emanated from the interviews with the various participants and from the researcher's observations.

Methods of Data Analysis:-

Depending on the nature of the basic questions and the data that was collected and the percentile, mean, standard deviation, and t-test statistical tools were employed. In testing the responses the statistical 0.05 level of significance was adopted. Qualitative data from the respondents was interpreted, organized and analyzed to triangulate the information obtained through questionnaire.

Result and Discussions:-

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the main findings of the research. The problem statement of the study as formulated in chapter one would be correlated with the findings as set out in this chapter, and the summary arising from the findings would show that the research basic questions have been effectively addressed. The chapter as well proposes a solution based on the research findings for factors that affect instructional leadership role in improving students' academic achievement in secondary schools of Ilu Ababor administrative zone. Finally, the chapter concludes and proposes recommendations for further research.

The following paragraphs will provide a summary of the findings of the statistical analyses, interviews, and focus group discussions. The biographical data indicated that questionnaire booklets were distributed to 267 teachers but 234 /87.6%/ completed and returned and principals (18) of secondary schools. Additionally, interviews were carried out with 6 education supervisors, 42 parent teacher associations and 42 zone education and district education offices. Focus group discussions were made with 42 department head. The total participants of the study were 384 and these participated through filling in questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions respectively. The purpose of this section was to determine factors that affect instructional leadership role in improving students' academic achievement in secondary schools of Ilu Ababor administrative zone. In order to fulfil the aims, the following main research questions were raised:

1. What are the factors affecting the instructional leadership role of school principals in secondary schools of Ilu Ababor zone?
2. What is the status of principals' instructional leadership in managing teaching and learning process in the study areas?
3. To what extent the principals promote teachers professional development in the study areas?

The following section discusses summary of factors that affect instructional leadership role in improving students' academic achievement in secondary schools of Ilu Ababor administrative zone.

The finding confirmed that, none of teachers, principals, Department heads and educational experts were below the age of 20. In addition to this, 203(86.8%) of teachers, 13(72.2%) of principals, 23(54.8%) of department heads, 19(45.2%) of PTAs, 5(83.3%) of supervisors and 26(61.9%)of the educational experts/TDP/were in the age interval of 21 to 40years. Moreover, 31(13.2%) of teachers, 5(27.8%) of principals, 19(45.2%) of department heads, 23(54.8%) of PTAs, 1(16.7%) of supervisors and 16(38.1%) of the educational experts were above the age of 40.

The findings of the study disclosed that, the majority, 196(83.8%) of the teachers and 18(100%)of the principals weremales. Therest38 (16.2%)of the teachers were females and none of the school leaders groups were females. In addition to this, 42(100%) of department heads, 36(85.7%) of PTAs, 6(100%) supervisors, and 34(81%) educational experts were males. This indicated that the participation of individuals who lead school leadership position was male dominated.

The findings of the study assured that the majority, 35(53%) of school leaders and educational experts have indicated that they have one to five years experience, while 31(47%) of the educational experts and school leaders have above five years of experience in the in current position. The significance of the study is that most school leaders in the secondary schools and educational experts in educational institutions are still in experienced and need assistance from the experienced educators.

The study also disclosed that the principals who participated in this study perceived themselves to be practising instructional leadership more than their teachers perceived them, on the contrary, the perceptions of the teachers and the data obtained qualitatively revealed that the head teachers were not actively practising much instructional leadership. The data further showed that the key instructional leadership functions were not actively practised and this was confirmed by data obtained qualitatively and also that the head teachers were detached from academic tasks in their schools and that these were mostly delegated to deputy head teachers and senior teachers. This was because the head teachers were too busy with administrative tasks.

With respect to principals commitment in the case of instructional leadership, the challenges facing the secondary schools to perform well were mentioned in the study is that if the teachers have high morals and are committed to teaching, this could create a positive school climate, but when the teachers are not committed to the task of teaching and are not motivated, this would lead to a negative or closed-school climate with regards to the effectiveness of instructional leadership. In the discussions it was indicated that most of the principals were not committed to their duties.

The quantitative and qualitative data in the study revealed that there were problems that affect the secondary school instructional leadership in such a way that resources / finance, human, and materials/ that are considered as basic in schools elsewhere are still absent in many schools. That is, secondary schools poorly resourced, and lack additional funding to purchase items to upgrade teaching and learning. Secondary schools have many systemic problems and struggle to meet their educational mandates in the three core functions of teaching, learning and management.

Besides, the data analyzed from interviews results revealed that there was the conflict between the principal and teachers and their school governing bodies partly due to the principals insufficient insight into and knowledge of the distinctive duties and responsibilities of a school managerial and school instructional leadership.

Basically, five domains were used as factors affecting the instructional practices, which are professional leadership, shared mission and clear goals, learning environment, continued monitor of teacher progress and professional growth of the teachers.

Most of the participants raised the issue of the principals' engagement with all the stakeholders in developing the school's vision. They felt that merely about half of the school principals collaborate well with their school governing bodies in developing and implementing the school's vision and mission, and work smoothly in conjunction with their school governing bodies.

Finding shows that, instructional leader is practicing professional leadership styles as one of the factors that influence their practices. Almost all the participants said that this is one of factors that affecting instructional leadership practices. If their leader could not have the professional leadership style, then it is very hard for the leader to delegate the task to the subordinates.

The principal should have a vision and make sure that the vision is well understood and followed by all stakeholders. However, the study in this case disclosed that each of the staff (teachers) was not come up with equal understanding to achieve the goals and objectives of the school to the expected standard because the staff members work on their own objectives without having a common goal to achieve for the secondary schools.

Pertaining to the continued monitoring of teachers' progress, the teachers said that their principals were practicing this domain in their instructional leadership practices. However, it was not tend to inform teachers weakness and strengths continuously that will make the principals easy to delegate the task based on the teacher's capability and strength.

In connection with promoting professional growth, teachers in this study said that their principals have not been emphasized professional growth of each staff to improve teachers skills and knowledge that help principals to delegate teachers for principal's job to make easy their instructional leadership practices. It would appear that their motivation was eroded by continuous problems, such as those mentioned in the interviews with the principals, namely poor infrastructure and the lack of resources, and the lack of skilled teachers and learner compliance with the codes of conduct in the schools.

Additionally, with regards to factors affecting instructional leadership in secondary schools the focus group discussion made with department heads 42 disclosed that factors like: "lack of instructional materials; poor communication with school staff and stake holders of the school; lack of in-service training in the area of instructional leadership; lack of courage and commitment by instructional leader to perform instructional activities; interference by district education supervisors and others in decision making process; inconsistency operation of instructional activities and lack of cooperation of teachers; insufficient utilization of available instructional materials; and shortage of time for school principals to perform instructional activities."

With reference to teachers' continuous professional development, the close ended questionnaire and open ended questionnaire results verified that the schools have to get standardised manuals such as handbooks for continuous professional development in the areas of induction training for novice teachers, action research methods and pedagogical skills and knowledge that enables the teachers to be highly committed to continuous improvement of their own teaching. Pertaining to the principals' motivation, the principals as managers should exhibit strong intrinsic motivation to fulfil their duties, but many fail in this area specially in promoting teachers professional development.

Many issues contribute towards the dissatisfaction of the principals as well as the teachers in the schools. The findings indicated that the principals of the secondary schools are working under difficult circumstances, and that internal and external factors often militate against their success as instructional leaders.

The interview and focus group discussion results as well indicated that the vast majority of Ilu Ababor administrative zone secondary schools are significantly below where they should be in reference to the curriculum, and more generally, have not reached the expected standard. All the participants showed that the performance of the secondary schools were poor .

Conclusion:-

This section deals with the basic research questions showing how the instructional leadership in the Ilu Ababor administrative zone can be supported to be more successful. The findings of this study are based on data gathered from questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions analysis to inform the instructional leadership practices and its output. The following paragraphs deal with brief concluding remarks of the basic question as follows:

The major and leading activity of school principals is the management of instruction. Particularly, if their target is to bring about improved learning environment, it is mandatory for them to prioritize the instructional side of their job. However, the questionnaire, interviews, and focus group data results in this study concomitantly disclosed that the principals major focus were not on instructional activity because principals did not devote more time to establish preconditions and intervention directed at improving teaching and learning, and reduced their time to administrative and managerial roles.

On the other hand, this study validated that the school principals who participated in this study perceived themselves to be practising instructional leadership more than their teachers perceived them, on the contrary, the perceptions of the teachers and the data obtained qualitatively revealed that the principals were not actively practising much instructional leadership. The data further showed that the key instructional leadership functions were not actively practised and also the principals were detached from academic tasks in their schools and the tasks were mostly delegated to deputy principals and senior teachers. This was because the school principals were too busy with administrative tasks.

Besides, this study made known that in secondary schools, the learners' academic performance is a matter of great concern. With the view to its improvement, the principals as instructional leaders should play a key role in creating an environment conducive to learning in order for the learners achieve and produce better results. Moreover, the

study concluded that teaching and learning were not at the top of the priority list on a consistent basis in secondary schools since instructional leadership was not a balance of its vision, mission, goals and objectives of the secondary schools. That is, principals in some schools were neglected their duties. Thus, concentrated effort must be there for teaching and learning in the area where the principals' scheduled time is to be more allocated for academic affairs.

In the study, secondary Schools were found to be relatively low in their instructional leadership practices that exhibited minimum result in students' achievement in secondary schools. Thus the result strongly suggests that the existence of relationship between principals' instructional leadership roles/practices and student achievement at lower stage that necessitate concerted efforts from all stakeholders in secondary schools of the administrative zone. In addition, the findings from this study showed that instructional leadership would have a positive effect on the teaching and learning process and that the inadequate provision of instructional leadership by the secondary schools impacted negatively on the teaching and learning process and consequently led to poor learners' performance. The study further concluded that as teachers in the open ended questionnaire disclosed that the majority of school principals in secondary schools did not receive training that prepares them for instructional leadership roles. The study as well revealed that training was not a requirement for one to be appointed as a school principal and therefore training opportunities were limited.

Recommendation:-

The recommendations presented below emanate from the findings and conclusions reached in the study. Thus, based on the major findings and conclusion drawn, the following recommendations are forwarded.

It is recommended that principals need to be leaders in learning rather than just leaders of routine managerial activities. Besides, principals ought to understand contemporary theories of learning with regards to instructional leadership to have an explicit instructional theory of learning, and be able to utilize this knowledge. Briefly, principals need to emphasize instruction if their target is to bring about improvement in their schools. Thus, continuous capacity building should be accessed for all secondary school principals by Ministry of Education and Regional Education Bureau to bring sustainable improvement in the schools.

The Regional Education Bureau, Zone Education Department and District Education offices should train principals in the strategic skills of managerial process, including planning, organizing, controlling, supervision, monitoring and evaluation in the instructional process, so that they can secure teaching and learning for poorly-resourced schools aimed at infrastructural improvement which would provide better conditions for the learners.

In terms of learner discipline, the zone and districts education offices, together with the principals as instructional leaders should train the teachers for effective instructional implementation so as to develop positive learners discipline in the teaching and learning process. If this problem is addressed properly, adequate time could be spent on teaching and learning rather than on the punishing of learners.

The principals as instructional leaders should identify teachers in need of supervision and help, and organize school-based professional development workshops conducted by each department in secondary schools and other experts to inspire the teachers and equip them in their professional responsibility as teachers. The ongoing professional development of the school principals should be encouraged by the Zone Education and District Education offices in the form of financial support and grants for further study in educational management, whether formal or informal.

It is as well recommends that the Ministry of Education, Regional Education Bureau should see whether instructional leadership are being implemented and the extent to which they are and that the Ministry of Education and regional Education Bureau should revisit the strategy and tactics on effective schools and the role of school principals as instructional leaders and ensure that it is implemented. Besides, Zone Education office and District Education offices should strengthen the monitoring and evaluation of the teaching and learning in secondary schools which seem to be comfortable so that school principals do not work in isolation. Further that training opportunities in education management and leadership should be expanded and also that such training should be a pre-requisite to appointment as secondary school principals.

In this research the objectives and basic research question of the study have addressed in the sections above that help to improve the practices of instructional leadership role of secondary schools in Ilu Ababor administrative zone.

Finally, further in-depth research has to be conducted to manage the challenges of instructional leadership in secondary schools systematically by other researchers.

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