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Status and Challenges of Schooling Effectiveness in Malo-Koza District of Gofa Zone, Ethiopia

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Abstract School effectiveness, in the study area, was below the targets set nationally. Thus, this study investigated the challenges of schooling effectiveness in the primary schools of Malo-Koza District in Ethiopia employing mixed method and parallel convergent design. The quantitative data were analyzed statistically, whereas the qualitative data in narration. The result revealed that schooling effectiveness was impoverished impeded by poor status of learning enablers. Thus, it was recommended that schooling effectiveness, in the study area, can be promoted through improving learning enablers working with students on their mind-set, and with parents, teachers and principals to upgrade their commitment and competence.

Index Terms challenge, learning enabler, school effectiveness, student achievement, status

I. Introduction

Education contributes to sustained development across generations [1]–[3]. In this regard, research on human resource capital concurred that the pivotal determinant of a country's rate of progress was its human resource [4]–[8]. According to Phipps [9], education is universally considered as a catalyst and master key for all development processes and, thus, for optimum human life. Furthermore, studies indicated that education, mainly primary education, was an important determinant of poverty reduction [10]–[12]. Thus, the Government of Ethiopia placed trust on education as both a means and an end of poverty alleviation program, and has given special attention for education sector in cognizant of its role in this regard [13].

The study site, was fortunate in that it was a place where education had been begun prior to other localities. It was in the early 1960's that Toba Missionary School was established in this cluster which enabled most of school age population of the period to attain literacy, attend the next grades of the primary education travelling long distance, and few who had afforded to join junior secondary and, then senior secondary schools travelling more than 100km to pursue their study [14].

Recorded evidences revealed that Malo Koza District was trembled by problems of failure of primary school students' achievement [15]. Dropout and promotion rates were signifying limitations to effectiveness of schooling. Extremely high dropout rate (32.3%) at overall district level was recorded in 2019 with varying records in different schools, besides records of low promotion rate. Therefore, this study was aimed at addressing and intervening with the challenges of ineffective schooling of the study area. The investigation focused at

identification of the status of school effectiveness, and the adequacy of learning enablers to disclose the major challenges impeding effectiveness of schooling in the study area.

II. Research Methodology

Malo-Koza District comprises 51 primary schools (37 full primary and 14 others) distributed over 29 rural villages, 4 municipalities and 1 town administration among which six primary schools were situated in the study site. Among the six ones in the study site, three full primary schools were selected purposively for the study because they were exhibiting low student achievement despite the elderliness of the area in accessing school. The study was, thus, intended to improve school effectiveness through conducting baseline survey of the current practice and challenges in the study area and, then, introducing intervention mechanisms. The dependent variable of the study was student achievement predicted by learning enablers comprising teacher motivation, parent commitment, student responsibility, availability of teaching materials, etc.

Accordingly, mixed, quan/qual, research method and parallel convergent research design were employed in order to serve the purpose of validation [16]. Questionnaire proved for validity and reliability, semi-structured interview questions and structured format for document analysis were used as tools for data collection. In effect, the quantitative data were collected from 145 participants determined by Yamane Formula and selected by simple random sampling technique [17], whereas the qualitative data were secured via interview conducted with nine participants who were purposively selected from the target schools. The quantitative data gathered through

questionnaire and document analysis were analyzed employing both descriptive and inferential statistics namely mean values, correlation and regression, whereas the qualitative data were analyzed thematically through narration.

III. Results

The status of school effectiveness, in terms of student achievement, was examined via document analysis. Table 1 and Table 2 depicted data gathered through document analysis pertaining students' dropout rate and eighth grade promotion rate respectively. As per the internal efficiency target of the Government of Ethiopia, tolerable dropout rate and that of repetition rate was 2% [18], [19]. However, Table 1 depicted that four year (2018 to 2021) average dropout rate was 11.8% (13.7% for male and 9.5% for female) at the district level and 12.3% at study site level, whereas it was 10.6% and 9% at zonal and regional levels respectively. District level worst average dropout rate (21.4%) was recorded in 2021, whereas that of the study site worst average dropout rate (32.3%) was recorded in 2019.

Similarly, Table 2 depicted that the eighth grade students' promotion rate was not in line with the national target of the primary school students' promotion rate at both the study site & district levels with the worst record for the study area. The four year (2018 to 2021) eighth grade students' average promotion rate of the study site was 75% (71% male and 79% female), whereas it was 85.3% & 92.2% at district & zonal levels respectively. Moreover, the promotion rate of the eighth grade students' at overall district level was steadily declining from 97.5% in 2018 down to 93.3% in 2019, then dramatically to 76.9% in 2020, & then fell down to 74% in 2021.

In addition to the document review, the respondents' mean perceptions pertaining school effectiveness and learning enablers were examined to enable the analysis of correlation between the variables and that of regression conducted to examine the relative importance of the components of the independent variable in explaining the dependent variable. The data presented in Table 3 indicated that students' achievement was low (1.96%). Moreover, the status of learning enablers specifically students' motivation to work independently on their study, teachers' motivation to support their students' learning, parents' commitment to help their children's schooling and adequacy of teaching materials were low, whereas the combination of all other enablers of student learning was moderate (2.77).

As depicted in Table 4, the result of correlation analysis revealed that teachers' motivation in their teaching profession, parents' commitment to school their children, students' motivation for independent work and adequacy of teaching materials had significant positive relationship with students' achievement. Besides, they cumulatively accounted for 67.8% of variance on students' achievement. This finding was in line with some previous research findings. According to [1], ensuring effectiveness of learning enablers including teachers' behavior leads to better students' academic achievement.

The result of multiple regression analysis, in Table 5 below,

revealed that 28.8%, 26.2%, 23% and 21.8% of variance in the students' achievement was accounted for by teachers' motivation, parents' commitment, students' interest and adequacy of teaching materials respectively.

Furthermore, the qualitative investigation into the problem showed that the schools under investigation had poor performance of schooling in that significant number of primary school students (including eighth grade) experience inability to spell their names properly, reading difficulty and severe difficulty of comprehending what they read. Besides, it revealed that lack of motivation on the part of students for performing independently, parents for prioritizing schooling their children and on the part of teachers in their teaching job, shortage of physical inputs including text books, buildings for library, etc. and road inaccessibility were the major challenges of schooling in the study area.

In general, dropout rate was far behind the national target and the eighth grade students' promotion rate was extremely low the study site and district levels than other echelons, the least of all being the study site. Both the dropout rate and that of eighth grade promotion rate were worse with male students than female ones in the study site. Thus, the high dropout rate and that of low promotion rate, as indicators of the level of internal efficiency, revealed that the status of school effectiveness was below the standard. The status of learning enablers namely teachers' motivation in their teaching profession, parents' commitment in supporting their children's learning, students' commitment in taking learning responsibility and supply of teaching materials was significantly low in the study area. Moreover, the students' achievement was significantly predicted by variables related to the learning enablers.

IV. Conclusion

The study revealed that the status of school effectiveness (students' achievement) and that of learning enablers namely teachers' motivation, parents' commitment, students' curiosity in taking learning responsibility and supply of teaching materials was low in the study area. Besides, the effect of the predictor variables related to learning enablers was significantly high on students' achievement. Therefore, it was concluded that school effectiveness was significantly impeded by the decline of the status of learning enablers.

The study revealed that the school effectiveness in the study area was poor to the point where a sizable number of primary school graduates were facing difficulty of reading and comprehending what they were reading. It was apparent that this would affect the graduates' study career in the next levels. Thus, the following suggestions were forwarded to mitigate the problem:

- Working with Students: the education sector need to facilitate consultation opportunity for the students to enable them develop steady mind-set in the view of their success. Students need to be assisted to take learning responsibility and get committed to pursue their study.
- Working with Parents: the schools leaders and teachers need to assist parents to ensure lowering students' extra-

School Name	Sex	2018	2019	2020	2021	Average
Study Site Average	M	4.4	33.2	6.6	16.2	12.9
	F	3.8	31.3	4.6	13.4	11.6
	Average	4.2	32.3	5.7	14.8	12.3
District Level Average	M	15.0	16.4	1.6	24.4	13.7
	F	7.6	12.7	2.2	17.9	9.5
	Average	11.8	14.6	2.0	21.4	11.8

Table 1: Primary school dropout rate from 2018 to 2021

School Name	Sex	2018			2019			2020			2021			Average		
		Sat	Promoted		Sat	Promoted		Sat	Promoted		Sat	Promoted		Sat	Promoted	
		No.	No.	%	No.	No.	%	No.	No.	%	No.	No.	%	No.	No.	%
Bokre	-	78	40	51.3%	79	78	98.7%	47	47	100%	42	42	100	62	40	64.5%
Dala Lome	-	90	41	45.5%	23	6	26%	44	24	54%	26	25	96.1	46	24	52.1%
Toba	-	67	59	88%	39	26	66.7%	59	58	98.3%	11	11	100	44	38	86.3%
Site Level Total	M	141	78	63.7%	67	48	59.3%	91	77	85%	45	44	98	344	247	71%
	F	94	62	68.8%	74	62	68.8%	59	52	82%	34	34	100	261	210	79%
	T	235	140	59.8%	141	110	78.0%	150	129	86.0%	79	78	98.7	151	102	75%
District Total	M	923	900	96.9	685	638	93.1%	1736	1306	76.2	529	438	75.6	968	821	84.7%
	F	795	780	98.1	627	587	93.6%	1146	911	79.4	526	380	72.2	774	665	86.0%
	T	1723	1680	97.5	1312	1225	93.3%	2882	2217	76.9	1105	818	74.0	1756	1485	85.3%

Table 2: Promotion rate of eighth grade students from 2018 to 2021

Statistics						
	Students' Achievement	Students' Motivation	Teachers' Motivation	Parents' Commitment	Teaching Material	All other Enablers
N	145	145	145	145	145	145
Mean	1.96	1.77	1.51	2.31	2.10	2.77

Table 3: Respondents' perceptions regarding student achievement and learning enablers

Correlations						
Students' Achievement	Pearson Correlation	Students' Motivation	Teachers' Motivation	Parents' Motivation	Teaching Material	Overall Factors
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.403**	.499**	.481**	.434**	.678**
	N	145	145	145	145	145

Table 4: Result of correlation analysis of variables

burdens arising from more responsibilities of their children at home, and to help their children's learning.

- Working with Teachers and the School Leaders: the nearby higher education institutions need to work with the teachers and principals on scheduled basis to improve their professional skills, and impart school vision to ensure school effectiveness. They need visit the schools on scheduled basis to ensure sustained endeavors of students and their parents, to provide continuous professional support to teachers and to monitor the overall development using structured check-list.
- Working with Other Partners: the education sector need to negotiate with all pertinent collaborators to address the problems related with shortage of teaching materials and facilities in order to assist the students' effective learning;
- Further Study: the intervention and practices in the studied schools need be scaled up to other schools preceded by further study.

the realization of this study.

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Coefficients ^a					
Model	Unst'zed Coefs		St'zed Coefs	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-.200	.245		-.815	.416
Students' motivation to independently work	.259	.075	.230	3.430	.001
Teachers' motivation to support students	.329	.080	.288	4.106	.000
Parents' commitment to support children's learning	.258	.070	.262	3.711	.000
Adequacy of teaching materials	.209	.066	.218	3.140	.002
Adequacy of all un-mentioned enablers	.062	.064	.062	.960	.339

Table 5: Result of multiple regression analysis of variance in the dependent variable

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