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The Effect of Shared Leadership on Teachers' Organizational Commitment in Secondary Schools of East Gojam, Amahra Region, Ethiopia

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Abstract

The wisdom of leadership appear to shift from vertical to shared leadership to use the abilities of different individuals. In fact, both shared and vertical leadership are needed, but how to combine them is not well known. In light of that, this study aimed to describe the status of shared leadership practices, teachers' level of organizational commitment (OC), and examine the existing relationship between the two as well as the effect of the former over the later in secondary schools. To do that descriptive and correlational research designs were employed. Data was collected from 652 teachers using close-ended questionnaire. Descriptive statistics, one-sample t-test, Pearson correlation, simple and multiple linear regression were used to analyze the data. The findings revealed that shared leadership was not practiced to the expected level. Similarly, teachers' level of OC was low except that their continuance commitment was kept them to stay in their job. Given that, shared leadership and teachers' OC has moderate and significant correlation($r(652)=.666, p<.001$, $r^2=0.44$). Thus, it was found that shared leadership explained 44.3% of the variance in teachers' OC. The findings of the study seem important to be aware of the importance of sharing leadership responsibilities to enhance tecahers' OC. The results of the study looked mainly vital for teachers, assigned school leaders, educational experts, trainer institutions, policy makers and others to have a better understanding on school leadership practices and teachers' level of OC.

Keywords: *Affective commitment, Continuance commitment, Normative commitment, Shared leadership*

1. Introduction

High-quality leaders and teachers are essential for the rapid intensification of the education quality (Luqman et al., 2012). As a result, there is a need to strengthen and empower leadership and management in Ethiopia's education and training system to promote good governance that ensures accountability, transparency, and ownership (Ministry of Education [MoE], 2023). In doing so, school leadership has been designated as a policy priority and is included as one of the core domains in the school improvement framework (MoE, 2011).

Different leadership approaches are used in the educational contexts despite each of them have limitations. In connection to this, Leithwood et al. (2004), recognized that instructional leadership was determined to be crucial for enhancing teachers' classroom

practices. However, it was criticized in that it places a greater emphasis on the principal as the center of power and authority but downplaying the role of other school stakeholders in leadership (Bush et al., 2022) as well as its lack of focus on the variables that may affect teachers' OC, such as willingness to work toward shared goals (Vally et al., 2016). Transformational leadership has also been found to be effective in inspiring commitment, innovation, and improved academic results among teachers (Leithwood et al., 2004). However, criticisms have been raised about the neglect of leaders' influence on group processes in the transformational-transactional model (Morgeson et al., 2010, as cited in Grille & Kauffeld, 2015).

In light of that the challenges facing in enacting post-hierarchical leadership approaches in schools, demands to the exploration of modern, collaborative and shared leadership models (Luqman, 2012). Shared leadership emphasizes and promotes team collaboration and strong relationships, unity, effectiveness, and commitment, contributing to problem-solving, encourages creativity and professional growth and team well-being (Seay, 2023). Moreover, shared leadership can improve organizational outcomes, group effectiveness, job satisfaction, commitment, and learning capacity (Ramthun & Matkin, 2012) and it is a response to address the limitations of hierarchical forms of leadership approaches (Patton & Higgs, 2013).

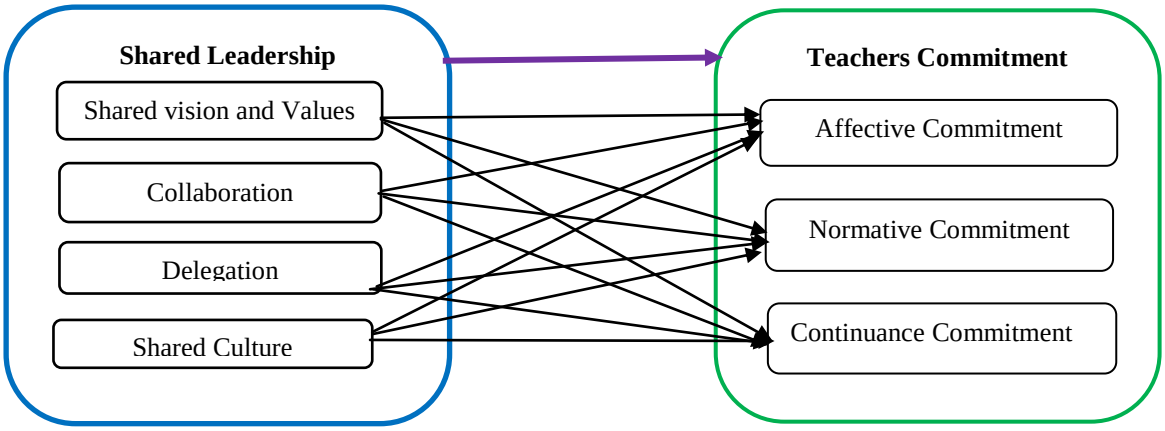
Schools have become increasingly complex, demanding shared forms of leadership and committed human capital to address the challenges (Feinstein & Kiner, 2011). Indeed, effective principals are crucial for vibrant education (Tesfaye, 2018) however adapting to technological advancements and managing conflicts further enhances to the demands placed on individual school leaders (Luqman, 2012). So that, shared leadership is indicated as preferred over top-down approaches (Luqman et al., 2012) to handle the complex situations and to create committed staff. Establishing lateral forms of leadership, which emphasize teams, information technology networks, shared leadership, and active employee participation, has been recognized as helpful (Hans & Gupta, 2018). To do that leadership should be shared to empower everyone in schools and make their jobs more efficient and effective (Misganaw & Birara, 2014).

It is increasingly challenging for one person to possess all the necessary knowledge and skills for effective school leadership (Pearce, 2004) and in turn to create committed staff. Consequently, the role of leaders has shifted towards fully utilizing the capacities of all involved (Wassenaar & Pearce, 2018). However, the reality seem inadequate. That is, school leaders seem reluctant to share leadership responsibilities and as a result teachers' level of OC looked low. This intrigues to study the effect of shared leadership on teachers' OC in secondary school contexts so as to fill the existing gaps in that regard (Binatari et al., 2022). In doing so, the four-dimensional model of shared leadership containing collaboration, shared vision and values, delegation, and shared culture was adapted by integrating the works of Brussow (2013). In addition, the three-component model to OC (consisting of affective, normative, and continuance domains), developed by Meyer and Allen (1997) was applied to examine the level of teachers' OC in secondary schools in the East Gojam Zone in the Amhara region.

The works of Pearce and Conger (2003) which has been often cited in several empirical studies since then is used as a theoretical foundation to study shared leadership (e.g. Brussow, 2013; Carson et al., 2007). Shared leadership is characterized by distributed influence, social interaction, participation and inclusion (Seay, 2023). All of them seem important to enhance

emplyees OC. To that effect, the three component model of OC generated by Meyer and Allen (1997) is applied to examine teachers OC. To that end, this study examined the effect of shared leadership on teachers' OC in secondary schools. The following conceptual framework is developed to guide the study.

Conceptual Framework of the Study



1.1.Problem Statement

Secondary education serves as a transitional phase for students leaving primary school and preparing them for both higher education and the world of work in general (Joshi & Verspoor, 2013). Thus, in order to help students meet the expectations at this level of education, committed teachers are highly needed. However that teachers' interest, trust, and commitment to the school and the profession in general are occasionally declining at this level compared to primary and postsecondary education, even though the issue exists at every level of education. According to the Amhara Regional State Education Bureau's (ARSEB) (2013), ten-year working plan (2013–2022), teachers' interest in the teaching profession is waning compared to earlier times. This could be because encouragement strategies are not being implemented correctly and the profession is not given as much respect as it deserves. Consequently, there is a severe problem with the consistent increase in teacher attrition, which seems higher in secondary schools, where it was stated as 3% in 2018/19, while it fell relatively in primary schools, to 2.2% in the same year as stated in ESDP VI (MoE, 2021) which appear against the stated need to "Transforming teaching into a profession of choice" in the policy and education sector program documents of the country (MoE, 2021, p. 65). There is also a strong desire to leave teaching, to the point where one can genuinely estimate the number of teachers who would do so if viable alternatives were offered. As of the researcher's critical observations and informal conversations with teachers and supervisors, teachers' motivation to work with commitment is completely depleted (e.g. A. Guadie (supervisor), personal communication, April 2022).

Indeed, teachers' OC is actually influenced by a number of factors, the most significant of which is the schools' leadership style, either directly or indirectly. According to Podolsky et al. (2017), in addition to other variables, roughly 21% of teacher turnover is attributable to discontent with the school administration. Connectedly, previous research indicated that teachers who receive administrative assistance are more likely to be dedicated to the mission and core values of the school (Baoc-Daguisonan, 2018). However, because of principals tend to lack leadership qualities and shy away from collaborative decision-making, secondary

school teachers have low levels of trust in them (Day et al., 2011).

According to the ESDP VI, which is currently in effect in Ethiopia, only 29% of school administrators possess professional credentials, and the remaining 71% fail to meet the necessary criteria in primary and secondary education (MoE, 2021, p.15). This implies that principals are operating in schools devoid of the necessary technical, interpersonal, and conceptual skills, which has resulted in low teacher OC, high teacher attrition, and the like. As a result, it seems that the current methods of school leadership are inadequate to fulfil the needs of the contemporary world and, consequently, to strengthen teachers' commitment to their schools and profession. Given that, principals are still the only ones with authority and decision-making under the existing school leadership. It was repeatedly confirmed through personal conversation with multiple secondary school teachers that principals and few selected group of assigned teachers and personnel appear to be in charge of school leadership (e.g., B. Tsehay, personal communication, December 2022; M. Birtukan, personal communication, December 2022).

In fact, a small number of research carried out in diverse contexts adequately highlighted the noteworthy benefits and certain limitations of shared leadership (Evaggelia & Vitta, 2012). Nonetheless, local studies exposed that principals were not trained or dedicated to using distributed and shared leadership approaches (e.g., Anteneh, 2019; Endale, 2019; Tesfaye, 2018) and ultimately, little is done to apply shared leadership approaches in the present secondary school contexts, particularly in our country, Ethiopia. Instead, there has been a constant focus on hierarchical leadership approaches which has led to a continuing lack of competence and effectiveness.

To put it short, theoretical, research and practical gaps that were found from the review and practical observations are aimed to be filled in this study. First, previous research results and existing literature indicated a clear lack of theoretical, conceptual and practical understanding among teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders about the connection between shared leadership and teachers' OC which necessitated more study. Second, there appeared the dearth of regionally contextualized research that may provide light on shared leadership theory and how it relates to teachers' level of OC. Third, there was insufficient research done on the application of shared leadership and how it enhances teachers' OC. The assignment and training policy of school leaders, including principals and teacher leaders, as well as their capacity to promote shared leadership, must also be studied.

To that end, the purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of shared leadership on teachers' OC and to identify the possible relationships along with their domains and identifying the predictive power shared leadership on teachers' commitment in East Gojam Zone Secondary schools. To address this purpose, the study was guided by the following basic research questions.

1. To what extent is shared leadership practiced in the secondary schools of the study area?
2. To what extent are East Gojam zone secondary school teachers committed to their job?
3. Is there a significant relationship among domains of shared leadership and teachers' OC in secondary schools in the study area?
4. To what extent do the domains of shared leadership predict every dimension of teachers' commitment?

2. Research Method and Design

This study aimed to describe and examine the actual practices of shared leadership and teachers' level of organizational commitment (OC), as well as the relationships and the effect of shared leadership on teachers' OC in secondary schools. In doing that, the study was guided by the post-positivism research paradigm which is interrelated with quantitative research approaches (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). As to this authors, post-positivism enables to claim for knowledge based on determinism, reductionism, by narrowing and focusing on selected variables aimed to interrelate; detailed observations and measures of variables; and testing of theories that all went in line with purpose of the study. To that effect, post-positivist paradigm and the associated quantitative research approaches guided the study. The specific research designs were descriptive design employed to describe the status of shared leadership practices and teachers' level of OC as compared to the expected level and correlational to examine the existing relationships between the two variables under the investigation.

2.1. Population, Sampling, and Sampling Techniques

A total of 5700 teachers who were working in 2022/23 academic year in the East Gojam Administrative Zone secondary schools made up the population from which the samples were drawn. Of these employing the Cochran (1977) sampling formula followed by a two-stage sampling (i.e. effect size) and a non-response insurance factor of 10% (Ahmad & Halim, 2017). Accordingly, a total of 30 out of 76 secondary schools were selected using simple random sampling. Of these sample schools a total number of 761 teachers (selected using systematic random sampling after making proportionality for each of the sample schools). Given that only 652 (85.68%) usable data was gathered and employed in the final analysis.

2.2.Data Collection Instruments and Procedures

The instrument originally developed by Brussow (2013) was reviewed, contextually modified based on expertise comments and applied to collect data on shared leadership practices. Similarly, the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ), generated by Meyer and Allen (1997) was adapted to measure OC. Permission was secured from original owners. Consent was held from all concerned bodies before any of the data collections. A pilot test was conducted to check the content and construct validity and reliability of the instruments using data collected from 92 teachers from two schools that were not part of the main sample and 12 experts were consulted for validity issues. Accordingly, as indicated in tables 1 and 2 the reliability coefficients and shared varinaces regarding the convergent, and discriminant validity values were found satisfying the acceptable range of assumptions because all the values of CR were greater than .70 and all the values of AVE was greater than .50 for both constructs (Christensen et al., 2015). Besides, Lawshe's Content Validity Ratio (CVR) (Lawshe, 1975) was employed to determine the content validity (12 experts involved) and the ratio for all the items were found greater than 0.83 and it was acceptable to use in the actual data collection.

Table 1. Correlations, Reliability, Convergent and Discriminant Validity of Shared Leadership

Constructs	α	CR	AVE	MSV	Max R	1	2	3	4
Collaboration	.843	.912	.758	.524	.913				
Shared Vision	.877	.953	.814	.629	.801	.975**			
Delegation	.845	.872	.784	.489	.873	.-.89	-.115		
Shard Culture	.933	.861	.782	.573	.841	.074**	.090	-.207*	

CR=Composite Relaibilty, AVE=Average Variance Extracted MSV= Maximum Shared Suared Varince

Table 2. Correlations, Reliability, Convergent and Discriminant Validity of Shared Leadership

Constructs	α	CR	AVE	MSV	Max R	1	2	3
Affective Commitment	.822	.789	.831	.547	.792			
Normative Commitment	.722	.721.	.795	.618	.764	.885**		
Continuance Commitment	.805	.823	.874	.569	.729	.959**	.902**	

CR=Composite Relaibilty, AVE=Average Variance Extracted MSV= Maximum Shared Suared Varince

Nonetheless, based on the comments received from experts in the area critical corrections were made (e.g. organization is changed to school, combined issues are changed in to a single issue) particularly in the items used to measure shared leadership. To mention some of the items used to test the practice of shared leadership respondents were asked to rate, My and each of my colleagues' unique expertise is valued and utilized to measure how shared culture was practiced which is one of the domains. Likewise, among the three OC domains, one of the items included in the AC was "I would be delighted to spend the rest of my career in this school".

2.3.Data Analysis Techniques

Based on the research questions, descriptive statistics (mean, SDs) together with a one-sample t-test were used to describe practices of shared leadership and teachers' level of OC and to determine the existence of statistical significance difference between the sample mean and the test value (set as 3.00). A corresponding effect size was employed to compromise the limitations of the statistical significance (Cohen et al., 2018). Moreover, bivariate Pearson correlation coefficients were computed to ascertain the relationship between the variables. Simple and multiple linear regression analyses were also used to determine the strength of prediction of the dimensions shared leadership on teachers OC. (e.g., sample size, outliers, normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, independence of residuals normality) were checked and except some violations often appear due to large sample sizes, the most found safe to run each of the selected statistical methods (Cohen, et al., 2018).

3. Results of the Study

3.1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

A total of 652 teachers of which 475 male and 177 female respondents filled the dispersed survey that was found usable in the final analysis. The respondents' age categories were dispersed in between 25 years or less than to greater than 41 years. The majority of the respondents were first degree and second degree graduates pertaining their educational status except few diploma and level graduates. Their work experiences dispersed above five years for most of the respondent teachers except few of them were less than that.

3.2.Practices of Shared Leadership

Teachers were asked to rate their level of agreement to what extent that shared leadership was practiced in secondary schools in terms of collaboration, shared vision and values, delegation and shared culture included as domains of shared leadership. Accordingly, the level of shared leadership practice for each of the domains in comparison with the expected mean (specified as 3.00). In doing that, the obtained means found in between 1.00-2.49 were classified as very low and low, the means in the category 2.50-3.49 were moderate and the sample means greater than 3.50 were taken high and very high. Besides, the effect sizes were interpreted based on the suggestions by Cohen (Cohen, 1998) which is called Cohen's d. accordingly, the values

of d=.80, .50, and .20 are interpreted as large, medium, and small effects respectively.

Given that as exhibited in the table 1, the sample mean for collaboration (M=2.54; SD=0.53) and also for shared vision and values (M=2.51; SD=0.65) found moderate and the one-sample t-test value revealed a significant mean differences between the sample and the average mean score for collaboration (t (651) = -21.557, p = .000, *d*=0.84) and for shared visions and values (t (651) = -13.652, p = .000, *d*=0.74) respectively. Indeed, the effect size was found strong that indicate both collaboration and shared vision and values were moderately practiced in secondary schools.

The obtained sample mean score for delegation (M=2.38; SD=0.53) and shared culture (M=2.45; SD=0.52) were found less than average mean and a significant MD for delegation (t (651) = -29.137, p = .000, *d*=1.14) and for shared culture (t (651) = -26.583, p = .000, *d*=1.49) respectively. In a similar manner, as indicated strong effect size was found for both cases that confirms shared leadership practice in terms of delegation and shared culture were lower than the expected level. Given that, the total mean for the practice was found less than the expected mean (M=2.47, SD=0.35) and a significant MD associated with strong effect size (t (651) = -37.210, p = .000, *d*=1.02) was obtained between the total sample mean score and the expected mean.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics and One-sample t-tests result on Shared Leadership (N=652)

Shared Leadership Domains			**Test Value (Expected Mean) = 3.00**						**Cohen's *d***
	Mean	**SD**	t	df	Sig (2-tailed)	MD	95% CI		
							Lower	Upper	
Collaboration	2.54	.53	-21.557	651	.000	-.45	-.49	-.41	0.84
Shared Vision and Values	2.51	.65	-19.105	651	.000	-.48	-.53	-.43	0.74
Delegation	2.38	.53	-29.137	651	.000	-.61	-.65	-.56	1.14
Shared culture	2.45	.52	-26.583	651	.000	-.55	-.59	-.50	1.02
Average Score of Shared Leadership	**2.47**	**.35**	**-37.210**	**651**	**.000**	**-.52**	**-.55**	**-.49**	**1.49**

Source: Survey Data SD=Standard Deviation; MD=Mean Difference; CI= Confidence Interval

3.3.Levels of Teachers' OC

Teachers was asked to rate their level of OC in terms of AC, NC and CC. The obtained result was reported as follows. Teachers was asked to rate their level of OC in terms of AC, NC and CC. To that effect, the mean and the corresponding SDs as well as the significance level of the difference between the means and the effect size were analyzed. The same level of classifications (used in shared leadership) to compare and interpret the sample mean scores of teachers' level of OC is followed.

As depicted in table 2, the sample mean score for teachers' level AC (M = 2.41; SD = .60) and NC M = 2.43; SD = .56) were both found less than the expected average mean and at the same time the sample means are significantly lower for AC (t (651) = -24.684, p = .000, *d*=0.96) and for NC (t (651) = -33.363, p = .000, *d*=1.00). Given that there seem slightly greater mean score of teachers' level of CC as compared to the other two domains. The obtained effect sizes along all the domains are also large implying that the mean differences are not only statistically significant but also meaningfully vary.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics and One-sample t-tests result on Teachers OC (N=652)

Teachers OC Domains			**Test Value (Expected Mean) = 3.00**						**Cohen's *d***
	Mean	**SD**	t	df	Sig (2-tailed)	MD	95% CI		
							Lower	Upper	
Affective Commitment (AC)	2.41	.60	-24.686	651	.000	-.58	-.6286	-.5360	0.96
Normative Commitment (NC)	2.43	.56	-25.352	651	.000	-.56	-.6082	-.5208	1.00

Continuance Commitment (CC)	2.52	.55	-21.915	651	.000	-.47	-.5193	-.4339	0.85
Average Score of Teachers OC	**2.45**	**.41**	**-33.363**	**651**	**.000**	**-.54**	**-.5726**	**-.5090**	**1.32**

SD=Standard Deviation; MD=Mean Difference; CI= Confidence Interval

3.4.Relationships between Shared Leadership and Teachers OC

It was assumed that the types of leadership in practice in the secondary school contexts might have relationships with teachers' levels OC. Thus, shared leadership was supposed to relate with teachers' OC. To that effect, the bivariate correlation (using Pearson correlation coefficient, at 0.05 significant level) was carried out. As can be seen in table 3, the results revealed that all of the domains of shared leadership were significantly correlated with every domain of OC except some variations in strength which were found modest to strong effect sizes. That is, the relationships between collaboration and AC, NC, CC and the overall teachers OC (r= 0.392, p < .01; r = .356, p < .01; r = .433, p < .01, and r= .547, p < .01) were all positive and significant respectively. Likewise, shared vision and values was correlated with AC, NC, CC and total OC (r= 0.330, p < .01; r = .319, p < .01; r = .245, p < .01, and r= .416, p < .01) respectively. As far as the relationship among the domains of delegation and shared culture and every domains of OC was concerned, slightly lower in magnitude but the same pattern of relationship was found. In general, the over relationship between shared leadership and teachers OC (r = .666, *p* < .001) was found moderate and at the same the corresponding coefficient of determination (r^2=0.44) found also strong that implies the relationship was strong.

Table 5. Correlation between Shared Leadership and Teachers' OC (N=652)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Collaboration	1								
2. Shared Vision & Value	.202**	1							
3. Delegation	.174**	.244**	1						
4. Shared Culture	.272**	.182**	.189**	1					
5. Total Shared Leadership	.628**	.685**	.615**	.621**	1				
6. AC	.392**	.330**	.290**	.240**	.491**	1			
7. NC	.356**	.319**	.321**	.258**	.490**	.290**	1		
8. CC	.433**	.245**	.259**	.235**	.454**	.269**	.268**	1	
9. Total Teachers OC	.547**	.416**	.404**	.339**	.666**	.738**	.718**	.700**	1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

3.5.The Effect of Shared Leadership on Teachers' OC

Both, multiple and simple linear regression analyses were carried out to determine the effects of each of the domains shared leadership on each of the domains of teachers OC and the total effect. The results of each of the regression analysis is presented as follows. Some of the important results (i.e. values of R; R^2 Adjusted $R^{2,}$ F test score and the significant levels are noted below each of the tables). It was for the sake of avoiding to use multiple similar tables

As can be seen in four consecutive tables 4, 5, 6 & 7, it was found significant prediction level of shared leadership domains on every domains of teachers OC. That is, shared leadership significantly predicted teachers level of AC, F (4,647) = 55.876, *p*< .001); NC, F (4,647) = 53.349, *p*< .001), and CC, F (4,647) = 52.205, *p*< .001), as well as the average score of teachers OC, F (4, 647) = 518.0266, *p*< .001). In the prediction, all four domains meaningfully contributed (but vary in magnitude) to the explain each of the domains of OC. That is, the beta weights suggested that collaboration was found the strongest predictor for all commitment domains followed by others in varying degrees of predictions. The least predictor of all was found to be shared culture. In

general, the adjusted R-squared values were .252 for AC, .243 for NC, .238 for CC, and 0.443 for total OC, indicating that 25.2%, 24.3%, 23.8%, 44.3% of the variances, respectively, were explained by shared leadership domains. Thus, indicates that the status of shared leadership might determine teachers Level of OC.

Table 6. The Results of Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting teachers' Level of AC (N=652)

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Co.	t	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Standard Error (SE)	Beta (ß)		Tolerance	VIF
Constant	.372	.114	-	2.583	-	-
Collaboration	.331	.040	.295***	8.228	.893	1.119
Shared Vision & Values	.197	.033	.213***	5.973	.904	1.106
Delegation	.192	.040	.170***	4.794	.910	1.099
Shared culture	.101	.041	.089*	2.485	.895	1.117

Note. R=.507; R^2=.257; Adjusted R^2 = .252; and F (4,647) = 55.876, P*** < .001; **p<.01; *p<.05.

Table 7. The Results of Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting teachers' Level of NC (N=652)

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Co.	t	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Standard Error (SE)	Beta (ß)		Tolerance	VIF
Constant	.499	.137	-	3.652	-	-
Collaboration	.264	.038	.249***	6.916	.893	1.119
Shared Vision & Values	.172	.031	.197***	5.484	.904	1.106
Delegation	.221	.038	.208***	5.828	.910	1.099
Shared culture	.123	.039	.115**	3.181	.895	1.117

Note. R=.498; R^2=.248; Adjusted R^2 = .243; and F (4,647) = 53.349, ***p < .001;**p<.01; *p<.05

Table 8. The Results of Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting teachers' Level of CC (N=652)

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Co.	t	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Standard Error (SE)	Beta (ß)		Tolerance	VIF
Constant	.722	.134	-	5.400	-	-
Collaboration	.371	.037	.359***	9.918	.893	1.119
Shared Vision & Values	.102	.031	.120***	3.330	.904	1.106
Delegation	.157	.037	.151***	4.210	.910	1.099
Shared culture	.092	.038	.087**	2.411	.895	1.117

Note. R=.494; R^2=.244; Adjusted R^2 = .238; and F (4,647) = 52.205, ***p < .001;**p<.01; *p<.05.

Table 9. The Results of Simple Regression Analysis Predicting Total Level of OC (N=652)

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Co.	t	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Standard Error (SE)	Beta (ß)		Tolerance	VIF
Constant	.563	.084		6.692		
Average score of shared leadership	.766	.034	.666***	22.760	1.000	1.000

Note. R=.666; R^2=.444; Adjusted R^2 = .443; and F (4,647) = 518.026, ***p < .001;**p<.01; *p<.05.

4. Discussion

The participation of all stakeholders in leadership activities so as to make schools effective seems widely acknowledged (Tesfaye, 2018). Thus, instead of looking to the principal as a lone leader in a school, cultivating leadership skills among all members of the school community is becoming important more than ever before. However that the findings of the present study revealed shared leadership was not effectively practiced. The sample mean values for the domains collaboration and shared vison and values were found moderate whereas the sample means for delegation and shared culture domains were by far less than the expected average value. Besides, the MDs were found significantly and considerably different. This result disclosed that the hierarchical principal focused leadership was dominantly practiced in secondary schools. Some previous study result displayed the same except the contextual differences. For example, it was reported that the hierarchical school

leadership approach focused on principals centric authority was dominantly in practice in most African countries like Nigeria (Abdulrasheed et al., 2016), in Kenya (Kaume-Mwinzi, 2016) and in Ethiopia (Tesfaye, 2018). However, teachers were the paramount and the heart to move the schools forward there were not enough rooms for them to play their leading roles (Sindhu, 2012).

Studies in Ethiopia by Seid and Serawit (2018) also showed that secondary schools were found short of developing smart visions and missions through active participation and substantial collaboration of key stakeholders. Similarly, studies in Chile (Avalos-Bevan & Bascopé, 2017) and in Flemish (Meredith et al., 2017) found the same that collaboration was not effectively practiced in schools. In contrast, Gumuseli and Eryilmaz (2011) found as school principals created collaborative schools in Turkey resulted in creating effective schools. In complex educational contexts, sharing leadership is found the state of the art (Müller et al., 2018). A system of shared leadership increased the efficiency of the collaboration model in high schools. Others also suggested that to end up with success in any organizations including schools, members have to be on the same page thereby developing shared vision and values (Huffman, 2001; Mesfin, 2019).

Therefore, one can learn from this is that the time is calling to shift the solo school leadership to shared leadership approaches to create all inclusive school environment. However continued being futile on the ground the necessity of collaboration was also emphasized in policy documents and existing educational programs in Ethiopia (MoE, 2021; MoE, 2023). Generally, teachers' collaboration in leadership, creating shared vision and values, effective delegation practices and establishing shared school culture were found low in secondary schools despite the limitations in terms of inclusion of primary schools in the present study.

The other important finding was pertaining teachers' level of OC. Accordingly, teachers' total level of OC along all domains (AC, NC, & CC) was found low, except the mean score of CC which was moderate and that might made teachers to stay in their job. The effect sizes were found large implying the sample means were practically lower than the test score. In fact, the results of previous studies on teachers' level of OC in different contexts were found inconsistent. For example, Joolideh and Yeshodhara (2009) studied high school teachers' level of OC in Bangalore (India) and Sanandaj (Iran). They found that Indian teachers had better OC in the affective and normative components and Iranian teachers were found to have better OC in the continuance component. Karakuș and Aslan (2009), on their side conducted a study to determine public and private high school teachers' level of OC, in Elazig city, Turkey and found that teachers were not committed to the expected level in all OC domains as of the present study. Few studies (e.g. Aslamiah, 2019) reported very good level of teachers' OC. This demystifies that variations in context might have different impacts on the level of teachers' commitment.

Similar studies were also carried out in secondary school contexts in Ethiopia. Example, Endale (2019) studied secondary school teachers' OC in Addis Ababa and found that teacher OC was low that was similar to the present study. However, the studies were conducted in higher academic universities in Ethiopia, similar results were reported by several local researchers (e.g. Abraham & Atalay, 2023; Melaku, 2023). All of them reported as teachers level of OC was below the expected level despite the differences in terms of the demographic characteristics. Thus, due attention would require to enhance teachers commitment beyond smartly documenting the issue in

words in policies and program documents (MoE, 2023).

The other crucial issue examined was the relationship between shared leadership and teachers' OC. Consequently, a moderate positive correlation coefficients were found between collaboration and every domains of OC; whereas a strong positive relationship was found between collaboration and the overall teachers OC; and the overall average scores of shared leadership and teachers' OC. On the other hand, low in magnitude but positive relationships were found for some domains (e.g. shared vision and values and CC; delegation and AC, and CC, as well as shared culture with all OC domains). The effect sizes were weak and moderate. On top of that shared leadership was found significantly predicted every dimensions of teachers' OC with modest effect size.

According to Firestone and Pennell (1993), teachers who collaborate with others become more dedicated to the organization than those who work alone. It has also been proposed that professional support and collaboration in leadership practices either form the school leaders and/or collegially with others can enhance teachers' commitment in turn can create synergy and improve school culture. Seay (2023) proposed that collaboration in leadership and commitment are states of the art in schools to promote trust and strengthen team leadership. Having these hand full suggestions secondary schools in this study context found ineffective in that regard. Therefore, without perceptible collaboration and thorough commitment of teachers and key school stakeholders, schools cannot function effectively.

Likewise, evidence supported that schools should develop their visions and values that are well understood by all stakeholders. Study results also noticed the same that the core leadership strategies and qualities are building a shared vision, promoting the acceptance of group goals and honest relationships, creating high-performance expectations, and communicating the directions (Kouzes & Posner 2017). However that there exist lack of involvement of stakeholders starting from school vision development (Matalon, 2018) and extends to lack of commitment to make the ideal visions practical. The responsibilities of developing visions and values in schools remain in the minds and hands of principals' and few formally assigned committee members. Given all the above it was clearly identified that shared leadership can play a promising role to enhance teachers OC despite it seem limited to provide all round suggestions in that regard.

5. Conclusions

As to the findings of the present study shared leadership approach to school leadership practice appear inadequate. Likewise, teachers' level of OC found low. Thus, the suggested benefits of shared leadership approach in fostering collaboration and creating more engaged school community that are paths to commitment remain not well done. However, the study emphasizes clear connection between shared leadership practices and teacher commitment. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that shifting away from the traditional model, principal centered leadership towards shared responsibility seems mandatory that in turn requires the collective actions from policymakers, training institutions, and educational leaders at all levels. Thus, principals and school authorities must prioritize teachers' active involvement in leadership activities. Building genuine relationships and fostering a sense of shared responsibility are crucial steps towards improving teacher commitment and ultimately, enhancing school performance.

Limitations

However, possible efforts have been done to address the objectives of the study, it has certain limitations as every research works face. One of the limitations is lack of inclusion of some control variables (e.g. personal factors, trust) to examine their multiple effects. The other is the method employed is quantitative approach that might require qualitative data to better understand the problem. As the same time, detail confirmatory and exploratory methods were not employed to create a stable instrument that work in the context of both secondary and primary schools. Indeed, all these were out of the intended aims of the current study, future research should involve these issues and the specified points of attention below.

Future Research Directions

Given the lessons from this study, it look important to carry out further research that involve all school levels, significant personal variables, school related constructs, policy issues, training systems, community views to better recognize the problem.

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The study has not registered and no fund was obtained to run. The authors have no any conflicts of interest.

Data availability statement

The raw data supporting the conclusion of this article might be made available by the authors without excessive reservation.

Author contributions

The corresponding author (Dibekulu) ensured the quality of the data and worked on the collection, analysis, and interpretation of the data, & the co-author (Melaku) ensured the data quality, supervised the study, proofread and edited.

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