

# School principals' leadership frame as a factor to improve leadership effectiveness: The case of primary schools in Ambo City Administration

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## Abstract

*The purpose of this study was to determine the preferred leadership frame of Ambo City Administration primary school principals as perceived by principals themselves and teachers. The study also examined the relationship between principals' demographic characteristics, the use of leadership frames, and the extent of principals' effectiveness as a manager and as a leader. The study applied a descriptive research design and an entirely quantitative approach. The study involved 20 primary schools. In these schools, there were 60 primary school principals and 182 teachers who were included in the study by comprehensive and proportionate simple random sampling techniques respectively. Bolman and Deal's (1997) Leadership Orientations Survey Questionnaire was the data collection tool. The results revealed that the school principals preferred leadership frame was the structural frame. This implies that Ambo City Administration primary school principals had a limited view of organization leadership as they emphasized on only the architecture of an organization. Furthermore, even though teachers only gave them grades of effective managers, most principals believed they were effective as both leaders and managers. Sex, leadership experience, and teaching experience were found to be factors for variations in the use of the leadership frame of principals. The researcher suggests that the principals need to view their leadership frame through all available leadership lenses in order to comprehend the complicated school environment and fulfill the various demands placed on them by the circumstances and in turn become effective.*

**Keywords:** Structural frame, human relation frame, symbolic frame, Political frame, and frame analysis

## Introduction

The success of a school is often tied to the principal. There is also evidence that a school excels under the leadership of a particular principal but declines under the leadership of another principal. Researchers like Gumus, Bellibas, Esen, and Gumus (2018); Leithwood and Sun (2012) and Liebowitz and Porter (2019) confirmed that the possibility of principal leadership to enhance student learning has drawn increasing attention. These suggest that the principal's leadership behavior and school performance are linked.

However, the challenges facing schools today are more frequent, more severe and more intense than ever. The growing societal demand for greater efficiency and accountability, as pinpointed by Green (2013), requires school principals to demonstrate excellence in school leadership and management. Teachers and other staff also expect school leaders to be active, supportive and actively involved in the educational life of the school. They hope to work in a school where order and fairness will be maintained and where they will receive humanely support throughout their teaching. In the same vein, Glauner, (2018) and Sheilds (2005) explain that in addition to performing functional tasks such as organizing, coordinating, and evaluating, management

should also practice a leadership style that gives emphasis to humanistic values such as harmonious relationships, transparency, closeness, encouragement and guidance while working with teachers.

It is accepted that society demands excellence and effectiveness from school leaders in every aspect of their behavior and actions. However, effective leadership is created when there is a link between the organizational leadership behaviors that the organization needs and the leadership behaviors provided by the organizational leader. Scholars, for instance, Bolman and Deal (2017), proposed a comprehensive view of leadership that includes qualities, contexts, and perspectives from the earliest theories of great men. Bolman and Deal brought together the attributes, behaviors, skills, and situational considerations necessary for leaders to develop leadership frameworks. They identify four leadership frameworks: structural, human resource, political, and symbolic. Structural leaders define clear goals, assign specific roles to their constituents, and coordinate specific activities with specific policies, procedures, and chains of command. The structural leader attempts to align the organization's internal processes with the external environment while resolving organizational dilemmas. The human resources framework focuses on human needs and interests.

Leaders look through the window of a human resources framework that values people's emotions and relationships. The human resources frame assumes that the organization must meet basic human needs. The political framework focuses on individual and collective interests. Political leaders build power bases through networks and negotiated compromises. Symbolic leaders develop symbols and culture to shape human behavior and reflect the overall mission and identity of the organization. These leaders inject passion, charisma, and drama into the organization.

Bolman and Deal, the developers of this leadership model, argue that leadership needs to be "reframed" to take into account variances in the leader and the conditions it faces (2003,

2008, 2013, and 2017). By using several frames, the leader can better understand the situation, explain potential answers, and arrive at an effective conclusion (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Every single frame's idea was taken from a specific academic field. The political frame came from political science, the structural frame from sociology, the human resource from psychology, and the symbolic frame from anthropology. By their very nature, schools are people-oriented businesses and as such, they form the core essence of the human resources framework. They emphasize that the diversity of the school community (students, parents, society and staff) highlights the symbolic framework and its importance in the school environment. Bolman and Deal (2013) argue that effective leadership requires the leader to be able to access all four frames and decide which frame will be most effective for a given leadership challenge. They coined the term multiple frames to describe a leader's ability to view an event through the lens of multiple frames.

Each frame presents a distinct view of reality. Developing a thorough understanding of all four deepens one's enjoyment and comprehension of organizations. This assertion regarding the benefits of having different viewpoints sparked an expanding amount of study. In fact, 98 percent of their respondents regarded reframing as beneficial or very helpful, and about 90 percent felt it gave them a competitive advantage, according to Dunford and Palmer (1995), who discovered that management courses teaching numerous frames had considerable positive benefits over the course of both the short and long term. According to previous research, managers and leaders who can use a variety of frames are more effective (Fritz, M. S. and Arthur, A. M. 2017, Himovics, Herman, and Jurkiewicz Coughlin, 1995; Bolman and Deal, 1991, 1992a, 1992b). This paper looked at how teachers and principals themselves regarded leadership in primary schools. The survey helps determine whether school principals have multi-frame thinking, which calls for going beyond conventional, mechanical methods of analyzing organizations.

Schools call for leadership orientation that promotes the changes required to prepare students adequately for the evolving world. There has also been a wide consensus that strong leadership behavior framed according to the demands of students, teachers, parents, school culture and climate is a foundation for school excellence (Tony, 2007). The principal, thus, is viewed as having the greatest position of power and influence in maintaining and improving the quality of the school (Sergiovanni and Green, 2014).

Primary school principal is the most important and influential individual in the school. It is his or her leadership, among other things, that shapes the school's learning climate, the level of relationship between staff, and the teachers' morale. Thus, leaders, who understand their own leadership orientations, can learn and rely on more than one frame (structural, human resource, political or structural) and the leaders are better equipped to understand and manage everyday complexity of their organizations. Scholars in the area recommend leaders to know their orientation in today's competitive workplace (Bass, 2008).

Nevertheless, it is argued that many principals do not realize that the key to creating and sustaining a successful school is the application of appropriate leadership orientation that nurtures the teaching-learning environment (Chiang, 2011). This implies that leadership orientation of the principals is one of the major causal factors of the school ineffectiveness.

The prior question in order, therefore, is the leadership orientation of school principals in position and how effective they are. In other words, it seems timely to examine if leaders with the necessary skill and competence who are considerate of whether their leadership behavior match with the need of context are in place. Yet, little research has been conducted that examines the leadership orientation of primary school principals in the study area. It is, then, important to begin small to see the general tendencies of Ambo primary school principals in terms of the four frames.

The purpose of this study was, thus, to examine the leadership orientation demonstrated by Ambo woreda primary school principals in view of frames developed by Bolman and Deal (1997). The specific research questions that guided the study were:

1. What are the preferred leadership frames of school principals at Ambo City administration primary schools as perceived by principals and teachers?
2. Is there a difference in the preferred leadership frames of school principals' by sex and experience at Ambo City administration primary schools?
3. What is the extent of effectiveness of principals as a leader and as a manager? Is there any significant relationship between effectiveness and frame usage?

## Materials and methods

The purpose of this study was to determine the preferred leadership frame of Ambo city administration primary school principals as perceived by principals and teachers. Owing to this purpose, this study adopted a descriptive research design using only a quantitative approach.

The determination of the population and sample schools was based on the 2021/22 annual statistics report of the city administration. As a result, the study population consisted of all teachers and principals who are working in 20 primary schools of the city administration. Comprehensive sampling technique and proportionate random sampling techniques were used to select principals and teachers respectively. Accordingly, 60 principals and 182 teachers participated in the study.

Leadership Orientations Questionnaire developed by Bolman and Deal (1997) was used to gather data. The questionnaire has two parallel forms, one for the principals to rate themselves and another for teachers to rate the principals. In both versions, there are four sections designed for measuring Bolman and Deal frames including demographics section. Bolman and Deal (1991b) established internal

reliability for the instrument and it was Cronbach's alpha of between 0.91 and 0.93. The researcher pilot-tested the instrument in two schools. The Cronbach's alpha result of the items, on average, was found to be 0.81 which is an acceptable reliability level.

Section 1 of the questionnaire is about demographic data of respondents. Section two contains 32 items. Each of the items describes behavior for which the respondents are asked to provide a rating using a Likert scale. The scale asked respondents to rate from 1-5 (1= Never, 2 = occasionally, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Often, and 5 = Always). The items are also patterned in a consistent sequence: structural frame (items 1, 5, 9, 13, 17, 21, 25, 29), human resource (2, 6, 10, 14, 18, 22, 26, 30), political (3, 7, 11, 15, 19, 23, 27, 31), and symbolic (4, 8, 12, 16, 20, 24, 28, 32). Section two asked to identify which frames are used, which are most dominant, and how many frames are used. Section three contained six forced-choice items. Each option in the six items was arranged in the same sequence as section one. This section was designed to address sub-scales for management development and to allow the respondent to describe his/her leadership style. It is suggested that, for research applications, only the 8-item frame measures in section one be used (Bolman, 2008). The data obtained by this part is not analyzed.

Section four asked respondents to rate themselves relative to other people they know with comparable levels of experience. It included two items. One item asked respondents to rate their overall effectiveness as a manager. The other item asked for a self-rating for overall leadership effectiveness. Both items were rated on a 5-point scale with "5" being a top 20% rating, "3" middle 20% rating, and "1" a bottom 20 % rating. Section three is designed to provide insight into how principals are performing as leaders and managers. There

is also a background information section at the very beginning of the questionnaire that asked respondents about sex, work experience, experience with the current principal, education level, and qualification.

Data analysis was performed in two stages. The first was a descriptive analysis of the demographic information collected from section one of the survey instrument. The second part was an analysis of the data that answer the basic research questions. So as to assess the differences concerning the leadership frames that the principals employ and to see the relationship, descriptive statistics like mean, SD and percentages and inferential statistics like ANOVA, correlation coefficient and t-test were used.

In order to answer, a research question "Which frame(s) of Bolman and Deal's (2003) leadership orientations do the principals dominantly use?" and "Is there any significant relation between demographics (gender, teaching experience and leadership experience) and frame use?", each respondent's mean score for each frame was computed from the data collected in section two of the survey. This was done by adding together all responses for each individual item and computing the mean score. For example, the mean score for the structural frame was computed by adding together the data collected from items 1, 5, 9, 13, 17, 21, 25, and 29; then computing a mean score based on the data. From those mean scores, standard deviations were computed for each frame. In order to understand the results of the current study, specific cut points were set to interpret the participants total scores related to their leadership preference frame. Regarding the cut points for decisions, Bolman and Deal's (2003) cut points of 1-2.3 = low, from 2.34 to 3.67 = moderate, and 3.68-5.00 = high levels were applied.

## Results and Discussions

**Basic Question 1:** Which of the principal leadership frames do primary school principals of Ambo City administration dominantly use?

Table 1. Mean distribution of leadership frames of school principals

Frame	participants	N	Level of Scores			Mean	S.D	GM
			1-13	14-27	28-40			
Structural	principals	60	0	2(3)	58(97)	4.19 (34)	.23	4.02
	teachers	182	7	25	150	3.88 (31)	.44	
Human Resource	principals	60	2 (4)	5(9)	53( 87 )	3.99 (32)	.32	2.95
	teachers	182	100	52	30	1.9 (15)	.4	
Political	principals	60	19(32)	27(45)	14(23)	2.4(19)	.39	3.09
	teachers	182	17	15	150	3.78 (30)	.28	
Symbolic	principals	60	8 (14)	9(15)	43(71)	3.5(28)	.41	2.85
	teachers	182	92	39	51	2.2(18)	.28	

Table 1 presented the teachers' perceptions and self-reported leadership frames of school principals. The result showed that teachers rated the principals higher in a structural frame ( $X=3.88$ ,  $SD= 0.44$ ) and political frame ( $X=3.78$ ,  $SD = 0. 28$ ) and lower in human resource ( $X=1.9$ ,  $SD = 0.4$  and symbolic frame ( $X=2.2$ ,  $SD = 0. 28$ ; whereas principals rated themselves higher in their the three frames (structural frame,  $X= 4.19$ , human resource,  $X=3.99$  and the symbolic frame,  $X=3.5$ ). The majority of the principals (81.7.3%) evaluated themselves as they frequently use the three leadership frames (structural, human resource and symbolic) with structural frame taking the leading position whereas teachers rated principals higher in structural frame and political frame while lower in the rest two. Hence, both the principals and teachers rated the structural frame as the dominant frame of leadership.

In the rest three frames, there exists a difference of perception. It is a challenge on which source of evidence to rely on for interpretation and decision. However, if we use common values of self-evaluation that people naturally do not downgrade themselves, it appears logical to determine that principals do not consider human and symbolic approach of leading workers. Some theorists like Durocher (1996), however, placed a great amount of value on humans as individuals and the interdependence between people and organizations. The calculated grand mean of 4.02 (32/40) showed that the structural frame was dominantly used by school principal. The other three frames were in the average score range, which indicated principals sometimes use the frames in their leadership, though it appeared that there exist a slight difference among the three. This finding differed from the findings of Toddy (2010) which found the highest mean score for the human resource frame. Likewise, it was inconsistent with the

findings of Bolman and Deal (2002). According to Bolman and Deal, most educators have primarily the human resource orientation in their leadership. They also commented that the use of single frameworks ignored the possibility of being an effective leader. In continuation, Bolman and express their conviction that the use of a collection of frames is a powerful asset for leaders as it could help them to make sense of the complex organizational events and solve problems.

This implies that principals of the study school focused on structure, goal realization, rules, policies, and organization mission than on other aspects of the organization like the human element, the soul of people, and the inspiration. They also seem to reject the diversities, conflict that exists due to resources deficit and power and the major role to be played by principals in negotiating the conflicts. According to Bolman and Deal (1994), effective leaders grasp the significance of symbols and acknowledge their duty in rallying and expressing a vision and values that infuse purpose, guidance, and significance into an organization. At its core, leadership is inherently symbolic. In other words, realizing an organization mission is possible not only through well-designed structure and policy but also through the consideration and treatment of the human element, through the treatment of the cultural and social context of humans.

These limitations could result from the idea that workers are there to serve the school and only to accomplish organization objectives. It might also reflect the autocratic style dominating the leadership of the school inherited likely from the supra- system like political system of the country. It could also emanate from the less skill, knowledge and unfavorable attitude the principals were equipped with.

It is clear that school principals should flexibly see things from different angles and use different frames as a school system is a complex organization that requires looking at things in different windows to meet the various

**Basic question 2:** Is there any difference in frame use of principals by gender, teaching experience and leadership experience?

demands of the setting. Sheilds (2005); Day, Harris, Hadfield, Tolley and Beresford (2000) agreed that the duties of a head teacher are not only limited to carrying out functional duties like organizing, coordinating and evaluating but they also need to be a role model and source of inspiration to all the teachers. Scholars argued that school leadership is recommended to practice leadership styles which emphasizes on humanistic values such as building a harmonious relationship with the teachers, being transparent, approachable, motivating and guiding the teachers (Bush, 2003). Fook (2000) in this case warns that the nation's educational aspirations will not reach its objectives if the school leadership focuses only on administrative chores when the school leadership field today is much more dynamic, complex and demanding creating head teachers who are capable of producing committed teachers.

Workers are not only to serve the organization but they are also to be served and treated as humans having interests and values. Hence, a principal is there in the school to treat people as human being considering their interests and values and their problems and challenges and make them enthusiastically work towards goal achievement. They should also play a symbolic and political role as the school environment requires the roles. Bolman & Deal (2008) remarked that the secrets to winning office politics are a contemporary application of the political frame. Bolman & Deal (2002) suggest that school leaders who can view situations from more than one angle are more effective. They added that a strong, effective school leader is not only able to provide instructional leadership (2002); but also to frame each situation according to his natural frame and then reframe each situation using additional lenses in order to clearly understand the situation (2003). These elements were, however, the missing element from the leadership practices of the study area principals as to the findings of this study.

The results in Table 2 showed that male principals and female principals rated themselves high in using both the structural and human resource frames. Female principals put

themselves at a lower level of use on the political frame (2.2) and average on symbolic frame (3.49) whereas male principals rated political frame (2.7) use at an average level and symbolic frame (3.54) use at a higher level. T-test was calculated to examine if there exists any pattern between frame use and sex. The result in four of the frames showed a significant difference (alpha less than 0.05). Hence, the results showed significant differences in frame usage and teaching experience in human resource, structural frame and political frame. Male and female principals had no similar scores on human resource and political frames. In addition, the mean scores of female principals in structural frame and human resource frame were higher than their male counterparts', whereas in the political and symbolic frame, male principals rated themselves higher than their female counterparts did.

This finding was similar to the findings of Suzuki (1994) and Davis (1996) that showed higher use of the human resource frame by female principals. In addition, both males and

females thought that they were nearly (greater than 3.5) using more than two frames except the political frame. In his study, Tillman (2012) also found that female superintendents described themselves as utilizing a multi-dimensional leadership orientation, with the highest scores on the human resource frame and the lowest scores on the political frame. Overall, female principals favored the human resource frame than their male counterparts and male principals favor political frame than their female counterparts. Though the issue requires detailed qualitative study to see whether their practice in its true sense reflect their symbolic and political frame use including emotional intelligence, power orientation, and social skill; male principals' higher political orientation than female principals' could be attributed to socio cultural and political background of the country. The use of more of the human resource frame by female principals could also be attributed to the motherhood spirit towards people that they have developed from the culture and tradition of the society.

Table 2. Mean differences of frame use by sex

	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Sig.
Structural	Male	47	3.99	0.48	6.74	0.037*
	Female	13	4.4	0.26		
Human Resource	Male	47	3.6	0.42	5.34	0.033*
	Female	13	4.35	0.20		
Political	Male	47	2.7	0.40	8.45	0.016*
	Female	13	2.1	0.33		
Symbolic	Male	47	3.54	0.55	4.65	0.047*
	Female	13	3.49	0.35		

As the result in Table 3 showed, there appeared a tendency that structural frame decreases with an increase in experience whereas the human resource and political frame usage tends to increase with experience. One-way ANOVA was calculated to examine if there exists any pattern between frame use and teaching experience as the outputs indicate some kind of correlation. Hence, the results showed significant differences in frame usage and

teaching experience in human resource (F=0.437, P= 0.034), structural frame (F=0.959, P=0.045) and political frame (F=0.648, P=0.40). Post hoc Tukey HSD comparisons and correlations were computed to identify differences among specific groups of years of experience. Accordingly, it appeared that the more the principals gain experience the less they use the structural frame and the higher they use human relation and political frame.

For the remaining symbolic frame, the difference was not significant. This could be as a result of a relative principals' maturity, as at a given average level of experience, provided that all other things remain constant, leaders develop confidence and become at pick in performance by using all the frames developing the need for having all-rounded perspectives of leadership.

This finding was in line with the idea stated by Bolman and Deal (2003). Bolman and Deal

note that within the first years of their leadership, principals are more energetic and willing to contribute to the betterment of the school. Such principals dwell more on establishing a clear organizational structure and setting goals for the school. The principals tried to strictly follow rules and policies. They tend to coordinate and control the work environment. As their experience increases they become more idealistic and they value the relationships and feelings of individuals (Bolman & Deal, 1994)

Table 3. Distributions of teaching experience and frame usage as perceived by principals.

Leadership frames	Level of scores	Teaching Experience				F	Sig.
		5-10	.959	.045	> or = 20	0.959	0.045
Structural	0-13	1	-	-	3		
	14-27	4	3	2	1		
	28-40	25	9	7	5		
	total	30 (50%)	12(20%)	9(16%)	9 (14%)		
	Mean	3.8	3.7	3.5	3.2		
Human Resource	0-13	3	1	-	1	0.437	0.034
	14-27	10	3	-	-		
	28-40	17	8	9	8		
	total	30(50%)	12(20%)	10(16)	9 (14%)		
		3.3	3.5	3.9	4.2		
Political	0-13	8	4	1	1	0.638	0.040
	14-27	10	2	5	2		
	28-40	12	6	3	6		
	total	30(50%)	12(20%)	9 (16%)	9(14%)		
		2.7	2.8	2.7	3.8		
Symbolic	0-13	1	1	-	2	0.558	0.067
	14-27	5	1	-	-		
	28-40	24	10	9	7		
	total	30(50%)	12(20%)	9(16%)	9 (14%)		
		3.85	3.8	4	3.8		

As to the leadership experience and frame use of principals presented in ANOVA (P > 0.05) result in **Table 3** showed the existence of significant differences in all the four frames. Post hoc Tukey analysis of individual group results indicated that, except for the structural in which the relation seems reverse, there appeared to be a direct relation between leadership experience and frame usage. It had a

tendency that as leadership experience increases mean score of the three frames increase. Though generalization requires correlation study, this simple result could indicate that school principals having relatively larger leadership experience tend to use multiple frames than those having lesser leadership experience and even the extent of use also showed an increasing tendency.



Table 4. Distribution of leadership experience and frame use of principals

Leadership frames	Level of scores	leadership Experience			F	Sig
		1-5	6-10	>10		
Structural	0-13	-	2	5	0.544	0.02
	14-27	4	4	3		
	28-40	26	8	8		
	total	30 (50%)	14 (20%)	16(16%)		
	Mean	4.05	3.3	2.85		
Human Resource	0-13	6	1	-	1.381	0.024
	14-27	7	3	3		
	28-40	17	10	13		
	total	30(50%)	14(20%)	16 (16%)		
	Mean	3.2	3.6	4.4		
Political	0-13	13	5	2	0.149	0.040
	14-27	10	5	6		
	28-40	7	4	8		
	total	30 (50%)	14(20%)	16(16%)		
	Mean	2.1	2.4	3.1		
Symbolic	0-13	10	-	-	0.133	0.039
	14-27	6	6	3		
	28-40	14	8	13		
	total	30(50%)	14(20%)	16(16%)		
	Mean	2.7	3.5	4.4		

Basic question No. 3 What is the extent of effectiveness of principals as a leader and as a manager? Is there any significant relationship between effectiveness and frame usage?

Table 5 was about ratings of effectiveness as a manager and as a leader by both principals and teachers. As it can be observed from means in the table, the principals rated themselves, as they were effective both as a leader and as a manager. Principals thought that they were effective equally both as a leader (4.3) and as a manager (4.2). Specifically, for managerial effectiveness, 81 % rated themselves above the middle 20 % when comparing themselves to other principal. The mean rating for managerial effectiveness was 4.2 (representing a top 20 % rating). To crosscheck self-ratings of principals with that of teachers' perceptions of principals, teachers' ratings were analyzed and were presented in the next section.

As the mean values of the teachers' ratings in Table 5 indicated, principals' effectiveness lies in the middle effectiveness range of 2.5-3.5 (the middle 20) that is represented by average effectiveness. Specifically, about 38 % of the teachers thought that principals were ineffective as leaders, 28% of the teachers thought that they had average effectiveness as a leader, and 34% of teachers consider principals as being in the top 20 leaders. On the management effectiveness, 29 % of the teachers thought that principals were ineffective as managers; about 45% of the teachers thought that principals were in the top 20 in their managerial effectiveness. The mean value of the scores put the principal in the average effectiveness range. In relative terms, teachers' ratings of the principals put principals higher on managerial effectiveness. This could

be an indication that principals focus more on administrative tasks of maintenance issues than change-oriented activities like articulating inspirational vision, development of culture and interpersonal relationships (Day, 2000). As

Bolman and Deal (1994) state the result of their study is a manifestation of two concepts: leadership and management for the school principalship are hard to distinguish as qualities of effective managers and leaders overlap.

Table 5. Ratings of Effectiveness of Principals as a Manager and as a Leader

Variable	Raters	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
Leadership effectiveness	Teachers	36 20%	32 18%	51 28 %	33 18%	30 16%	2.93
	Principals	5 8%	4 7%	7 12	20 34%	29 47%	
Managers effectiveness	Teachers	24 13%	30 16%	47 26 %	41 23%	40 22%	3.2
	Principals	7 8%	2 3%	14 23%	19 32%	25 42%	

Decision Rule: 1-2.4=ineffective 2.5-3.4=averagely effective and 3.5-5=effective (source the developers of the instrument mentioned)

School principals self-rated leadership frame mean scores were correlated with the self-rated effectiveness means scores by using a bivariate correlation analysis method of Pearson correlation coefficient. The result of the correlation analysis presented in Table 6 indicated the existence of a significant relationship between managerial effectiveness and the use of the structural frame,  $r(60) = .521, p < 0.05$ ; while the analyzed correlation coefficient between self-rated managerial effectiveness and the use of the other frames-human resource, political, and symbolic, were found to be insignificant. A significant positive correlation existed between self-rated leadership effectiveness and the use of human

resources and the political;  $p$  values in all cases were  $< 0.05$ . These findings partly maintain previous research by Bolman and Deal (1991, 1992a, 1992b). They found that the ability to use multiple frames was a consistent correlate of effectiveness in both business and education organization. Effectiveness as a manager was particularly associated with the structural frame, whereas the symbolic and political frames tended to be the primary determinants of effectiveness as a leader. This suggested the political, symbolic, and human resource frames are predictors of leadership effectiveness. The next table presented the summaries of the analysis.

Table 6. Correlations between Frame Use and Effectiveness as a Manager and as a leader

Frame	Manager		Leader	
	R	sig	r	sig
Structural	0.52**	0.021	0.124	0.078
Human Resource	0.372	0.57	0.413*	0.032
Political	-0.234	0.62	0.451*	0.042
Symbolic	-0.425	0.69	0.129	0.76

Note: \* $p < 0.05$

## Conclusions and implications

### Conclusions

The structural frame was the frame of choice of leadership of Ambo City administration primary school principals. They emphasized rationality, analysis, logic, facts, and overall architecture of an organization in their leadership process. There was a significant relationship between principals' gender, teaching experience, leadership experience, and the extent to which they use the frames. Specifically, female principals tend to use human resource frequently followed by structural frame whereas male principals frequently use the structural frame followed by the human resource. The use of human resource and political frame was positively correlated to principals teaching experience, whereas the structural frame was inversely related.

### Implications for Practice

Modern leaders need to use more than one lens in order to better understand and control organizations. The ability to develop a broader, multi-framed perspective puts principals in a much better effective position to address the complexity and ambiguity prevailing in schools.

Hence, this study advised that effective leadership is related to a multi-framed approach to addressing current complex school challenges. Specifically, principals who have the ability to view these challenges through the human resource, political, and symbolic frames besides the structural frame are in the best position to effectively lead. Specifically,

- For principals to see issues of leadership and management through different lenses before making decisions of partial and biased kind, and to use sized-up mental structure in dealing with complex issues of school leadership and management. Multiframe thinking requires moving beyond narrow, mechanical approaches for understanding organizations.
- For supervisors to supervise, mentor, and support principals to use not only the structural but also the human resource, political and the symbolic frames as well for both managerial and leadership effectiveness. They should empower principals to always use more than one

Leadership experience was also positively related to human resource, political and symbolic frame and negatively related to structural frame. Principals in the study area were found to be effective as a manager and ineffective as a leader. Structural frame could predicate managerial effectiveness and both human resource and political frames could predicate leadership effectiveness. Overall, it could be concluded that Ambo city administration primary school principals had a limited view of organization leadership frame as they emphasized on only the architecture of an organization and their leadership frame use was significantly related to their sex, teaching experience and principalship experience.

approach to respond to organizational leadership issues. This also implied the use of awareness creation and in-service development programs like CPD, Workshops and seminars about the recent approaches/models in leadership such as Bolman and Deal's four frames leadership orientation; similarities and differences between leadership effectiveness and management effectiveness can be provided for principals by professionals like university lecturers and other relevant educational bureau experts

- The findings of this study would have implication for educational authorities at woreda level that had primary responsibility for principal's recruitment, training and continuous professional development. It would provide supplementary confirmation to them in choosing or training their school principals. It might provide a clue to those officials on whom to select, what criteria to set.

### Implications for Research

Knowing one's leadership orientation through either self-evaluation or subordinates is very important for leaders. It could indicate whether their orientation meets the demands of the

organization context including the humans, the work, the culture and leads to effectiveness or not. Hence, the study implies the need for a similar study with a larger sample which would enhance the replication and consistency of the conclusions by including students, school PTA, school board, and support staff in the school as

well. Besides, multiple frame analysis is a potential research area for educational leadership researchers by applying a mixed approach to include insider's viewpoint on leadership and management roles principals are practically engaging in.

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