

The Role of School Principals as Instructional Leaders in the Implementation of Curricula in Public Schools in Aqaba District, Jordan

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Abstract

Objectives: This study aimed to:

1. Investigate the role of school principals as instructional leaders in the implementation of curricula in public schools in Aqaba district.
2. Identify the differences in the means of personal factors according to the variables of gender, academic qualification and experience as a school principal.

Methods:

The study followed the descriptive approach and used the questionnaire as a method to collect data.

Results: The study revealed that:

1. School principals practice their role as instructional leaders in implementing curricula with a high degree in the three dimensions, where the dimension of defining the school mission achieved the highest score, with an arithmetic average of 2.56, and the dimension of managing the instructional program with an average of 2.50, while the third dimension, which is promoting a positive school learning climate, achieved the lowest arithmetic average, reaching 2.49. This is because the items related to the fields of maintaining high visibility and promoting professional development got an average score.
2. There were no statistically significant differences due to the independent variables such as gender and academic qualification, while the differences were significant according to the variable of experience as school principal (more than 10 years).

Conclusion: The study results indicated that:

Public school principals in Aqaba district practice their role as instructional leaders in implementing curricula.

Keywords: School principal, Instructional leader, Curriculum implementation.

دور مدراء المدارس كقيادة تدريسيين في تنفيذ المناهج في المدارس الحكومية في منطقة العقبة، الأردن

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المخلص

الأهداف: هدفت الدراسة إلى:

1. التعرف إلى دور مديري المدارس كقيادة تدريسيين في تنفيذ المناهج في المدارس الحكومية في منطقة العقبة.
2. التعرف إلى الفروق في متوسطات العوامل الشخصية تبعاً لمتغيرات الجنس والمؤهل العلمي والخبرة كمدير مدرسة.

المنهجية: اتبعت الدراسة المنهج الوصفي واستخدمت الاستبانة كطريقة لجمع البيانات.

النتائج: أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن:

1. مديري المدارس يمارسون دورهم كقيادة تدريسيين في تنفيذ المناهج بدرجة عالية في الأبعاد الثلاثة، حيث حقق بعد تحديد رسالة المدرسة أعلى الدرجات بمتوسط حسابي 2.56، وبعدها إدارة البرنامج التعليمي بمتوسط 2.50، في حين حقق البعد الثالث وهو تعزيز مناخ التعلم الإيجابي في المدرسة أدنى متوسط حسابي بلغ 2.49. وذلك لأن الفقرات المتعلقة بمجالات الحفاظ على الرؤية العالية وتعزيز التطوير المهني حصلت على درجة متوسطة.
2. عدم وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية تعزى للمتغيرات المستقلة مثل الجنس والمؤهل الأكاديمي، بينما كانت الفروق ذات دلالة إحصائية تبعاً لمتغير الخبرة كمدير مدرسة (أكثر من 10 سنوات).

الخلاصة: أشارت خلاصة الدراسة إلى أن مديري المدارس الحكومية في منطقة العقبة يمارسون دورهم كقيادة تدريسيين في تنفيذ المناهج.

الكلمات المفتاحية: مدير المدرسة، القائد التدريسي، تنفيذ المنهج.

Introduction

Curriculum is a powerful tool used by a community to convey its own learning objectives and intentions and it is also a contract between the stakeholders (Wiles and Bondi, 2011). Therefore, teachers should implement curriculum as planned and with high quality. The curriculum implementation is considered the most important and sometimes the most difficult stage in the curriculum process (Jansen, 2009 and Chen and Yang, 2013). It requires putting everything planned as a curriculum document into practice in the classroom through the joint efforts of stakeholders as well as interaction with physical facilities, educational materials and the psychosocial environment.

Since the goal of the curriculum implementation is to make a difference to the learners, the implementation of curriculum is therefore a process of bringing about change and perhaps improvement and this is not an easy task (Simão, 2008, Marsh, 2009 and Ornstein and Hunkins, 2009). Thus, the school principal plays a prominent role in the success of curriculum implementation process and ensuring that curriculum is delivered and managed efficiently and effectively (Spillane & Hunt, 2010, Roul, 2012 and Pietsch, 2015) as this process depends on teachers and principals which have a direct effect on the achievement of students (Nkobi, 2008, Premavathy, 2010, Sekhu, 2011 and Bush, 2015).

Statement of the Problem

School principals must spend 65% of their time on instructional programs and are therefore expected to tend to their role as instructional leaders in the school, (Rooney, 2009). However, some researchers indicated that typical principals spend 62% of their time practicing administrative activities, and spend only 11% of their time practicing works related to instructional activities and this result certainly varies from country to country. Therefore, due to the lack of time and large number of paper work, school principals can only allocate a little of their time to practice their roles as instructional leaders (Poirier, 2009).

Although the roles of school principals as instructional leaders have received a great deal of attention by instructional leadership researchers, some researchers as Bush (2014) and Nguyen et al., (2017) criticized that most of the studies presented on the principals' roles as instructional leaders are from the decentralized educational system and few are known about the practice of leadership related to the centralized educational system.

In developing countries, the available and presented studies on the roles of principals as instructional leaders are still emerging and relatively undeveloped so there is an urgent need for more empirical studies to enhance the research and knowledge base on instructional leadership (Walker et al., 2005, Hallinger, 2011, Jamelaa, & Jainabee, 2011, Hallinger and Bryant, 2013a, 2013b, Hallinger and Walker; 2014, Hallinger and Chen, 2015 and Harris and Jones, 2015a).

From the researcher's point of view, some principals do not practice their roles as instructional leaders properly because there are differences in the principals' views about the importance of their roles, the preference for some roles over others and the high pressure of work. In addition to the lack of experience and knowledge of some school principals in their roles as instructional leaders. This was confirmed by Budhal 2000, Nelson et al., 2008. Hallinger & Murphy, 2013, Spillane and Lee, 2014, Lee, 2015, and Scott, 2017) who indicated that newly appointed principals face barriers in performing their roles as instructional leaders such as lack of experiences, difficulty in time management, lack of understanding of educational policy content and lack of resources and funding etc., that are described as exhausting, traumatic and confusing. The researcher also noted that there are a number of personal factors that positively or negatively affect principals' practice of their roles. Based on this background. There is a need to highlight the principals' role as instructional leaders.

Purpose of the Study

The study aimed to identify the role of school principals as instructional leaders in the implementation of curricula in public schools in the Aqaba district, Jordan.

Questions of the Study

The study questions were formulated as follows:

- To what extent do school principals practice their role as instructional leaders in the implementation of curricula in public schools in the Aqaba district?
- Does the role of school principals as instructional leaders differ according to the variables such as gender, academic qualification and experience as a school principal?

Significance of the Study

The study might help in

- Providing feedback to officials, principals and stakeholders to see if school principals are practicing their roles as instructional leaders, and to assist in the evaluation of these roles.
- Demonstrating the key contribution of principals' role as instructional leaders in improving the quality of instruction and learning.

Limitations of the Study

- The study spatial limits include all public schools in the Aqaba district.
- This study included all male and female governmental school principals in the Aqaba district.
- This study was ended in the academic year 2023- 2024.
- This study was limited to the role of principals as instructional leaders in implementing curricula.

Study Hypothesis

The hypothesis underneath guided this study:

- Hypothesis 1: There are no statistically significant differences at ($\alpha \leq .05$) in the role of school principals as instructional leaders in the implementation of curricula in public schools in the Aqaba district due to gender (male and female).
- Hypothesis 2: There are no statistically significant differences at ($\alpha \leq .05$) in the role of principals due to academic qualification (higher diploma) or (master degree or more).
- Hypothesis 3: There are no statistically significant differences at ($\alpha \leq .05$) in the role of principals due to experience as a school principal (10 years or less) or (more than 10 years).

The study terms were defined theoretically and procedurally as follows:

Curriculum implementation: Putting the curriculum into practice through the interaction of stakeholders to achieve the curriculum objectives (Mkpa, 2007). For this study, it refers to using curriculum in a way that leads to achieving the goals for which curriculum was developed through teaching and learning process.

Instructional leader is the leader whose responsibilities are linked to the teaching and learning process (Quah, 2011). For this study, it refers to the leader whose roles are to ensure the correct implementation of curriculum.

Theoretical Framework and Previous Studies

The Instructional Leader Concept and Roles

Various researchers have attempted to provide definitions of instructional leader over the years. Muijs et al., (2010) defined instructional leader is a one who takes a practical approach in teaching and learning process. It was also defined by Cotton, 2003; Jita, 2010, Sekhu, 2011 as a leader who is primarily responsible for effective implementation of curricula and instructional issues that directly influence students' academic achievement.

The roles of principals as instructional leaders include three key dimensions and each of them consists of two or more of the ten sub- roles (Hallinger and Murphy, 1985, Admed 2016). In this study, these dimensions will be discussed depending on Hallinger and Murphy's model (1985) due to its frequently use in many empirical studies.

1. Defining the School Mission

This dimension relates to the role of principal in working with teachers to ensure that school has clear, measurable mission and goals that concentrate on achieving students' academic performance. Principal must have a vision and the school plays a clear role in making this vision create a sense among teachers and students of a common goal through implementation of different activities (Turkoglu and Cansoy, 2018). This dimension includes:

a) Framing the School Goals

This role relates to principals' roles in determining their vision, personal expectations and aspirations and what they expect from teachers and students to achieve the stated goals of school.

b) Communicating School Goals

This role relates to the methods that principals use to communicate the most important goals of school to the stakeholder. (Hallinger & Lee, 2013).

2. Managing the Instructional Program

This dimension requires the participation of the principal and other principals in promoting monitoring, supervising and teaching and learning in the school. This dimension includes:

a) Coordinating Curriculum

Students spend a lot of time in school doing different types of work and extra-curricular activities. Therefore, these activities should be suitable for students and teachers and organized according to a practical school timetable (UNESCO, 2005). Some researchers claimed that principal is responsible for coordinating curriculum across the level of grade as well as ensuring that teachers translate the school's academic goals into common curricular objectives.

b) Supervising Instruction

Principals work to stimulate the development of the staff to impact teachers' behavior in the classroom and to promote, select, develop, use and evaluate good instructional materials and approaches.

c) Monitoring and Evaluating Learner Progress

Principals have a major role in monitoring academic progress of students by providing teachers with tests and examinations results in a timely and useful way, in addition to discussing the result with teachers and helping parents understand where, why and what is needed for improvement (Kruger, 2003).

3. Developing a Positive School Learning Climate

The third dimension is considered broader in purpose and scope than the previous dimension. This dimension includes:

a) Protecting Instructional Time

Some teachers do not use classroom management skills and instructional skills are optimally if they are interrupted during instruction frequently so principal can control this through the development and implementation of policies at school level.

b) Providing Incentive for Teachers

Principals play an important role in providing motivation for teachers by creating a positive learning climate that includes establishing a work structure through which teachers' work is rewarded and recognized.

c) Providing Incentive for Learners

When principals practice this role, they create a school climate that enables students to make academic progress by repeatedly rewarding students for their academic progress and recognizing it in the classroom and in front of the whole school.

d) Promoting Professional Development

Principals practice this role by ensuring that the in- service professional training activities that they lead and organize are directly linked to the achievement of school goals.

e) Maintaining High Visibility

The visibility of vision of principal's increase interaction between principal and students and teachers. It is expected that the principals will focus more time on dealing strictly with curricula issues than on administrative roles.

Review of Empirical Literature

Previous studies related to the study of objectives were reviewed, including:

Geleta's study (2015) aimed to explore the roles of Shambu primary school principals as instructional leaders. The sample comprised of 13 respondents (two heads of departments, two principals, two teachers and seven students of the school council) and they were chosen purposively. The study used focus group discussion, semi-structured interview, observation and document analyses. The findings showed that principals practice their administrative roles at the expense of their roles as instructional leaders and that they need to practice many of their roles to improve teaching and learning such as defining school mission and creating a positive climate for teaching and learning. The study recommended that principals should attend training courses to develop their ability to practice their roles as there were differences in leadership practices due to age and year of experience, while gender has shown no significant difference.

Salameh's study (2016) aimed to reveal the extent to which principals of public secondary schools of the Al Ain Educational Office in the United Arab Emirates practice their role as instructional leaders, in addition to revealing

whether there are statistically significant differences attributed to gender. The sample included 258 respondents, and the Hallinger scale was used. The results revealed that the first dimension is the most practiced dimension by principals, while the continuous follow-up of school affairs achieved the least practice in addition to that the results showed that male practice their role to a greater extent compared to female. The study recommended the need to pay attention to the dimensions and items that achieved low levels in this study.

Harris et al., (2017) conducted a study aimed to investigate the instructional leadership practices of primary school principals in Malaysia. Semi-structured interviews were used. The sample consisted of 30 primary school principals from four different states in Malaysia. The findings revealed that principals practice their roles efficiently in the three dimensions, especially with regard to promoting professional development, while they do not practice their roles as required in the field of coordinating the curriculum, monitoring and evaluating student progress, and protecting instructional time. The study recommended to reduce the routine administrative tasks practiced by principals.

Yimer's study (2017) aimed to assess principals' roles as instructional leaders in public secondary schools of Assosa Zone of Benishangul Gumuz regional state. The sample comprised of 10 principals, 92 teachers, 20 Members of Parent Teacher Association and 6 school cluster supervisors. The teachers were selected using simple random sampling in addition to the sampling techniques. Questionnaires, semi structured interview and documents were utilized. The findings showed that although principals were effective in implementing some of their roles such as monitoring students' progress and implementing, evaluating and improving curricula, they were not effective in practicing some of their roles such as promoting professional development, creating a positive school learning climate for implementing curricula and monitoring and evaluating instruction. The findings also showed that there were no statistically significant differences with regard to gender, and there were significant differences for professional qualification. The study recommended the need to providing professional development to train principals.

Norbu and Lhabu's study (2021) aimed at examining the level of Bhutanese principals' practice of their roles as instructional leaders in Wangduephodrang district. The sample comprised of (76) respondents (65 teachers and 16 school principals) and they were selected purposively. One to one interviews and semi-structured questionnaires were utilized. The results showed that principals practice their role at a high level and have sufficient awareness of the importance of their roles, but they did not practice some roles sufficiently with regard to supervising and evaluating instruction. The study recommended to reduce the burdens of administrative principals

Wangdi's study (2021) aimed to investigate the level of principals' practices of their roles as instructional leaders' practices in Eastern Bhutan and to compare the difference in the instructional leadership practices based on institutional and personal factors. The sample was 147 principals and they were chosen by using stratified random sampling technique. Questionnaire and personal interviews were utilized. The findings showed that principals practice their role, in addition to presence of statistically significant differences due to personal and institutional variables such as age, year of experience, level, and school location while there were no statistically significant differences due to gender. The study recommended helping principals to execute their expected roles as instructional leaders.

All previous studies and this study aimed at revealing the roles played by principals as instructional leaders in implementing curricula. In addition, the studies of Geleta, 2015, Harris, et al., (2017), Yimer (2017) and Wangdi (2021) dealt with three dimensions and the ten sub-roles that fall under it while the study of Norbu and Lhabu (2021) did not address all the previous roles.

The sample of the current study consisted of school principals only, as in the studies of Harris, et al. (2017) and Yimer (2017), while some studies included teachers and principals as in the study of Norbu and Lhabu (2021). In any case, the sample of Yimer's study (2017) consisted of principals, supervisors, teachers and parents. This study selected sample purposively as in the studies of Geleta (2015) and Harris, et al. (2017), while the study of Wangdi (2021) used stratified random sampling technique. The studies of Yimer (2017) and Norbu and Lhabu (2021) used both of the previously mentioned techniques.

The questionnaire was employed as a tool for data collection in this study, while previous studies used different tools. Some previous studies found that the inability of principals to practice their roles as required as in the studies of Harris, et al. (2017), Yimer (2017), Norbu and Lhabu (2021) and Wangdi (2021) but the study of (Geleta, 2015) found that principals need to perform more of their roles.

Design and Methodology

Design of the Study

The descriptive survey design was used because of its suitability to the nature of the study subject.

Population, Sample size and Sampling Techniques of the Study

The study population included 87 school principals (27 males and 60 females) and all of them were selected purposively. Instrument of the Study

The study tool was a questionnaire prepared by the researcher and its final form consisted of two parts. The first part related to personal information of the principal, and the other included three dimensions. The total number of questionnaire items was 50, where five items were distributed to each of the ten roles of principal.

Reliability of the Instrument

The method of testing and re-testing was applied to extract reliability of the tool, where the tool was applied to a sample consisting of 30 principals from outside the study sample and from a population similar to the current study population with a difference of two weeks from the first and second time. Pearson Correlation coefficients were calculated for the three dimensions, and the table below shows that the values are suitable to achieve the study purpose.

Table (1) Test - Retest of the whole dimensions

Dimensions	Test-retest
Defining the school mission	.79
Managing the instructional program	.77
Promoting a positive school learning climate	.80
Whole scale	.86

** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

The tool reliability was also calculated for all dimensions using Cronbach Alpha as shown in table (2). The result showed acceptable reliability for all dimensions, which are acceptable coefficients for the study purposes and give the researcher confidence to apply it.

Table (2) The reliability of the questionnaire dimensions according to Cronbach's alpha coefficient

Dimensions	Cronbach alpha
Defining school mission	.82
Managing the instructional program	.84
Promoting a positive school learning climate	.80
Whole scale	.87

It is clear from the previous table that the values of Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the tool for the three dimensions ranged between (.80- .95) that indicate the questionnaire reliability.

Validity of the Instrument

The validity of the content of study tool was confirmed by presenting it to a number of arbitrators to ensure appropriateness of the items to measure what was set to be measured and the extent to which they belong to the study subject and its fields, as well as the clarity of its linguistic formulation and the extent of its measurability. The arbitrators' opinions were taken into account and the number of questionnaire items was reduced from 80 to 50. The correlation coefficients of each item and the total score were calculated to extract the significance of construct validity of the scale. Therefore, the value of correlation coefficients of the items with the tool ranged between (.38 - .85) and with the domains (.41- .90) and the table underneath illustrates that.

Table (3) Correlation Coefficients between the item and the total Score and the domain to which it belongs for the scale of the degree to which school principals practice their role as instructional leaders

Item #	R With Domain	R With total score	Item #	R With Domain	R With total score	Item #	R With Domain	R With total score
1	.61**	.58**	18	.67**	.55**	35	.84**	.82**
2	.69**	.70**	19	.56**	.56**	36	.81**	.72**
3	.65**	.67**	20	.81**	.75**	37	.83**	.78**
4	.73**	.78**	21	.73**	.61**	38	.90**	.83**

Item #	R With Domain	R With total score	Item #	R With Domain	R With total score	Item #	R With Domain	R With total score
5	.84**	.74**	22	.68**	.70**	39	.77**	.74**
6	.83**	.67**	23	.61**	.52**	40	.71**	.61**
7	.85**	.69**	24	.76**	.76**	41	.82**	.84**
8	.72**	.71**	25	.67**	.62**	42	.80**	.74**
9	.79**	.63**	26	.55**	.52**	43	.74**	.80**
10	.80**	.70**	27	.73**	.76**	44	.73**	.67**
11	.71**	.65**	28	.66**	.70**	45	.47**	.43*
12	.70**	.59**	29	.56**	.54**	46	.41*	.38*
13	.77**	.75**	30	.81**	.75**	47	.42*	.44*
14	.63**	.54**	31	.70**	.61**	48	.74**	.74**
15	.64**	.56**	32	.41*	.40*	49	.55**	.57**
16	.82**	.78**	33	.59**	.59**	50	.58**	.61**
17	.81**	.85**	34	.75**	.75**			

* Correlation is significant at the (.05) level

**Correlation is significant at the (.01) level

It can be noted from the previous table that correlation coefficients were acceptable and therefore no items were deleted from questionnaire items.

The field correlation coefficient was also extracted with the total score, and the correlation coefficients between the fields with each other, and the following table shows this.

Table (4) Correlation Coefficients between the domains and the total score

Dimensions	Defining the school mission	managing the instructional program	promoting a positive school learning climate	Total score
Defining the school mission	1			
Managing the instructional program	.826**	1		
Promoting a positive school learning climate	.797**	.817**	1	
Total score	.906**	.928**	.921**	1

Table (4) shows that all correlation coefficients were acceptable and statistically significant degrees, indicating an appropriate degree of construct validity.

Data Collection and Analysis

A link to the questionnaire was sent via the Internet, and all principals were invited to participate in the study. All sample responses were obtained, and then data was analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Findings

To answer the first study question, means and standard deviations of principals' practices were computed as presented in tables (5,6,7,8).

Table (5) Means and standard deviations of the principals' practices, ranked in a descending order

Rank	N	Dimensions	Mean	Std. Deviation	Level
1	1	Defining the school mission	2.56	.403	High
2	2	Managing the instructional program	2.50	.390	High
3	3	Promoting a positive school learning climate	2.47	.349	High
		Total score	2.50	.345	High

Table (5) shows that "defining the school mission" received the highest mean (2.56), while "promoting a positive school learning climate" was ranked last with mean (2.47). This table also shows that the total mean is (2.50).

Mean and standard deviation of sub items in each domain were calculated as shown in the following tables.

1-Defining the school mission

Table (6) means and standard deviations of the school mission, ranked in a descending order

Rank	N	Domains	Mean	Std. Deviation	Level
1	1	Framing the school goals	2.58	.407	High
2	2	Communicating school goals	2.54	.476	High
		Defining the school mission	2.56	.403	High

Table (6) shows that "Framing the school goals" received the highest mean (2.58), while "Communicating school goals" was ranked last with mean (2.54). This table also shows that defining the school mission mean is (2.56).

2- Managing the instructional program

Table (7) Means and standard deviations of managing the instructional program, ranked in a descending order

Rank	N	Domains	Mean	Std. Deviation	Level
1	2	Monitoring and evaluating student progress	2.53	.447	High
2	3	Supervising and evaluating instruction	2.49	.428	High
3	1	Coordinating the curriculum	2.48	.450	High
		Managing the instructional program	2.50	.390	High

Table (7) shows that "Monitoring and evaluating student progress" received the highest mean (2.53), while "Coordinating the curriculum" was ranked last with mean (2.48). This table also shows that managing the instructional program mean is (2.50).

3-Promoting a positive school learning climate

Table (8) Means and standard deviations of promoting a positive school learning climate, ranked in a descending order

Rank	N	Domains	Mean	Std. Deviation	Level
1	5	Providing incentives for learning	2.71	.374	High
2	1	protecting instructional time	2.62	.376	High
3	4	Providing incentives for teachers	2.52	.431	High
4	3	Promoting professional development	2.26	.493	Moderate
5	2	Maintaining high visibility	2.24	.479	Moderate
		promoting a positive school learning climate	2.47	.349	High

Table (8) shows that "providing incentives for learning" received the highest mean (2.71), while "maintaining high visibility" was ranked last with mean (2.24). This table also shows that promoting a positive school learning climate mean is (2.47).

As for the study second question, t-test analysis was conducted to find out whether there are statistically significant differences ($\alpha \leq .05$) in the means of the principals' practice to their role due to gender, academic qualification and experience as a school principal and the results are shown in tables (9,10,11)

1- Gender variable

Table (9) t-test results of the principals' practices according to gender

Dimensions	Gender	N	Means	Std. Deviation	t	DF	Sig. (2-tailed)
Defining the school mission	Male	27	2.62	.364	.929	85	.355
	Female	60	2.53	.420			
	Male	27	2.53	.365	.474	85	.636

Dimensions	Gender	N	Means	Std. Deviation	t	DF	Sig. (2-tailed)
Managing the instructional program	Female	60	2.49	.403			
Promoting a positive school learning climate	Male	27	2.51	.293	.677	85	.500
	Female	60	2.45	.373			
Total score	Male	27	2.54	.295	.720	85	.474
	Female	60	2.48	.367			

The findings from table (9) shows that there are no statistically significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) in all the domains and the total score due to gender.

2- Academic qualification variable

Table (10) t-test results of the principals' practices according to educational degree

Domains	Academic qualification	N	Means	Std. Deviation	t	DF	Sig. (2-tailed)
Defining the school mission	Higher diploma	66	2.55	.426	-.228	85	.820
	Master's degree or more	21	2.58	.330			
Managing the instructional program	Higher diploma	66	2.49	.403	-.304	85	.762
	Master's degree or more	21	2.52	.356			
Promoting a positive school learning climate	Higher diploma	66	2.46	.368	-.377	85	.707
	Master's degree or more	21	2.49	.289			
Total score	Higher diploma	66	2.49	.363	-.347	85	.729
	Master's degree or more	21	2.52	.290			

The findings from table (10) shows that there are no statistically significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) in all domains and the total score due to academic qualification.

3- Experience variable as a school principal

Table (11) t-test results of principals' practices according to experience as a school principal

Dimensions	experience as a school principal	N	Means	Std. Deviation	T	DF	Sig. (2-tailed)
Defining the school mission	10 years or less	44	2.41	.429	-3.692	85	.000
	more than 10 years	43	2.71	.313			
Managing the instructional program	10 years or less	44	2.34	.412	-4.176	85	.000
	more than 10 years	43	2.66	.291			
Promoting a positive school learning climate	10 years or less	44	2.32	.354	-4.433	85	.000
	more than 10 years	43	2.62	.272			
Total score	10 years or less	44	2.34	.355	-4.589	85	.000
	more than 10 years	43	2.65	.258			

The findings from table (11) shows that there are statistically significant differences at ($\alpha=.05$) in all the domains and the total score in favor of principals with more than 10 years of experience.

Discussion the Findings

As for the first question, the findings revealed that principals practice their roles with a high degree in the three dimensions, where the first dimension got the highest average in the study, followed by the second dimension, and then the third dimension. The researcher attributes this result to preparation, rehabilitation and professional development programs offered by Ministry of Education for principals, in addition to efforts made by the school administration supervisor during their periodic and continuous supervisory visit to support principals and evaluate their job

performance, in addition to what the questioning committees at the level of Ministry of Education and its affiliated directorates carry out follow-up visits to evaluate educational process in schools on an ongoing basis, and this makes principals fully prepared in various aspects of educational process as evidence of school performance quality.

The results revealed that principals practice their role with regard to the first dimension and this is consistent with the studies of Salameh (2016), Harris et al., (2017), Yimer (2017), Norbu and Lhabu (2021) and Wangdi (2021) While it differs with the study of Geleta, 2015. It is worth noting that this dimension occupied the first place among the three dimensions in this study, and this result is consistent with Salama's study (2016). The interpretation for this result, in the researcher's opinion, is due to the fact that this dimension is close to basic administrative role and functions that principals are fully aware of and consider it as starting point of new academic year, in addition to principals' awareness that clear and specific goals of the school are indispensable for enhancing curriculum implementation because it is the focus of the school system.

The dimension of managing the instructional program ranked second after defining the school mission, which indicates that principals practice their role. This result is consistent with the studies of Salameh (2016), Yimer (2017) and Wangdi (2021). This result differs from the results of the study Norbu and Lhabu (2021), in addition to the study of Geleta, 2015 and Harris et al., (2017) as principals paid little attention to this dimension. It should be noted that all areas of this dimension obtained a high score, in addition to the area of monitoring and evaluating students' progress receiving the highest average among the other areas. The researcher attributes this result to presence of a kind of awareness and clarity among principals of their role in monitoring and evaluating students' performance and actually supervising what happens inside the classroom, and this indicates follow-up and interest in implementing curricula. The field of the principals' role in coordinating curricula achieved the lowest average among the three fields belonging to the second dimension. This is due to preoccupation of principals with administrative burdens and tasks, because this role requires them to fully and deeply immerse themselves in curricula.

According to the findings, the third dimension ranked last among the three dimensions, and this is consistent with the study of Salameh (2016) as this dimension achieved the third rank, but it differs from the results of the current study which revealed that this dimension achieved a high degree, while Salameh's study (2016) achieved an average degree.

The findings indicated that the field of maintaining visibility achieved a medium degree within the third dimension, where the item that talks about the role of principal in practicing teaching, especially in the absence or delay of the teacher, achieved the lowest score among the items in the questionnaire. The researcher attributes this result to the large number of administrative burdens that fall on principals and the lack of prevalence of this practice as a culture among principals, while the item that talks about the presence and participation of the principal in the additional activities related to curriculum implementation in addition to the item that talks about principal talking to teachers and students informally about school issues and curriculum, achieved a medium degree. The researcher attributes this result to the lack of sufficient time for principals because they are preoccupied with office work that has nothing to do with teaching and their interest in the basic administrative duties entrusted to them at the expense of interest in their role as instructional leaders. This result can also be attributed to the scarcity or non-existence of the administrative staff, or the teachers' failure to accept the principal's intervention in performing their work except in very necessary cases because they believe that the responsibility for implementing curriculum is limited only to teachers.

The results on the field of promoting professional development, which falls under the third dimension, showed that the practices of principals were of an average degree. This result is in line with the result of Salameh (2016), Harris, et al. (2017), Norbu and Lhabu (2021) and Wangdi (2021). The result of this field differs with the studies of Geleta (2015) and Yimer (2017). The researcher attributes the result of this field to the increase in administrative burdens on principals or their lack of belief in the importance of promoting professional development for. This can also be attributed to resistance to change by principals for fear of participation of teachers in leadership, which leads to a decrease in their status and influence, in addition to the weakness of necessary capabilities and lack of sufficient time to experiment and innovate new methods of work. This could be due to the belief of principals that this role has great connection with educational supervisor and principals' negligence of their role in promoting professional development.

It is worth noting that the role of principals in providing incentives for learning has obtained the highest degree with regard to the third dimension. The researcher attributes this result to the fact that principals know that providing incentives for learning is the main key to ensuring the quality of curriculum implementation and improving educational system quality as a whole. To achieve this, they use all the possibilities, capabilities and facilities available inside and outside school because they believe that providing incentives reflects positively on the environment and school learning climate and all its elements. It should also be noted that the item that talks about principals' communication with students' parents

to inform them of their children's academic progress or their ideal contributions received the highest average among the fifty items of the questionnaire. This result is due, in the researcher's view, to the fact that principals are keen to motivate students and direct them towards learning, and use all possible methods and means because they realize that students are the focus of educational process and the purpose of its existence. Principals deal with students' parents as essential partners in the educational process. Therefore, they are keen to communicate constantly with parents, submit reports on their children's results, and inform them of their progress.

As for the second question of the study, the findings showed that there were no statistically significant differences at ($\alpha \leq .05$) in the role of principals according to the gender. This result is consistent with the studies of Yimer (2017) and Wangdi (2021). The researcher attributes this result to the fact that all principals in the Aqaba district, males and females, are subject to similar conditions of cultural and educational experiences and circumstances. They also receive the same directives and instructions related to their role, and that the management requirements in all schools are similar, regardless of the gender of principal. This confirms the interest of Ministry of Education in strengthening the role of principal without discrimination, and that the work within Ministry's system is one and equal for everyone, regardless of gender, and that Ministry of Education is interested in building capacities of principals in order to develop their roles, style, and performance regardless of their gender.

The findings indicated that there were no statistically significant differences at ($\alpha \leq .05$) in the role of principal due to the academic qualification. This result varies with the study of Yimer (2017). The researcher attributes this result to the fact that principals have high educational and professional skills and competencies and have convictions about the importance of their role. They all aspire to excellence regardless of their academic qualifications, and that holders of various certificates follow one official body that draws up different education policies for them. This confirms the role of Ministry of Education and its followed policy, which does not differentiate between principals in their possession of academic qualifications, but rather encourages them to follow and develop educational process and provide advice and guidance to them in order to achieve excellence in their performance and to use modern methods and strategies and follow them to fully carry out their roles.

The results also revealed that there were statistically significant differences at ($\alpha \leq .05$) in the role of principal who has experience for more than 10 years. The researcher attributes this result to the fact that principals who have more than 10 years of experience are more aware of their role as they underwent all training courses held by Ministry of Education and participated in seminars and lectures related to their role as instructional leaders, in addition to that they exposed to situations and experiences that enabled them to practice their role for a long period of time.

Conclusion and Recommendations of the Study

The findings revealed that principals practice their role as instructional leaders in implementing curricula in public schools in the Aqaba district to a high degree, and that there are statistically significant differences attributed to experience as a school principal, and there are no significant differences attributed to gender and academic qualification. Therefore, a number of recommendations emerged from the study findings:

- Enhancing the role of principals as instructional leaders in implementing curricula, especially with regard to promoting professional development through holding training courses and workshops.
- Conducting more research on the reality of principals' practice of their role as instructional leaders in implementing curricula and linking it to the same or other variables that may play an important role in raising or declining its level.
- Reducing the burdens and administrative tasks placed on the shoulders of the school principals to be able to increase the degree of their practice of their role as instructional leaders in the implementation of the curricula.

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