

An Assessment of the Effectiveness of the Local Governance in Ensuring Educational Development: Explaining the Public Attitude

A Case of Gulomekeda Woreda, Eastern Tigray Region, Ethiopia

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Abstract

In carrying out the research an attempt is made to assess the attitudes of the public concerning to the effectiveness of the local government in dealing with educational sector development from local governance perspective in Gulomekeda woreda. To come up with the required data pertinent to the research undertaking quantitative research methodology was employed. To select the sample respondents for the research both probability and non probability sampling designs were used. The research finding shows that the local government is effective in educational equity and access where as facing limitations in ensuring quality and efficiency. Therefore stakeholders' participation, ensuring democratic school leadership based on meritocracy and minimizing the risk of poverty in the area is recommended to deal with the limitations.

Keywords: Education, Local Governance, Public Attitude

1. Introduction

There is a premise that local governance is an important driver of a country's overall progress towards achieving local socio-economic development (FDRE&UNDP, 2012). That is why the Ethiopian government has adopted a federal governance architecture that recognizes the constitutive power of the nations, nationalities, and peoples of Ethiopia. However, still there are communities living in poverty in Ethiopia and for which the local governance process is facing difficulties in bringing effective local socioeconomic development (MoFED, 2012). Shumete (2009) also strengthens the idea claiming that "due to several reasons that local governance actors face in bringing socio-economic development poverty in particular and poor local socioeconomic development and governance, in general is, the reality in Ethiopia today" and of which the largest section socioeconomically poor is rural people with insufficient assets to produce and purchase food.

Though the local government in Gulomekeda woreda claims as it is successful in educational sector development in its consecutive annual report declarations different socioeconomic problems especially problems related to educational quality, access and efficiency are well observed in the local district. Gebrehiwot and Gebru (2012) stated that the characterization of the socioeconomic reality of the woreda is a very poor kind and different households were living in a worse livelihood situation. Poverty, migration and unemployment are some of the social and economic problems in action while at the same time the local governance is failed to recognize their existence and their reality in the local district. However to Gebrehiwot and Fekadu, (2012) found that low level of education, limited access to information, unemployment are major factors for out-migration of the youth section of both sexes in the area for example. Therefore the research has been focused on assessing and explaining the attitude of the public so that to come up with real image of the local district and to triangulate the claims and reports of the government officials and the researchers on the other hand.

2. Description of the study area

Gulomekeda is one of the Woredas in Tigray Region of Ethiopia. Its name partly comes from the legendary Queen Makeda, also known as the Queen of Sheba. Part of the Misraqawi Zone, Gulomekeda is bordered on the south by Ganta Afeshum, on the west by the Central Zone, on the north by Eritrea, on the east by Irob, and on the southeast by Saesi Tsaedaemba. Towns in Gulomekeda include Sebeya, Fatsi and Zalanbesa.

In regard to educational sector there are a total of 52 primary and secondary schools. Out of which 6 are not governmental while the rest are government schools. According to the 2014/15 data of woreda office of education 20,000 primary and 2587 secondary school students are in the schools and 715 teachers with different qualifications are serving in the education sector. The local district is made up of 19 Kebeles and 72 Kushets (Gots') which are the lowest unit of administration. According to Article 84 of the constitution of the regional state of Tigray the "Tabias" or "Kebeles" or "Baitos" are empowered to implement plans and strategies formulated by the executive committee of the woreda council (Woreda Statistical Magazine 2014).

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Research strategy, Data Type, Source and Collection

As per the nature of the research objective the research strategy is a quantitative strategy and all the data are primary data collected through questionnaire. Concerning to the source of the data it was collected from members/ residents of the three sample kebeles which have been selected randomly out of the total 19 kebeles.

3.2. Sample and sampling procedure

To select the sample respondents for the research both probability and non probability sampling designs were used. Simple random sampling was employed and three Kebeles out of a total of nineteen Kebeles have been selected and convenient sampling to address questionnaire participants from each Kebele.

3.3. Sample Size

After defining the sample kebeles through simple random sampling technique the appropriate size of the respondents from each kebele for questionnaire administration was determined using sample size determination formula, called Yamane formula. Accordingly out of a total of 2418 households of the three kebeles 187 respondents has been derived. The precision level considered in this assessment was 7%. While calculating the published tables as a guide for sample size determination, Israel (1992) had used a formula developed by Yamane (1967), with the precision level of ± 3 , ± 5 , ± 7 and ± 10 . Therefore due to this known use of precision levels (e) starting from ± 1 to ± 10 it is used 7% because the population is homogenous in its socio-economic and geographic context so as to get manageable sample size. As a result 7% of margin of error has been considered in this research so that to keep the sample size manageable.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2} \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

$$n = 2418 / 1 + 2418 (0.7)^2 = 187$$

Where n = sample size to be drawn , N = house hold size of the three kebeles
 e = margin of error 7%

Table 3.1: Number of sample respondents from each kebele for questionnaire administration.

No.	Name of Kebeles	Total No. of households	No. of Sample taken
1.	Addis Alem	772	59
2.	Addis Tesfa	854	66
3.	Anbesete Fikada	792	61
	Total	2418	187

Here is the formula to determine the proportional allocation of respondents to each kebele: $n = N_i * n/N$

Where n_i = the number of households from each kebele

n = total sample size

N = total households of the three kebeles

3.4. Data Analysis

To analyze the quantitative data obtained through questionnaire the researcher was used SPSS (version 16) as a descriptive analytical technique for frequency distributions and mean values. The attitudinal agreement is ranged from very poor to very high in five continuum likert - scale [Very high (5), High (4), Moderate/ Medium (3), Poor (2) and Very poor (1)]. And this was calculated by minimum, maximum, as well as mean and since the scale consists 5 points and 2.5 was taken as the average. Therefore results exceeding 3.5 mean scores are considered as effective, mean scores between 2.50 and 3.4 were considered to be moderately effective whereas scores less than 2.5 were regarded as less effective.

4. Discussion and Analysis of Results

In dealing with the attitudes of local residents concerning to the effectiveness of the local governance in ensuring educational development in their locality different sub elements were referred in a likert way. These include questions on educational *quality, equity, access, and efficiency*. However the researcher is intended to assess the attitudes of local residents about these indicators of educational development only taking in to account the respondents access to information and capacity of interpreting and using these information and the indicators may not explain fully the phenomenon under study. The attitudinal agreement is ranged from very poor to very high in five continuum Likert - scale [Very high (5), High (4), Moderate/ Medium (3), Poor (2) and Very poor (1)]. And this was calculated by minimum, maximum, as well as mean and since the scale consists 5 points and 2.5 was taken as the average. Therefore results exceeding 3.5 mean scores are considered as effective, mean scores between 2.50 and 3.4 were considered to be moderately effective whereas scores less than 2.5 were

regarded as less effective.

4.1. Attitude on Equitable Access

How would you perceive/explain the effectiveness of the local governance /woreda in improving educational equity	Rating	Frequency	Percent	Mean of equitable access		
				Min	max	Mean
1. In increasing the rate of participation of girls in primary schools	Very poor	2	1.1	1.00	5.00	3.6845
	Poor	25	13.4			
	Medium	28	15.0			
	High	107	57.2			
	very high	25	13.4			
	Total	187	100.0			
2. In encouraging and increasing the participation rate of girls in secondary schools	very poor	1	.5	1.00	5.00	3.9679
	Poor	8	4.3			
	Medium	27	14.4			
	High	111	59.4			
	very high	40	21.4			
	Total	187	100.0			
3. Ensuring equity of access to education among all kebelles in the woreda	very poor	-	-	2.00	5.00	3.7647
	Poor	8	4.3			
	Medium	46	24.6			
	High	115	61.5			
	very high	18	9.6			
	Total	187	100.0			

Source: own questionnaire survey, 2016

NB: Level of effectiveness = (<2.50= less effective; 2.50-3.4 = moderately effective and >3.50 effective)

Residents of Gulomekeda woreda particularly from the three kebeles were asked about their perception in regard to the effectiveness of the local governance in ensuring educational equity in the woreda. To make clear respondents were supposed to answer three equity issues in education. Accordingly they were asked about the effectiveness of the local governance in increasing the rate of female participation in primary schools in their locality. As a result, the local governance is found effective with mean 3.68 in increasing female educational participation in primary school in the woreda. In regard to the effectiveness of the local governance in increasing females' secondary school participation a significant number of respondents claim that the local governance is effective and the mean score value remains 3.96. In addition to this concerning to the effectiveness of the local governance in ensuring equitable access to education among all kebeles/ reaching all kebeles majority of the respondents reported their attitude as effective with mean score value of 3.76.

In general, concerning to the effectiveness of the local governance in ensuring educational equity among male and female students in primary and secondary school and among all kebeles in Gulomekeda woreda, it is found that good and effective with grand mean of 3.8.

4.2. Attitude on Educational Quality

How would you perceive/explain the effectiveness of the local governance /woreda in improving educational quality	Rating	Frequency	Percent	Mean of the attitude on educational quality		
				Min	max	Mean
1. In improving school facilities in your locality(school fence, toilet , water supply , sufficient class rooms , desks , books, libraries etc	very poor	60	32.1	1.00	5.00	3.0699
	Poor	70	37.4			
	Medium	39	20.9			
	High	17	9.1			
	very high	186	99.5			
	Missing	1	.5			
	Total	187	100.0			
2. In Assigning disciplined, and qualified teachers to schools in their locality	very poor	5	2.7	1.00	5.00	3.1530
	Poor	27	14.4			
	Medium	92	49.2			
	High	53	28.3			
	very high	6	3.2			
	Missing	4	2.1			
	Total	187	100.0			
3. In assigning competent and committed school leaders	very poor	2	1.1	1.00	5.00	2.7861
	Poor	76	40.6			
	Medium	72	38.5			
	High	34	18.2			
	Very high	3	1.6			
	Total	187	100.0			

Source: own questionnaire survey, 2016

NB: Level of effectiveness = (<2.50= less effective; 2.50-3.4 = moderately effective and >3.50 effective)

Currently ensuring educational quality besides to ensuring access is at the apex of the government of Ethiopia. The country's motivation and commitment for educational quality is clearly indicated in GTP I (2010/11-2014/15) and ESDP IV which existed from 2010/11-2014/15. So that educational objectives will be achieved Ethiopia had decentralized educational activities to Educational minister (horizontal decentralization) and to regional education bureaus and woredas (a kind of vertical decentralization). Bearing this in mind the researcher had presented questions quality issues for respondents. Accordingly in assessing the effectiveness of the local governance in improving school facilities the local government is moderately effective with mean score value 3.06. For enhancing educational quality the role of teachers can be considered as irreplaceable role because of the great share they have in education and schooling. However to contribute for ensuring quality the quality of teachers is also a necessary point of reference. Teachers should be capable enough in pedagogical skills and subject mastery, discipline and with environmental interaction. Their capacity can be developed through short trainings, in- service, induction, and continuous professional development processes besides to formal training which is mostly the responsibility of regional and national governments. This can be done by the local government's motivation and strong local governance initiatives in collaboration with other actors in the education sector. Therefore the researcher had assessed attitudes of the ordinary citizens on hoe effective is the local government in assigning disciplined and qualified teachers and the respondents informed that its effectiveness is somewhat/moderately effective with the mean score 3.15.

Democratic leadership and school environment is also a key for educational quality because it manages tasks to the right direction and in line with strategic interests of the nation and motivate teachers to have assume full responsibility and let communities to take part and share in school. In the assessment of the perception of residents they have on the effectiveness of the practices of the local governance in assigning committed, capable and good school leadership it is found that moderately effective with mean 2.78 in the woreda.

In a nut shell, the attitude of the ordinary residents on the state of educational quality in the local district is found moderate with the grand mean value 3.003. Due to poor institutional and school governance, over politicization of the school environment, weak teachers' commitment and poor infrastructures in the woreda educational quality is not ensured in the woreda and the finding also sides with the findings of Keating et al (2003) and UNICEF (2002).

4.3. Attitude on Access to Education

How would you perceive/explain the effectiveness of the local governance /woreda in improving educational access	Rating	Frequency	Percent	Mean of the attitude on access to education		
				Min	max	Mean
1. In ensuring access to pre primary school in your locality	very poor	1	.5	1.00	5.00	3.9519
	Poor	6	3.2			
	Medium	36	19.3			
	High	102	54.5			
	very high	42	22.5			
	Total	187	100.0			
2. In ensuring access to primary school in your locality	very poor	3	1.6	1.00	5.00	3.9144
	Poor	3	1.6			
	Medium	32	17.1			
	High	118	63.1			
	very high	31	16.6			
	Total	187	100.0			
3. In ensuring access to secondary school in your locality	very poor	8	4.3	1.00	5.00	2.9358
	Poor	69	36.9			
	Medium	54	28.9			
	High	39	20.9			
	Very high	17	9.1			
	Total	187	100.0			

Source: Own questionnaire survey, 2016

NB: Level of effectiveness = (<2.50= less effective; 2.50-3.4 = moderately effective and >3.50 effective)

Access to education is the top priorities of the Ethiopian government and hence local governments and communities have given responsibility to ensure access to education. Accordingly the researcher approached questionnaire respondents to assess their attitude on the effectiveness of the local governance in ensuring access to education in their locality. As a result it has been found that it is effective with mean value of 3.95. Not different with this majority of the respondents claimed that the local governance is effective in ensuring access to

primary and secondary schools in their locality as well with mean of 3.91 and 2.93 respectively.

In lieu of conclusion, the researcher found that the attitude of the respondent on the effectiveness of the local governance in ensuring access to pre primary, primary schools and secondary schools is found effective with grand mean of 3.6. This finding positively supports the findings of the first objective obtained through document analysis. The main reason for its effectiveness is it is the government's commitment to achieve motto of the education for all and Millennium Development Goals and its commitment to reach the rural poor in general. This is supported by Deolalikar (1997) and EFA (2015).

4.4. Attitude on Educational Efficiency

How would you perceive/explain the effectiveness of the local governance /woreda in improving educational efficiency	Rating	Frequency	Percent	Mean of attitude on educational efficiency		
				Min	Max	Mean
1. In improving dropout rate	very poor	4	2.1	1.00	5.00	2.8663
	Poor	47	25.1			
	Medium	108	57.8			
	High	26	13.9			
	Very high	2	1.1			
	Total	187	100.0			
2. In improving repetition	very low	1	.5	1.00	5.00	2.6043
	Poor	110	58.8			
	Medium	48	25.7			
	High	18	9.6			
	very high	10	5.3			
	Total	187	100.0			

Source: own questionnaire survey, 2016

NB: Level of effectiveness = (<2.50= less effective; 2.50-3.50 = moderately effective and >3.50 effective)

Educational efficiency is one major indicator of educational development. As local governments through local governance are the prime responsible bodies for ensuring educational efficiency, respondents were asked to assess the effectiveness of the local governance in ensuring efficiency in education in the woreda measured by rate of dropout and repetition. Accordingly, the perceived educational efficiency in the woreda is found out to be moderate given the mean values of 2.86 and 2.60 for dropout and repetition rates respectively.

Poverty, perceptions and practices of out migration in the area, ineligibility and issues of school environment were the factors for less effectiveness of the local governance in ensuring educational efficiency. Ricardo et al (2010) and Francis Dakwa, et al (2014) in studying Zimbabwe noted that poverty and then ineligibility emerged as the underlying cause of school dropout and repetition and hence low educational efficiency.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1. Conclusion

In a nutshell, the following conclusions can be drawn from the research:

- In general, concerning to the effectiveness of the local governance in ensuring educational equity among male and female students in primary and secondary school and among all kebeles in Gulomekeda woreda, it is found that good and effective.
- Due to poor institutional and school governance, over politicization of the school environment, weak teachers' commitment and poor infrastructures in the woreda educational quality is not ensured in the woreda
- The local governance is effective in ensuring access to pre primary, primary schools and secondary school.
- The perceived educational efficiency in the woreda is found out to be moderate given the mean values of 2.86 and 2.60 for dropout and repetition rates respectively. Poverty, perceptions and practices of out migration in the area, ineligibility and issues of school environment were the factors for less effectiveness of the local governance in ensuring educational efficiency.

5.2. Recommendations

- Stakeholder participation and empowerment of school leaders, community members and associations like student clubs, teachers association and parent-teacher-student associations.
- Ensure democratic leadership which should be based on the principle of meritocracy rather than party affiliations.
- Creating conducive school environment like fulfilling physical school infrastructures and software like proper toilet for male and female students, clean water and other (entertainments for teachers) that let

teachers and students to stay and love their school more and work more.

- Introduction and focus on effective capacity building trainings for planners of local educational policy and implementers
- Minimize the risk of poverty and migration perceptions through awareness development and creating employment opportunities and vocational skill development and training centers to youths

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