Views On Problems Faced by Somali Novice School Principals[1]

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Abstract

This paper examines challenges faced by novice school principals in Somalia using quantitative research. The International Study of Principal Preparation (ISPP) survey was employed with a sample of 181 principals serving for a maximum of three years. Data were collected from primary and secondary schools in Mogadishu and the Puntland region. Statistical analyses, including frequency, t-test, ANOVA, and Kruskal Wallis, were performed using SPSS. Findings reveal no significant differences in problematic aspects based on gender, age, experience, or student enrollment. However, education background, school location, and school level showed significant differences in problematic aspects.

Keywords: *Problems; Training; Novice Principal*

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Views On Problems Faced by Somali Novice School Principals

Introduction

Educational leaders that are often having a career shift from teaching and administrative roles are being tasked in guiding schools and shaping students and their educational experience in novice school principals. However, these schools that are particular in Somalia face many challenges and endeavors which undermines the effectiveness of the system.

Somalia has faced many crises that exerted a lot of stress on its political structures leading to fractures within its educational policies. The instability experienced throughout the years has left novice school principals dealing with complex problems that are both social and political aspects. Due to the lack of faith exhibited by the people of Somalia towards their governing bodies which is attributed to lack of stability and concrete development within the country, these novice principals have been left to inherit a challenging and discouraging environment to work in.

Numerous factors play into the role that act as a barrier to the abilities of novice school principals in Somalia such as not having a clear policy for professional development, absence of mentorship programs, and lack of educational staff support. Continuous development is absolutely necessary to enable novice principals to operate and be equipped to undertake the challenges they are currently facing. Issues that arise from the above can be but not limited to lack of staff retention, curriculum imperfections, and parental involvement that halts the progress of the educational system. The success of these schools inevitably leads to the prosperity and development of the educational system with raising the quality of education received by the Somalian people, creating a richer environment for innovation to occur. Thus, addressing the challenges faced by these novice school principals is key for the development of Somalia as a whole from a socio- economic perspective. Implementing a decisive and coherent strategy for the development of these novice school principals should be a priority for the governing bodies from providing the necessary funding, comprehensive support, and inclusion of opportunities for professional development.

The role of the principal in the school is important as a teacher (Chalikias et al., 2020). The principal is considered the leader and manager of all activities occurring in the school whether it's in class or out class activities. As a leader, the principal should have leadership skills which enable and promote his/her relationship with his staff (Delgado & Loya, 2018), in another words, he is the one who make school staffs work (Everard et al., 2004).

The roles we refer to the school principal can be divided into broad types: management and leaderships (Delgado & Loya, 2018). This will lead us to question ourselves whether the principal is leader or manager. Researchers are divided into two teams each supporting one idea while the other defending the other idea (Ornstein, 1991). Some researchers agree that the principal is a

leader based on his behaviors or practices. One study was conducted in Massachusetts and participated in by 149 elementary school principals, more than %75 described themselves as instructional leaders (Ornstein, 1991). In a sample of 370 secondary school principals in North Carolina, it was found that 60% of them are referred to as General Managers (Ornstein, 1991). If the principal is leader, so which leadership style is followed by the principal? School leadership style is recognized by the principal's behavior and his relationship with stakeholders of a school unit (Chalikias et al., 2020). The way leadership is practiced has been changing over time, and there is now a trend towards more inclusive and collaborative approaches, such as distributed leadership (Delgado & Loya, 2018). Choosing the suitable leadership will contribute to the effectiveness of the school principals (Chalikias et al., 2020).

Historically, north American is where school principals started in the mid nineteenth century (Allen, 2020), where the concept of school changed from a room in a house to multiple graded classrooms with teachers, which dramatically made the roles of the principals more complicated and included mentoring, couching guiding teaching methodologies and motivating teacher (Enterieva, 2022).

The researcher did not come across literature about the school principal and the problems they face, or any other form of writing, policies or training programs related to principal training in Somalia. However, the Teacher Policy Report of the Ministry of Education outlined the characteristics of a good principal, such as defining who is the principal, and that he has the ability to solve any conflict that may happened in the school (Somali Republic Ministry of Education, 2021). While reviewing publications of the ministry of education and higher education, they were focused on the principals and how s/he is supposed to be.

No research has been found on the challenges faced by newly appointed school principals in Somalia during their initial years of duty. Therefore, it is believed that this study will contribute to the literature in the field. Additionally, the data obtained is expected to serve as an important resource for practitioners and policy makers in this regard.

Research on Problems of Novice School Principal
For many years, the problems associated with novice principals were known in the globe. As earlier as 1990s, the main problems of novice school principals were defined as, role clarification or what is their role in the school, and how to utilize the new role in the school, lack of technical expertise, and how to do what they supposed to do at school (Daresh & Playko 1994). Fresh School principals may experience a sense of awkwardness, lack of confidence, and require assistance when confronted with practical issues (Kouhsari & Bush, 2020).

The challenges facing principalships in Africa include students who decent from poor families, who cannot pay school fees, or get school materials or more than that with school mapping which long distances are between the students and schools. These problems differ from country to country, for example, England, United States and Europe share the same problems. The challenges mentioned revolve around various issues such as handling feelings of being isolated and lonely,

adapting to the leadership practices and style of the previous principals, managing multiple tasks and time, overseeing the school budget, implementing new government initiatives and projects, and addressing concerns related to the school's infrastructure and site management (Kouhsari & Bush, 2020). Challenges like bureaucracy, lack of resources, resistance to innovation and lack of in-service training were pointed out as problems facing Turkish school principals (Sincar, 2013).

School Principal Roles

School principals' role is considering the most important factor in the success of all activities that occur in the school and the performance of the students and teachers depending on how prepare they are. The pivotal role of the principal in reinforcing character education is important, as the principal assumes the role of a policy maker capable of catering to the diverse needs of students pertaining to character education. The principal's leadership capacity enables them to encourage all faculty and staff members to exemplify good character traits for students, and this is a vital factor that determines the success of character education in schools (Fajri & Dafit, 2022). The school principal holds the most senior leadership position in the school, and as a result, performs a school leadership function that involves organizing and overseeing the allocation and utilization of school resources within the institution (Fadlilah et al., 2022).

The school principal must have background in area like cultural management where he is working, behaviors, beliefs, values and customs of the communities where the school is located (Daries, 2021). The role of the principal is to provide the process of leading, directing and coordinating within the school and all managerial work in the school. The principal's focus should be to develop and maintain effective educational programs within school and to improve the process of teaching and learning with the school (SH Ali & Alnakhala, 2019).

Somali Context

Somali located in east of Africa in area called horn of Africa. Somali has suffered political and civil war for many years. The political situation in Somalia is instable since the collapse of the central government of Somali in 1991, this made a gap in all fields of the social, political and education of Somali (Unesco IIEP Dakar. Africa Office et al., 2022). In Somalia, the social demographics indicate that the number of individuals who are engaged in recognized economic activities and contributing to the economy is nearly equivalent to the total number of dependents, which include individuals under 15 years and above 65 years of age. The average age of the population is 33 years, which suggests that Somalia has a youthful population. Consequently, the country experiences almost complete demographic dependency, estimated to be close to 100 percent (Unesco IIEP Dakar. Africa Office et al., 2022). Historically, education in Somali started as early as the Islam spread in Somalia, and take second revolved in colonize period of the Italian and British (City University & Heritage Institute For Policy Studies CU & HIPS, 2020). Arabic language was the medium instruction in the country before the Italian and English language employed in the education (Faqih. 2001).

The education system of Somali adopted different patterns of school system, the first to adopted since the independence was 8+4 which is primary school and 4 secondary school (Hare, 2007).

Later changed into 6+3+3 approximately after 1990 i.e., six years of lower primary, three years of upper primary, and three years of secondary. Until 2020, adopted a 4+4+4 system, i.e. four years of lower primary, four years of upper primary (UNESCO IIEP Dakar Africa Office et al., 2022). The Ministry of Education is the responsible authority for appointing new principals in public schools, and the most important qualification to be shortlisted is having a bachelor's degree, at least five years of teaching experience, previous experience as a deputy principal, and possessing moral and cultural values. In private schools, the school stakeholders appoint the principal based on the same qualifications (SH Ali & Alnakhala, 2019).

The rest of the paper is organized as follows: section two is about the methodology followed, while section three is about findings and the last section is about conclusion and recommendation.
In light of this information, the aim of this research is to uncover the perceptions of newly appointed school principals in Somalia regarding the aspects of their profession that they find challenging during their initial period of appointment. To achieve this aim, the following research questions were addressed:

What are the perceptions of newly appointed school principals in Somalia regarding the aspects of their profession that they find challenging during their initial period of appointment?

Do the perceptions of newly appointed school principals in Somalia regarding the aspects of their profession that they find challenging during their initial period of appointment differ significantly based on their (a) gender, (b) highest level of education, (c) age, (d) age at the time of appointment as a principal, (e) years of experience as a principal, (f) previous professional seniority in the field of education prior to their current principalship, (g) previous professional seniority in the field of school management prior to their current principalship, (h) number of enrolled students in the school, and (i) geographical location of the school?

METHODOLOGY

In this study, a descriptive research design, which is a quantitative research design, was preferred. The purpose of this research is to investigate and determine the current situation regarding the level of challenges faced by novice school principals in Somalia during their initial years of carrying out their profession. Descriptive research designs are commonly used to provide a snapshot of the existing conditions or characteristics of a specific phenomenon (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2012).

Research Population

The population of this study was all school principals in Mogadishu and Puntland region of Somalia, and the research sample consisted of 181 school principals who had been working in public and private primary, secondary, and high schools in these areas for three years or less during the 2020-2021 academic year. The sample was selected using total population sampling methods, which allowed the researcher to include all novice principals who had been working in these roles for one to three years. The purpose of collecting background information about the respondents was to understand their characteristics and the distribution of the population in the study. The first

objective of the study was to determine the profile of the respondents in terms of gender, age, highest level of education, and experience, in order to understand which categories, the majority of the respondents fit into.

Table 1

Demographic Information of the Research Population Gender/Level of Education and age of the respondents

Gender	n	%
Male	164	90.6
Female	17	9.4
Total	181	100
Degree	**n**	**%**
Undergraduate	113	62.4
Postgraduate	68	37.6
Total	181	100
Age	**n**	**%**
Under 25 years	21	11.6
25 to 34 years	86	47.5
35 to 44 years	59	32.6
45 to 54 years	15	8.3
Total	181	100

The data from Table 1 shows that the majority of the respondents in the study were male, with 164 out of 181 respondents being male and only 17 being female. This means that male respondents made up 90.6% of the group, while female respondents made up just 9.4%. This suggests that the number of female headteachers in the studied area is low, or that there may be no female

headteachers at all in some area. The data also shows that the majority of novice headteachers in the studied area hold a bachelor's degree, with 113 out of 181 respondents having only a bachelor's degree, which represents 62.4% of the total respondents. 37.6% of the respondents had graduated but did not hold a doctoral degree. This indicates that bachelor's degree holders are more common among novice headteachers in the studied area.

In addition, the data in Table 1 indicates that the age group of 25 to 34 years was the largest, with 86 out of 181 respondents, representing 47.5% of the total. The second largest age group was between 35 to 44 years, with 59 out of 181 respondents, representing 32.6% of the total. The age group under 25 years made up 11.6% of the respondents, while the age group of 45 to 54 years made up 8.3% of the respondents.

Table 2

Demographic Information of the Research Population of Age when the principals first appointed, current experience years and years in formal leadership.

Principals' age when first appointed to their current principal position	n	%
Under 25 years	21	11.6
25 to 34 years	91	50.3
35 to 44 years	55	30.4
45 to 54 years	14	7.7
Total	181	100
Number of (full-time equivalent) years in your current principal position	**n**	**%**
1 year	79	43.6
2 years	45	24.9
3 years	57	31.5
Total	181	100
Number of (full-time equivalent) years in a formal leadership or administrative position prior to taking up your current principalship	**n**	**%**
Under 5 years	68	37.6
5 to 9 years	62	34.3
10 to 19 years	51	28.2
Total	181	100

Table 2 presents the age of novice principals when they were first appointed as principal. The data shows that the age group between 25 and 34 years old had the highest rate, with 91 out of 181 respondents falling into this category and representing 50.3% of the total. The second largest age group was between 35 and 44 years old, with 55 out of 181 respondents, or 30.4% of the total. The third largest age group was under 25 years old, with 21 out of 181 respondents, or 11.6% of the total. The final age group, 45 to 54 years old, had the lowest percentage, with 14 out of 181 respondents, or 7.7% of the total.

Table 2 also shows the number of years that the novice principals had spent in their current position. The data reveals that the majority of the principals, 79 out of 181, had spent only one year in the position, representing 43.6% of the total. The second largest group, with 57 out of 181 respondents, or 31.5% of the total, had spent three years in the position. The remaining principals, 45 out of 181, or 24.9% of the total, had spent two years in the position.

In addition, Table 2 presents the number of years that novice principals had spent in formal leadership or administration positions prior to accepting their current principalship. This information is divided into three age groups. The group with less than 5 years of experience in leadership positions received the highest rating, with 68 out of 181 respondents, or 37.6% of the total. The group with 5 to 9 years of experience received the second highest rating, with 62 out of 181 respondents, or 34.3% of the total. The group with more than 10 years of experience received the lowest rating, with 51 out of 181 respondents, or 28.2% of the total.

Table 3

Demographic Information of the Research Population of years of professional experience, student enrollment, school location and school level

Number of (full-time equivalent) years of your professional experience in education prior to taking up your current position	n	%
Under 9 years	114	62.9
10 and above	67	37.1
Total	181	100
Number of students enrolled in your school in 2021	n	%
Under 199	104	57.5
Above 200	77	42.5
Total	181	100
School Location	n	%
Urban	134	74.0
Rural	47	26
Total	181	100
School Level	n	%
Elementary	36	19.9
Middle	44	24.3
Secondary	101	55.5

Total	181	100

Table 3 presents information about the respondents in terms of their professional experience in education prior to becoming school principals, the number of students enrolled in their schools during the 2020-2021 academic year, the location of the school, and the level of the school.

The data shows that the majority of respondents had 9 or fewer years of professional experience in education prior to being appointed as principal, with 114 out of 181 respondents falling into this category, representing 62.9% of the total. The remaining respondents, with more than 10 years of experience, represented 37.1% of the total, with 67 out of 181 respondents.

The survey also looked at the number of students enrolled in the schools during the 2020-2021 academic year and found that student enrollment varied widely. The data shows that the majority of schools had under 199 students, with 104 out of 181 schools, or 57.5% of the total, falling into this category. The second largest group had more than 200 students, with 77 out of 181 schools, or 42.5% of the total.

The location of the schools was also analyzed, and the data shows that the majority of the schools were located in urban areas, with 134 out of 181 schools, or 74.0% of the total, located in cities. The remaining 47 schools, or 26.0% of the total, were located in rural areas.

Finally, the data shows that the majority of the schools that novice principals manage are secondary schools, with 101 out of 181 schools, or 55.5% of the total, falling into this category. Middle schools ranked second, with 44 out of 181 schools, or 24.3% of the total, and elementary schools ranked third, with 36 out of 181 schools, or 19.9% of the total.

Data Collection Tools

The researcher employed a standardized survey developed by a number of researchers from 15 countries (Australia, Canada, China, England, Germany, Jamaica, Mexico, New Zealand, Scotland, South Africa, Tanzania, Turkey, and the United States). The survey is divided into four sections. The first section includes questions about the respondents' background and experience, The second section of the survey includes 21 items that address four main categories of challenges faced by novice principals: Dealing with Place; Dealing with People; Dealing with System; Dealing with Self. Respondents were asked to rate these challenges on a five-point Likert scale, firstly, evaluating the degree to which the aspect of principals' work represented by the item was problematic in the first three years of appointment; and secondly, evaluating the extent to which they felt prepared for dealing with the aspect before appointment (Wildy et al., 2010).

Data Collection

Data for this study was gathered through personal visits to the participants' workstations, where the survey was administered in person. The researcher-initiated communication with the school principals, requesting appointments, and found that most principals were cooperative and granted appointments promptly. Upon visiting the principal's office, the researcher conducted the survey, with an average duration of one hour and 10 minutes.

Data Analysis

Once the data collection was completed, the researchers organized the data and entered it into a computer for analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). To examine the validity and reliability of the tool, the researchers used the Rasch measurement model for dichotomous data. This model is used to assess the internal consistency and reliability of scales in various social science and medical disciplines (Wildy et al., 2010). The first step in the analysis was to check the construct validity of the items, which is a measure of whether each scale represents a single variable. The second step was to determine whether the items demonstrated relative difficulty invariance across locations for both countries. According to the Rasch model, if such invariance is demonstrated, then the scales measure the same construct in each country. This was checked using the Differential Item Functioning (DIF) facility available in the analysis software RUMM2020 (Wildy et al., 2010a). Due to the small sample size in some of the analyses, the results should be interpreted cautiously (Beycioglu & Wildy, 2016a).

Finding

First sub-question: "What are the perceptions of newly appointed school principals in Somalia regarding their readiness to deal with the difficult aspects of their profession when they are appointed?" The researchers wanted to know if the novice principals were prepared to take on a principalship. The researchers calculated the arithmetic mean of all the factors and examined which dimension was the most prepared and which was the least prepared.

Table 4
Overall Means of Problematic Aspect

Self	n	x̄	Sd
Organizing my time	181	3.44	1.18
Adjusting to the isolation of the position	181	3.43	1.06
Feeling confident as the school's leader	181	3.49	1.18
Coping with public visibility in my day-to-day work	181	3.47	1.11
Achieving a work/life balance	181	3.47	1.11
Overall Mean	**181**	**3.46**	**1.13**
System			
Applying system policies	181	3.46	1.10
Managing paperwork	181	3.51	1.03
Getting access to system personnel	181	3.56	1.11

Balancing system imperatives with local needs	181	3.50	1.20
Acquiring appropriate resources	181	3.58	1.04
Managing the school budget	181	3.66	1.13
Overall Mean	**181**	**3.55**	**1.10**
Place			
Understanding the cultures of the community in which my school is located	181	3.82	1.22
Developing relationships within the community in which my school is located	181	3.90	1.10
Feeling credible as the principal in the community in which my school is located	181	3.67	1.11
Initiating school improvement	181	3.62	1.17
Sustaining school improvement initiatives	181	3.52	1.22
Overall Mean	**181**	**3.71**	**1.16**
People			
Dealing with poorly performing staff	181	3.36	1.15
Building positive relationships with staff	181	3.52	1.22
Enhancing capacity of staff	181	3.49	1.21
Handling conflict	181	3.51	1.11
Working with parents	181	3.47	1.12
Securing appropriate staff	181	3.57	1.02
Overall Mean	**181**	**3.49**	**1.14**
Overall mean Problematic	**181**	**3.55**	**1.13**

Based on the information provided, it appears that the new school principals surveyed had positive opinions about their problems in relation to problematic aspects. The item "Developing relationships within the community in which my school is located" was the one that they felt the most problematic for, while "Dealing with poorly performing staff" was the item that they felt the least problematic.

The survey items were organized into four dimensions: Place, System, People, and Self. The mean scores for these dimensions were distributed from highest to lowest as follows: Place ($\bar{x}$=3.71), System ($\bar{x}$=3.55), People ($\bar{x}$=3.49), and Self ($\bar{x}$=3.46). This suggests that the Place dimension, which includes items related to the physical environment of the school and its surrounding community, was the most problematic for the new principals.

Second sub-question: "The perceptions of newly appointed school principals in Somalia regarding the level of problem to cope with the aspects of their profession that they find difficult at the time of their appointment, their (a) gender, (b) latest education level, (c) age, (d) age when they were appointed to the principalship, (e) how many years they have been working as a principal, (f) their professional seniority in education before their current managerial position, (g) their professional seniority in school management before their current managerial position, (h) the number of registered students at the school, and (i) does it differ significantly according to the region where the school is located?" The following sub-questions were analyzed by using a t-test

(where we have two groups under each variable and each group is greater than or equal to 30), Kruskal Wallis (where the groups under the variables are more than two and some of the groups under variables are less than 30) and ANOVA (where we have more than two groups and the size of each group is greater than or equal to 30). Also, the researchers used the Mann-Whitney test, where the Kruskal Wallis shows significant differences, to figure out exactly which of the two groups is significantly different in mean. Variables show significant differences, and the researchers wanted to locate between which variables were the difference located.

Table 5
Mann-Whiney U test result of novice principals of problamatic level by Gender

Dimensions	Gender	N	*Mean Rank*	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney U	Z	P
Self	Male	164	90.94	14914.50	1384.50	-.05	.96
	Female	17	91.56	1556.50			
System	Male	164	91.42	14993.50	1324.50	-.34	.74
	Female	17	86.91	1477.50			
Place	Male	164	92.54	15176.00	1142.00	-1.23	.22
	Female	17	76.18	1295.00			
People	Male	164	92.61	15188.00	1130.00	-1.29	.20
	Female	17	75.47	1283.00			
General Problematic	Male	164	92.13	15108.50	1209.50	-.90	.37
	Female	17	80.15	80.15			

Table 5 presents the averages and standard deviations for males and females based on four dimensions and a general problematic area and examines whether the differences in means between the two groups are statistically significant. According to the p-values in the final column of the table, there is no significant difference between male and female principals in regard to any of the dimensions or overall preparation.

Table 6
Kruskal Wallis test result of novice principals of problamatic level by Age

Dimensions		Under 25	25 to 34 years	35 to 44 years	45 to 54 years	Total	df	Chi Squ	P
Self	Mean rank	93.07	86.22	101.74	73.27		3	4.98	.17
	n	21	86	59	15	181			
System	Mean rank	98.88	86.07	100.12	72.37		3	4.96	.18
	n	21	86	59	15	181			

Place	Mean rank	88.31	90.36	92.47	92.67		3	.13	.99
	n	21	86	59	15	181			
People	Mean rank	88.81	86.62	100.41	82.17		3	2.10	.39
	n	21	86	59	15	181			
General Problematic	Mean rank	93.79	86.10	100.64	77.23		3	3.85	.28
	n	21	86	59	15	181			

The table 6 shows the analysis of the perceptions of the newly appointed school principals in Somalia regarding the level of problem to cope with the aspects of their profession that they find difficult at the time of their appointment in terms of their Age. To analyze this, the researchers had to employ Kruskal Wallis. The p-value was between .17 and .99, which indicates no existence of any differences between the age group.

Table 7
T-test result of novice principals of Problematic level by education background

Dimensions		Undergraduate	Postgraduate	Total	df	t	P
Self	x̄	3.55	3.29	3.45	179	1.99	**.05**
	n	113	68	181			
	Sd	.87	.85	.87			
System	x̄	3.65	3.36	3.54	179	2.24	**.03**
	n	113	68	181			
	Sd	.85	.88	.87			
Place	x̄	3.76	3.60	3.70	179	1.13	.259
	n	113	68	181			
	Sd	.87	.94	.90			
People	x̄	3.58	3.32	3.49	179	1.91	.058
	n	113	68	181			
	Sd	.89	.89	.89			
General Problematic	x̄	3.64	3.39	3.55	179	2.09	**.04**
	n	113	68	181			
	Sd	.77	.74	.77			

The findings from Table 7 provide valuable insights into the relationship between the educational level of newly appointed school principals in Somalia and their perceptions of the problems they encounter in their roles. The majority of these novice principals hold bachelor's degrees, while a smaller proportion possess graduate degrees.

The results of the t-test analysis reveal that there are statistically significant differences between the respondents' educational levels and their perceptions of self, system, and general problematic dimensions. With p-values of 0.05, 0.03, and 0.04, respectively, these findings suggest that the level of education attained by the principals may indeed be related to their views on the challenges they face.

Firstly, the statistically significant difference in the self-dimension implies that principals with different educational backgrounds perceive distinct levels of personal challenges. It is possible that those with higher education levels may have developed a broader skill set and acquired more specialized knowledge, allowing them to navigate their roles with greater confidence and efficacy. On the other hand, principals with bachelor's degrees may feel less prepared or encounter more difficulties in addressing personal issues related to their new appointments.

Secondly, the significant difference in the system dimension highlights the potential impact of educational level on principals' perceptions of problems within the educational system itself. Principals with graduate degrees may possess a deeper understanding of the broader educational context and may be more adept at identifying systemic issues and implementing appropriate solutions. In contrast, principals with bachelor's degrees might be more likely to encounter challenges related to the overall functioning and organization of the educational system.

Lastly, the significant difference observed in the general problematic dimension suggests that principals' educational backgrounds could influence their overall perception of the challenges they face. Principals with higher education levels may possess a more comprehensive perspective, enabling them to identify a wider range of issues and devise effective strategies to address them. In contrast, principals with bachelor's degrees may have a more limited scope of perception, potentially leading to a narrower understanding of the problems and fewer approaches to tackle them.

Table 8

Kruskal Wallis test result of novice principals of Problematic level by Age when they were first appointed

Dimensions		Under 25 years	25 to 34 years	35 to 44 years	45 to 54 years	Total	df	Chi Squ	P
Self	Mean rank	81.31	92.34	93.00	89.00		3	.88	.83
	n	21	91	55	14	181			
System	Mean rank	83.64	92.00	93.80	84.54		3	.82	.84
	n	21	91	55	14	181			
Place	Mean rank	77.55	84.75	104.40	99.18		3	6.68	.08
	n	21	91	55	14	181			

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People	Mean rank	79.29	89.54	98.03	90.43		3	2.13	.55
	n	21	91	55	14	181			
General Problematic	Mean rank	81.48	90.68	95.35	90.29		3	1.08	.78
	n	21	91	55	14	181			

Table 8 presents the results of a statistical analysis that was conducted to examine the perceptions of newly appointed school principals in Somalia regarding the level of problems they face at the age when they were first appointed to their current principal position. The researchers used the Kruskal-Wallis test to determine if there is a difference between the groups in terms of age when they were first appointed as school principals. The analysis showed that there is no statistically significant difference between the groups in terms of age when they were first appointed as principals. This means that the age at which the principals were first appointed does not seem to be related to their perceptions of the problems they face in their current roles.

Table 9

ANOVA test result of novice principals of problematic level by number of years in current position

Dimensions		1 Year	2 Years	3 Years	Total	Sources of Variation	Sum SQ	df	Mean Sq	F	p
Self	x̄	3.49	3.30	3.53	3.46	BG	1.50	2	.75	.39	.39
	n	79	45	57	181	WG	134.64	179	.76		
	Sd	86	.84	.90	.87	Total	136.14	180			
System	x̄	3.62	3.45	3.50	3.55	BG	1.02	2	.51	.67	.51
	n	79	45	57	181	WG	135.97	178	.76		
	Sd	.89	.81	.90	.87	Total	136.99	180			
Place	x̄	3.69	3.62	3.79	3.71	BG	.834	2	.42	.52	.60
	n	79	45	57	181	WG	143.85	178	.81		
	Sd	.89	.89	.91	.90	Total	144.68	180			
People	x̄	3.44	3.39	3.62	3.49	BG	1.57	2	.79	.98	.38
	n	79	45	57	181	WG	142.37	178	.80		
	Sd	.93	.86	.90	.89	Total	143.95	180			
General Problematic	x̄	3.56	3.44	3.61	3.55	BG	.786	2	.39	.67	.51
	n	79	45	57	181	WG	104.77	178	.59		
	Sd	.78	.69	.80	.77	Total	105.55	180			

Table 9 presents the results of a statistical analysis that was conducted to examine the perceptions of newly appointed school principals in Somalia about the problems they face in their profession in terms of the number of years they have been in their current position. The researchers used an ANOVA test to determine if there is a difference between the variables. According to the table, the results of the ANOVA test showed that there is no statistically significant difference between the

variables. This means that the number of years the principals have been in their current position does not seem to be related to their perceptions of the problems they face in their profession.

Table 10
ANOVA test result of novice principals of Problematic level by years in a formal leadership or administrative position prior to taking up your current principalship

Dimensions		Under 5 years	5-9 Years	10-19 years	Total	Sources of Variation	Sum SQ	df	Mean Sq	F	p
Self	x̄	3.42	3.46	3.49	3.45	BG	.17	2	.08	.12	.90
	n	68	62	51	181	WG	135.97	178	.76		
	sd	.88	.81	.95	.87	Total	136.14	180			
System	x̄	3.51	3.51	3.63	3.54	BG	.56	2	.28	.02	.99
	n	68	62	51	181	WG	136.43	178	.77		
	sd	.90	.88	.84	.87	Total	136.99	180			
Place	x̄	3.69	3.71	3.71	3.71	BG	.02	2	.01	.49	.62
	n	68	62	51	181	WG	144.66	178	.81		
	sd	.93	.83	.95	.90	Total	144.68	180			
People	x̄	3.40	3.55	3.52	3.49	BG	.78	2	.39	.37	.69
	n	68	62	51	181	WG	143.16	178	.80		
	sd	.97	.80	.91	.89	Total	143.95	180			
General Problematic	x̄	3.51	3.56	3.59	3.55	BG	.218	2	.11	.18	.83
	n	68	62	51	181	WG	105.34	178	.59		
	sd	.81	.69	.80	.77	Total	105.55	180			

Table 10 presents the results of a statistical analysis that was conducted to examine the perceptions of newly appointed school principals in Somalia about the problems they face in their profession during the first years of their current position, based on whether they had previously held a formal leadership or administrative position. The researchers used an ANOVA test to determine if there is a difference between the groups. The results of the ANOVA test showed that there is no statistically significant difference between the groups. This means that whether or not the principals had previously held a formal leadership or administrative position does not seem to be related to their perceptions of the problems they face during the first years of their current principalship.

Table 11
T-test result of novice principals of Problematic level by years of your professional experience in education, prior to taking up your current position

Dimensions		Under 9 years	Above 10 years	Total	df	t	P
Self	x̄	3.44	3.49	3.46	179	-.37	.71

	n	114	67	181			
	sd	.85	.91	.88			
System	x̄	3.53	3.57	3.55	179	-.29	.77
	n	114	67	181			
	sd	.88	.86	.87			
Place	x̄	3.71	3.69	3.7	179	.12	.90
	n	114	67	181			
	sd	.91	.88	.89			
People	x̄	3.46	3.53	3.49	179	-.54	.59
	n	114	67	181			
	sd	.91	.87	.89			
General Problematic	x̄	3.54	3.57	3.55	179	-.31	.76
	n	114	67	181			
	sd	**.77**	**.77**	.77			

The results of a study on the perceptions of newly appointed school principals in Somalia regarding their ability to handle challenging aspects of their job were presented in Table 11. The researchers used a t-test to see if there was a connection between the principals' readiness and their prior years of experience in education. The t-test results showed that there was no statistically significant relationship, meaning that the number of years of prior experience in education does not appear to impact the principals' perceptions of their readiness for handling difficulties in their profession.

Table 12
T-test result of novice principals of problamatic level by Number of students enrolled

Dimensions		Under 199	Above 200	Total	df	*t*	P
Self	x̄	3.53	3.35	3.44	179	1.416	.16
	n	104	77	181			
	sd	.83	.91	.87			
System	x̄	3.61	3.45	3.53	179	1.20	.23
	n	104	77	181			
	sd	.84	.91	.88			
Place	x̄	3.63	3.81	3.72	179	-1.35	.18
	n	104	77	181			
	sd	.87	.93	.90			
People	x̄	3.41	3.58	3.50	179	-1.22	.22
	n	104	77	181			
	sd	.92	.85	.89			
General Problematic	x̄	3.55	3.55	3.55	179	-.01	.99
	n	104	77	181			
	sd	.76	.78	.77			

Table 12 presents the results of a statistical analysis that was conducted to examine the perceptions of newly appointed school principals in Somalia about their readiness to deal with the difficult aspects of their profession, based on the number of students enrolled in the school at the time of their appointment. The researchers used a t-test to determine if there is a difference between the variables. The results of the t-test showed that there are no statistically significant differences between the variables. This means that the number of students enrolled in the school at the time of the principals' appointment does not seem to be related to their perceptions of their readiness to deal with the difficult aspects of their profession.

Table 13

T-test result of novice principals of Problematic level by Location of school

Dimensions		Urban	Rural	Total	df	t	p
Self	x̄	3.59	3.08	3.33	179	3.62	**.00**
	n	134	47	181			
	sd	.76	1.05	.90			
System	x̄	3.67	3.19	3.43	179	3.32	**.00**
	n	134	47	181			
	sd	.75	1.09	.92			
Place	x̄	3.83	3.35	3.59	179	3.26	**.00**
	n	134	47	181			
	sd	.79	1.08	.94			
People	x̄	3.59	3.19	3.39	179	2.65	**.01**
	n	134	47	181			
	sd	.76	1.15	.96			
General Problematic	x̄	3.67	3.20	3.44	179	3.73	**.00**
	n	134	47	181			
	sd	.61	1.02	.90			

Table 13 presents the perceptions of newly appointed school principals in Somalia regarding the level of problematic aspects they encounter in their profession during their appointments in different regions. The purpose of conducting a t-test on these variables was to determine whether significant differences exist among them. The results of the analysis indicate that there is indeed a significant difference between the variables, suggesting noteworthy variations in principals' perceptions.

The significant difference observed in Table 13 implies that the school principals' perceptions of problematic aspects vary depending on the region in which their schools are located. To gain a deeper understanding of this finding, it is important to explore potential factors that could contribute to these differences.

One possible explanation for the significant difference could be attributed to the unique characteristics and challenges associated with each region. Different regions in Somalia may have varying socioeconomic conditions, cultural norms, and educational infrastructures, all of which can significantly impact the nature and extent of problems faced by school principals. For instance, principals in rural or underprivileged regions may encounter difficulties related to inadequate

resources, limited access to educational materials, and a lack of community support. In contrast, principals in urban or more developed regions may face challenges related to student diversity, high student-to-teacher ratios, or issues specific to the urban environment.

Another factor that could contribute to the significant difference is the varying levels of support and resources available to school principals in different regions. Regions with better educational funding, stronger administrative support, and well-established networks for professional development may provide principals with more tools and assistance to navigate their roles effectively. Conversely, regions with limited resources and support systems may place additional burdens on principals, resulting in a higher perception of problematic aspects.

Furthermore, the significant difference may also be influenced by the principals' prior experiences and personal backgrounds. Principals with different professional backgrounds or educational experiences may have varying levels of preparedness to handle the specific challenges and contexts they encounter in different regions. For example, a principal with prior experience in rural education may have developed strategies to overcome challenges specific to that setting, whereas a principal with a background in urban education may face a steep learning curve when confronted with the unique issues of rural regions.

Table 14
ANOVA test result of novice principals of Problematic level by Level of the School

Dimension		Elementary	Middle	Secondary	Total	Sources of Variation	Sum SQ	df	Mean SQ	F	p	LSD
Self	x̄	3.28	3.50	3.51	3.46	BG	1.47	2	.74	.97	.38	-
	n	36	44	101	181	WG	134.67	178	.76			
	sd	.79	.97	.85	.87	Total	136.14	180				
System	x̄	3.37	3.56	3.60	3.55	BG	1.49	2	.74	6.73	38	**-**
	n	36	44	101	181	WG	135.51	178	.76			
	sd	.82	.90	.88	.872	Total	136.99	180				
Place	x̄	3.23	3.87	3.80	3.70	BG	10.17	2	5.09	3.07	**.00.**	2-1 3-1
	n	36	44	101	181	WG	134.51	178	.76			
	sd	.87	.86	.87	.90	Total	144.68	180				
People	x̄	3.17	3.52	3.59	3.49	BG	4.79	2	2.40	.98	**.05**	3-1
	n	36	44	101	181	WG	139.15	178	.78			
	sd	.89	.96	.85	.89	Total	143.95	180				
General Problematic	x̄	3.26	3.61	3.63	3.55	BG	3.75	2	1.87	3.28	**.04**	**2-1 3-1**
	n	36	44	101	181	WG	101.81	178	.57			
	sd	.76	.86	.71	.77	Total	105.55	180				

Table 14 presents the perceptions of newly appointed school principals in Somalia regarding their preparedness to handle difficult aspects of their profession, categorized by the level of the school. The ANOVA test was utilized to determine if there were any significant differences between the variables. The results indicated that there were indeed significant differences in the variables of System, Place, and General Preparation. To further investigate these differences, the variables were grouped into three categories: Elementary-Middle, Elementary-Secondary, and Middle-Secondary.

The Mann Whitney test was then employed to determine the specific group that exhibited the differences.

The findings of the study suggest that managing secondary and middle schools presents more challenges compared to managing primary schools. However, this does not imply that primary school principals do not face any difficulties. On the contrary, they encounter a myriad of problems that contribute to the overall complexities of their roles.

Among the challenges faced by primary school principals, stress stands out as a significant issue. The responsibility of overseeing the academic and personal development of young children can be demanding, and principals may experience increased pressure to ensure a nurturing and conducive learning environment. Additionally, financial issues and concerns regarding low compensation can pose challenges for primary school principals, potentially impacting their ability to effectively address various needs within their schools.

Moreover, the socio-economic status of the student population can influence the challenges faced by primary school principals. Schools serving students from disadvantaged backgrounds may encounter additional difficulties related to limited resources, lack of access to educational materials, and a higher prevalence of social problems among students. Principals in these schools may need to find innovative solutions and establish community partnerships to address these challenges effectively.

Administrative tasks also contribute to the challenges faced by primary school principals. Balancing administrative duties with instructional leadership responsibilities can be demanding, particularly in schools with limited administrative support. Principals may need to multitask and efficiently manage their time to meet the diverse needs of their schools.

While secondary and middle school principals may encounter similar challenges as primary school principals, they also face additional complexities inherent to their respective school levels. These can include issues such as a larger student body, a broader range of subjects and curriculum, a more diverse student population, and the need to guide students through critical transitions in their education.

The significant differences observed in the variables of System, Place, and General Preparation indicate that principals at different school levels perceive distinct levels of preparedness in

addressing these challenges. The specific results of the Mann Whitney test would provide more precise information on which group exhibited the differences.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study found that women are underrepresented in the field of school administration in Somalia, with male teachers making up over 80% of the teaching staff in primary and secondary schools, according to UNESCO (2022). The study also noted that obtaining a bachelor's degree is a minimal requirement for becoming a principal in Somalia (SH Ali & Alnakhala, 2019), but that a postgraduate degree, such as a Master's, is typically required in other countries, like the US, Finland, Turkey, and Jordan (Akbaşlı et al., 2017). The majority of respondents in the study had a bachelor's degree, but not a postgraduate degree, which is generally considered necessary for a headteacher position in the modern education system. Additionally, the study pointed out that most educational institutions in Somalia are privately owned by men, with state-owned schools being a rarity (CU & HIPS, 2020).

Since educational facilities are mostly owned by private individuals, giving the owner the power to appoint anyone they choose. This is reflected in the high percentage of principals with just one year of school experience, as well as their lack of formal leadership or administrative experience prior to becoming a principal. This suggests that novice principals may have more difficulty running a school, whereas those with prior leadership experience are better equipped to handle the role.

The enrollment capacity of a school is impacted by both its physical structure and the surrounding community. When evaluating enrollment, it is also important to take into account the socioeconomic status of the school's neighborhood, as families in Somalia often have to pay high fees for their children's education due to the predominance of private schools over public ones. The location of the school was also a consideration in the study, with schools located in urban and rural areas like Mogadishu and Puntland Region surveyed. The majority of schools surveyed were in urban areas, making up 74% of the total number of schools surveyed.

The overall mean of the 181 participants' responses to the items using the 5-point Likert rating scale for the extent to which they found the items problematic was 3.55. This figure provides evidence that individuals perceived existing issues in the workplace, as a high score on the problem scale reflects a strong perception of existing issues. Of all the survey items, understanding the culture of the community in which their school was located was rated with the highest mean, which suggests novice principals are not adequately equipped to deal with the complexities of the school environment and community. This could be due to a lack of personality development and/or leadership skills, rather than any administrative difficulties. It is evident that principals are facing challenges when it comes to comprehending and adapting to the culture of their surrounding environment, and this is an area that needs to be addressed in order to ensure successful leadership, same results were revealed on Iranian principals (Kouhsari & Bush, 2020).

The study found no difference between gender, age, age when they were first appointed, by number of years in current position, years in a formal leadership or administrative position prior to taking up your current principalship, years of your professional experience in education, prior to taking up your current position, and number of students enrolled, in terms of problematic aspect. This demonstrates that the perceptions of the novice principal groups regarding problematic aspects are similar. This is true not only in terms of the overall average of the problematic, but also in terms of the constructs of Self, People, Place, and System.

On the other hand, the study showed a significant difference between the Education background, location of school and school level towards problematic aspect. This shows that the perceptions of the groups of novice principals are different regarding the problematic aspect. This is true not only in the overall average of the preparation but also in the constructs of Self, people, Place, and System.

Despite these challenges, some notable differences exist among school principals at different levels of education. In primary school, principals handle a larger number of younger students who require more supervision and attention to ensure their safety and well-being. They also need to take care of the students' programs, focus on reading, writing, and basic learning, and ensure that the curriculum is well-rounded and meets the needs of all students. Additionally, teachers in primary schools are less stressed and have fewer teaching hours. Therefore, the principal's role in primary schools includes creating a nurturing and safe environment, managing student behavior, and providing a balanced curriculum.

On the other hand, secondary and middle school principals have to manage a smaller number of students, but they come with more complex needs and issues. These schools focus on producing high-performing students, especially in the secondary school leaving exams, which are centralized. Secondary and middle school principals must ensure that the education provided prepares students for college or a career, handle student discipline issues, and manage relationships with parents, teachers, and other stakeholders. Moreover, psychological growth of the secondary school is considered one of the main reasons for school principals to faces stress and pressure from the community.

A study conducted in England revealed that governing primary schools is smaller in scale and less complex compared to secondary schools (James et al., 2014). Therefore, managing a secondary or middle school requires a higher level of expertise and experience due to the added complexity and variety of challenges.

According to the study, there is no headteacher preparation program in Somalia, and respondents agreed that if given the opportunity, adequate preparation before being assigned to the position would help them handle principalship duties. There are only teacher education programs, which are insufficient to prepare a school leader (SH Ali & Alnakhala, 2019) .

School principals are not undergoing a scientific process to become school leaders. Instead, they get appointed. Most of the schools are privately owned schools, and the public schools are getting

widely spread recently (SH Ali & Fırat, 2022). The absence of a training program seems to be the biggest factor of problem for novice principals. As this study recommends, the principal should go under a robust training program after passing a fair selection and appointment process, which the country lacks.

Through a comprehensive study of the education system in Somalia, the researcher has come to the conclusion that there is a critical need to enhance the training and preparation of school principals. The results of the study indicate that the existing teacher training programs in Somalia do not sufficiently address the needs of school leadership or adequately prepare teachers to become effective school leaders. Furthermore, there is a gap in the provision of principal training programs that needs to be addressed, as this lack of training limits the potential for effective management and positive outcomes for students. As such, the researcher recommends the establishment of a principal training facility that would operate within the structure of the Ministry of Education of Somalia.

The proposed principal training facility would provide targeted training and development programs for school principals, equipping them with the necessary skills and knowledge to lead their schools towards success. The facility would serve as a dedicated resource for principals, offering workshops, seminars, and other forms of professional development that would improve their ability to manage school operations, cultivate positive learning environments, and promote student achievement.

In order to implement this recommendation, the researcher suggests that the Ministry of Education of Somalia consider either establishing a new department solely dedicated to principal training or dividing the existing teacher training center to include a sub-section for principal training. By doing so, the Ministry can ensure that principals receive the specialized training they need to succeed in their roles, and ultimately contribute to the improvement of the education system in Somalia.

Furthermore, the proposed principal training facility could collaborate with other departments within the Ministry of Education of Somalia, such as curriculum development and teacher training, to ensure that all stakeholders in the education sector are working towards a common goal. This could foster a culture of collaboration and cooperation within the Ministry, which would benefit all areas of the education system and contribute to its overall success.

Overall, the establishment of a principal training facility in Somalia has the potential to significantly improve the quality of education, enhance the professionalism of school principals, and promote positive learning outcomes for students. The researcher strongly recommends that the Ministry of Education take immediate steps to consider this proposal and begin the necessary planning and implementation to make this a reality.

Based on the study's results, suggestions can be made to overcome problems that the novice principals face and help them to successfully run their schools. These suggestions include:

1. Providing access to training and professional development opportunities: Formal degree programs, mentorship programs, and workshops focused on the specific skills and knowledge that novice principals need can help these individuals develop the competencies they need to succeed in their roles.
2. Establishing mentorship programs: Pairing novice principals with experienced principals who can provide guidance, support, and advice can help these individuals navigate the challenges of their new role and provide valuable insights and advice based on their own experiences.
3. Providing resources and support: Schools and districts can provide novice principals with the resources and support they need to effectively lead their schools. This can include access to administrative support, adequate budgets, and the necessary technology and equipment.
4. Encouraging collaboration and networking: Novice principals can benefit from opportunities to collaborate and network with other school leaders, both within their own schools and districts and with leaders from other schools and organizations. These connections can provide valuable support, resources, and information that can help novice principals succeed in their roles.

Overall, by providing training, support, and resources, and by encouraging collaboration and networking, novice principals can be better equipped to effectively lead their schools and support the success of their students.

Limitation

The research encountered multifaceted challenges in engaging headteachers from public schools, with some expressing reluctance due to fears about potential repercussions from the research findings. This hesitation highlights the need for strategies to foster a more open and collaborative research environment. Furthermore, the scarcity of resources, both online and printed, posed a substantial obstacle, underscoring broader issues related to the infrastructure and support for educational research within the country. Additionally, security concerns impeded visits to certain areas, limiting firsthand data collection. This emphasizes the complexities of conducting research in regions affected by security issues and necessitates careful planning and collaboration with local authorities. Notably, the study revealed the absence of a formal principal training program, suggesting a critical gap in the preparation of school leaders. Future studies are expected to shed light on the importance and potential frameworks for establishing a formal school principal training program to address this notable void in the educational landscape.

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Implication

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The study on challenges faced by novice school principals in Somalia holds significant implications for educational leadership and policy. Firstly, the identified gender disparity in school administration underscores the necessity for policies fostering gender equality in leadership roles, urging efforts to encourage and support the career progression of female educators into administrative positions. Secondly, the revelation of a minimal requirement of a bachelor's degree for school principals suggests a need for policymakers to reconsider and potentially revise these standards to align with international norms that often emphasize postgraduate degrees for

leadership roles. Additionally, the prevalence of privately owned educational institutions calls for the development of policies ensuring transparency and fairness in principal appointments, potentially involving guidelines for selection processes and emphasizing experience and qualifications. The absence of a formal headteacher preparation program highlights a critical gap, prompting the need for educational policies that address structured training programs for school leaders, potentially involving the creation of a dedicated department or section within existing teacher training centers. Acknowledging the diverse challenges faced by principals at different school levels, tailored policies and support systems are recommended. Addressing the impact of school location and socioeconomic factors on enrollment capacity calls for strategic policy development, particularly in areas where families encounter challenges affording high fees for private schools. The study strongly advocates for the establishment of a principal training facility, emphasizing the need for educational policies to support and fund such initiatives within the Ministry of Education, ultimately contributing to the professional development of school leaders and enhancing overall educational outcomes. Lastly, policymakers are encouraged to promote collaboration and coordination between different departments within the Ministry of Education, fostering a holistic approach to education policy that considers curriculum development, teacher training, and principal preparation for a more integrated and effective education system. In summary, the study's findings underscore the imperative for comprehensive policy changes in educational leadership and administration in Somalia to address gender disparities, enhance educational qualifications, improve selection processes, provide targeted training, and consider unique challenges across different school levels and locations.

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