Principals' Leadership Practice, School Culture and Students Academic Achievement in the Case of General Primary Schools of Enjibara Adminstrive Town

Agegnehu Alene Demozie
Lecturer, Department of Pedagogical Science, Faculty of Education and Behavioral sciences,
Woldia University, Ethiopia

Abstract

The objective of the study was generally to investigate the leader ship practice, school culture and students' academic achievement in Enjibara administrative town government primary schools and to provide possible ways of improving the practices and students out come Descriptive survey research design was used and data was primarily collected through questionnaire, interview and document analysis from primary schools. Out of 7 government primary schools, 4 schools were selected through simple random sampling technique. From these schools 91 teachers were selected through stratified random sampling technique and data also analyzed by using one-sample t-test by using SPSS 20 version.The findings of the study showed that the school leadership practice and school culture practices reported mean was lower than expected results and as the result the students achievements was above average and nearest to the expected mean. There is strong significant relationship between the school leadership practice and school culture practice and also students' achievements have positive but very weak relationship with leadership practice and school culture. The conclusion drawn from this study showed that the school leadership practice and school culture practices were lower than expected mean but the result of the students' achievements was at average level.Consequently, to improve the school leadership practice, school culture and students achievement the major recommendations forwarded which were; woreda education officials, cluster supervisors and all stake holders should consider a special leadership and management programs to be exercised to build positive school culture and building the capacity of school principals towards managing and leading school activities All levels of education offices should consider in improving the capacity of the school principals and on building positive working atmosphere to enhance students' achievement. The training policy of principals should consider improving the principal leadership quality which contribute for increased students' achievement.
Keywords: School Principals, leadership practice, school culture, students' academic achievement, general primary schools

Introduction

Hoy and Miskel (2008) define leadership as a social system in which group of members or members of a group or organization affects the interpretation of wider environment phenomenon, the goals or desired outcomes, organization of work activities, groups motivation and abilities, positive relation and shared orientation.

"Leadership is the system of motivating of what individuals are working together so that individuals will know and be committed (Numkarnisorn, 2008)."

In general, leader ship is defined as the system of influencing followers to wards and accept about what activities to be done and the way how to do it and the process of motivating members and group efforts to attain shared objectives.

As Aggrwal (1998) noted that, educational organizations are the most important formal institutions which play major role in shaping the ideas, behaviors and attitudes of learners.

So, creating a strong and productive culture in these organizations based on common vision, and collaboration increase quality and school effectiveness which is a vital issue and depends on the principals' effectiveness (Dimmock and Walker, 2005).

According to Fullan (2000), school leadership in effective schools increase professional development of teachers, collaboration and communicate the schools with wider community. The importance of leadership in any organization has critical value for the success and failure of the organization.

As Chandan (1987) noted that, "if there is a main factor that differentiates between effective and non effective institutions, it can be taken as dynamic and successful leadership". In other speaking, the vital causes of unsuccessful for organizations including schools would be unsuccessful particularly, the type and quality of school principal working at the school level is essential as schools are the scene of exercising educational activities. For schools to be successful greatest level of workers satisfaction must exist among all the school community. All staff members must have a place in the decision making process in the school. Students must have confidence in the faculty and feel good and accept about what the school is doing. The principal who does not organize and participate the school stake holders and use his/her staff will truly be lonely and unsuccessful

(Brown, 1985).

Cordeiro(1994) claims that most research on the school leadership has not captured the themes which bind successful principals together with their schools. The responsibility of the principal as an educational leader is identified by (Brewer & Blase, 2001) as one that targeting on teaching-learning; building a community of learners; group decision making; supporting current professional development for all staff members; and building climate of integrity, inquiry, and continuous improvement. Effective school researchers hold that a key element of an effective school is an effective principal (Whitaker, 1997).

There is a relationship between positive school climate and increased student achievement. The principal's effectiveness influences student achievement, including cognitive behavior, through the mediating influence of school climate (Korir & Karr- Kidwell, 2000). The effective school leader has the chance to model his or her beliefs and attitudes to increase positive instructional environment and main leadership qualities of effective principals. Principals who create an exciting and motivating learning environment will get that students and teachers will have wants to do needs to be done (Krug, 1992).

In this respect Macbeath et.al (cited in Bush.T. 2003 p.65) argued that school principals inevitably get themselves facing many problems, uncertainties and ambiguities in their education practices. Similarly, in the case of Ethiopia different literatures show the presence of inappropriate leadership exercise. For instance, MOE (2005 E.C) indicated that, there is lack of visionary, change and result oriented leadership. In ESDP ||| Program action plan it was indicated that, there are significant gap in supervision, management and implementation capacity especially at the level of primary schools.

World Bank (2005) noted that, different document on the education system in Ethiopia indicate many challenges school encountered are linked to leadership and management. These problems including inadequate preparation and training people, poor supervision by principals and lack of commitment on the part of heads and teachers.

Similarly, USAID (2006) in its pilot study in Ethiopian schools noted that, in schools with positive school culture, there is positive attitude about student learning, professional development and better academic practices and in the opposite the schools with toxic culture have low students achievement.

When the complex patterns of beliefs, values, attitudes, expectations, ideas and behaviors in an organization are inappropriate or incongruent the culture will ensure that things work badly. Successful school leaders comprehend the critical responsibility that the school culture contribute in developing a successful school.

Though this is the fact issue about the role of school leadership in building positive school culture; many school leaders lack to create positive culture in their schools due to different conditions.

With regard to this, researchers write their reasons and findings. According to Bazezew (2010), school leaders are weak in motivating their teachers, unable to support sustainable knowledge to their teachers and working in collaboration with teachers to build positive school culture. Solomon (2011), in his study also concluded that the principals leadership practice were not good in creating effective school community partnership. Similarly, Fantahun (2011) in his research noted that, the status of educational leader ship practices were weak and not have good instructional climate in his study area. Additionally, Fetene (2009) in his study noted that, some of the weakness of school leader ship in building positive school culture is lack commitment and readiness to change.

So, as studies conducted in different areas (Solomon, Bazezew, Fantahun ,Fetene) are cases in point and shows that many schools lack to build positive school culture due to various reasons like lack of principals leadership quality and lack of principals commitment in creating positive school culture and lack of understanding how far positive school culture is useful for students' academic achievement.

2. Theoretical Frame work
2.1 The Basics of Successful School Leadership
"More of the success of educational leaders in building high performance organizations (organizations which make significantly greater than- expected contributions to student learning) depends on how these leaders interact with the larger community context in which they find themselves" (Leithwood, 1999 p. 23.)

Leithwood's (1996) categories are "setting directions," developing people" and "redesigning the organization." Within each of these similar categories of practice are numerous, more specific competencies, orientations and considerations; for example, most of the 21 specific leadership practices linked to student learning in Waters et.al (2003) review fit within these categories.

In this case different specific leadership practices directly or indirectly linked to students' academic achievement and the core process of education that is teaching learning process and increasing the students out come.

These categories of leadership practices closely reflect a transformational approach to leadership which Bass (1991) "claims has proven to be useful in many different cultural and organizational contexts." This transformational approach has proven useful for educational organizations (as demonstrated in studies by Geijsel

et.al 2003; Leithwood and Jantzi, 2002; Southworth, 1998; and Mullin and Keedy, 1998) and, specifically, for the success of some large-scale reform efforts in schools (such as Day et al., 2000).

According to Leithwood et al (1999):

> *Three broad categories of leadership practices, including a total of eight more specific dimensions of practice, are encompassed in this model. Included in the category Setting Directions are the dimensions building school vision, developing specific goals and priorities, and holding high performance expectations. In the category Developing People are the dimensions providing intellectual stimulation, offering individualized support, and modeling desirable professional practices and values. The third category, redesigning the Organization, includes the dimensions developing a collaborative school culture, creating structures to foster participation in school decisions, and creating productive community relationships.*

2.1 .1.Setting Directions

As Leithwood (1999) stated that setting direction is leaders' ability to build a vision, develop specific goals and priorities and convey high performance expectations. A main aspect of leadership is motivating a team to develop group awareness about the institution and its activities and objectives that can brings a sense of purpose or vision (Hallinger and Heck, 2002). The most fundamental theoretical explanations for the importance of leaders' direction- setting practices are "goal-based theories of human motivation" (Bandura, 1986)

According to such theory, individuals are reinforced by goals which they find, individually acceptable, as well as challenging but achievable. Having such goals helps people make sense of their work and enables them to find a sense of identity for themselves within their work context. Vision Identification: the degree to which the principal identifies new opportunities for the organization and develops, articulates, and inspires others with a vision of the future (Jantzi & Leithwood, 1996).

In this issue Hallinger (2003), stated that "goal setting can be done by the principal or through a collaborative process which encourages organizational members to be more invested in the goals set by the school". School leaders can help followers to accomplish school goals by setting high expectations because high expectation help to motivate teachers to work towards goal attainment by comparing current performance to future success. (Leithwood, 1996)

Goal Acceptance: the degree to which the principal promotes cooperation among organizational members and assists them in working together toward common goals (Jantzi & Leithwood, 1996).

High Performance Expectations: the degree to which the principal establishes expectations for excellence, quality, and high performance on the part of the organization's members (Jantzi & Leithwood, 1996).

2.1.2. Developing People

Organizational improvement comes from the improvement of the people who are members of the organization (Leithwood et al, 1999)

As (Leithwood et.al, 1999) Developing people include:

> *Providing intellectual stimulation, offering individualized support and modeling desirable professional practices and values. People and the organization and organizational improvement come from the improvement of the people who are members of the organization and an overarching effect on the school culture.*

Intellectual stimulation through professional development leads to collaboration and the promotion of collective action to reach school goals (Brown, 1993)

Intellectual Stimulation: the degree to which the principal challenges organizational members to reexamine some of the assumptions about their work and rethink how it can be performed (Jantzi & Leithwood, 1996).

Individualized Support: the degree to which the principal demonstrates respect for organizational members and concern about their personal feelings and needs (Jantzi & Leithwood, 1996). "Individualized support can be provided in a variety of ways including giving personal attention to teachers (Bass, 1990), assisting individuals when they are struggling personally or professionally (Bass, 1990), and showing concern about staff members' needs and feelings" (Jantzi & Leithwood, 1996; Leithwood et al., 1999).

Modeling: the degree to which the principal sets an example for the organizational members to follow consistent with the values the principal espouses (Jantzi & Leithwood, 1996). Modeling behavior allows the principal to set an example for the staff by demonstrating how one should act in order to facilitate the accomplishment of the school vision and goals (Jantzi & Leithwood, 1996; Lucas & Valentine, 2002).

2.1.3. Redesigning the Organization

As also Leithwood (1996) state that this category has two important ideas that have high positive effects in creating conducive learning environment. These are strengthening school culture and building collaborative structures. Effective principals build collaborative relationship with families and communities. In this regard, Leithwood et.al (2006) stated that " school leadership must be connected the school to the community because what is happening outside of the school impacts the performance of students and connecting the wider environment which allows the school to use new ideas from the community".

Successful educational leaders develop their districts and schools as effective organizations that support and sustain the performance of administrators and teachers, as well as students. Specific practices typically associated with this set of basics include strengthening district and school cultures, modifying organizational structures and building collaborative processes. Such practices assume that the purpose behind the redesign of organizational cultures and structures is to facilitate the work of organizational members and that the malleability of structures should match the changing nature of the school's improvement agenda

Major Indicators of Positive School Culture

Though there is no perfect school culture, there are so many indicators of positive school culture identified by different scholars and researchers (Peterson, 2002). For instance, Wagner (2006) listed that "the major indicators of positive school culture as collaboration, collegiality and efficacy." Similarly, Deal and Peterson (1998) identified that in a positive school culture, there is a group sense of purpose, norms of continuous learning and improvement, collegial support and opportunities of collective problem solving and sharing experience, moreover, Gruenert and Valentine (1998) identified six factors as indicators of positive school culture. These elements are collaborative leadership, teacher collaboration, professional development, collegial support, unity of purpose and learning partnership.

2.5.1 Collaborative Leadership

Collaborative leadership is the degree to which the principal creates and maintains collaborative relationships among school staff. The principal values teacher's ideas, seeks input, participate staff in decision making, and trusts the professional judgment of the staff. "The principal supports and rewards risk taking and innovative ideas decide to improve education for the students. The principal motivates the sharing of ideas and effective practices among all staff" (valentine,2006). This expression indicates that the collaborative leadership is distribution of power among school main stakeholders to become owner of the school success in their schools.

2.5.2. Teacher Collaboration

Teacher collaboration describes the degree to which teachers participate in contractive discussion that further improves the educational vision of the school. Teachers across the school path together, observe and discuss teaching practices, evaluate programs and develop an awareness of the practices and programs of the teachers (Valentine 2006). In schools with teacher collaboration, teachers learn best from other teachers or learn each other, not from external experts (Dufour, 2004)

Therefore, in positive school culture teachers with a best friend at work are more effective, likely positively engage with customers, share new ideas, and lost more time in their jobs. When people work together to achieve common goals, they stimulate each other to higher levels of accomplishment

2.5.3 Professional Development

Professional development is the extent to which teachers' value continuous individual development and total school improvement. Teacher seek ideas from seminars, colleagues, organizations, and other professional sources to maintain current knowledge, particularly current knowledge about instructional practices (valentine, 2006).A positive school culture ensures the culture and practices of the school continually reinforce and support the professional growth of all adults and include effective and varied professional development opportunities (Georgia Department of Education, 2006a).

2.5.4 Collegial Support

The nation of collegial support shows the extent to which teachers work together effectively. "Collegiality is important to the health of the school and the health of its educators" (Wagner, 2006). According to Wagner, collegiality is about a sense of belonging, emotional support and inclusion as a valued member of the organization. Similarly, Valentine (2006) stated that in positive schools with collegial support, teachers trust each other, value each other's ideas, and assist each other as they work to accomplish the tasks of the school organization. In schools with high collegiality, staff members help each other. When a teacher has a difficulties to teach some content or solve a certain problem, it will be shared to other teachers based on the belief that teachers have similar challenges but talents and abilities differ. Teachers believe that they can learn from each other and one teacher's problem is a problem of all others.

2.5.5 Unity +of Purpose

In order for any group of people to work together in ways in which they are most effective, there must be a shared goal to which they all aspire. In education, these goals are labeled by several distinct terms: such as mission, vision or unity of purpose. "Unity of purpose is the degree to which teachers work toward a common mission for the school" (Valentine, 20006). "The vision and mission synthesize the focus of the entire school and reflect consensus and understanding among all administrators, staff, parents, community and students. The vision and mission in successful schools consistently guide and inform the continuous improvement process" (Georgia Department of Education, 2006a).

2.5.6 Learning Partnership

Valentine (2006) stated that positive school culture facilitate respect, best effort, honesty, good judgment and kindness from all of the stake holders. According to valentine, in positive school culture "parents and teachers

share common expectations and communicate frequently about the students performance, parents trust teachers and students generally accept responsibility for their schooling."

Generally, healthy relationship with the stake holders fosters positive school culture. Informing the community consistently on students' progress is an essential building block for a positive school culture. Schools should satisfy a community's reasonable expectation that they provide meaningful information on how they are performing. Parents and other school communities want to know about not only a school and its programs but also now well the school is doing and this tend to parents to think highly of their local schools.

Relationship among Principals Leadership Practice, School Culture and Students Achievement

Marzano et.al (2005) described the link among school culture, leadership, and student achievement. They stated, "Fostering school culture that indirectly affects student achievement is a strong theme within the literature on principal leadership principals can influence student achievement in two primary ways: (a) through development of effective teachers, and (b) through effective organizational processes" (p. 47).

Marzano et.al (2005) describes the link among the three as follows:

From their comprehensive meta-analysis of empirical studies of leadership and student achievement, they described the following key leadership behaviors: (a) promote cohesion among all staff, (b) promote a sense of well-being among all staff, (c) develop an understanding of purpose among all staff, and (d) develop a shared vision of what school should be like (p. 48). They concluded that each of these leader behaviors directly related to school culture and school culture related to student achievement. In another comprehensive synthesis of the leadership literature associated with student achievement, Cotton (2002) described 26 principal behaviors that contributed to student achievement.

It is evident from these two comprehensive studies of the literature that the educational research community has concluded that leadership influences school culture and school culture influences student achievement. In this case the above mentioned comprehensive studies show that to what extent the three variables area interrelated and the school principal can affect the school culture and also in turn the school culture affects students' achievement in the schools.

Method

The study adopted descriptive survey design to assess educational leadership practice and its relationship with students' academic achievements. Because this method aims to describe behaviors and to gather people's perceptions, opinions, attitudes, and beliefs about a current issue of the study

Participants

In Enjibara Administrative Town there are seven government general primary schools which hold 280 teachers and this was the population of this study.

From the general target population in Enjibara Administrative Town seven government general primary schools which hold 280 teachers, four of the schools (57%) were taken by using probability sampling technique especially simple random sampling (lottery system).

Among the total 199 teachers (sample of the study area), 91 (45.7 %) of sample teachers were selected by stratified random sampling techniques system and proportionality according to the number of each school's teachers .Because this technique is better to give equal chance for all teachers. The principals of sample schools were taken by using comprehensive sampling technique, because the number of principals was manageable and being they were leaders in schools they expected to have more information's about the issue.

Instrumentation

The closed ended questionnaires for school leader ship practice survey developed by Leithwood and Jantizi (1996) and the questionnaires for school culture survey also were developed by Gruenert and valentine (1998) were adopted directly for the purpose of this study. Because these questionnaires were use full to collect data of school leadership practice survey and school culture survey. Questionnaires for two sets of practices contain 5 likert scales (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Undecided, Agree, Strongly Agree) for closed ended questions which were provided for teachers to assess the status of principals' leader ship practice and the school culture practice. To ensure validity of instruments, the questionnaires for school leader ship practice survey and school culture survey , a pilot study was carried out on two schools out of the sample schools (41 teachers) of in Enjibara Administrative Town government primary schools   to pre-test the instrument. The value of cronbach alpha was computed to check the reliability of the instruments (leadership practice questionnaires that valued 0.982and the school culture practice questionnaires that valued 0.968)

Interview was also used in order to get detail information from the informants about the overall present context and to assess the status of principals' leader ship practices, the school culture practice and students academic achievements. Semi-structured interview questions were prepared by researcher by considering leadership practices and the school culture practice which were performed by the school principals and which affect students' achievement. And other main reason to select the semi--structured interview was because it helps to find out different persons perspectives and views deeply and to triangulate the validity of the information with the questionnaire. In the case of this study also document analysis was used to assess students' academic

achievements. The data was taken from the school documents (rosters) of three consecutive years (2006 E.C-2008 E.C) of grade 8 regional examination average scores from schools.

Data Analysis

Principals' School Leadership Practices

The first objective of this study was to assess the status of principals' leadership in Enjibara administrative town government primary schools. To do this, one sample t-test was computed by using SPSS 20 and the results are presented in the following table.

Table 1.The Status of Principals' Leadership Practice as Perceived by Teachers by Different Dimensions of Leadership practices in the Primary Schools of Enjibara administrative town.   **Test Value = 3**

Leadership Practice Dimensions	N	Mean	SD	t-test	Df	Sig
Modeling	91	2.4284	1.07647	-5.066	90	.001
Intellectual Stimulation	91	2.4103	1.16965	-4.810	90	.001
High Expectation	91	2.4872	1.16142	-4.212	90	.001
Building Collaborative Structure	91	2.3956	1.15354	-4.998	90	.001
Vision Identification	91	2.4286	1.24354	-4.384	90	.001
Goal Acceptance	91	2.5604	1.23816	-3.387	90	.001
Individual Support	91	2.3077	1.00275	-6.586	90	.001
Strength School Culture	91	2.4103	1.13755	-4.946	90	.001
Total Leadership practice	91	2.4286	1.06424	-5.122	90	.001

*P < 0.05

School culture practices

Similarly, an attempt was made to judge the status of school culture in Enjibara administrative town government primary schools. To attain this, one sample t-test was computed and the results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 The Status of Principals' School Culture as Perceived by Teachers By Six Dimensions in the Primary Schools of Enjibara Administrative Town.

School culture	Test Value = 3					
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T-value	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Collaborative leadership	91	2.5220	1.26856	-3.595	90	.001
Teacher collaboration	91	2.3874	1.02826	-5.684	90	.001
Professional development	91	2.4670	1.08986	-4.665	90	.001
Unity of purpose	91	2.4725	1.18992	-4.229	90	.001
Collegial support	91	2.4835	1.26590	-3.892	90	.001
Learning partnership	91	2.4231	.95720	-5.750	90	.001
Total School culture	91	2.4592	1.04429	-4.940	90	. 001

Df=90,N=91   (expected mean=3)   * (p< 0.05)

As total school culture practice calculated mean indicated in table 2 the results of one sample t-test showed that the calculated mean score (2.45) of school culture was significantly lower than the mean test value which was 3. This result implies that generally school culture was performed at lower level. When the complex patterns of beliefs, values, attitudes, expectations, ideas and behaviors in an organization are inappropriate or incongruent the culture will ensure that things done not as intended

Students Academic Achievement

To know the students achievement and to relate with other independent variable the researcher taken three years (2006-2008 E.C) of ministry grade eight results of the students' achievement.

In the same way an effort was made to examine the status of students' academic achievement in Enjibara administrative town government primary schools. To achieve this, one sample t-test was performed and the results are presented in Table 3

Table 3.The Status of Students' Academic Achievement
    Test Value = 50

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD	t-test	Df	Sig
Academic Achievement	151	38	78	52.6556	5.71320	5.712	150	.001

The Relationships among the School Leadership Practice, School Culture and Students Achievement.

The next objective of the study was to examine whether there is statistically significant relationship between principals leadership practice, school culture and students academic achievement in Enjibara administrative town government primary schools. To achieve this purpose Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated and the results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4 Interrelation Among Leadership Practices, School culture and Students' Academic Achievement.

	Variables	N	Mean	SD	1	2	3
1	Leadership Practice	91	2.4286	1.064	1		
2	School Culture	91	2.4592	1.044	.917**	1	
3	Academic achievement	151	52.666	5.71	.127	.114	

*p < 0.05

As indicated in Table 4 the results of correlation coefficient portrayed that there was very high statistically significant correlation between school leadership practice and school culture (r =.917**, p< 0.05). This result implies that as leadership practice increases, school culture increases too. On the other hand, in positive direction but extremely low and insignificant relationship was observed between leadership practice and students' academic achievement (.127). In the same way, it is in a positive direction, very weak relationship was observed between school culture and students' academic achievement (.114)

6 The Overall Effect of Principals' Leadership Practice and School Culture Practice on Students' Academic Achievement in Enjibara Administrative Town Government Primary Schools

The last objective of this study was to determine the contribution of principals' leadership practice and school culture on students' academic achievement in Enjibara Administrative Town government primary schools. To attain this purpose regression statistics was performed and the results are presented in table 5.

Table 5 Regression Statistics of Leadership Practice and School Culture on Students Academic Achievement

Variables	R^2	Coefficients	Beta	t-test	Sig
Leadership Practice		.595	.142	.534	.594
School Culture	0.016	-.068	-.016	-.060	.953

Dependent Variable: Academic Achievement

As indicated in table 5 the results of regression statistics showed that there was very small and statistically insignificant effect of leadership practice and school culture to students' academic achievement R^2 = 0.016, F = .727, p > 0.05.

Results and Discussion

Principals' School Leadership Practices

As total leadership practice calculated mean indicated in table 1 the results of one sample t-test showed that the calculated mean score (2.42) of leadership practice was significantly lower than the expected mean which was 3. This result implies that principals' practice of leadership practices employed at lower level.

From this it was easy to understand that, the successful leadership practice in the schools are very important to instructional practices, academic achievement, students' discipline, school climate and other school activities to improve the core process of the schools. But the findings of this research shows that the leadership practices were not practiced as expected and, in the case of Ethiopia different literatures show the presence of improper leadership exercise. For instance, MOE (2005 E.C) indicated that, "there is lack of visionary, change and result oriented leader ship". World Bank (2005) noted that, different document on the education system in Ethiopia indicate many problems school faced are linked to leadership and management. These problems including inadequate preparation and training people, poor supervision by principals and lack of commitment on the part of heads and teachers.

Generally, one sample t-test show the observed mean difference between the reported and expected mean values is statistically significant. Then, the obtained mean of the total Leadership practice was 2.42. Here, the reported mean value (2.42) is less than the test value (3). The result in this table shows that the computed t-value (-5.122) at 90 Df has a level of significance p=0.001. Since the observed level of significance is lower than the acceptable (p= 0.05), it testifies that the observed mean difference is statistically significant. This result, therefore, implies that the participants agreed that there was no good or effective school leadership practice in the primary schools of Enjibara administrative town and the majority of the teachers agreed on their schools principals didn't practice effective schools leadership.

School Culture Practices

Similarly, an attempt was made to judge the status of school culture in Enjibara administrative town government primary schools. To attain this, one sample t-test was computed and the results are presented in Table 2.

As total school culture practice calculated mean indicated in table 2 the results of one sample t-test showed that the calculated mean score (2.45) of school culture was significantly lower than the mean test value which was 3. This result implies that generally school culture was performed at lower level. When the complex patterns of beliefs, values, attitudes, expectations, ideas and behaviors in an organization are inappropriate or incongruent the culture will ensure that things work badly. A negative culture guides people in the wrong direction and puts strong pressure on organizational members to conform (Kilman et al., 1986). The presence of a weak culture

may be due to the lack of a transformational leader (Cavanaugh & Dellar, 1998).Also according to Vos et al. (2012), an unhealthy school climate can lead to ineffectiveness. Weak and negative culture can divide a school, as strong and positive school culture can unite a school for change (Firestone & Louis, 1999).

Also (Brown, 1993; Cavanaugh & Dellar, 1998) state weak cultures hinder school improvement and are characterized by teachers working to solve problems alone instead of collectively.

In another way Dufour (2004) stated that, in schools with teacher collaboration, teachers learn best from other teachers, not from external experts. In the same way Valentine (2006) noted that, teachers across the school path together, observe and discuss teaching practices, evaluate programs and develop an awareness of the practices and programs of the teachers.

In general, one sample t-test show the observed mean difference between the reported and expected mean values is statistically significant. Then, the obtained mean of the school culture practice was 2.45. Here, the reported mean value (2.45) is less than the test value (3). The result in table 4 shows that the computed t-value (-4.940) at 90 Df has a level of significance p=0.000. Since the observed level of significance is lower than the acceptable (p= 0.05), it testifies that the observed mean difference is statistically significant. This result, therefore, implies that the participants disagreed that there was positive school culture in the primary schools.

The Status of Students' Academic Achievement
To know the students achievement and to relate with other independent variable the researcher taken three years (2006-2008 E.C) of ministry grade eight results of the students achievement.

In the same way an effort was made to examine the status of students' academic achievement in Enjibara administrative town government primary schools. To achieve this, one sample t-test was performed and the results are presented in Table 3.

As indicated in Table 3 the results of one sample t-test showed that the observed mean score of students' academic achievement (52.6) was significantly higher than the mean test value which was 50. This result implies that students' had above average academic achievement.

To maintain high levels of learner achievements, principals need to be effective leaders and should function as instructional leaders (Leithwood et al. 2004; Robinson et al. 2008). Students learning and achievement are affected by a combination of leadership strategies which jointly address school culture and staff development, and focus on enhancing the processes of teaching and learning (Day et al., 2000).

The Relationships among the School Leadership Practice, School Culture and Students Achievement.

The next objective of the study was to examine whether there is statistically significant relationship between principals leadership practice, school culture and students academic achievement in Enjibara administrative town government primary schools. To achieve this purpose Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated and the results are presented in Table 4.

As indicated in Table 4 the results of correlation coefficient portrayed that there was very high statistically significant correlation between school leadership practice and school culture (r =.917[**], p< 0.05). This result implies that as leadership practice increases school culture increases too. On the other hand, in positive direction but extremely low and insignificant relationship was observed between leadership practice and students' academic achievement (.127). In the same way, it is in a positive direction, very weak relationship was observed between school culture and students' academic achievement (.114)

Concerning the finding a lot of literature and researchers noted as follows. Bass (1991) in his study found that "there is a positive relationship between the measure of transformational leadership and school culture. Krug (1992) also found the high correlation exist between factors of transformational leader ship and school culture."

So, as indicated above different literatures strength the findings of their relationships in the study area.

On the other hand, in positive direction but extremely low and insignificant relationship was observed between leadership practice and students' academic achievement (.127) in the primary schools of Enjibara administrative town. This indicated that there was positive but extremely low relationship between school leadership practices and students achievement. Also to relate the school leadership practice with students achievement the researcher take three years of ministry grade eight results of the students. As document analysis of sample schools show that, the minimum and maximum results are 38 and 78 respectively. The mean is 52.6% that is nearest to expected mean (50)..

Generally, the typical conclusion drawn by quantitative leadership researchers is that school leaders have small and indirect effects on student outcomes that are essentially mediated by teachers (Hallinger & Heck, 1998)

In the same way, it is in a positive direction, very weak relationship was observed between school culture and students' academic achievement (.114) in the primary schools of Enjibara administrative town. This indicated that there is extremely low and statistically insignificant relationship between school culture practices and students achievement.

Also to relate the school culture practice with students achievement the researcher take three years of ministry grade eight results of the students. As document analysis of sample schools show that the minimum and

maximum results are 38 and 78 respectively .The mean is 52.6% that is nearest to expected mean (50)
 Concerning the finding a lot of literature strength the relationship of the two points. Watson (2001) warned that:

> *If the culture is not hospitable to learning then student achievement can suffer. Fink and Resnick (2001) reminded us that school principals are responsible for establishing a pervasive culture of teaching and learning in each school. Mortimore (2001) warned that we should concentrate on establishing more knowledge about the complex interactions between culture and schooling.*

According to Hoy and Tarter (1997), "unhealthy schools are deterred in their mission and goals by parental and public demands. Unhealthy schools lack an effective leader and the teachers are generally unhappy with their jobs and colleagues. In addition, neither teachers nor students are academically motivated in poor schools and academic achievement is not highly valued."

.Waters et.al (2005) described the link among school culture, leadership, and student achievement. They stated, "Fostering school culture that indirectly affects student achievement is a strong theme within the literature on principal leadership" (p. 47).

4.2.5 The Overall Effect of Principals' Leadership Practice and School Culture Practice on Students' Academic Achievement in Enjibara Administrative Town Government Primary Schools

The last objective of this study was to determine the contribution of principals' leadership practice and school culture on students' academic achievement in Enjibara Administrative Town government primary schools. To attain this purpose regression statistics was performed and the results are presented in table 5.

As indicated in table 5 the results of regression analysis showed that there was very small and statistically insignificant effect of leadership practice and school culture to students' academic achievement R^2 = 0.016, F = .727, p > 0.05.

The most recent review of the impact of instructional leadership on student outcomes concluded as follows: The size of the effects that principals indirectly contribute toward student learning, though statistically significant is also quite small (Hallinger, 2005, p. 229)

 Hallinger and Heck (1998) proposed that the principal does not directly affect student achievement, but rather indirectly effects learning by impacting on the climate of the school. While much of the research indicates that the impact of school leadership on student achievement is indirect, mediated by the work of teachers in classrooms (Smith et.al 2005).

Generally, it is clear to conclude that the contribution of principals' leadership practice and school culture practice on students' academic achievement in Enjibara Administrative Town government primary schools was very low and this means there may be other different factors which influence the students' academic achievement

Conclusion

The principals' leader ship practice, school culture and students achievement was attempted to be seen in the study area.

As the result of findings show that in relation to principals' leadership practice, school culture and students' achievement the study concluded that the two practices (the principals' leadership practice and school culture practice) at Enjibara administrative town schools were not exercised at expected level and students academic achievements was almost at average or expected level. Principals' leadership practice and school culture were likely failing states which need urgent intervention and improvement.

 In addition, regarding the correlation of the three, as it has been seen in the finding, it can be concluded that there was a positive relationship among the three and especially the relationship between the school leadership and school culture was very strong and high. But, the relationship of leadership practice and students academic achievements and also, the relationship of school culture and students academic achievements were extremely low and weak. Also the findings show that there was very low contribution or low effect of principals' leadership practice and school culture on students' academic achievement. This shows that there may be different factors which highly or significantly contribute to students' academic achievement.

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