

## **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRINCIPALS' MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT**

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### **Abstract**

The main aim was to study the relationship between principals' management practices and students' achievement in Basic Education High Schools, Laymyethna Township, Ayeyarwaddy Region. The specific aims were to study the teachers' perceptions on the degree of importance of principals' management practices, to study the teachers' perceptions on principals' management practices and to study the relationship between principals' management practices and students' achievement. Quantitative and qualitative methods were used in this study. The participants of this study were 103 Seniors teachers from 8 Basic Education High Schools of Laymyethna Township by using purposive sampling. The questionnaire was based on the Principals' Management Practices and review of related literature. There were 40 items for principals' management practices and the reliability coefficient (Cronbah's Alpha) was 0.89 for the degree of importance of principals' management practices and 0.87 for principals' management practices. Descriptive statistics and Spearman's rho Correlation were used to analyze to data. By using SPSS version 23.0, principals' distributed leadership practices were found out with the descriptive statistics. According to findings, high school principals continually performed management practices by their teachers' perceptions (Means=3.96, SD=0.65). There was significant correlation between principals' management practices and student achievement ( $r=0.359$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). The information from open-ended questions were complementary to the quantitative findings.

**Keywords:** management practices, student achievement

### **Introduction**

Every organisation strives to enhance the effectiveness through focused attention on managerial effectiveness aimed at helping managers to get best out of their team as well as themselves. Olorisade (2011) argues that any organisation exists to accomplish a purpose in the larger society which is usually stated in the form of objectives or goal. This is also the same in schools.

According to Mintzberg, (1975), a manager is everyone who has an influence on others in the organisation, can be the president, prime minister, administrator, official, principal, director, executive of an institution and so forth. The head of the school in this matter is the manager that requires a set of qualities to manage the school to achieve its intended goal.

Managers may directly influence the workers' attitude, interest, and change their behaviour towards commitment to work and objectives. A school can stand to bear changes only if there are right managerial styles and behavior since the performance of an organisation depends on the entire support of employees, customers (students), community and investors. To deal with them effectively requires special skills which make the manager successful in their task.

Principal occupies a position of great importance in the set up of an educational institution. He/She is an educator with executive authority and ought to have a clear vision for the future of his school. Therefore, he/she seeks the support of the faculty to channelize their

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professional energies towards the achievement of clear objectives of the schools and learning needs of students. His/Her role is important and his/her intervention counts in school improvement efforts. It is his/her leadership role that makes different from manager because a manager just plans, organizes and controls the resources available to him. Leaders have ability to influence and motivate others to achieve organizational goals, influences minds of subordinates who follow their leaders duly inspired by their personalities.

One of the key factors which may influence school effectiveness is the ability of the principal to perform managerial functions. Effective school management are key to improve school performance, particularly of students in both academically and discipline wise. Therefore, the principal has to learn some management practice which has effect on employees' behaviour and attitudes so that the organisation can be much benefited by their labour.

### **Importance of the Study**

Education is one of the pre-requisite for ensuring sustainable development in a country. It ensures individual development, and promotes quality human resource. According to Holmes (2000), in a school set up, management practices refer to the way a school principal uses the human resources and other resources and promotes best value and the way the school works with its governing body.

The principals' management practices that set the tone of the school, the climate for teaching, the level of professionalism, the morale of teachers and the degree of concern for what students may or may not become.

Principals' management practice is a significant factor in students' achievement. In an effective school, there is a clearly articulated school mission through which the staff shares an understanding of and commitment to instructional goals, priorities, assessment, procedures and accountability Lezotte (2001). Principal creates an atmosphere in which teachers are considered professionals and have opportunities to continue their professional development both within and without the school they teach in, leads teachers towards excellence. There should be a climate of high expectations in which the staff believes and demonstrates that all learners can obtain mastery of the school's essential curriculum (Lezotte, 2001).

An effective principal communicates the school's mission and vision, by persistently creating a shared sense of purpose and establishing a set of common core values among the instructional staff. There is an orderly, purposeful, business-like atmosphere, which is free from the threat of physical harm. School climate is not oppressive, parents understand and support the basic mission of the school and are given opportunities to play important roles in helping the school to achieve its mission.

Educators and members of public acknowledge that different schools achieve different degrees of success even with similar learning facilities. There is great competition today among schools all trying to produce better results in national examinations. Some have maintained better results while others have dropped due to different management practices of principal in the schools. Success in producing good results in national examinations is largely determined by the principal and the type of management practices in the school. The principals' management practices are important in shaping the school's organizational climate and the students' academic performance.

This study was to benefit the principal by providing information on those factors that affect performance of students in their schools. It was hoped to help the policy makers in general to assess performance of the principal with a view of promoting only those who have high organizational ability and good in achieving high academic performance. It would also be by principal to improve on their supervisory and motivation techniques with a view to enhance quality teaching and learning in the schools.

The study addresses the management practices of principals. It highlights the management practices of principals which can result to improved achievement in national examinations in the township. The findings of the study could shed light to the rest of the schools outside the township on management practices which can bring about better students' academic achievement. The study will be useful to the educators when formulating ways of improving performance in the country and elsewhere.

### **Aims of the Study**

#### **Main Aim**

To study the relationship between principals' management practices and students' achievement in Basic Education High Schools, Laymyethna Township.

#### **Specific Aims**

The specific aims of the study are

- To study the perceptions of teachers on the degree of importance of principals' management practices
- To study the teachers' perceptions on principals' management practices
- To study the relationship between principals' management practices and students' achievement

#### **Research Questions**

The research questions are

- To what extent do the teachers perceive on the degree of importance of principals' management practices?
- To what extent do the teachers perceive the principals' management practice?
- Is there any relationship between principals' management practices and students' achievement?

### **Theoretical Framework of the Study**

Based on McGregor's theory, principals' management practices developed by Ndiza Kasyoka (2015) are used as theoretical framework in this study. Principals' management practices are:

- (1) Supervision
- (2) Communication
- (3) Motivation

## **Supervision**

Principals should supervise teaching and learning in the school by ensuring that early lesson planning is always done, ensuring that lessons are structured with an interesting beginning, revision of previous lesson, teacher voice variations and summary of major points are done, that there is use of backups (teaching aids by teachers) properly and that there is good relationship between teachers, students and that teachers follow up curriculum strictly.

Supervision is a major function that the school head must carry. It includes supervision of activities supportive of improving instruction that is curriculum and material development, evaluation of programmes and instructional planning.

Examinations are generally accepted as valid measures of achievement. The responsibility of checking professional documents like teachers' schemes of work and lesson plans lies in the hands of the principal. This may be done in person or he may delegate to the deputy principal or the senior the teacher. Preparation and use of schemes of work by the teachers, enhances sequential teaching and results to improved academic achievement. This should be done frequently to allow the principals to monitor curriculum implementation.

## **Communication**

Successful principals communicate the school vision effectively, provide resources for instruction, act as instructional resources and maintain a high visible presence in all aspects of the school.

A manager who knows his job well must brief members of the teaching staff of their responsibilities. He must inform his staff about events and activities and avoid last minute communication. Principals as managers of schools among other things must explain and clarify the objectives of ongoing innovations to the teachers and students in the school if these innovations are to be carried out successfully.

The importance of communication through staff meetings, which should aim at: programming for the future events and examinations in the school, making official announcements to teachers on the content of circulars from the ministry, discussing subject allocations and fostering friendship among staff.

Most people would like a clear understanding of what is expected of them in the workplace. To provide the best education or care for students, principals need to communicate clearly and regularly communicate to share the frustrations and disappointment of the teachers and other workers.

## **Motivation**

Motivation is the complex forces, incentives, needs, desires, tensions and other mechanisms which start and maintain voluntary activity by members of an organization such as a school, for purpose of attaining personal aims, organisational goals, targets, professional roles and status.

Motivation of human resources in any work place is associated with high productivity. Rewards may be used for motivation either financial or non-financial rewards. Rewards should be given on the basis of effort and performance of personnel.

Motivation in the school should not only be through monetary rewards but it should also involve the proper use of verbal praise and other non-monetary rewards such as letters of appreciation and presentation of gifts. Principals should also recommend promotion of teachers who have shown excellent performance to boost their morale and productivity.

### **Definition of Key Terms**

#### **Management Practice**

Management practice is the management skills/behaviour exercised by a principal in a school (Brookover, 1979).

#### **Student Achievement**

Student achievement means students' scoring at or above the minimum level of proficiency as defined by standardized test. It is a measure of knowledge gained in formal education usually indicated by test scores, grade, grade points average and degrees (Bennet, 2001).

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

This study was conducted with descriptive research design. Quantitative and qualitative methods were used to collect the required data. Questionnaire survey was used in quantitative study and open-ended questions were also used in qualitative study.

### **Sample**

There are totally 8 Basic Education High Schools and 103 senior teachers in Laymyethna Township, Ayeyarwaddy Region. The sample was comprised of 103 senior teachers from 8 Basic Education High Schools by purposive sampling method.

### **Instrumentation**

The questionnaires included demographic information composed with gender, age, academic qualification, service, subjects, and training. It consists of 40 items related with Principals' management practices. These items were rated on five-point Likert scales. For qualitative study, there were five open-ended questions in this study. Open-ended questions were interpreted based on the teachers' responses.

### **Procedures**

Pilot study was conducted with 40 teachers from Basic Education High School, North Okkalapa Township, Yangon Region. The questionnaires were distributed to the teachers on 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 2018. They were returned on 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 2018. According to the pilot study, the reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) were (0.89) for the degree of importance of principals' management practices and (0.87) for the principals' management practices. After that, the necessary modifications were made with the directions and guidelines of the supervisor.

On 7<sup>th</sup> November, 2018, the questionnaires were distributed to 103 senior teachers in the schools. On 15<sup>th</sup> November, 2018, the distributed questionnaires were returned. The respondent rate was (100%).

## Data Analysis

The collected data of this study were systematically analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) version 23. The descriptive analysis technique was used to find out the principals' management practices. The findings were presented in table, graph, means and standard deviations. The open-ended questions were analyzed and interpreted to check their responds.

## Findings

This chapter deals with research findings based on the quantitative and qualitative studies.

### Findings for Principals' Management Practices in Basic Education High Schools

The mean values and standard deviations of teachers' perceptions on the degree of importance and principals' management practices are presented in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1 Comparison of Mean Values of Teachers' Perceptions on the Degree of Importance and Principals' Management Practices (N= 103)**

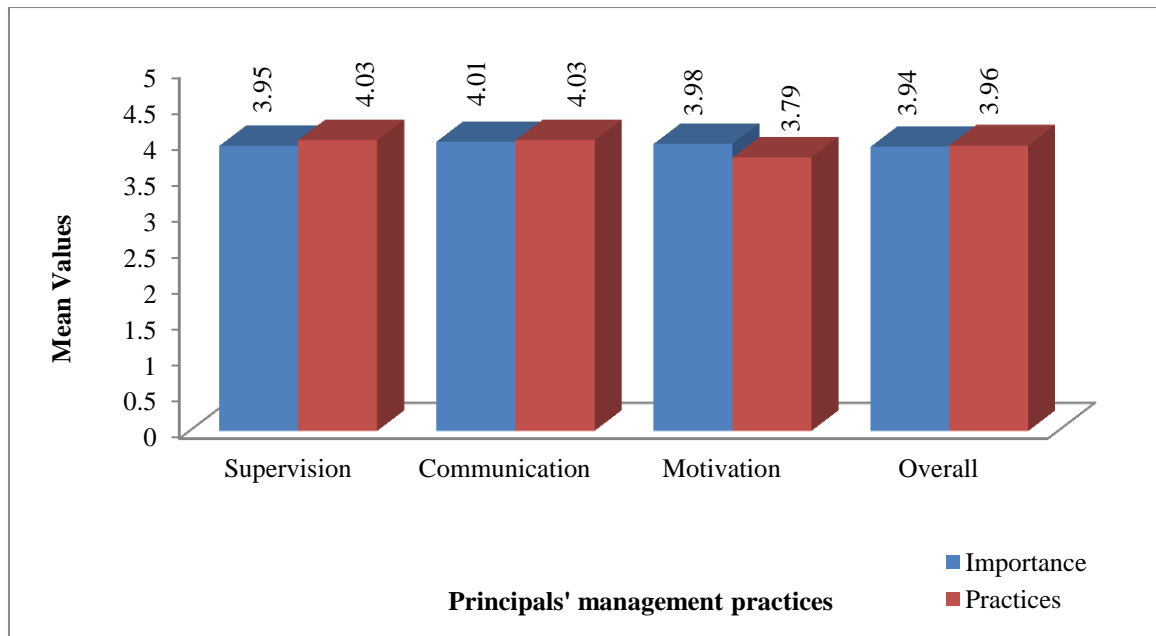
No.	Principals' management practices	Importance		Practices	
		Mean (SD)	Degree	Mean (SD)	Level
1	Supervision	3.95 (0.53)	Moderately high	4.03 (0.63)	Often
2	Communication	4.01 (0.44)	Moderately high	4.03 (0.70)	Often
3	Motivation	3.98 (0.49)	Moderately high	3.79 (0.92)	Often
	Overall	3.94 (0.47)	Moderately high	3.96 (0.65)	Often

#### Scoring Direction:

For Degree of Importance of Principals' Management Practices	For Practices of Principals
1.00 to 1.49 = Low	1.00 to 1.49 = Never
1.50 to 2.49 = Moderately low	1.50 to 2.49 = Seldom
2.50 to 3.49 = Average	2.50 to 3.49 = Sometimes
3.50 to 4.49 = Moderately high	3.50 to 4.49 = Often
4.50 and more = High	4.50 and more = Always

According to table (4.1), for teachers' teachers' perception on the degree of importance of principals' management practices, the mean value of communication had the highest mean value ( $M=4.01$ ), but supervision had the lowest mean value ( $M=3.95$ ). For teachers' perception on their principals' management practices, the mean value of supervision and communication had the highest mean value ( $M=4.03$ ), but motivation had the lowest mean value ( $M=3.79$ ).

Comparisons of mean values of teachers' perceptions on the degree of importance and principals' management practices were shown in figure 4.1.



**Figure 4.1** Comparison of Mean Values of Teachers' Perception on the degree of Importance and Principals' Management Practices

The mean values and standard deviations of teachers' perception on their principals' management practices by school are presented in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2** Mean Values and Standard deviation of Teachers' Perception on their Principals' Management Practices by School

No	Principal' management practices		School A	School B	School C	School D	School E	School F	School G	School H
1	Supervision	Mean (SD)	4.06 (0.31)	4.15 (0.49)	4.35 (0.74)	3.82 (0.65)	4.22 (0.54)	4.34 (0.41)	3.44 (0.66)	3.88 (0.53)
2	Communication	Mean (SD)	4.12 (0.48)	4.08 (0.69)	4.09 (0.79)	3.79 (0.63)	4.02 (0.59)	4.36 (0.50)	3.55 (0.59)	4.19 (0.95)
3	Motivation	Mean (SD)	3.88 (0.83)	3.78 (0.92)	4.03 (0.68)	3.35 (1.16)	3.69 (1.06)	4.34 (1.23)	3.48 (0.66)	3.65 (0.61)
4	Overall	Mean (SD)	4.08 (0.34)	4.01 (0.65)	4.17 (0.70)	3.66 (0.77)	3.99 (0.72)	4.35 (0.60)	3.49 (0.57)	3.89 (0.51)

According to the table (4.2), it was found that in School "A", the mean values of communication had the highest mean value 4.12 but motivation had the lowest mean value 3.88.

In School "B", it was found that the mean values of supervision had the highest mean value 4.15 but motivation had the lowest mean value 3.78.

In School "C", it was found that the mean values of supervision had the highest mean value 4.35 but motivation had the lowest mean value 4.03.

In School "D", it was found that the mean values of supervision had the highest mean value 3.82 but motivation had the lowest mean value 3.35.

In School "E", it was found that the mean values of supervision had the highest mean value 4.22 but motivation had the lowest mean value 3.69.

In School “F”, it was found that the mean values of communication had the highest mean value 4.36 but supervision and motivation had the lowest mean value 4.34.

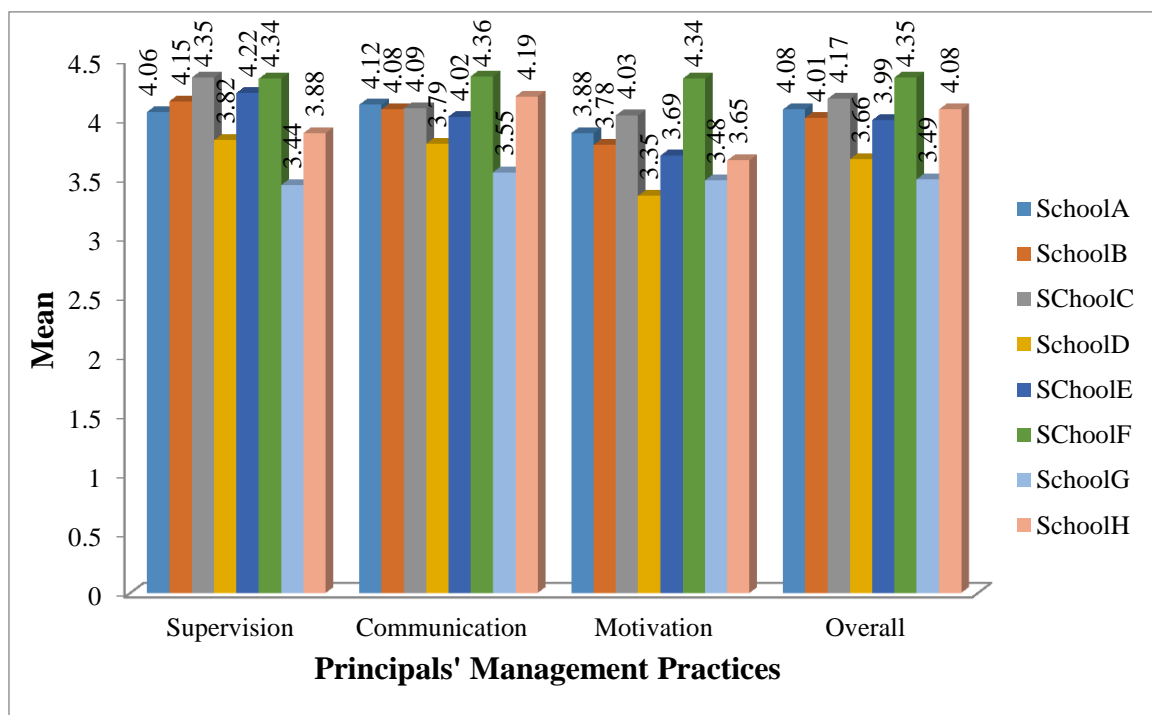
In School “G”, it was found that the mean values of communication had the highest mean value 3.55 but supervision had the lowest mean value 3.44.

In School “H”, it was found that the mean values of communication had the highest mean value 4.19 but motivation had the lowest mean value 3.65.

In general, it was found that the total mean values of supervision, communication and motivation were 4.08, 4.01, 4.17, 3.66, 3.99, 4.35, 3.49 and 3.89 respectively.

According to table (4.2), School F had the highest mean values ( $M=4.35$ ) and School G had the lowest mean values ( $M=3.49$ ).

The mean values of teachers’ perception on their principals’ management practices by school were shown in figure 4.2.



**Figure 4.2** Mean Values of Teachers’ Perceptions on Principals’ Management Practices by School

In this study, the student achievement refers to the pass rate of Matriculation Examination of 2018. The average township pass rate of 2018 is 21.13% in Laymyethna Township, Ayeyarwaddy Region. Thus, the schools with the average pass rate below 21.13% are below average group, and the schools with the pass rate above 21.13% are above average group. (See Table)



**Table 4.3 The Pass Rate Level of Schools in Laymyethna Township (2018 AY)**

School	Pass Rate of 2018	Township Pass Rate	Pass Rate Level
A	28.84	21.13	Above Average
B	28.95	21.13	Above Average
C	29.82	21.13	Above Average
D	24.39	21.13	Above Average
E	24.00	21.13	Above Average
F	21.72	21.13	Above Average
G	22.92	21.13	Above Average
H	29.37	21.13	Above Average

Average Pass Rate; Below 21.13%=Below Average, Above 21.13%=Above Average

To examine the relationship between the teachers’ perception on principals’ management practices and student achievement, Spearman’s rho Correlation was used. It was shown in table.

**Table 4.4 Relationship between Principals’ Management Practices and Students Achievement**

		Principals’ Management Practices	Students Achievement
Principals’ Management Practices	Spearman’s rho Correlation Sig.(2-tailed) N	1.000 . 103	.359** .000 103
Students Achievement	Spearman’s rho Correlation Sig.(2-tailed) N	.359** .000 103	1.000 . 103

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table proved that the sample of this study (N=103), there was a significant relationship ( $r=.359$ ), ( $p=0.01$ ) between principal’s management practices and student achievement. It can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between principals’ management practices and student achievement. The result indicates positive correlation. This means that if the teachers’ perceptions on principals’ management practices are high, the student achievement is likely to be high or if the teachers’ perceptions on principals’ management practices are low, the student achievement is likely to be low.

**Finding for Open-ended Questions**

There are five open-ended questions in the instrument. The 103 teachers can express their perception on their principals’ management practices.

**Question 1-What are some of the methods that principal use in your school to ensure academic improvement?**

The 100 teachers (97.09%) stated that their principals arranged night-study, organized guardianship system to get the high pass rate. The 80 teachers (77.67%) answered that their principals discussed with the teachers, students and parents and then planed for improvement of the school. The 80 teachers (77.67%) responded that their principal supervised teaching and

learning. The 70 teachers (67.96%) responded that their principals coordinated with the teacher, parents and students for improvement of the school.

**Question 2-What kind of responsibilities does the principal gives to the teachers?**

The 100 of teachers (97.09%) described that their principals lead teachers to take the leadership role in school disciplinary, activities of school council and school health. The 80 teachers (77.67%) answered that their principal encouraged sport, school activities and school competitions.

**Question 3-State any three ways among your principal can do to improve academic performance in your school?**

The 100 teachers (97.09%) described that their principals often consult with the students' parents about the students' weakness. The 80 teachers (77.67%) answered that their principal informed parents the students' exam result, organized guardianship system, provided extra teaching and regular remedial teaching. The 90 teachers (87.38%) described that their principals cooperated with parents, teachers and students. The 70 teachers (67.96%) responded that their principals checked the teaching-learning situation, syllabus coverage, students' attendance and exercise books.

The 60 teachers (58.25%) stated that their principals praise and give appropriate rewards to the teachers with high performance, always reward the outstanding teachers and students in school family day. The 50 teachers (48.54%) responded that their principals continuously evaluate the students' progress.

**Question 4-How does your principals perform in your school to improved subject's pass rate?**

The 100 teachers (97.09%) described that their principals monthly conducts subject meeting. The 80 teachers (77.67%) answered that their principal are encouraged teachers to teach the lessons in accordance with monthly plan and to study the journals and articles related to their teaching subject. The 85 teachers (82.52%) responded that their principals encouraged teachers to teach the students by separating the class according to their ability.

The 80 teachers (77.67%) answered that their principals usually guided the teachers to teach by trying their best in the teaching process. The 75 teachers (72.82%) answered that their principals regularly consult with teachers about the students' strength and weakness and then fulfill the students' needs. The 70 teachers (67.96%) responded that their principals used to discuss with the teachers who have difficulties in teaching process and other responsibilities and then give suggestions. They always provide many books for teachers in order to improve their subject knowledge and teaching aids and other necessary support. The 57 teachers (55.34%) described that their principals often evaluate the strengths and weakness of the students.

**Question 5-Do you think that principal's management practices is correlated with students' achievement? Why?**

The 100 teachers (97.09%) described that principal is the responsible person for all activities that occur in and around in a school. The 80 teachers (77.67%) answered that principal is the person of authority in school. The 70 teachers (67.96%) responded that principals are greatly accountable for academic achievements of their students. The 60 teachers (58.25%) stated that principal is to be vital to the successful functioning of many aspects of a school.

## Conclusion and Discussion

Through the 1970s and 1980s, researchers began defining school effectiveness and ways to bring about school improvement. One study posited that effective principals emphasized student achievement (Edmond, 1979). Roberts Brailsford (2001) specified that the principal is the person who is directly responsible for student achievement.

In this study, the extent of principals' management practices based on their teachers' responses, the mean values of teachers' perception on the degree of principals' management practices such as supervision, communication and communication were 3.95, 4.01 and 3.98 respectively. The total mean values of the teachers' perception on the degree of importance of principals' management practices are 3.94. Thus, it can be said that the teacher perceived that the overall dimension of principal management practices is moderately high. The dimension of *communication* has the highest mean values and the dimension of *supervision* has the lowest mean values.

In According to teachers' perception, The extent of principals' management practices based on their teachers' responses, the mean values of teachers' perception on the principals' management practices such as supervision, communication and communication were 4.03, 4.03 and 3.96 respectively. The total mean values of the teachers' perception on their principals' management practices are 3.96. Thus, it can be said that the teachers perceive that the overall dimension of principal management practices is *often* performed by the principals.

According to teachers' rating scale, the dimensions of *supervision* and *communication* have the highest mean. So, it can be said that the teacher perceived that the dimensions of *supervision* and *communication* are the most performed by their principals among three dimensions of principals' management practices.

According to teachers' rating scale, the dimension of *motivation* had the lowest mean. So, it can be said that the teachers perceive that the dimension of *motivation* is the least performed by their principals among three dimensions of principals' management practices.

Thus, the principals' management practices are often performed by the principals as the teacher perceived that the degree of importance of principals, management practices is moderately high.

In general, the total mean values of principals' management practices in Basic Education School in Laymyethna Township were 4.08, 4.01, 4.17, 3.66, 3.99, 4.35, 3.49 and 3.89 respectively. Among them, School F had the highest mean values ( $M=4.35$ ) and School G had the lowest mean values ( $M=3.49$ ).

It was found that there was a significant relationship between principals' management practices and student achievement. The result indicates positive correlation. This means that if the teachers' perceptions on principals' management practices are high, the student achievement is likely to be high or if the teachers' perceptions on principals' management practices are low, the student achievement is likely to be low.

### Suggestions

Based on the analyses of the survey, the following suggestions and recommendations are presented to improve the principals' management practices for the improvement of students' achievement.

- The principals ought to closely supervise teachers and students not only for achieving effective teaching and learning but also to consistently do well by students in the examinations.
- Principals should create opportunities for understanding the needs, aspirations and frustrations of each staff member through effective communication, mutual trust and openness among all the stakeholders.
- They should meet often with teachers and students and discuss the problems and possibilities of solving them. They should reward students as much as possible to recognize regarding their academic achievement. They should create an environment where teachers and students are motivated to work together with momentum.
- The ministry of education should organize in service courses for principals on management practices with a view to improving academic performance in their institutions.

### Need for Further Research

This research focused on the principals' management practices and students achievement in Basic Education High Schools, Laymyethna Township, Ayeyarwaddy Region. It will provide the foundation for future research concerning principals' management practices. The following recommendations are made for further research based on the findings of this study.

- The research on principals' management practices should be conducted in the Basic Education School of other townships, states and regions in Myanmar.
- A study of primary school principals', middle school principals' management practices should be conducted.

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