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**PRINCIPALS' AND TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF SCHOOL  
CULTURE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF GUJI ZONE OROMIA  
REGIONAL STATE**

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL STUDIES  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT**

**A THESIS TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES IN  
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR MASTER OF  
ARTS IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP**

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**This is to Certify that the Thesis Prepared by Girum Zenebe Afessa; Entitled  
Principals and Teachers Perception of School Culture in Guji Zone Secondary  
Schools Oromia Regional State**

**Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master  
of Arts (Educational Research and Development) Complies with the  
Regulations of the University and Meets the Accepted Standards.**

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## **Abbreviations/Acronyms**

GEQIP: General Education Quality Improvement Program

MoE: Ministry of Education

SIP: School Improvement Program

TDP : Teachers Development Program

## Abstract

*This study aimed to compare the perception of school culture from principals to that of the perception of teachers in secondary schools of Guji Zone Oromia regional state. To accomplish this purpose, the study employed descriptive design. The study was carried out in six secondary schools of Guji Zone. Schools were included as sample through random sampling technique especially lottery sampling method. A total 265 teachers and six principals were included through available sampling technique. School culture Triage questionnaire was the main instrument to collect data. Additional qualitative data was gathered through open ended questions, observation and interview. Observation was employed in order to interpret the current state of school culture. To get more about principal's belief with regard to school culture, interview was also conducted with six principals from participating schools. The focus for this study was provided through three research questions to compare principals and teacher's school culture perception (a) what are the differences between principals and teacher's perception regarding collaboration? (b) what are the differences between the perception of principals and teachers regarding collegiality? (c) what are the differences between the perception of principals and teachers regarding self-determination/ efficacy? School Culture Triage questionnaire was used to generate key areas of school culture (collaboration, collegiality and self-determination/efficacy) score. The analysis was carried out qualitatively. Data from principals and teachers analyzed separately, to compare the perception of school culture from principals to that of the perception of teachers. The results of this study show that the overall school culture is weak. Regarding to school culture perception the study revealed that school culture is perceived very similarly between teachers and principals but there are areas of the school culture that are perceived differently, and if improved, can lead to significant gains for teachers and student learning and achievement. Thus the research result suggests that improving school culture will increase teacher moral, teacher and school leadership cohesiveness, and increase student's achievement.*

# Chapter One

## 1. Introduction

This part deals with the problem and its approach. It consists of introduction, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, and organization of the study.

### 1.1 Background

It was not until the beginning of the 1980s that organization scholars began paying serious attention to the concept of culture. In most instance, practice has led research and scholars have focused mainly on documenting, explaining, and building model of organizational phenomena that were already been tried in the field of management. Organizational culture however has been an area in which conceptual work and scholars have provided guidance for managers as they have searched for ways to improve their organization effectiveness (Cameron and Quinn, 1999).

Organizational culture has been recognized as an important element which can influence organizational success. Since then organizational culture became a very important field of investigation. Organizational researchers and managers have examined the concept of culture in a variety of setting in order to develop more consistency and productivity in the work place (Fraliner & Olson, 2007). Researchers across various disciplines began examining the role of culture within organizational life and then connected it to effectiveness and central processes of the organization in the last decades of 20<sup>th</sup> century (Kezar & Eckal, 2002). Organizational culture can be used to increase organizational effectiveness because it controls the way they interpret and manage the organization's environment. Organizational culture can be treated as one of main subject which shapes the relation, working process, decision making and problem solving processes. Thus, culture has notable impact on the organization's performance, effectiveness and competitive position in its environment (Cameron & Freeman, 1991).

School culture and climate are the top factors affecting student achievement (Wang, Haertel, & Walberg, 1997). Deal and Peterson (1998) stated "Parents, teachers, principals, and students

often sense something special and undefined about the schools they attend” (p.28). The “something special and undefined” that they refer to is the culture of the school.

Even though school culture is difficult to define, it can be extremely powerful and often it is taken-for-granted and over-looked in schools (Deal & Peterson, 1998). Culture has a deep impact on many facets of schools, typically parts of the school that cannot be measured with a test, but the greatly impact learning outcomes and test scores (Melton-Shutt, 2004). The culture impact how staff dress and interact with each other, what they talk about, to the instruction happening in each classroom, and even the willingness of students and staff to change (Deal & Peterson, 1998). These are all important aspects of healthy school culture where the people involved share common goals and have a constant agreement on how to do things and what is actually worth doing (Wagner,2008).

There are many terms used by different researchers to describe organizational culture. According to Hofsted (1980), culture is the collective thinking of minds which create a difference between the members of one group from another. As per Schein (1990), defines culture is set of different values and behaviors that may considered to guide to success. Stolp and Smith (1994), defines school culture as an embodiment of norms, values, beliefs, ceremonies, rituals, traditions and myths understood in varying degrees by members of the school community.

Every school has a culture. This culture of the school can be a positive influence on learning or it can seriously inhibit the functioning of the school. A school’s culture is always at work, either helping or hindering adult learning (Deal & Peterson, 1990). According to Tichy (1982), organizational culture is known as normative glue means to hold the overall organization.

Macneil, Prater, and Busch mentioned, “Strong school cultures have better motivated teachers. Highly motivated teachers have a greater success in terms of students academic achievement (2009, p.78). Watson (2001) stated, if the culture is not hospitable to learning then student achievement can suffer. Organizational theorists have long reported that paying attention to school culture is the most important action that leaders can perform (Macneil, Prater, and Busch, 2009).

Anybody who spends time in schools can distinguish school cultures. Deal and Peterson (1998) defined and give examples of negative (toxic) cultures and the benefits of a positive school culture. Negative, or toxic, school cultures are where the staff is extremely fragmented, where addressing students and the needs of those students is no longer the main objective. This leads to environments that serve adults more than the students. Examples include teachers who attack new ideas, criticize teachers who are concerned with student achievement, and make fun of teachers willing to go above and beyond what is expected.

In contrast to the negative and toxic cultures, there are many opportunities provided to positive cultures, such as increased student learning (Deal & Peterson, 1998). These are schools where the staff has a shared sense of purpose, healthy communication, and strong, positive collegial leaderships among the staff. These schools also celebrate traditions, improvement, hard work, and share an overall feeling of support for each other within this school, not just from administrators to teachers, but from teachers to other teachers, and even positive parent communication and celebration (Deal & Peterson, 1998). Cultural values will be reflected by actions and behaviors of the administration, teachers, support staff, and the students. In some schools, the building itself will reflect the values of the staff and administration. Most importantly, a school's culture is a direct reflection of the principal and school leadership team in charge of that school (Hallinger and Heck, 1998). Accordingly, the culture can be manipulated by those authorities dictating what they deem important.

All stakeholders of the school have responsibility for the failure or success of the student's achievement. Thus, developing a healthy school culture or collaborative work cultures helps to reduce isolation of teachers, administrators, students and community and allows the sharing of successful practices in student's achievement.

There are various approaches to culture studies. Cultures were conducted using different types of analysis. For example culture has been studied in association with leadership based on Schein (1985) or values based on O'Reilly and others (1991). However, this study based on Wagner and Masden-Copas (2002) by using School Culture Triage instrument to compare the perception of school culture from principals to that of the perception of teachers in Guji Zone secondary schools.

This study is therefore, expected to compare the perception of school culture from principals to that of the perception of teachers in particular and quality education in general. Since Guji Zone is found in the southern part of Ethiopia which is 610 km far from Addis Ababa, capital city of Ethiopia. It has Seventeen Woredas which are categorized under three areas: agrarian areas, semi pastoralist and pastoralist areas. Based on 2007 census conducted by Central Statistics agency of Ethiopia Guji Zone has a total population of 1,389,800 of which 702,580 are male and 687,220 female; with an area of 18,877.05 km<sup>2</sup> and with population density 74.81 km<sup>2</sup>. It has twenty secondary schools and teachers 594. There are 17,513 students and a grade 10 promotion is 18% according to 2017 academic year's statistics.

The Education and Training policy has been designed and implemented since 1994. It has been the major framework for reform and transformation. Quality and relevance in education program is stressed issue in the policy. To address this issue, Ministry of Education (MoE) has developed a general education quality improvement package (GEQIP) that comprises six programs. Among the six programs school improvement program (SIP) is the major one and the main objective was high expectation of student's academic achievement. However, the program has given little attention to the role of schools culture on student achievement. School improvement plan would be developed without assessing the current state of school culture. Thus almost all of the regions are not implementing it accordingly and the education system is faced with multitude issues which affect the effort to improve the quality of education. To this end, the need to develop strong and positive school culture that enhances student's achievement is vital. In addition, researches conducted in the area of secondary schools culture in Guji Zone are not available. Hence, the main purpose of this study is to compare principals and teachers perception on school culture in Guji Zone secondary schools.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Culture refers to values, beliefs and norms of individuals in the organizations that can increase performance toward the overall organization goals. Cameron and Quinn (1990) Stated that a high degree of organizational performance is linked to an organization which has a strong culture with well integrated and effective set of beliefs, values and behaviors. In this research if principals and teachers perceived school culture differently, this study will highlight the areas of in

consistency. If the principals and teachers share the same perception, then the study will highlight areas that can further improve the school culture.

Rollins and Roberts (1998) noted, Empirical evidence indicates that organizational culture is an important driver of organizational performance. Stolp and Smith (1995) explained that school culture has a powerful influence in schools because it and the manner in which school community members operate. Strong culture has almost considered as a driven force to improve the performance of the employees. It enhances self-confidence and commitment of employees and reduces job stress and improves the ethical behavior of the employees (Scaffold, 1998). Further he states that mostly studies on culture attend to emphasize on a single organization culture. But in the Real and Kennedy's (1982) point of view behavior but in the strong culture, employee's goals are side with the goal of management and helpful to increase the overall organizational performance.

Phillips (2003) posited that student achievement may improve as teachers increase participating in professional learning such as study groups. Styron and Nyman (2008) stated that student's achievement would increase dramatically as teachers collaborate on instructional planning.

Some schools were able to foster substantial teacher collaboration because of the significant benefits produced. Collaboration was a great way for instructional improvement. These approaches yielded high achievement, positive relationships, and psychologically healthy people (Johnson, 1989). Inger (1993) found that teachers saw improvements in student achievement, behavior, and attitude. In schools where teachers work collaboratively, students can sense the program coherence and a consistency of expectations. Collaboration provided for significant and lasting personal growth that led to substantial change (Christenson & Eldredge, 1996). Many researchers have studied about school culture. For example "The relationships between school culture and students achievement" by Karen Lynn Vislocky, (2001), "Analysis and comparison of school culture with academic" by Joane Quiambao (2004) and "Relationship of collaborative school culture and school achievement" by Karen Durrence Bland (2012) were some of the studies. However, these researches have been done in different schools of other countries.

In Ethiopia, there were some studies on organizational and school culture. For example," Assessment on the current state of organizational culture in Arba Minch University" Mulatu

(2011) and “Assessing the dominant culture of secondary schools in pastoralist areas of Borena Zone” Wogene (2013) studied in higher education and Secondary School. However; most of the studies focused on assessing organizational culture of higher education and secondary school culture in different parts of the country. These researches could not generalize the situation of schools culture in the country, because every school has its own unique culture. In contrast to the above studies, this study focuses on the principals and teachers perception of school culture in secondary schools of Guji Zone which have unique environment form the previous studies. Additionally, the fact that researcher has found no published work about the perception of principals and teachers on school culture initiated to study the perception of principals and teachers on school culture. Lastly, study on the perception of principals and teachers on school culture in this particular case is important because, from working experience at schools, particularly secondary schools in Guji Zone, the researcher realized from general observation that schools would develop school improvement plan without assessing the current state of school culture. Thus, there were complains and dissatisfactions from the stakeholders; it triggered the researcher to undertake this research.

Having understood the effect of school culture on student’s academic achievement, it is vital to assess secondary schools culture with respect to principals and teachers perception. This enables schools to know where they stand at the present and where they want to go in the future. Accordingly, this study examines the principals and teachers perception of school culture in Guji Zone secondary schools. To this end, the study was guided by the following basic questions,

What are the differences between principals and teachers perception regarding collaboration of secondary schools in Guji Zone?

What are the differences between principals and teachers perception regarding collegiality in Guji Zone secondary schools?

What are the differences between principals and teachers perception regarding self-determination/efficacy of secondary schools in Guji Zone?

### **1.3 Objective of the Study**

The general objective of the study is to examine the difference perception of principals and teachers on school culture in Guji Zone of Oromia regional state. More specifically, the study assesses the following specific objectives.

- To compare the differences between principals and teachers perception regarding collaboration at Guji Zone secondary schools.
- To compare the differences between principals and teachers perception regarding collegiality of Guji Zone secondary schools.
- To identify the differences between principals and teachers perception regarding self-determination/efficacy of Guji Zone secondary schools.

#### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

Schools are the major social institution where by behaviors, skill and attitudes of student are shaped accordingly through the teaching and the learning process. Therefore, culture which affects student's academic achievement need to be carefully examined. It is hoped that the study will be of significance and is expected to contribute the following.

1. The finding of the study creates awareness of educational institution leaders, principals and teaching staff, by indicating the current state of school culture and principals and teachers perception of school culture in Guji Zone secondary schools.
2. The study tries to contribute a focus on school culture can increase students academic achievement and suggests workable solution that help to better enhance cultural elements by indicating differently perceived school culture aspects which the policy makers, top management, concerned government bodies, could make use of as appropriate.
3. The study serves as a base to those individuals to conduct more extensive research in related to perception of school culture.
4. The study helps educational leaders and teachers to improve their organizational culture.

#### **1.5 Delimitation of the Study**

There are twenty government secondary schools in Guji Zone Oromia regional state. Due to time, and resource limitation it was impossible to cover principals and teachers perception of school culture of all secondary schools found throughout the Zone. The study has delimited to secondary schools (grade 9-10). Thus, it was delimited to assess principals and teachers perception on the key areas of school culture (collaboration, collegiality and self-determination/efficacy) in Guji Zone secondary schools.

## **1.6 Operational Definitions**

**School Culture:** Deals with the key areas of school culture (collaboration, collegiality, and self-determination/efficacy) in Guji Zone secondary schools.

**Perception:** In this study, perception refers to principals and teachers idea, belief or image on the key areas of school culture (collaboration, collegiality, and self-determination/efficacy) in Guji Zone secondary schools.

**School Culture Triage Survey:** Wagner and Masden-Copas (2002), instrument of a questionnaire which was used to compare the perception of school culture from principals to that of the perception of teachers in Guji Zone secondary schools.

## **1.7 Organization of the Study**

The study is organized in to five chapters. In the first chapter introduction of the study has been discussed. In the second chapter review of literature has been reviewed. While the third chapter deals with the research design and methodology, the fourth chapter focuses on data presentation, analysis and interpretation, and finally the fifth chapter deals with the summary of major findings, conclusions and recommendations.

## **Chapter Two**

### **2. Review of Related Literature**

This chapter attempts to review theoretical concepts and practical research findings about school culture and student academic achievement. The literature review began with the concept and nature of school culture to make the school culture more clear: characteristics, school culture components, functions and quality of school culture and effective and healthy school culture have been treated. The review different literatures on school culture and student achievement, School culture and school performance, challenges in changing school culture were reviewed. Finally, strategies for improving school culture and managing school culture were discussed.

#### **2.1 The Concept and Nature of School Culture**

##### **2.1.1. The Concept of School Culture**

According to Schein, culture concept hold root in social anthropology. It has been used by anthropologists to refer to the customs and rituals that societies develop over the course of their history (Schein, 1992). The study of organizational culture became more important with the increase of global competition in business (Rollins and Roberts, 1998). In the last several decades culture has been used by some organizational researchers to refer to the espoused values and group norms of an organization (Schein, 2004).

Culture has been defined differently by various scholars. The term organizational culture was used for the first time in the academic literature by Pettigrew in 1979 in journal “Administrative Science Quarterly”. He introduced the anthropologist concept like Symbolism, myths, and rituals that could be used in organizational analysis.

There are various definitions of culture by scholars, but none is universally agreed (Deal and Peterson, 1999). Wilson and Covcoran (1988), in their study of effective schools, perceived school culture as a set of linkages that included the system of collectively accepted meanings, beliefs, values and assumptions that organizational members use to guide their regular, daily action and interpret their surroundings.

Many scholars defined organizational culture at different times. Some of these definitions are discussed as follow. Bolman and Deal (1999: 250) have defined culture in both product and process. As product, it embodies the accumulated wisdom of previous members of the organization. As process, it is continually renewed and created as a new member are taught the old ways and eventually becomes teachers themselves. Cunningham and Gresso (1993:20) also defined culture is informal understanding of the “way we do things around here.” Culture is a strategic body of learned behaviors that give both meaning and reality to its participants.

As Per Schein (1990), defines culture is a set of different values and behaviors that may considered guiding to success. According to Kotter and Heskett (1992), culture means fairly established set of beliefs, behaviors and values of society contain generally. Bath (2002: 89) also provided a definition of school culture, when he studied that “As School’s culture is a complex pattern of norms, attitudes, beliefs, values, ceremonies, traditions and myths that are deeply ingrained in the very core of the organization.”

Deal and Peterson (1990:3) emphases shared values as a defining aspect of culture: organizations usually have clearly distinguishable identities manifested in their members’ pattern of behavior through rituals and norms. The concept of culture helps us to understand these varied patterns – understand what they are, how they come to be, and how they affect performance.

Deal and Peterson (1999) discussed schools as complex webs of traditions created by students, parents, and community, and school staff through working together, solving problems, and sharing accomplishments. Culture influences all aspects of schools, including such things, as how the staff dresses (Peterson & Deal, 1998), what staff talk in the teacher’s Lounge (Kotter, 1997), how teachers decorate their classrooms, their emphasis on certain aspects of the curriculum and teachers’ willingness to change (Hargreaves, 1997). Generally school culture is all about assumptions, attitudes, beliefs, feelings, behaviors, values and symbols that characterize a school.

A more modern definition of culture depicts culture as “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group from other group” (Hofstede, 1997: 180).

The concept of school culture has been ignored, in part, because it was difficult to study; experts often disagreed on its nature and the manner by which it must be assessed (Hoy & Dipaola,

2008). Although researchers disagreed about the definition of school culture they agreed that school culture was an integral component of all schools since it was a mixture of various elements and the relationships that existed in the environment.

All of the definitions of school culture revolve around what organizational members have in common. Thus, it can be understood that culture is gained knowledge, values, beliefs, communications, behaviors, common perceptions and understandings of school members.

### **2.1.2 Characteristics of Organizational Culture**

The culture of schools is all the beliefs, feelings, symbols assumptions and expectations that characterize schools. While there is considerable variation in the definition of school culture, it appears that the most contain the following characteristics as defined by Hodgetts and Luthans (2003). (a) norms- norms are measured by things like as amount of work done and also the level of cooperation between management and staff members of the organization; (b) rules-clearly rules are defined for staff member's behavior associated to the productivity; inter group cooperation and customer's relationship; (c) Observed behaviors regularities- illustrate common language and formal procedures; (d) Coordination and integration – coordination and integration of the organizational units for the purpose of improvement efficiently to work, quality, speed of designing and services.

On the other hand, Robbins (2005) presented seven primary characteristics that aggregate capture the essence of an organization's culture, according to him these are: (a) Innovation and risk taking –is the degree to which organizational members are encouraged to be innovative and take risks.; (b) Attention to details – the degree to which organizational members are expected to exhibit precision, analysis and attention to detail; (c) Outcome orientation – the degree to which management focuses on results or outcomes rather than on the techniques and process used to achieve those outcomes; (d) People orientation – the extent to which management decision take into consideration the effect of outcomes on people within the organization; (e) Team Orientation – the extent to which work activities are organized around teams rather than individuals.; (f) Aggressiveness– the extent to which people are aggressive and competitive rather than easy going; (g) Stability – the extent to which organizational activities emphasizes maintaining the status quo in contrast to growth. According to Robbins, appraising the

organization on these seven characteristics, then, gives a composite picture of organization's culture. This picture becomes the basis for feeling of shared understanding that organizational members have about organization, how things are done in it, and the way organizational members are supposed to behave (Robbins, 2005).

Researchers suggest that positive school culture characteristics support hard work and high performance of the organization. In a positive school culture, staff members share a consistent sense of purpose and values. School leaders, teachers and students practice norms of continuous learning and school improvement. All staff members feel a sense of responsibility for students' performance. Staff members have collaboration and collegial relationships in which they can exchange ideas, identify problems, and determine workable solution.

The above writers state that culture of an organization is interrelated with most other concepts in educational administration, including organizational structures, motivation, leadership decision making, communication and change.

### **2.1.3 School Culture Components**

The term and phrases used to define school culture and its components are various each bringing a new dimension to its meaning. In this study, three component of school culture: collaboration, collegiality, and efficacy, coupled with Phillip's (1993) determination that 'culture is the beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors which characterize a school' are used to define school culture.

#### **a. Collaboration**

Peterson (1994) defined collaboration as "cultures whereby the basic norms, values, assumptions, and beliefs of the members of the culture foster high level of collegiality and collaboration (p.2). In the school setting it is "the degree to which staff members work together to solve professional issues, and to encourage and inspire each other" (Phillips and Wagner, 2003, p.5).

Collaboration is a great way for instructional improvement. This approach yielded high achievement, positive relationships, and psychologically healthy people (Johnson, 1989). Inger (1993, p.1) found that teachers saw improvement in student achievement, behavior, and attitude. "In schools where teachers work collaboratively, students can sense the program coherence and a

consistency of expectations”. Collaboration provided for significant and lasting personal growths that lead to substantial organizational change (Christenson and Eldredge, 1996).

There were many benefits to schools that used teacher collaboration: (a) teachers and administrators got smarter together through formal and informal training, study groups, and conversations centered around teaching; (b) teachers increased their pool of ideas and materials by working together; (c) faculty became more adaptable and self-reliant; and (d) teachers eased the strain of staff turnover by providing assistance to new teachers and socializing all newcomers to the values and traditions ( Inger, 1993).

### **b. Collegiality**

Collegiality is comprised of professional collaboration and affiliation and exists when people feel valued and included. Collegiality comprises of two elements: professional collaboration and affiliation. “Professional collaboration is the degrees to which staff members work together to solve professional issues, and to encourage and inspire each other” while affiliation is present when “relationship between all members of the school community demonstrate harmony, respect, mutual support, and enjoyment of each other’s company (Philips and Wagner, 2003, p.5).

Four types of collegial relationships were identified by Little(1990)to be found in schools: (a) storytelling and scanning for ideas; (b) aid and assistance; (c) sharing; and (d) joint work. Teachers benefit from collegiality. It bridges the gap between experienced and beginner teachers by breaking the isolation often feel in the classroom. Collegiality also provides satisfaction to teachers. Complex tasks are more manageable, new idea stimulates, and curricular and instructional coherence promotes .Teachers are more able to detect and celebrate patterns of accomplishment within the classroom and across the classrooms. By working together, teachers found themselves better equipped on curricular and instructional issues. They gain satisfaction from the development of professional relationships, regardless of the different viewpoints and the occasional conflict.

When schools are organized and supported collegiality, the advantages are plentiful and varied. Such an environment produces greater coherence and equips teachers and the school for steady improvement. The school becomes an environment learning to teach (Inger, 1993).

### **c. Self-determination/ Efficacy**

Self-determination/efficacy, as defined by Bandura (1994) is people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives. In the schools "self-determination/ efficacy is demonstrated when staff members work to improve their skills are true professionals, and not because they see themselves as helpless members of a large, uncaring bureaucracy" (Phillips and Wagner, 2003, p.7).

Four sources of efficacy were founded by Bandura (1997): (a) mastery experience; (b) physiological and emotional states; (c) vicarious experiences; and social persuasion. According to Tschannen-Moran et al., (1998), Mastery experiences improved teachers' efficacy, especially when success was achieved early. Physiological and emotional cues improved performance when moderate levels of arousal helped teachers focus their attention and energy on the task. Vicarious experiences, observing skilled and credible models, and verbal persuasion provided information about teaching, gave encouragement and strategies for overcoming obstacles, and provided feedback about a teachers' performance.

A low sense of efficacy was contagious to the school and created a demoralizing cycle of failure. Low teacher efficacy led to low student efficacy and low academic achievement, which lowered teacher efficacy even further (Bandura, 1997). To reverse this cycle and create a cohesive culture, the environment must be orderly, with a strong press for academic achievement, administrators were responsive to teachers' concerns and encouraged them to try new ideas, and teachers encouraged colleagues to address student needs. As academic achievement improved, efficacy was enhanced, which then furthered student achievement (Hoy & Sabo, 1997). Strong efficacy led to higher motivation, greater effort, and persistence (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998).

#### **2.1.4 Functions of School Culture**

Organizational cultures as a makeup of organizations can serve a number of functions. As clearly stated by Schein (1985); Robbins, (1998) and Kondalkar, (2007), the following are the key functions of organizational cultures.

**The standardizing function:** through establishing common values system, and an organization culture form unified thought, make faith form a kind of tendency on the staff psychological deep

layer, and then a kind of response mechanism reconstructed in the transformation. As long as there is inducement signal from outside, positive response will take place turn in to the anticipated behavior rapidly. By coordination and self-control, the collection of restrain to staff members is weakened, the conflict of autonomy psychology with reality of being managed is received, which makes a unifying, and harmonious organization from the top to the bottom.

**The guiding function:** it refers to the culture lead the whole organization and all the staff member's personal value and behavioral orientation towards the goal of the organization. The essence of the construction of outstanding organizational culture is to set up internal force mechanism. The construction of mechanism makes vast staff recognize that the organization is striving not lofty goal, which not only can produce creative tactics but also can make staff dare to make individuals sacrifice for realizing organizational goals.

**The agglomerating function:** is organizational culture as the group consciousness created by the staff together. It is a kind of binder, units the staff members of all respects and all level around organizational culture, and makes cohesiveness and centripetal force to the organization. Organizational culture ties staff member's personal thought and feelings, and destiny with the safety of organization very closely.

**The motivation function:** organizational culture emphasizes on people as the center, its focus is to create common values. Outstanding organizational culture means creating a kind of atmosphere that everybody is paid attention to and respected. Excellent atmosphere of organizational culture usually may produce a kind of incentive mechanism which makes each staff members' contribution get other members and leader's appreciation and reward in time.

**Problem solving function:** organizational culture does more to solve internal and external problems. According to Schein (1985) culture serves the basic functions of reducing anxiety that organizational members experience when they are faced with cognitive uncertainty or overloaded. Once organizational members have cultural solution they can relief to some extent.

**Boundary function:** culture creates distinction between one organization and the other. Such boundary defining helps identify members and none members of the organization. Organizational culture facilitates the generation of commitment to something larger than one's

individuals self-interest. It serves as a control mechanism that shapes the attitude and behavior of organizational members.

To sum, organization culture is the philosophy spirit of organizations. So it is important to understand what strong cultures consist of and how they function within organization. Schein (1999:13) stated that “culture is a property of a group. Wherever a group has enough common experience, a culture begins to form”. Thus, it is the corner stone of organizational performance and change. Therefore, the need to assess and change organizational culture accordingly, is very important for individual and organizational performance.

## **2.2. Quality of School Culture**

School culture may be positive (healthy) or negative (toxic) either helping or hindering school’s progress. According to Peterson and Deal (2002), a school’s culture is always at work, either helping or hindering adult learning. Similarly, as Freiberg (1998) has noted: “School culture has been described as being similar to the air we breathe. No one notices it unless it becomes foul”. The culture of a school can be a positive influence on learning or it can seriously inhibit the functioning of the school. Assessing the school culture will help to understand which culture you have in your school and what steps you need to take, either maintenance or critical major. Both positive and negative school cultures are discussed briefly in the next two subdivisions.

### **2.2.1. Positive School Culture**

As Deal and Peterson (2002) described in a positive school: First of all, there needs to be a widely shared sense of purpose and values that is consistent and shared across staff members. Without this, there will be fragmentation and often times, a conflict. Secondly, we find that there are group norms of continuous learning and school improvement that the group reinforces the importance of staff learning and a focus on continuous improvement in the school. The third one is a sense of responsibility for a student’s learning, a staff that really feels a sense of responsibility for the learning of all students. Fourth, we find collaborative and collegial relationships between staff members. People share ideas, problems and solutions, they work together to build a better school. Finally, in more positive school cultures there’s a real focus on professional development, and staff reflection, and sharing of professional practice. These are

places where people interact around their craft; they improve their teaching; and they do it as a shared collaborative.

Peterson and Deal further point out that a school with a positive school culture is a place with a “shared sense of what is important, a shared ethos of caring and concern, and a shared commitment to helping students learn” Peterson and Deal, (1998). Schools that are conducted in a culture exhibiting these positive qualities have teachers and staff members who are willing to take risks and enact reforms. It is obvious; this is a place where everybody enjoys being. In addition, Hanson and Childs (1998) describe a school with a positive school culture as “a place where students and teachers like to be”. It is a place that has a climate of support and encouragement Hanson and Childs, (1998).

Research suggests that, a strong, positive culture serves several beneficial functions, including: Fostering effort and productivity; Improving collegial and collaborative activities that in turn promote better communication and problem solving; Supporting successful change and improvement efforts; Building commitment and helping students and teachers identify with the school; Amplifying energy and motivation of staff members and students; Focusing attention and daily behavior on what is important and valued.

Therefore, it is unquestionable that schools need to have this healthy culture in order to have attractive, motivating, successful and productive school that make every stakeholder satisfied. This is the dream of every parent, students, community, teachers, administrators and even the government.

### **2.2.2. Negative School Culture**

In negative (toxic) cultures, the opposite of the term that the above researchers have coined, will be found. According to Deal and Peterson (2002) we find almost a sense of depression and frustration in the school. There’s no shared sense of purpose. The school is fragmented. There are negative norms around improvement and learning. Staffs really don’t believe that they can improve what they do. They don’t believe they can bring the school up to a higher level. In toxic cultures, they blame the victim. They believe that it’s the students’ fault for not learning. They believe that the parents are not sending their best kids to school, but they are. They blame the

community for not having better students. In toxic cultures, also, we find little celebration of success. There are few traditions that reinforce positive and supportive aspects of the school.

Schools with a toxic or negative culture are places where teachers are unwilling to change and where the tone is oppositional and acerbic. These are the types of places where nobody prefers to be. They are “places where negativity dominates conversations, interactions, and planning; where the only stories recounted are of failure” Peterson and Deal, (1998). The shared ethos about reform among teachers in these schools is “this too shall pass” and “if it isn’t broken, don’t fix it.” To these teachers, the way it has always been done is the right way.

Generally, this type of culture is the one where everyone blames one another, where motivation is low, where all stakeholders are unhappy or unsatisfied, and where it is difficult to expect success, but failure. It is where change is the only out. Introducing change is necessary to get on the track. Whether positive or toxic, the introduction of change will serve to bring the dominant features of the school’s culture to the surface.

### **2.2.3. Strong versus Weak School Culture**

Every school has a culture. It may be fragmented and difficult to read from the outside or it may be very strong and cohesive. In fragmented cultures, loyalties were divided. “Staff openly believed they couldn’t teach children who attended their school...believed it was the students’ and parents’ fault that students didn’t learn...and no longer searched for ways to change their instruction to achieve results” Deal & Peterson, (1999; 120). Deal and Peterson identified eight specific negative roles in toxic schools: (a) saboteurs found ways to sabotage or ruin new ideas, programs, or positive activities; (b) pessimistic storytellers reminded the group of every failure, thereby poisoning the culture and dampening enthusiasm and energy; (c) keepers of the nightmare reduced staff commitment by telling about the problems that developed during past change efforts; (d) negaholics found something negative or unfavorable in any idea proposed; (e) prima donnas wanted all the attention; (f) space cadets had no idea what was going on; (g) martyrs expected people to see any contribution they made as a tremendous personal sacrifice; and (h) deadwood, driftwood, and ballasts were along for the ride, the glory, and the excitement, but refused to do any work. Often, negative cultures, colleagues, and environments overwhelmed the best teachers. Without a healthy school culture, staff may not be open to professional

learning opportunities, thereby decreasing the chances of improving student teaching (Wagner & Masden-Copas, 2002).

A strong culture guided members' behaviors in two ways: the informal rules spelled out how members were to behave most of the time and enabled members to feel better about what they did, so they would work harder. It bound individuals to the organization and generated loyalty and commitment. Strong cultures removed the degree of uncertainty by providing structure, standards, and a value system to follow Deal & Kennedy, (1995).

Rosenholtz (1989) differentiated between "moving" and "stuck" schools. In "moving" schools, the culture was cohesive. Teachers shared a common purpose, worked cooperatively, used peers as resources, viewed themselves as learners, and strived for continuous improvement. On the other hand, "stuck" schools represented a fragmented culture. Teachers felt no progress or growth, had low aspirations and motivation, lacked a sense of community, stayed isolated, had little dialogue with colleagues, and felt frustrated. Whether fragmented or cohesive, culture had a powerful influence in an organization. Culture tied people together, gave meaning and purpose to their lives, and acted as a tool for achieving organizational goals.

Fullan and Hargreaves (1991) described four types of school cultures. On one end of the continuum lied balkanization. In this type of culture, the teacher was the king or queen of his or her classroom. This resulted in a competitive atmosphere because teachers focused on immediate rather than long range issues and worked in isolation implementing traditional practices. Next along the continuum, lied comfortable collaboration, where collaboration was thin and superficial. Teachers shared materials and some instructional strategies, but avoided discussing deeper issues, such as curriculum, long range planning, or their philosophy of education. In contrived collegiality, a third type of culture, there was a façade of formal, explicit bureaucratic policies and procedures and these formal structures were unsupportive of collaborative cultures. On the opposite end of the continuum was collaborative culture. In these cultures, continuous, career learning happened. Teachers showed increased efficacy and confidence in their professional abilities because they welcomed opportunities for continued learning by attending professional development opportunities. Daily practices of team teaching, mentoring, and shared decision-making were emphasized.

### **2.3. Effective and Healthy Schools**

A healthy school climate is imbued with positive student, teacher and administrator interrelationship. Teachers like their colleague, their job, and their students and they are driven by a quest for academic excellence. They believe in themselves and their students; and set high but achievable goals. Students work hard and respect others who do well academically. Principal behavior is also positive; that is, it is friendly and supportive. Principals have high expectations for teachers go out of their way to help teachers. Healthy schools have good relationships with the community (Hoy, Smith & Sweetland, 2003).

A school healthy is its own reward. Healthy people feel good and have the capacity to be productive just as healthy schools can fulfill their mission of being a good place to work and learn. A healthy school is a positive place. The faculty emphasizes academic achievement and sets high achievable expectations for student. Teachers enjoy friendly and supportive relations with each other. Administrators have positive, collegial relationship with the rest of the staff. The principal influences the central office to secure resources and facilitate school improvement. A healthy school has its own mission and is protected from destructive intrusions from the community (Hoy and Tarter, 1997).

Saphier and King (1985) identified 12 norms, or elements of school culture, that needed to be strong in order to create a healthy school culture. The norms included: (a) collegiality; (b) experimentation; (c) high expectation; (d) trust and confidence; (e) tangible support; (f) reaching out to the knowledge base; (g) appreciation and recognition; (h) caring, celebration, and humor; (i) involvement in decision making; (j) protection of what is important; (k) traditions; and (l) honest, open communication. Strong norms led to improvement in instruction and increase student achievement. Weak norms resulted in random, infrequent, and slow progress.

Common characteristics were found in effective schools. They were: (a) high expectation for students; (b) student-centeredness; (c) safe and disciplined schools; (d) orderly atmosphere; (e) focused mission; (f) coherent plan; (g) teacher efficacy; (h) frequent monitoring of progress; (i) reward and incentives for teachers and students; (j) positive physical environment; (k) low sense of futility; and community support. All or some of these characteristics were absent in ineffective schools ( Gonder and Hymes, 1994).

## **2.4. School Culture and Student Achievement**

Does school culture affect student achievement? A study by Brookover et al (1978) investigated the relationships among a variety of school-level climate variables and mean school achievement in a random sample of Michigan elementary schools. The study concluded that some aspects of school social environment clearly make a difference in academic achievement of schools. A favorable climate with high academic standards is a necessary condition for high achievement. The social-psychological climate is an integral component of school culture and student achievement.

Sackney (1998) wrote that school culture influences psychological processes and achievement and is subject to change as stakeholders' perceptions change. Teachers who are empowered professionals encourage positive student achievement. Teachers working and participating in a school culture high in collective efficacy promoted higher levels of student achievement Bandura, (1993).

Sweetland and Hoy (2000) demonstrated that school culture was the next most powerful variable in student achievement. Teachers who were empowered, supported, and respected by their principal and colleagues, showed higher student achievement scores.

Murnane's (1981; 27) literature review of effective schools research in the 1970s arrived at a similar conclusion of "schools matter, and more specifically, that the key element of schools that matters the most are the people". Strong administrative leadership can make a difference in student learning. These findings have clear implications for school leaders.

### **2.4.1. Key Achievement Indicator**

Measuring the degree to which following three behaviors that is present in a school or school district is most helpful in assessing the school culture according to Phillips (1993). These behaviors include: (a) Professional Collaboration - Do teachers and staff meeting and working together to solve professional issues e.g. instructional, organizational or curricular issues? (b) Facilitative/Collegial Relationships - Do people enjoy working together, support one another and feel valued and included? (C) Efficacy or self-determination - Are people in this school here

because they want to be? Do they work to improve their skills as true professionals or, do they simply see themselves as helpless victims of a large and uncaring bureaucracy?

According to Freiberg (1998) physical environment is another indicator of school cultures. The physical environment includes elements from the physical structure of the building to the physical comfort levels of the individuals and how safe the members feel. The school physical environment affects student's and teacher's health, work, leisure, emotions, and a sense of place and belonging. When the school environment works well, student's lives and educational performance are enhanced. While the school environment is intended to support students' individual needs, it is necessary to gain knowledge about their diverse needs and how the physical environment satisfies them. Evaluation is the systematic assessment of environmental performance relative to defined objectives and requirements.

The assessment process is a means of providing satisfactory environments for the people who own, manage, and occupy them. Becoming aware of perceived environmental effects is a necessary first step in striking the delicate balance between familiarity and monotony and boredom, and between variety and confusion and disorientation. With understanding of how the physical surroundings affect us psychologically, we can become more aware of our effects on them, and on ourselves, when we allow them to be changed. We will then start to realize the importance of our concern for our surroundings, and eventually work toward the improvement of their quality.

Researches indicate that the culture of a school is a composite of the conditions that are specific to the students, teachers, administrators, and parents of a school building. Although there may be people from many cultural groups within a building, the day-to-day interactions of the people who live and breathe there embody that distinct culture.

## **2.5. The Relationship between School Culture and Performance**

Rose and others (2008) has noted that connection between culture and achievement strengthened as time goes by. Denison's (1990) study indicates that organizational culture influences organizational performance directly. Studies have done much investigation and tried to establish the relationship between organization culture and organizational performance, namely, there is a close connection organizational culture and organizational performance at least. Studies have

suggested, organizational culture is a kind of complicated and comprehensive composition element, it is a kind of value that is shared by the members, and it is a kind of inherent regulatory faith. It will not only influence people's behavior but also decide working atmosphere, leadership style and the formulation of strategy.

The model of school effectiveness developed by Sheerens (1992) and Creemers(1994), factors emerged that reflects school's culture like, achievement orientation, a shares ideology or mission cohesion and collaboration among teachers.

Levine and Lezotte (1990:9) identified nine characteristics of unusually effective school. The first they mention in a productive school climate and culture. More specifically, effective schools are characterized by an orderly environment. According to both authors, an orderly environment is rather associated with inter personal relationship, than with regulations. As they note, "Discipline" derives from "belonging and participation" rather than "rules and external control". Other effectiveness enhancing factors reflected a similar point of view. For instance, 'faculty cohesion, collaboration, consensus, communication and collegiality' where identified as a crucial feature of effective schools. Staff members have to work as a team ensures a sense of unity and consistency in their relation with students. Furthermore, faculty input in decision-making was identified as an effectiveness-enhancing factor. This refers to a more participatory approach of decision making, which is likely to enhance the commitment of faculty members.

As Levine and Lezotte (1999) indicate, the commitment of staff members and the impetus for collaboration and communication has to be directed towards student achievement. Not only do staff members, need to be committed to a shared and articulated mission focused on achievement. Levine and Lezotte (1999) argue, but also a school wide emphasis on recognize positive performance indispensable. Staff members need to have a problem solving orientation a willingness to experiment and actively search for solution that might overcome obstacles in students learning, especially with respect to low achievers.

School performance reflects the effectiveness and efficiency of the school process. Effectiveness, in a general sense, refers to the accomplishment of the school's objectives, while efficiency indicates whether these objectives were accomplished in a timely and costly manner. As this definition shows, effectiveness and efficiency are judged according to the school

objectives. Although these are school specific to some degree, school performance research focuses solely on objectives that school, or a distinct type of school, have in common. Despite this specific focus Scheerens (1992) indicated that in several aspects measuring performance is multidimensional.

First the concept of effectiveness and efficiency are based on the relative performance of school. In other words, a school is classified as effective or efficient if that particular school performs better on their aspects than other school. By adopting this relative approach of performance, it is necessary to ensure that 'fair comparison' is made between schools. For this purpose, So-called 'value added' measures are usually employed when comparing school.

Sammons, Thomas and Mortimore (1997:24) noted that within the field of school effectiveness research it is commonly agreed that studies should employ 'value added' performance measures, instead of unadjusted output criteria. 'Value-added' in this respect can be defined as "an indication of an extent to which any given school has fostered the progress of all students in a range of subjects', during a particular time period" at the core of this definition the term 'progress', which implies that student achievement is corrected for prior knowledge of the students, or other student characteristics. This indicates that 'value added' in fact is a generic term that encompasses different forms of corrections.

Bosker (1991) identified three different forms of value-added measures, based on predictions of learning outcomes based on background of variables of students and schools, differences with prior achievement, or a combination of both corrections. In general correction for prior achievement are preferred for they are considered to best represent the collective 'learning gains' of students, and therefore do justice to the efforts to the effort of school (Teddlie and Reynolds, 2000). For performance measures related to aspect of other than student achievement, like attendance, delinquency or promotion rules, value added scores are obtained by controlling for background variables of student and school. This type of performance indicator is only rarely employed in research on school effects (Mortimore and Sammons, 1979). Similarly a number of studies have used variety of performance measures, including social and affective outcome like student attitudes or student 'self concept (Knuver and Brandsma, 1993).

## **2.6. The Link between Principals and School Culture**

The role of school leaders is to communicate core values and support the teachers and students within the school building (Deal & Peterson, 1999). The teachers then support the leaders in action and in words, and pass this on to the students and parents. The parents then are more apt to participate in the school, not just as volunteers, but in the form of presenting themselves in the governance meeting, board actions, and even the every day events in the school (Deal and Peterson, 1999). Effective leaders don't simply communicate their own ideas; they understand the history and context of the culture. They know the current condition of the school, and they build on what is important to the teachers, students and the community. Then, they pass on the core values and reinforce the elements that are positive and perpetuate the culture (Deal & Peterson, 1999).

Hallinger and Heck (2010) have summarized the impact of school leader on student achievement, mainly in the form of creating conditions that support effective teaching and learning. This, in turn, builds the capacity for professional learning of teachers, therefore assisting change within the school. Hallinger and Heck (2010) employed a conceptualization that they have called "collaborative leadership" where the focus is on strategic, school-wide actions. These actions are specifically directed towards school improvement and the responsibilities are shared among the principals, teachers, other administrators, and others in the building. This not only divides the responsibilities and makes it less likely to those involved with new responsibilities be overwhelmed, but also produces genuine buy in from staff throughout the building. This empowers the staff and students, encourages board participation in decision making, and fosters shared accountability for students learning. When more people are involved in the accountability of student learning, there is school-wide effort in increasing that student learning.

The culture and climate of a school is established by the long standing traditions and faculty within the building, but it can be highly influenced with instructional leadership via the school's principal (Mancneil, 2009). Even when there are strong cultures, whether positive or negative, the principal is the central to changing that culture, if needed (Mancneil, 2009). There are further researches that suggests one of the most influential actions that a principal can demonstrate within a school is to promote a strong vision for the school itself in the form of a mission and

vision statement and actively reflecting this mission and vision (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, and Wahlstrom, 2004).

Developing a school culture can be a difficult task, especially if the culture within a building is toxic and negative. The principal can shift the culture easily by placing the correct personnel in the correct locations, and by hiring a new staff that will support the common mission of the school. The principal is, in fact, responsible for selecting and promoting staff that is highly qualified and able to instruct and engage students (Fink & Resnick, 2001). In many cases, principals are simply managers, they take care of scheduling, budgeting, dealing with parents and other issues not related to instruction. Instructional leadership has often overlooked, but was often expected of principals, and still is. A true instructional leader will be a good judge of high quality teaching and address teaching that is unsatisfactory, which will improve a high quality teaching staff (Fink & Resnick, 2001). But instructional leadership is only one way to lead; there are other ways to lead a school. Instructional leadership is most focused on the improvement of the classroom instruction, which is an important factor in student learning and achievement, but not the only form leadership that can be implemented in a school, and depending on the culture, it may not be the type of leadership needed in that school ( Leithwood et al. 2004). In some schools, mainly toxic learning environments, transformational leadership would draw attention to broader conditions that may need to be changed within the school with less of a focus on the specific classroom strategies.

Hallinger and Heck (1999) concluded that school leaders to have an impact on school effectiveness and student achievement, even though it may be small and indirect, they assert that it is still measureable and significant. Strong, consistent school leadership can help develop a positive school culture, which in the end, is a large determinant in the schools effectiveness and student achievement.

## **2.7. Challenges in Changing School Culture**

Improving schools involves change. Change, however, is not an isolated process. It occurs within some context. In the case of school improvement, that context is the school. A school is a complex organism, not just a building with people inside. In order to change the organism, it is necessary to consider the effects of a change on all the parts of the organism. Each part is dependent upon the others and all parts react to changes in any other part. Examining these parts and considering their influence on the change process is important for leaders of school improvement efforts.

There is no hope of helping all students learn unless those within the school work collaboratively in a collective effort to achieve that fundamental purpose. There is no credible evidence that the best way to improve student learning is to have teachers work in isolation. On the other hand, there is ample evidence to support organizing teachers into high performing, collaborative teams. A teacher's world can change when the school shifts from a culture of isolation to a culture of collaboration.

Parents, teachers, students, administrators, and support staff often form sub-cultures around immediate, parochial interests that pull the school in several directions. Some schools may have inside itself multiple schools formed around cliques and friendship groups. This is another challenge which influences in creating good school culture. There may be some groups in school who oppose others and influence decision. The simplest example of the sub-culture is the subject sub-culture which often develops in secondary schools Ball (1987). As disputes emerge about scarce resources, administrative and teaching styles, a larger school's fragmented organization can sometimes result in "sabotage and outright warfare" Deal and Peterson, (1999).

Deal and Kennedy (1983), who believe that a positive culture can have marked results when fully established, found that: in many schools, teachers and students do not know what is expected of them nor do they understand how their actions are related to school-wide efforts. Arrow smith and Jamieson (1995) elicited pupils' responses in order to evaluate a department from their perspective. One perception that did emerge was that it would be good if the teachers were "more encouraging of less able pupils". The teachers were unaware that they were

portraying a culture in which the less able were not valued so highly, until the pupils gave their views.

Lee Bolman and Terry Deal (1995), describe the importance of celebration this way: “Ritual and ceremony help us experience the unseen webs of significance that tie a community together. There may be grand ceremonies for special occasions, but organizations also need simple rituals that infuse meaning and purpose into daily routine. Without ritual and ceremony, transitions become incomplete, a clutter of comings and goings. Life becomes an endless set of Wednesdays.” This literature contributed the basis for this study. Considering from the literatures how important school culture is for the life and success of a school, the assessment of school culture was carried out in the secondary schools of Borena Zone so as to understand how the school cultures of these schools are. Furthermore, understanding that there are challenges in creating good school cultures, the challenges in these schools were assessed so as to recommend suitable solutions for the schools.

## **2.8. Strategies for Improving School Culture**

To successfully change the culture, attitudinal and behavioral changes were made. Several factors helped improve the culture of a school: (a) sense of direction; (b) attitude of principal; (c) positive board support; (d) consistency and credibility; (e) positive, knowledgeable, energetic, and communicative leaders; (f) removing fear and regarding risk taking; (g) positive, honest exchange of ideas; (h) integrity; (i) trust; (j) teacher empowerment; (k) leadership teams working on exciting, clear goals for student success; (l) allowing time for staff to identify, discuss, and internalize mission, beliefs, and goals of the school; (m) good teacher negotiation sessions; (n) collaboration of individual groups; (o) empowering the students; (p) feeling of involvement; (q) missions and goals tuned into by community; (r) adequate funding; (s) unified common goals of teaching staff; (t) addressing problems; and (u) communicating about problems (Gonder&Hymes, 1994).

Hickman; Silva, (1986) explain that strategic thinking aims at getting and keeping customers, culture building attracts, develops, motivates and unifies the right kind of employee. When the organizations strategy to get and keep customers requires employees to act and think in accustomed ways, employees may respond poorly and even resentful. Culture should be in

alignment with the organizational strategy, strategy and culture each contribute to the success of an organization.

There are three fundamental elements of strategy, they are: satisfying customer needs, gaining advantage over competitors and capitalizing on company strength. Whereas the three fundamental elements of culture are: commitment to common purpose, competence to deliver superior performance and consistency in perpetuating culture by attracting and keeping the right people Hickman; Silva, (1986).

### **2.8.1. Managing School Culture**

If culture is important, is it possible to manage culture change? Culture change involves moving an organization on from one form of culture to another, often through a culture change program. Managing this culture change program requires that attention be paid to a range of issues. Pattigrewetal, (2003) suggest a number of key factors: (a) creating a receptive climate for change, (b) top leadership drive, (c) coherent and cohesive, (d) requiring an articulate and precise vision from the top, (e) discrepant action to increase tension, (f) use of deviants and heretics, (g) new avenues for articulating problems, (h) reinforcing structural change and rewards, (i) use of role models, (j) deep socialization, training and development, (k) new communication mechanisms to transmit new values and beliefs, (l) integrated selection criteria and removal of deviants, (m) luck, persistence and patience.

Hatch (1997), however, suggests that it is important to manage with cultural awareness rather than to directly manage the culture. Legge (1995) has used a metaphor of 'riding a wave' to explain managing culture cited in Morgan, (1988). 'The best the surf-rider can do is to understand the pattern of currents and winds that shape and direct the waves. He/She may then use them to stay afloat and steer in the desired path. But this is not the same as changing the basic rhythms of the ocean' Legge, (1995; 207). There are, therefore, competing views in the literature as to the degree to which it is possible to manage culture. Some argue that culture can be directed and controlled, particularly by influential leaders. Others argue that directive, top down change is unlikely to be successful in the long run, and that managing culture is either not possible or only possible if the complexity of reality is understood and change is progressed in a consensual and longer-term manner.

On the other hand; since culture is an important aspect of organizational success, it is important that managers play a significant role in keeping values and behavior of organizational members as to what is expected of them at all times. This would ensure that any deviations from the norms are caught early so that corrective actions can be taken before any change is done. Cultural consistence and strong adherence to cultural values become easy when the leader themselves play strong role model. Employees often emulate leader behavior and look up to them for guidance. By being strong role models and guiding, teaching and coaching; leaders reinforce the values that support the organizational culture Chandan, (1994).

## **Chapter Three**

### **3. Research Design and Methods**

This section of the paper discussed the research design that was employed, sources of data that was gathered, population and sampling techniques that were used, and instrument for gathering data and methods of data analysis.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The main purpose of the study was to compare the perception of school culture from principals to that of the perception of teachers in Guji Zone secondary schools. In order to assess school culture a descriptive survey design was employed. Descriptive survey design is appropriate to collect different types of data on situation that exists, opinion that are prevailed, trends that are developed and preferences that are sought (Best and James, 2005). Therefore descriptive research design was more contexts bound than other research design.

#### **3.2 Source of Data**

Primary source of data was employed to answer the research questions. Teachers and school principals were primary sources.

#### **3.3 Population and Sampling Technique**

There are twenty government secondary schools grade 9-10 in Guji Zone Oromia regional state. Due to time and resource constraint six secondary schools (30%) were selected using simple random sampling. All teachers from the sample schools (N=269), school A (N=54), school B (N= 34), school C (N= 60), school D (N=57), school E (N=39) and school F (N=25) and six school principals whose school name was picked as a sample were included through available sampling technique. In order to make reliable the study, simple random sampling is preferred because each member of the population has an equal and independent chance of being included in the sample. In addition, it has an advantage to be free from subjectivity and personal error. In order to get sample schools, lottery sampling method was used. Lottery sampling method is preferred because it works well with small sample of population. First name of the schools were

folded and put in a box. Then the folded papers were mixed and picked. Finally schools name which picked were included as sample of the study.

### **3.4 Data Collection Tools and Procedures**

The major instrument used for data gathering in the study was School Culture Triage survey questionnaire, observation, and interview

#### **3.4.1 Questionnaire**

A questionnaire enables the researcher to gain information from large or small number of people. For this study School Culture Triage Survey instrument was used. According to Wagner and Masden-Copas (2002), the School Culture Triage survey instrument helps to identify the current condition of school culture. Thus, the questionnaire was addressed to teachers and principals. In this study School Culture Triage survey instrument is preferred because it has been used in educational institutions and has been found to compare the perception of school culture from principals to that of the perception of teachers. In addition to this, the appropriateness of the instrument for studying the key areas of school culture (collaboration, collegiality, and self-determination/efficacy) was also proved by different researchers such as Karen Vislocky (2005) and Kelley Navok (2008) on their study at University of central Florida respectively.

The instrument consisted of twenty items in total. Items 1-17 were unchanged from the authors' original instrument, while three open-ended items were added by the researcher. School Culture Triage survey consisted of three sections: (a) five questions on collaboration; (b) six questions on collegiality; (c) six questions on self-determination/efficacy. For each of these items, the respondents circled their responses on a 1-5 Likert Scale to indicate the degree to which the statements most closely align with the practices at their school (1= Never; 2= Rarely; 3= Sometimes; 4= Often; 5= Always). Connecting reliability, the extent which School Culture Triage survey measures the key areas of school culture consistently, studies indicate that of the most commonly used instrument in assessing the current state of school culture. To check reliability of the instrument in this study, the researcher conducted pilot study on two of secondary schools. Baker (1994) noted that a pilot test is often used to pre-test or try out a research instrument.

Total question reliability revealed a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.925. Additional reliability analyses were for each of the three key areas of school culture of the survey: collaboration, collegiality, and self-determination/efficacy. Survey items focusing on collaboration had a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.743. Collegiality showed a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.887, while self-determination/efficacy had a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.879. An inter-correlation test for each school culture component was also computed. A Pearson's Product Moment Correlation test revealed that the correlation between collaboration and collegiality was significant ( $r=0.95, p=0.0$ ). The correlation between collaboration and self-determination/efficacy was significant ( $r=0.97, p=0.0$ ). In addition to these the correlation test between collegiality and self-determination/efficacy was also significant ( $r=0.98, p=0.0$ ). The reliability results supports that School Culture Triage survey is reliable in determining school culture.

### **3.4.2 Interview**

Besides to School Culture Triage Survey questionnaire, interview was prepared for school principals. The purpose of the interview was to assess how school principals feel about school culture. The interview analysis was expected to answer the research questions perception of principals and teachers on collaboration and self-determination. According to Schein (1992), interview enables to bring to the surface subjective opinions, values, beliefs and assumption which were not possible with structured form. Moreover, especially the semi-structured interview is hoped to enable the researcher to capture a genuine responses. Furthermore, Burns (1999) confirmed that semi-structured interview can help researcher get theme and topics which may not have been anticipated while designing the interview. The interview questions have been prepared and administered to school principals.

### **3.4.3 Observation**

Observation was also used in the study to get information on visible organizations artifacts. The artifacts are that tell that something about organizations culture (Schein, 1992). The purpose of data gathering by observation is to interpret the current state of key areas of school culture and to identify the most practiced school culture. Observation resulted were expected to answer research questions on collaboration and collegiality. Checklist was prepared for this process. The researcher observed the school compound in a good relationship with school community in order to get appropriate results.

### **3.5 Data Collection Procedure**

To collect data School Culture Triage survey questionnaire was organized. After that the following procedure was undertaken: permission to address the questionnaire was asked the school principals. Getting the respondent, the researcher gave explanation about the purpose of the study to the respondents and assisted them on how to fill out the questionnaire. Finally completed questionnaire was returned back to the researcher. Regarding the interview discussion was made with school principals as when and where to conduct the interview.

Observation was held to get information from visible organizational process. The researcher observed the out lay of the school compound, the relationship of school community, facilities in the school, pictures and symbols to get their cultural meaning.

### **3.6 Data Analysis Method**

This study was designed to collect qualitative data to compare the perception of school culture from principals to that of the perception of teachers. The results of this study were intended to contribute the existing research on the perception of school culture from principals to that of the perception of teachers.

Data obtained through questionnaire, observation and interview were analyzed qualitatively. Accordingly, data obtained through questionnaire were analyzed using a five-point Likert Scale (1= Never, 2= Rarely, 3= Sometimes, 4= Often, 5= Always) to compare the perception of school culture from principals to that of the perception of teachers.

Data obtained from questionnaire (School Culture Triage survey) were coded, tabulated, and organized. Results of School Culture Triage survey were obtained computing respondents score for each alternative related to the key areas of school culture (collaboration, collegiality and self-determination/efficacy) respectively. Then the data for each group was analyzed separately, and compared to identify similarities and difference in perception two groups, and which factors were perceived differently. The researcher arrived at this score by calculating the sum of all the scores, then dividing by the number of scores. This was calculated for each survey question. The survey question is divided in to three sections; the first five questions were collaboration, the second section was collegiality, and the third section was self-determination/efficacy.

On the other hand data collected through interview and observation was organized. Each expression and views of respondents and things observed by the researcher were identified their cultural meaning.

### **3.7 Variables of the Study**

In this study the dependent variable was principals and teachers school culture perception, whereas the independent variables were the key areas of school cultures (collaboration, collegiality and self-determination/efficacy) of secondary schools in Guji Zone.

### **3.8 Ethical Considerations**

Ethical issues like voluntary participation, informed consent, risk of harm, confidentiality, anonymity have been taken in to consideration in the research work. Accordingly respondents were not forced participate in the research, they were fully informed about the procedure and were asked for their consent to participate. They were also assured that identified information would not be made available to anyone who is not directly involved in the study, and respondent remain anonymous throughout the study.

## **Chapter Four**

### **4. Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation**

This chapter deals about presentation analysis and interpretation of data. The researcher used School Culture Triage survey questionnaire.

There were twenty secondary schools in Guji Zone. Two schools were excluded from this sample because they had already been selected for previous pilot study.

The researcher has selected 269 respondents as a sample and questionnaires were administered. Of 269 respondents 265 of them returned questionnaires. After reviewing the questionnaires nine of the questionnaires were not completed to be included in the study. As a result, questionnaires were completed by respondents N=256 (95.2%) was included in the data analysis. Besides questionnaires was addressed to six school principals. Finally school culture perception from principals to that of the perception of teacher was compared.

#### **4.1 Characteristics of Respondents**

Basic characteristics of respondents' teachers and school principals their sex, age, major areas of study, educational qualification and service year were assessed as follows.

##### **4.1.1. Sex, Age, Education Qualification and Service year of Respondents in Secondary Schools of Guji Zone**

Table 1 below shows gender and age of respondents. Accordingly, teacher respondents 219 males and 46 were females. Almost 82% were males and only 17.5% were females. This indicates that number of female teacher's in secondary schools was small. It needs high attention in Teachers Development Program (TDP) to increase the participation of female teachers in secondary schools. From school principals, all six of them were males.

As shown in the Table 1 below, in secondary schools of Guji Zone 13 teachers were below the age of 25, the age of 187 respondents' lies between 25 to 35, the age of 27 respondents lie between 36 to 45, the age of 31 respondents lie between 46 to 55 and the age of 7 respondents were above 55 years. All school principals age lies between 25 to 35 years. It indicates that 94.9% of the staffs were above 25 years.

**Table 1, Sex, Age, Education Qualification and Service Year of Respondents**

No	Respondent category	Sex	Teachers		Principals	
			N	%	N	%
1	Gender	Male	219	82.5	6	100
		Female	46	17.5	0	0
		Total	265	100	6	100
2	Age	Less than 25	13	4.8	0	0
		25-35	187	71	6	100
		36-45	27	7.8	0	0
		46-55	31	11.5	0	0
		More than 55	7	2.6	0	0
		Total	265	100	100	100
3	Education Qualification	Master's Degree	4	1.5	2	33.4
		Bachelor Degree	255	95.2	4	66.6
		Diploma	6	2.5	0	0
		Total	265	100	6	100
4	Service year	Less than 5	48	17.8	1	16.6
		5-10	118	45.4	4	66.6
		11-15	40	14.9	1	11.6
		16-20	8	2.9	0	0
		21-25	9	3.4	0	0
		Above 25	42	15.6	0	0
		Total	265	100	6	100

Table 1 above shows educational qualification of respondent, as it indicates in table above teacher respondents four Master's Degree, 255 Bachelor Degree and six was Diploma. According to Ethiopia Teacher's development program secondary school teachers should be Bachelor Degree and above. As it can be concluded from the data 96% fulfill the standard for secondary schools. And finally, from School principals two were Master's Degree and four were Bachelor Degree holders. According to secondary schools leadership standard, only 33.4% (Master's Degree) of fulfill the level. The rest 66.6% did not fulfill the required standard. It is expected that schools with qualified teachers and school leaders would perform strong school culture and high performance.

Service year of respondent as it is shown in Table above, 48 teacher respondents have less than 5 year service, 118 respondents have a service between 5 to 10 years, 40 respondent have service between 11 to 15 service year, 8 respondents 16 to 20, 9 respondents have 21 to 25 Years'

service and 42 respondents have greater than 25 years. Finally from school principals 1 respondent has less than 5 year service, 4 respondents 5 to 10 and 1 respondent has 11 to 15 year service. This implies that nearly 17.8% the staff had less than five year service experience and most staff 45.4% had 5-10 years of experience. Almost 36.8% of the staff had more than 10 years' experience. It can be concluded that more than 82% staff were above 10 years and would be expected strong school culture in secondary schools.

#### 4.1.2 Major Areas of Study of Respondents in Guji Zone Secondary Schools

Table 2 below shows major area of the study of the respondents. Accordingly, teacher respondent 25 studied Afan Oromo, 14 respondents' Amharic, 29 studied English, 35 Mathematics, 28 Physics, 28 Chemistry, 26 Biology 18 History, 20 Geography, 23 Civic and Ethical Education and 12 Information and Communication Technology. From school principals, two of them studied Educational Planning and Management and the remaining four principals trained in English, Chemistry, Physics and History.

**Table 2. Major Area of Respondents**

No	Respondent category	Major area of study	N	%
1	Teachers	Afan Oromo	25	9.6
		Amharic	14	5.2
		English	29	11.2
		Mathematics	35	13.4
		Physics	28	10.8
		Chemistry	28	10.4
		Biology	26	9.6
		History	18	6.7
		Geography	20	7.4
		Civic	23	8.5
		HPE	13	4.8
		ICT	12	4.5
Total			265	100
2	School principals	EdPM	2	33.3
		English	1	16.6
		Chemistry	1	16.6
		Physics	1	16.6
		History	1	16.6
Total			6	100

## **4.2 School Culture Perception at Secondary Schools of Guji Zone**

### **4.2.1 Principals and Teachers School Culture Perception in Guji Zone Secondary Schools**

According to Masden-Copas (2002), there are four classifications for school culture scores. The first quartile is school culture score 17-40. This shows that school culture is in critical condition that means it is a weak culture. Therefore it needs immediate attention to invest all available resources in repairing and healing the culture. The second quartile is school culture score 41-59. This score indicates that school culture needs modification and improvement. Therefore, school leaders should identify which area is in most need of improvement.

The third quartile is school culture score 60-75. This shows that school culture needs monitor and maintain making positive adjustments. The fourth quartile is school culture score 76-85. This shows that it is strong culture and amazing.

Accordingly, the composite score from the School Culture Triage survey for teachers was 55.2 and 55.8 for principals, which categorized as a weak culture. And suggestions are school culture needs modification and improvement.

### **4.2.2 Summarized Survey Results from Teachers and Principals**

The survey results are summarized in Table 3 below. The survey question is provided along with the average response from teachers, the average response from principals and the difference.

**Table 3 Summarized Survey Results from Teachers and Principals.**

	<b>Survey Questions</b>	Average Teacher Responses	Average Principal Responses	Difference
	<b>Collaboration</b>			
1	Teachers and staff discuss instructional strategies and curriculum issues.	3.8	3.7	0.1
2	Teachers and staff work together to develop the school schedule.	2.4	3.2	0.8
3	Teachers and staff are involved in the decision-making process with regard to materials and resources.	2.9	3.2	0.3
4	The student behavior code is a result of collaboration and consensus among staff.	2.5	3.2	0.7
5	The planning and organizational time allotted to teachers and staff is used to plan as collective units/teams rather than as separate individuals.	3.3	3.0	0.3
	<b>Collegiality</b>			
1	Teachers and staff tell stories of celebrations that support the school's values.	3.7	3.6	0.1
2	Teachers and staff visit/talk meet outside of the school to enjoy each other's' company.	2.5	3.1	0.6
3	Our school reflects a true "sense" of community.	3.6	3.3	0.3
4	Our school schedule reflects frequent communication opportunities for teachers and staff.	3.5	3.3	0.2
5	Our school supports and appreciates the sharing of new ideas by members of our school.	3.6	3.3	0.3
6	There is a rich and robust tradition of rituals and celebration, including holidays, special events, and recognition of goal attainment.	3.3	3.4	0.1
	<b>Self-determination/Efficacy</b>			
1	When something is not working in our school, the faculty and staff predict and prevent rather than react and repair.	3.2	3.1	0.1
2	School members are interdependent and value each other.	3.6	3.2	0.4
3	Member of our school community seek alternatives to problems/ issues rather than repeating what we have always done.	3.3	3.2	0.1
4	Member of our school community seek to define the problem/ issue rather than blame others.	3.3	3.2	0.1
5	The school staff is empowered to make instructional decisions rather than waiting for supervisors to tell them what to do.	3.0	3.2	0.2
6	People work here because they enjoy and choose to be here.	3.7	3.6	0.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>55.2</b>	<b>55.8</b>	<b>0.6</b>

As it can be observed from Table 3 above the composite size score from the School Culture Triage survey for teachers was 55.2, and the composite score for principals was 55.8, 0.6 points higher than that of the teachers which is a difference of 0.71 of the total possible score of 85. Which is categorized as weak school culture and suggestions are school culture needs modifications and improvements.

Analysis of open ended questions showed that some schools had collaboration, team spirit and decision making role to perform high student achievement. Whereas, most schools had low initiation in team spirit and decision making role to perform better student achievement. It can be concluded that school which had fewer role in decision making and self-directed rather than team-directed can be characterized by weak school culture. This analysis supports the result of the overall weak school culture score exhibited on principals and teachers school culture perception.

#### **4.2.3 Summarized Categories of Response Comparing Teacher and Principal Responses**

The summarized categories of response comparing teachers and principal's responses were presented in Table 4 below.

**Table 4- Summarized Categories of Response Comparing Teacher and Principal Responses**

No.	Survey Questions	Teacher Responses	Principal Responses
	<b>Collaboration</b>		
1	Teachers and staff discuss instructional strategies and curriculum issues.	Sometimes	Sometimes
2	Teachers and staff work together to develop the school schedule.	Rarely	Sometimes
3	Teachers and staff are involved in the decision-making process with regard to materials and resources.	Rarely	Sometimes
4	The student behavior code is a result of collaboration and consensus among staff.	Rarely	Sometimes
5	The planning and organizational time allotted to teachers and staff is used to plan as collective units/teams rather than as separate individuals.	Sometimes	Sometimes
	<b>Collegiality</b>	Rarely	Sometimes
1	Teachers and staff tell stories of celebrations that support the school's values.	Sometimes	Sometimes
2	Teachers and staff visit/talk meet outside of the school to enjoy each other's' company.	Sometimes	Sometimes
3	Our school reflects a true "sense" of community.	Sometimes	Sometimes
4	Our school schedule reflects frequent communication opportunities for teachers and staff.	Sometimes	Sometimes
5	Our school supports and appreciates the sharing of new ideas by members of our school.	Sometimes	Sometimes
6	There is a rich and robust tradition of rituals and celebration, including holidays, special events, and recognition of goal attainment.	Sometimes	Sometimes
	<b>Self-determination/Efficacy</b>	Sometimes	Sometimes
1	When something is not working in our school, the faculty and staff predict and prevent rather than react and repair.	Sometimes	Sometimes
2	School members are interdependent and value each other.	Sometimes	Sometimes
3	Member of our school community seek alternatives to problems/ issues rather than repeating what we have always done.	Sometimes	Sometimes
4	Member of our school community seek to define the problem/ issue rather than blame others.	Sometimes	Sometimes
5	The school staff is empowered to make instructional decisions rather than waiting for supervisors to tell them what to do.	Sometimes	Sometimes
6	People work here because they enjoy and choose to be here.	Sometimes	Sometimes

**4.2.4 Teachers and Principals Perception on Collaboration School Culture**

Collaboration is a great way for instructional improvement. This approach yielded high achievement, positive relationships, and psychologically healthy people (Johnson, 1989). Inger (1993, p.1) found that teachers saw improvement in student achievement, behavior, and attitude. "In schools where teachers work collaboratively, students can sense the program coherence and a consistency of expectations". Collaboration provided for significant and lasting personal growths that lead to substantial organizational change (Christenson and Eldredge, 1996).

The first section on the School Culture Triage survey has five questions that focused on collaboration school culture. Data analysis for collaboration focused on the differences between teachers and principals perceptions discussed under here.

Survey question one was scored 3.8 “sometimes” by teachers and 3.7 “sometimes” by principals. Survey question two in this section was scored 2.4 “Rarely “ by teachers While principals scored 3.2 “ sometime , which is a qualitative difference and the results fall in different categories. Survey question three in this section was rated 2.9 “Rarely “by teachers and 3.2 “sometimes” by principals. Survey question four in this section was rated 2.5 “Rarely” by teachers and 3.2 “ sometimes by principals results fall in to different categories . Survey question five in this section was scored 3.3 “sometimes” by teachers and 3.0 “sometimes “by principals.

According to the survey results, there are a few aspects of school culture that are perceived differently by teachers and principals. One of the questions from the survey that had the greatest difference was question two. “Teachers and staff work together to develop the school schedule?” This was scored at 2.4 by teachers which are categorized as “Rarely” and 3.2 by principals “sometimes”. The difference here suggests that the principals believes that teachers are being included in the making of schedule , but teachers feel they are “ Rarely “ a part of this process .

The other survey question that was rated differently from teachers and principals was the survey question two: The student behavior code is a result of collaboration and consensus among staff. This also demonstrated the different views between the teachers and principals about collaboration. This suggests that principals believe that the behavior code is established as a whole with equal input from teachers and principals and that the behavior code is being enforced. Teachers on the other hand only “Rarely” feel that the behavior code is collaborative effort between teachers and principals and that the behavior code is not consistently enforced.

#### **4.2.5 Teachers and Principals Perception on Collegiality School Culture**

When schools are organized and supported collegiality, the advantages are plentiful and varied. Such an environment produces greater coherence and equips teachers and the school for steady improvement. The school becomes an environment learning to teach (Inger, 1993).

The second section on the School Culture Triage survey has six questions that focus on collegiality school culture. Data analysis for collegiality focused on the differences between the perceptions of teachers and principals discussed as follow.

The survey question one in this section was scored 3.7 “sometimes” by teachers and 3.0 “sometimes” by principals , both are “ sometimes “ Survey question two in this section was scored 2.5 “Rarely “by teachers and 3.1 “sometimes” by principals. Survey question three in this section was scored 3.6 “sometime “by teachers and 3.3 by principals respectively. Survey question four in this section was scored 3.5 “sometimes” and 3.3 “sometimes” by principals both are “sometimes “. Survey question five in this section was scored 3.6 “sometimes” by teachers and 3.2 “sometimes” by principals respectively. Survey question six was scored 3.3 by teachers and 3.4 by principals, which is “sometimes “for both groups.

The survey question with the greatest discrepancy in regarding to collegiality was question two “ teachers and staff visit outside of the school to enjoy each other’s company “ This was scored 2.5 by teachers which is categories as “ Rarely “ and 3.1 by principals which “ sometimes”. This suggests that principals believe that there are sometimes teachers and staff visit outside of the school to enjoy. On the other hand teachers feel “ Rarely “ teachers and staff visit outside of school to develop relationship among them.

Observation was made in order to assess the current state of school culture. Observation analysis showed that each school had school vision, mission and values displayed in the school compound. Some schools were concentrated on building positive school culture by practicing collaboration, team work, ceremonial celebration like get together, and field trip. They were also focused on attractive school compound, staff rooms and lounges. Whereas, most schools had low practice in building positive school culture, they had weak team spirit, collaboration and less effort in order to foster shared values among the school community. Besides they wee characterized by less attractive school compound and poor quality facilities like staff rooms and lounges. The analysis of the observation supports that the perception result of principals and teachers which was characterized by weak school culture.

#### **4.2.6 Teachers and Principals Perception on Self-determination/Efficacy School Culture**

A low sense of efficacy was contagious to the school and created a demoralizing cycle of failure. Low teacher efficacy led to low student efficacy and low academic achievement, which lowered teacher efficacy even further (Bandura, 1997). To reverse this cycle and create a cohesive culture, the environment must be orderly, with a strong press for academic achievement, administrators were responsive to teachers' concerns and encouraged them to try new ideas, and teachers encouraged colleagues to address student needs. As academic achievement improved, efficacy was enhanced, which then furthered student achievement (Hoy & Sabo, 1997). Strong efficacy led to higher motivation, greater effort, and persistence (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998).

The third section on the School Culture Triage survey has six questions that focused on self-determination/efficacy school culture. Data analysis for self-determination/efficacy focused on the difference between perception of teachers and principals presented as follow.

Survey question one in this section was scored 3.2 by teachers and 3.2 by principals, which is "sometimes" for both groups. Survey question two in this section was scored 3.6 by teachers and 3.2 by principals, which is "sometimes" respectively. Survey question three for this section was scored 3.3 by teachers and 3.2 by principals, which is "sometimes" for both groups. Survey question four in this section was scored 3.3 by teachers and 3.2 by principals, which is "sometimes" for both groups. Survey question five in this section was scored 3.0 by teachers and 3.2 by principals, which is "sometime" for both groups. The last survey question six in this section was scored 3.7 by teachers and 3.6 by principals which are "sometimes" for both groups.

The survey question that had great difference regarding to self-determination/ efficacy was question two "school members are interdependent and value each other" This was scored 3.6 by teachers and 3.2 by principals which is for both groups. This suggests that the teachers and principals hold similar opinions on this aspect, but not everybody would agree.

Interview also made with principals to assess how school leaders feel about school culture in order to enhance among school communities. The researcher found that there was consensus on the positive school culture to perform better student achievement. But responses varied on building positive school culture. Some school principals were committed to foster positive school culture in order to perform high student achievement whereas; most school principals had

no designed activities to develop positive school culture to perform better student achievement. The responses suggest there is not a clear defined instructional mission for the school. If there is one, it is not communicated among the school community. It can be concluded that the interview discussion supports the result of principals and teachers perception score which is characterized by low collaboration, collegiality and self –determination /efficacy role among the school community.

In a school with a positive culture, there is a cohesive attitude of the teachers and administrators, and it can even be seen in student behavior and attitudes. The teachers and administration pass along the positive that is happening, and they support and celebrate each other (Deal & Peterson, 2009). Negative school culture has perpetual and continual conflicts and serves adults, rather than the children in the building (Deal & Peterson, 1999).

It can be concluded that principals and teachers perceive differently, the difference in perception may suggest poor communication or lack of a clear, common goal. So, it implies that School principals and teachers should take immediate action in order to improve the existing weak school culture.

## Chapter Five

### 5. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter deals with the summary of major findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

#### 5.1. Summary of Major Findings

The main objective of the study was to compare the perception of school culture from principals to that of the perception of teachers in Guji Zone secondary schools. To achieve this objective, the following basic questions were raised to guide the study:

What are the differences between principals and teachers perception regarding collaboration of secondary schools in Guji Zone?

What are the differences between principals and teachers perception regarding collegiality in Guji Zone secondary schools?

What are the differences between principals and teachers perception regarding self-determination/efficacy of secondary schools in Guji Zone?

A descriptive survey was employed to conduct the study. For the analysis and interpretation data from principals and teachers analyzed separately, to compare the perception of school culture from principals to that of the perception of teachers. Each survey question was averaged for each group; one for teachers, the other for principals. The average scores for each group were then compared. Observation and interview were also employed to foster the results obtained through School Culture Triage Survey questionnaire.

The total sample size of respondents was (N=269). Of the 269 respondents 265 of them returned the questionnaires. Among the returned questionnaires nine did not complete to be included in the study and four questionnaires were not returned. As a result, questionnaires completed by respondents N=256 (95.2%) was used for data analysis.

Pertaining to respondents' characteristics 219 (82.5%) males and 46 (17.5) were females. This indicates that number of female teacher's in secondary schools was small. It needs high attention in teachers' development program to increase the participation of female teachers in secondary

schools. From school principals, all six of them were males. The majority of the respondents 71% were within the age range of 25-35. The rest 11.5% lies the age range of 46-55, 7.8% lies within age range of 36-45, 4.8% lies the age less than 25 and 2.8% more than 55 years. Regarding the education qualification and service year of the respondents 95.2% was Bachelor Degree, 2.5% Diploma and 1.5% was Master's Degree. Finally, the service year of respondents 45.4% 5 to 10, 17.8 less than 5, 14.9% 11 to 15, 3.4% 21 to 25 and 2.9% were 16 to 20 years. According to Ethiopia Teacher's development program secondary school teachers should be Bachelor Degree and above. As it can be concluded from the data 96% fulfill the standard for secondary schools. And finally, from School principals two were Master's Degree and four were Bachelor Degree holders. According to secondary schools leadership standard, only 33.4% (Master's Degree) of fulfill the level. The rest 66.6% did not fulfill the required standard. It is expected that schools with qualified teachers and school leaders would build strong culture and perform high performance.

#### **5.1.1. Findings Related to Principals and Teachers Perception on Collaboration School Culture**

Collaboration is a great way for instructional improvement. This approach yielded high achievement, positive relationships, and psychologically healthy people (Johnson, 1989). Inger (1993, p.1) found that teachers saw improvement in student achievement, behavior, and attitude. "In schools where teachers work collaboratively, students can sense the program coherence and a consistency of expectations". Collaboration provided for significant and lasting personal growths that lead to substantial organizational change (Christenson and Eldredge, 1996).

In this finding related to principals and teachers perception on collaboration school culture there were some aspects perceived differently. Principals and teachers perceive differently, the difference in perception may suggest poor communication or lack of a clear, common goal on collaboration school culture.

### **5.1.2. Findings Related to Principals and Teachers Perception on Collegiality School Culture**

When schools are organized and supported collegiality, the advantages are plentiful and varied. Such an environment produces greater coherence and equips teachers and the school for steady improvement. The school becomes an environment learning to teach (Inger, 1993).

In this finding related to principals and teachers perception on collegiality school culture there were some aspects perceived differently. Principals and teachers perceive differently, the difference in perception this may also suggest poor communication or lack of a clear, common goal on collegiality school culture.

### **5.1.3. Findings Related to Principals and Teachers Perception on Self- Determination/ Efficacy School Culture**

A low sense of efficacy was contagious to the school and created a demoralizing cycle of failure. Low teacher efficacy led to low student efficacy and low academic achievement, which lowered teacher efficacy even further (Bandura, 1997). To reverse this cycle and create a cohesive culture, the environment must be orderly, with a strong press for academic achievement, administrators were responsive to teachers' concerns and encouraged them to try new ideas, and teachers encouraged colleagues to address student needs. As academic achievement improved, efficacy was enhanced, which then furthered student achievement (Hoy & Sabo, 1997). Strong efficacy led to higher motivation, greater effort, and persistence (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998).

In this finding related to principals and teachers perception on self-determination/efficacy school culture hold similar opinion in this aspect, but not everybody would agree.

## 5.2 Conclusions

The following conclusions were drawn from the study:

The study sought to determine (a) what are the differences between principals and teachers perception regarding collaboration of secondary schools in Guji Zone? (b) What are the differences between principals and teachers perception regarding collegiality in Guji Zone secondary schools? (c) What are the differences between principals and teachers perception regarding self-determination/efficacy of secondary schools in Guji Zone? Accordingly, the researcher concluded the following:

Several studies reveal the research regarding the relationship between the key areas of school culture (collaboration, collegiality, and self-determination/efficacy) and student achievement (Cunningham, 2003; and Melton-Shutt, 2004). Phillips and Wagner's (2003) stated that collegiality which included the concept of collaboration and self-determination/efficacy were the "two most important variables in assessing the culture of a school, classroom, or entire school district" (p.4).

The overall score given to the culture of Guji Zone Secondary schools was 55.2 for teachers and 55.8 for the school principals. The school principals rated the school culture 0.6 higher than that of the teachers who completed the survey. This revealed that overall school culture is weak and immediate action should be taken in order to improve the existing weak school culture.

For thirteen of the questions of the survey, the difference is less than 0.5 on a 1-5 scale. It can be concluded that teachers and principals hold similar opinions on these aspects of school culture. For four of the questions, there is a difference of 0.6 to 0.8, which suggests that the teachers and school principals have different opinion on these aspects. The results of this study show that overall school culture is perceived very similarly between teachers and principals but there are areas of school culture perceived differently, and if improved, can lead to significant gains for teachers and student learning and achievement.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study additional studies are needed in order to improve the perception of principals and teachers on school culture. Thus, the following recommendations were drawn:

1. There are school culture aspects perceived differently by principals and teachers. Therefore, Regional Education Bureau, Zonal Education office and Woreda Education office advised to provide training, seminar and workshop for principals and teachers on school culture in order to build strong communication and set a clear common goal.
2. All schools should assess their school culture before they develop school improvement program plan. Therefore, Regional Education Bureau, Zonal Education office and Woreda Education office advised to provide school culture assessment training.
3. Overall school culture in Guji Zone Secondary School shows that weak school culture. Therefore, Regional Education Bureau should be responsible for developing directions and guidelines and provide training for school leaders and stakeholders to build strong school culture in order to achieve high student academic achievement.

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## Appendix A

Addis Ababa University  
School of Graduate Studies  
Department of Educational Planning and Management

Study on the principals and teachers perception of school culture in Guji Zone Secondary Schools  
**Questionnaires** to be filled by Teachers and Principals

### I. Personal information

1. Name of the School \_\_\_\_\_
2. Sex: Male  Female
3. Age Less than 25  25-35 years  36-45years   
46-55  more than 55 years
4. Educational Qualification BA/BSc/BEd  Diploma  other
5. Year of Service: Less than 5 years  5-10 years  10-15 years   
15-20 years  20-25 years  more than 25 years
6. Major area of study: Write your major area of your study \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions: Please respond to each survey item relative to its presence in your school. For each item, please circle the appropriate response.**

		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
	<b>Collaboration</b>					
1	Teachers and staff discuss instructional strategies and curriculum issues.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Teachers and staff work together to develop the school schedule.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Teachers and staff are involved in the decision-making process with regard to materials and resources.	1	2	3	4	5
4	The student behavior code is a result of collaboration and consensus among staff.	1	2	3	4	5
5	The planning and organizational time allotted to teachers and staff is used to plan as collective units/teams rather than as separate individuals.	1	2	3	4	5
	<b>Collegiality</b>					
1	Teachers and staff tell stories of celebrations that support the school's values.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Teachers and staff visit/talk meet outside of the school to enjoy each other's' company.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Our school reflects a true "sense" of community.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Our school schedule reflects frequent communication opportunities for teachers and staff.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Our school supports and appreciates the sharing of new ideas by members of our school.	1	2	3	4	5
6	There is a rich and robust tradition of rituals and celebration, including holidays, special events, and recognition of goal attainment.	1	2	3	4	5
	<b>Self-determination/Efficacy</b>					
1	When something is not working in our school, the faculty and staff predict and prevent rather than react and repair.	1	2	3	4	5
2	School members are interdependent and value each other.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Member of our school community seek alternatives to problems/ issues rather than repeating what we have always done.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Member of our school community seek to define the problem/ issue rather than blame others.	1	2	3	4	5
5	The school staff is empowered to make instructional decisions rather than waiting for supervisors to tell them what to do.	1	2	3	4	5
6	People work here because they enjoy and choose to be here.	1	2	3	4	5

## II. Open ended Questions

**Directions: Please respond to each open ended items by writing.**

1. In what ways have you contributed to develop positive school culture at your school?
2. What sort of things should the school do to encourage high student academic achievement?
3. In what ways can you have role into decision made at your school?

**Thank You!**

## Appendix B

**Addis Ababa University**  
**School of Graduate Studies**  
**Department of Educational Planning and Management**

The study on principals and teachers perception of school culture in Guji Zone Secondary Schools

### I. Interview to School Principals

The purpose of the interview is to assess how principals feel about school culture.

#### I. Personal information

7. Name of the School

8. Sex: Male

Female

9. Age Less than 25

25-35 years

36-45years

46-55

more than 55 years

10. Educational Qualification BA/BSc/ B Ed  Diploma  MA/MSC

11. Year of Service: Less than 5 years  5-10 years  10-15 years

15-20 years  20-25 years  more than 25 years

12. Major area of study: Write your major area of your study \_\_\_\_\_

#### II. Interview guidelines for school Principals

1. Which school culture is dominant in your school? Collaboration, Collegiality or self-determination/efficacy. Why?
2. What have you done to shape the culture of the school?
3. What are the focuses you have for fostering and developing positive school culture?
4. To what extent do you feel school culture influences student achievement?
5. To what extent does student academic achievement impact school culture?

## Appendix C

Addis Ababa University

School of Graduate Studies

Department of Educational Planning and Management

Study on principals and teachers perception of school culture in Guji Zone Secondary Schools

### Observation Checklist

School Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

No	Indicators	Yes/No	Status
1	Presence of symbol or Logo of the school observed in the school compound		
2	Presence of attractive school compound		
3	Presence of unique language used in the school		
4	Presence of good relationship among school community		
5	Presence of teachers and staff members punctuality		
6	Presence of school mission displayed in the school compound		
7	Presence of school values displayed in the school compound		
8	Presence of ceremonial photos observed in school compound		