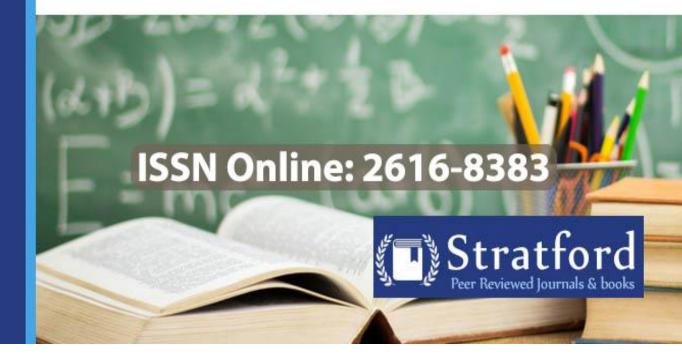# School Leadership Practices and Students' Academic Competence in TVET Secondary Schools in Rwanda

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School Leadership Practices and Students' Academic Competence in TVET Secondary Schools in Rwanda

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Abstract

The students' competency among TVET secondary schools in Rwanda specifically in Musanze District depends on the quality of school leadership practices. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship of school leadership on students' academic competence in TVET secondary school in Musanze District Rwanda. The target population was 172 respondents that provided the sample size of 118 got using Morgan's table. Interview guide, observation and questionnaire were used as data collection instruments. Correlation research design was employed. The study found that there is a positive correlation between school leadership practices and students' academic competence since the significant level for the calculated R-value was .797 which is greater than .05 significance level. Therefore, there is a strong positive significant correlation that exists between the two variables under discussion. The recommendations of this study highlight the critical roles of both school head teachers and the Ministry of Education in enhancing students' academic competence. For school head teachers, it is paramount to cultivate effective leadership practices that align with their schools' vision and promote students' academic growth. Such practices could include evidence-based teaching methods, student-centered learning approaches, and fostering an inclusive, supportive school culture. On the other hand, the Ministry of Education, as the policy-making body, is recommended to arrange motivational talks for students ahead of integrated assessments, helping alleviate test-related stress and boosting morale. Furthermore, the Ministry should create comprehensive guidelines detailing effective school leadership practices. These directives serve as a roadmap for schools to establish a conducive learning environment and to ensure quality education for all students.

Keywords: *Academic competence, Students' competences, Leadership practice and School leadership.*

1.0 Introduction

Education is crucial for the economic and social development of a country. A well-trained, motivated, and adaptable workforce is a key component of such development. Moreover, education plays a vital role in human capital development, readying individuals to enhance their country's economic and social growth. Today's schools serve as critical conduits for driving change and strategic innovation, with effective leadership at their heart. According to Kouzes and Postner (2007), leadership is instrumental in transforming values into actions, visions into realities, obstacles into innovations, separateness into solidarity, and risks into rewards. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in Article 26, recognizes Technical and Vocational Education (TVET) as a human right. This assertion is supported by several UNESCO guidelines including the Convention on TVET (1989), the revised recommendations concerning TVET (2008), and UNEVOC's framework for orienting TVET towards Sustainable Development (2006). These international regulations serve as references for many countries, including Rwanda, where the TVET policy aims to develop TVET as a vital part of the educational system.

In many developing African countries, the TVET program has been implemented to prioritize human resources, a critical factor in both socio-economic development. These nations have established TVET policies and strategies and are making significant efforts to enhance the quality and relevance of TVET. However, the alignment of TVET institutions with the labor market remains a challenge. Although TVET provides skills and knowledge to unskilled individuals, its value is often underappreciated in many developing countries. The lack of effective TVET management often leads to stagnation within the sector and disparities in training standards (GIE, 2011). Consequently, leadership training for head teachers in all secondary schools, including TVET schools, has been organized to address and mitigate these education challenges (MINEDUC 2010). The General Inspectorate of Education (GIE, 2011) states that secondary school leadership resides with the head teachers, district authorities, parents' committees, and elected student representatives. These head teachers oversee all school activities. Yet, a 2011 report revealed that of the 24 teachers evaluated in Kigali city, only five utilized learner-centered teaching methods.

A study conducted by Nelly (2016) in Zambia revealed a correlation between the leadership styles of head teachers, teacher morale, and student performance in primary schools. The research indicated that schools dominated by democratic leadership styles generally exhibited better teacher morale and performance than those governed by autocratic leaders. To be effective, a head teacher should employ a mix of democratic and autocratic leadership styles. In Ghana, a study by Richard (2016) found that a head teacher's leadership style could significantly impact the academic competence of students within the school. If head teachers lack knowledge and skills in leadership, they may not realize the influence they wield over their schools and academic work. Rwanda, a country deeply scarred by the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi, is making concerted efforts to rebuild its socio-economic structures and improve the living conditions of its population. Education management and leadership are high on the country's priority list as the education sector represents one of the most viable means to restore the nation's status quo (MINEDUC, 2009). However, Rwanda faces severe deficiencies in terms of trained human capital, particularly within technical professions. The devastating impact of the 1994 genocide further compounds this problem, posing a significant threat to Rwanda's Vision 2020 targets (MINEDUC, 2008).

As a result, the Rwandan TVET system is often ineffective and disconnected from the realities of the workplace. Graduates struggle to find employment due to a lack of practical, hands-on competencies, leaving around 170,000 young people annually without vocational preparation (MINEDUC, 2008). To address this issue, TVET institution managers need to acquire new skill sets aimed at improving student competence. An evaluation conducted by MINEDUC also highlighted that some secondary schools fail to meet the ministerial standards of school leadership. These deficiencies manifest in poorly managed teaching staff, with teachers frequently neglecting their timetables and school programs (MINEDUC, 2012). Thus, Rwanda grapples with significant shortcomings in TVET and a lack of well-equipped technicians due to inadequacies in teacher training (MINEDUC, 2015; MINEDUC, 2008). This gap cannot be bridged without strong leadership in TVET schools. Effective leadership practices can influence student learning and school performance, as demonstrated by varying performances among schools with similar demographics (Brigette, 2001). Therefore, the focus of this study was to explore the relationship between secondary school leadership practices and student academic competence in TVET schools, and to what extent these leadership practices influence school performance.

1.1 Statement of the problem

One of the key roles of education is to help a country achieve its mission and vision. For example, as stated in the mission statement of the Government of Rwanda, the global goal of the Government of Rwanda is to reduce poverty and in turn to improve the well-being of its population. Then, the role of education in this is to combat ignorance and illiteracy and to provide human resources useful for the socio-economic development of Rwanda through the education system (MINEDUC, 2010). Thus, education constitutes a corner stone for the achievement of Rwandan government mission. In this regard, the leadership practices throughout education contribute significantly to the school and learners' performance all along their further achievement. This implies that school leadership needs to provide in order to inspire students' action to achievements and make the school successful. The latter seeks to guide its staff and students toward having a passion for learning, and for growing creatively and collaboratively towards their high competence.

However, as far as Rwandan TVET schools are concerned, despite the fact that they have to be remarkable improvement in TVET in different spheres of their lives, some TVET school leaders continue to lack educational leadership practices, which lead to positive influence on the competence of the TVET learners. As consequence, there is poor competence in different TVET schools in Rwanda (MINEDUC, 2015). In order to serve appropriately, educational leadership should be of quality which is reflected in many aspects including students' academic competence. The most important tool to achieve quality teaching and education as well is to develop effective educational leadership practices whose main task is to forecast future and useful activities to be undertaken by schools so as to achieve quality teaching that target the learners learning outcome (UNESCO, 2005). More so, the Government of Rwanda invest a lot of money in TVET secondary schools through Rwanda TVET Board (RTB) in order to help them develop and achieve their goals that are envisaged through their school practices. One of the goals of TVET secondary schools is to boost learners' academic competence by investing some money into the learning activities aiming at improving students' competence (MINEDUC, 2015).

Despite the huge investment in TVET secondary schools, learners' do not perform well in many schools. This may be due to the fact that many schools are faced with the poor and shortage of school leadership practices among others. As result, some schools fail to realise and implement many activities aiming at improving school competences. In the same vein, some TVET secondary school managers might not have enough skills in leadership (MINEDUC, 2015). Hence, they do no develop and support their school activities related to students' high competences in detriment of the reason that they are overloaded. As consequence, the poor academic competence from these schools remains persistent for many years. Indeed, these schools have qualified teachers and with the same learners' background that tends to look alike. There is no big difference considering the schools' resources. From this perspective, one wonders why many learners perform very poorly in TVET secondary schools while the government invest a lot so as to boost learners' competence. The root cause of this poor competence might be looked at the level of poor schools' leadership practices, among others.

1.2 Objective of the study

The objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between school leadership practices and students' academic competence in TVET secondary schools in Musanze District.

2.0 Literature Review

The literature review was discussed in sections.

2.1 Understanding of school leadership

The school leadership basically concentrates on running effective teaching and learning is the school as a primary responsibility. The excellence of a school should be measured against the quality of the teaching and learning done in a school. Therefore, the effect a teacher has on the learning experiences of learners is now and always will be the most important dimension of a school's existence. Then, the school's organization should be geared mainly to making effective teaching and learning possible. The duties of a principal are wide-ranging in a way that he or she is responsible for the school administration, organization, and work processes at school. The principal is expected to play an important role in integrating and coordinating the efforts of teachers, students, personnel, and parents to achieve the desired objectives of education and facilitate the over-all aspects of the teaching-learning process. Thus, the main responsibility of the principal is to create conditions in the school in which the pupils receive quality instruction both inside and outside the classroom (UNESCO, 2005). Nevertheless, the school administration is different from other enterprises due to its goals. However, like other organization, the school needs strategies to run efficiently. These means are mainly human, material, financial, legal, and technological nature. The existence of these means is not enough in itself; there is a need to make rational utilization and combination which fundamentally remains the responsibility of the head teacher. Indeed, school heads today face a big challenge not only to know different tools of secondary school Leadership practices but also to maintain the required professionalism to handle the available pertaining issues efficiently and effectively. This went further because some of them do not yet master the basic of school leadership or face problem of understanding which may hinder the efficiency of the general administration of the school (Daoust, 2008).

2.2 Students' academic competence

Students' academic competence is a major concern area in educational delivery in TVET Rwanda. Stakeholders like parents, school leaders, teachers, students, policy makers and society as a whole are anxious to see learners excel in their academic work. Even without the necessary framework and resources or the impediments, everyone still expects that standard of performance should be high at all times, and for poor academic competence, the head of the school is mostly held responsible and requires him or her careful and reflected school leadership practices at every stage of its development especially in the influence of students' competence (NSUBUGA,2008). The schools are then there to impart knowledge, skills attitudes and values of learners who may attend school where the main explicit reason is the idea of improving competence and the aspect of academic competence is at top priority of education system and researchers. That is why some of them have investigated the factors, either inside or outside the school that may hinder the academic competence. Thus for, the academic competence is the level of at which a learner, a teacher or a school has achieved their objectives and this is realized after a certain measurement especially exams (Charles,2015).

It is suggested that motivated and satisfied teachers are most likely to affect and influence the students' learning positively while the opposite of that may have negative impacts on students' competence. Educational leaders and managers have to pay special attention to the phenomena of motivation and satisfaction to both teachers and students. As results, the students' academic competence plays significant role in producing the best quality graduates who will become great leader and manpower for the country thus responsible for the country's economic and social development (Ali et.al, 2009). Student academic competence measurement has received considerable attention in many different dimensions. It is challenging aspects of TVET students who might be affected by social, psychological, economic, environmental and personal factors. Many people then tend to believe that a leader unifies and embodies the opinion of different people to any desired goal lie performance as a key factor to improve the condition of any students in school. For all these to take effect, the functional schools and outstanding performance exist on the benchmark of school leadership practices that fosters ahead the performance of the learners (Gyasi, Bao & Ampomah, 2016).

2.3 School leadership practices

Leadership first is basically multidisciplinary. Although leadership has been developed as a separate discipline, it draws knowledge and concepts from various disciplines such as psychology, economics, etc. Leadership integrates concepts drawn from various discipline and applies them to the functioning of an organization. Secondary school leadership has an applied branch, although Leadership is a distinct field of study, school leadership has not developed as a separate discipline. It is an applied branch of leadership. It applies techniques and principles of leadership to accomplish the desired objectives of the schools (Witziers, 2005). As regards to the issues and points of view presented by the school leaders' practices namely at school and classroom conditions, the goal for school leader is to create and sustain a competitive school, by school improvement plans, by involving themselves in setting professional standards, in stimulating the teaching staff intellectually, by offering professional development opportunities and staff

assessment. The research has proved that there is clear evidence of the fact that, before setting student learning as a priority, such actions and productive plans for educational purpose are essential. These school leadership practices are reflected in the present research through students' discipline, teachers' motivation, supervision, and training among many other practices that they have to perform under their responsibilities (Dina, 2013).

In addition, the school leadership should not be based on principles. It should be flexible. Although there are rules and regulations for every school, there is a need to be sensitive in taking decisions. But there should be a fluid condition without any specific norm or standard rules and regulations because fluidity may create confusion and chaos. What is meant is a proper balance between rigidity and flexibility. School leadership should not be a bundle of theoretical principles (Hallinger and Heck, 2011). More so, the school sets objectives and organizes means and material to accomplish them. Planning, organizing, directing and control, decision making and evaluation all must be geared to the accomplishment of the objectives of the school leadership in modern days is therefore, regarded as Leadership by objectives. Leadership is humane in nature. It deals with human being, teachers, students, parents, and community members. It is concerned with the welfare and development of human beings in the school setting. The human element is the most essential element of the school leadership (Fullan, 2005).

Although leadership has grown as profession in business and industry, school leadership is not a profession. The main benchmarks of a profession include a body of specialized knowledge, formal training and experience, an organization to espouse professionalization, an ethical code for the guidance of conduct, the licensing of practitioners, and a commitment to serve rather than to monetary benefits. In terms of these benchmarks school Leadership cannot be called as a profession. It is a semi profession (Witziers,2005). The principles of school leadership are not absolute, they are relative. Schools differ from one to another in terms of size, homogeneity, stability and other related fields. Since schools differ from one to another, style of leadership must also vary from school to school. The same headmaster, who has been successful with certain techniques in one school, may be a failure with the same techniques in another school because of the differences in situational factors (Allan, 2008).

2.4 School leadership practices contributing to students' academic competence

In the same view of school leadership practices as discussed above, the effective headteachers provide a clear vision and sense of direction for the school, facilitating the achievement of educational and organizational goals (Day & Sammons, 2014). From this perspective, providing educational entrepreneurship that links resources to outcomes and ensuring that the processes and content of the curriculum are contemporary and relevant (Day & Sammons, 2014). They focus the attention of staff on what is important and do not let them get diverted and sidetracked with initiatives that will have little positive impact on the work of the students (Day& Sammons, 2014). Furthermore, the headmasters have to know what is going on in their classrooms. They have a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of their staff. They know how to build on the strengths and reduce the weaknesses through influencing skills that is motivating people, negotiating, publics peaking and entrepreneurial. These school managers also gain this view through a systematic program of monitoring and evaluation. Their clarity of thought, sense of purpose and

knowledge of what is going on mean that effective headteachers can get the best out of their staff, which is the key to influencing work in the classroom and to raising the standards achieved by students (Day & Sammons, 2014).

More so, the headteachers have to take the responsibility for raising the quality of teaching and learning for students' achievements. This implies setting high expectations and monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of learning outcomes. A successful learning culture will enable students to become effective, enthusiastic, independent learners, committed to life-long learning (Day, & Sammons, 2014). Therefore, the understanding and developing school leadership practices in this category make a significant contribution to students and teachers' motivation. The principals' primary aim is building not only the knowledge and skills that teachers and other staff need in order to accomplish organizational goals but also the dispositions that are commitment, capacity and resilience to persist in applying the knowledge and skills in the school environment for learners' achievement (Day, & Sammons, 2014).

Focusing on the school leadership goals and expectations for student high competence, keeping track of teachers' professional development need, creating structures and opportunities for teachers to collaborate, providing backup for teachers with student discipline and with parents, participating in teachers and students own professional development, supporting community involvement in student learning, providing teachers with instructional resources and materials are the key roles for the school leadership has to foster a head so as to have a positive impact on quality education (Karen, Kenneth, Kyla, & Stephen, 2010). At the very least, school leadership should be a way where children and teachers are not treated as though they are data or numbers in someone else's policy, or as only future members of society as though their present experience is not important in the long-life learning (Hughes, 2013). This helps to embark on the role of leadership that makes everything of the school run for the benefit of the child and the society as well.

For leadership, feedback is the process of critical reflection on the leader's style and practices. In other words, the critically reflective leader will be aware of personal goals, context, his or her own attributes, and actions and his or her impacts on the actions of individuals or the outcomes of organizations. Worldwide, different initiatives aiming at improving the academic achievement are among the priorities of the agenda states (Reardon, Fite, Boone & Sullivan, 2019). Nevertheless, there are many other factors affecting school leadership practices and therefore, they affect quality education in line with the students' outcomes. These factors include economic, political, and administrative constraints which may hinder a successful completion of planned activities (Forojalla,2013).

The other problem faced with secondary schools in leadership is that many school leaders do not know much about developing educational leadership practices. It is generally assumed that educational leadership is a technical process and that the educational management, in an attempt to plan, requires not only technical know-how relevant to leading but also knowledge about their responsibilities and to what extent they have to implement. Another point to raise is that school leaders have an impact, as a matter of policy and practice and extension of significant decisional influence to others in the school community, on teachers and students' outcomes. The negative effects come in when there is much weaker of relationship from school leadership and teachers'

capacity in a sense of professional development opportunities rather than the skills that the teachers need to foster students' achievement (Vidoni, & Grassetti, 2003).

In addition to this, the present study adds on the low professional inputs and settings available to both learners and teachers in schools contribute negatively to the education quality in a way that the leaners may not learn what they are supposed to learn from classroom. In this regard, learners are challenged to access, equity, and efficiency from teaching -learning processes while all these are under the duties of school leadership planning and practices. More eventually, there are also challenges that the school leaders face when dealing with their job in striving for learners' performance. These include ensuring consistently of good teaching and learning; integrating a sound grasp of basic knowledge and skills within a broad and balanced curriculum; managing behavior and attendance; strategically managing resources and the environment; building the school as a professional learning community; and developing partnerships beyond the school to encourage parental support for learning and new learning opportunities (Day, & Sammons, 2014).

Ultimately, there are different dimensions that are very vital in the school leadership practices influencing the overall approach of teaching and learning within a school, others may focus on innovative administration and school partnership involving education practitioners in students' learning. Therefore, contemporary researchers are focusing on the link between school leadership and academic success. Much pressure for academic success has pushed education researchers as well as all stakeholders in education to focus on instructional level and school factors affecting student performance (Lamb & Fullarton, 2008). As result, effective school leaders exercise a direct and powerful influence on the effectiveness of the school and on the achievement of learners. In other words, the impact of school leadership upon school effectiveness and students' competence is significant (Harris, 2014). It is also echoed that there is a need to embrace effective leadership in the way principals lead schools towards future success. It means mobilizing expertise at all levels in the school in order to generate more opportunities for change and to build the capacity for learners' success (Harris, 2014).

2.5 School leadership and academic competence

A stable society requires citizens who are productive and know how to function independently in whatever situation they find themselves, in short, citizens who have discipline. Discipline at school is ordered behavior that leads to better learning. With discipline, success is possible. Without discipline, chaos is certain. A disorganized school and chaos lead to educational disaster. Discipline is learned and can be taught indeed, one principle goal of education is to teach discipline, which is the most basic of all basics to the extent none surpasses it. Unfortunately, some school leadership does not engage children do not exhibit self-discipline. Yet, it is the core dimension in one's lifetime for self-regulated in accomplishing assigned tasks. On the other hand, there are schools where discipline does not seem to be a problem. The fact that such schools exist convinces everyone that solutions are possible (UNESCO, 2005).

The school leadership assume a major role in judging key elements of merit among young people namely, academic skills, hard work, self-discipline, and cooperative behavior. In this regard, they have to do so mainly by evaluating students in a variety of subjects deemed important for success in integrated assessment together with other integrated assessments and later in life. No one

expects outcomes at the end of the schooling process to be the same for every student, since initial ability varies, and some young people are more disciplined and willing to work harder in school than others (Harris, 2014; UNESCO, 2005). Yet, when students' inherent characteristics such as gender or parents' economic and social capital rather than their innate ability, hard work, and discipline systematically affect their school performances ideals.

It is asserted that a student's success in accomplishing a task is strongly affected by the belief in his or her ability to accomplish the task. This self-efficacy or discipline are classified in different dimensions through their main sources that are mastery experience, vicarious experience, moods and social persuasion whereby individuals are verbally persuaded that they can achieve given goals, they are likely to do sustained effort. On the other hand, self-doubts and thinking about personal deficiencies lowers effort level (Nasir & Iqbal,2019). This is generally to acknowledge that learners' self-efficacy or discipline positively correlate with a belief of accomplishing their various academic and learning tasks successfully that increases their academic competence. Mooi (2007) explored that the self-efficacy measures were significantly related to examination performance. More eventually, moving forward to the student learning, the research focused on what happens inside the classroom, how leaders' professional learning experiences influence student achievement. There is no objection that the main role in the classroom is assumed by the teacher, whose pedagogical knowledge, training skills and classrooms working are key features for students' competence.

2.6 Teachers' motivation practices and students' academic competence

The psychologists defined motivation as forces acting either on or within a person to initiate behavior, which suggests the activating properties of the processes involved in psychological motivation. It is not typically measured directly but rather inferred as the result of behavioral changes in reaction to internal or external stimuli. It is also important to understand that motivation is primarily a performance variable. That is, the effects of changes in motivation are often temporary. An individual, highly motivated to perform a particular task because of a motivational change, may later show little interest for that task as a result of further change in motivation. As in a system of relations, interrelations and actions, motivation in each person will be composed of internalized factors during development and external circumstances. i.e., external actions, after interpreted in a socio-cultural context and daily life of each individual, become significant and important also as intrinsic motivation (Antunes, 2016).

In this regard, the major players in the education process are teachers, who would be depicted as the one who makes the differences. This within-school variance highlights the variance provided by teacher effects, and while we may wish to believe that all of our teachers are excellent, this is not always the view of those who have been their students and leaders (Hattie, 2012). This teacher' variance is portrayed in a sense of teacher's extrinsic and intrinsic motivation which is the force that provides the impetus for human behavior, causing individuals to initiate and sustain goal-directed actions (Jenkins & Demaray, 2015).The exceptional benefits to students by implementing student-centered learning is that it impacts students' performance gains. In this regard, teachers motivate learners through constant evaluation and reinforcing the strength of responses. Now that the teacher's both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation arouse students' intrinsic motivation in a

positively correlated with the amount of active learning in the classroom that leads to better academic competence.

In this sense, the motivational process is shaped by actions with intrinsic and extrinsic reasons. Perhaps the latter directly represent the development of the first actions, internalized through the meanings of social motivation in each relationship. This is to suggest that when the school leadership motivates the professional capital toward the institutional goals, the later also takes part in encouraging and directing the students toward the preset target. This is suggested in a way that a good leadership reflects both the needs of teachers and students. Although, there are some aspects reputed as difficult, teacher's commitment greatly influences the students' interests in a sense of getting chance for success in classroom situations (UNESCO, 2005).

Therefore, this increases the nature of student-centered learning which allows the student to take ownership of their learning and interact in a meaningful manner with course content. The role of the instructor is now one of supporter and facilitator. As result, the instructor's main job is to support the student in their autonomous learning. Instructor support in the student-centered classroom was shown to positively predict student performance, motivation, and positive behaviors. Furthermore, student-centered learning seems to work towards learning achievement regardless of the environment in which it is implemented. Although, motivation is conceived as personal process, not always conscious development, there are factors that can be internalized as intrinsic. External factors, for the subject, constitute sociocultural reasons that differentiate in various social contexts (Antunes, 2016).

According to goal-setting theory states the now widely accepted concept that goals drive behavior. Commitment to goals and the energy and productivity resulting from this depend on the nature of the goal specific and demanding goals lead to greater results than easy' or vague goals. Goals that are externally imposed are less effective than those created by, or with the consent of, the individual. The way to encourage high performance is to help people to set themselves goals that they find meaningful as well as challenging. Feedback is also crucial to the success of goal-setting theory- as well as participating in the setting of the goals, individuals need feedback on how well they have performed in order to understand what behaviors they should adopt in the future and to provide them with incentives to achieve their next goals (Antunes, 2016).

As we know, human motivation is linked to human behavior, and is one of the factors in investigations in education, to better understand the educational context warns that it is difficult to conceptualize motivation. Huertas defined motivation is understood as a continuous process, which precedes human action. Sometimes is inherent in the human body in the prefrontal region of the brain, corresponding to interest the task with an end in itself and not as a means to achieve a goal, sometimes extrinsic when attention to the task is related to the achievement of the goal, the task seen as a means (Huertas, 2011). On one hand, intrinsic motivation reflected as self-motivation, the goal is the action itself and the result is seen as a natural secondary, must the time proving "myself that I can do it well". Success is always expected, but in case of failure, the attempt would have been valid as personal experience, as interaction with people and environment. Intrinsic motivation corresponds to a typically self-determined behavior, in which the interest in

an activity is guided by free choice, by spontaneity and curiosity. The efforts dedicated to the realization of an activity are not linked to external contingencies and rewards, but with the inherent characteristics to activity (Deci & Ryan, 2010).

On the other hand, extrinsic motivation is perceived as activity or task that is subject to the achievement of a goal or outcome. According to Deci & Ryan (2010), in this situation the realization of actions is closely related to rewards, reviews, terms, punishments, praise, among others. What determines the behavior is much more associated with the control, touted by external wills in which the individual acts under pressure, to the detriment of free will and autonomy. In this controlled behavior, the subject tends to perceive the activities/tasks as instrumental for achieving certain goal. However, that figure in the foreground is the ultimate goal and not the very task activity. According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory, human needs emerge in a predictable sequence. He argues that higher needs emerge as lower ones are satisfied, but that a satisfied need does not necessarily satisfy behavior. Indeed, all employees have material needs, and if these are fulfilled, they will satisfy and motivate to a certain extent, but personal needs and aspirations then take over and play an important role in motivation (Harper & Row, 2007).

2.7 Teachers' supervision practices and students' academic competence

Supervision of the instructional program is the most important responsibility of the principal. The principal should see that the teaching work in the school goes on well. The concept of supervision is one of coordination and service. To be effective, supervision must contribute to the improvement of individualized instruction and result in a wholesome teaching-learning situation. Therefore, the principal who performs his/her duties as supervisor through various means and can use various methods to ensure effective teaching in a school such as the following offering practical and constructive suggestions concerning the organizational procedures relative to the school-wide program, to the classroom and teachers' situation effect size on student better performance by providing formative evaluation to teachers (Hattie, 2012; UNESCO, 2005). In order to avoid a drawback in performance, supervision should not only be intended to apply result-oriented performance but also on agreed upon plan of actions. The evaluation criteria should be the quantity and quality of work accomplished, the process time and cost-effectiveness. Therefore, the supervision would look into the how much, at what cost, how well, how efficient, how effective, and how necessary aspects of the work accomplished is related to the institutional objectives. The result from this would be measured not only on the output but also on the outcome and impact of the activities performed. In this regard, peer evaluation can also serve as an important tool to carry out an improved supervision with the purpose of the professional growth and teaching skill improvement. Appraisal involves the formal evaluation of an employee's performance (UNESCO, 2005).

2.8 Teachers' in-service trainings provision towards students' academic competence

The term professional development refers to both formal and informal learning experiences and processes that lead to deepened understanding and improvement of practice. Differentiation of professional development practices is critical to meeting the unique learning needs of experienced teachers due to their individual developmental and experiential career paths and contexts.

Professional development programs and activities frequently evaluate participant satisfaction but rarely professional learning or change in practice. The term supervision can be defined as a continuous and systematic process to help individual teachers with their professional development and carrier planning and to help ensure that in-service training and deployment of teachers matches the complementary needs of individual teachers and schools (UNESCO, 2005).

In addition, Important components of professional development stresses the link of professional development to student learning and professional standards for learning that provides many varied learning processes and practices within a learning Framework. An integrated design that focuses upon student and teacher learning, linking to the larger system and incorporating a range of possible learning activities within a classroom embedded context is the one recommended. Professional development consists of natural learning experiences and those conscious and planned activities which are intended to be of direct or indirect benefit to the individual, group or school, which constitute, through these, to the quality of education in the classroom. It is the process by which, alone and with others, teachers review, renew and extend their commitment as change agents to the moral purposes of teaching; and by which they acquire and develop critically the knowledge, skills and emotional intelligence essential to good professional thinking, planning and practice with learners and colleagues throughout each phase of their teaching lives (Broad & Evans, 2006).

Most TVET secondary educators have room in their professional lives for teaching improvement. Empirical research has demonstrated that most these teachers often teach the way they were taught. In this context, the focus was solely on respect and allow for diverse ways of learning and knowing. The school leadership should adjust curriculum to the new one in a sense of practice and its future concerns through instruction, and appropriate assessment so that all students feel supported and challenged academically for their improved performance. They need to evaluate students for true understanding, in a way that increases students' understanding and that allows students to be metacognitive about their own learning. Therefore, the in-service training should allow practitioners to engage in a safe learning community regarding teaching and learning (Bouwma-Gearhart,2011; Kinzie, 2005).

Although professional development is sometimes considered to be the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Regional Government Bureaus of education, the school should play an important part in its implementation. Professional development at school level can ensure the development of individual teachers, the broadening of their outlook, the heightening of their professionalism and the improvement of their effectiveness (Kinzie, 2005). Eventually, personnel development programs are really going to meet the needs of teachers, it is important to identify those needs. Teachers' needs differ from school to school, so it is essential for every school to have an individualized professional development program, which is based on its own needs. This individualization is the particular responsibility of the principal (UNESCO 2005). Personnel development should take place continuously on a long-term basis. A one-off program cannot be satisfactory. It should, therefore, be an integral part of the school program. Personnel appraisal is also widely used as management aid at schools that increases the quality of teaching by ensuring the realization of educational objectives knowing that every student need at least three good teachers during school time (Fullan, 2014).

2.9 The influence of school leadership practices on students' academic competence

The school leadership practices are reflected in their influence on students' academic competence relationship in a sense that school leadership has a direct influence upon the school and the students' better competence. Therefore, the school principal as a school leader provides direction that is connected to the expert advice on development of teaching and learning in his or her school. The principal has a duty to lead, guide, conduct, direct and motivate both the teaching and non-teaching staff all that influence students' achievement and the school direction as well (Tobin 2014). In this regard, school leaders determine admission procedures, setting direction, planning, teaching strategies and resources utilization, controlling, and improving the school standard (Mohanty, 2013). They also shape institutional strategies including their execution and effectiveness, appear at any level of an institution and are not exclusive to management. Instructional leadership practices are the most appropriate school leadership style for making students committed to institutional change which can positively impact change implementation bringing out improved organizational performance that is mirrored into students learning outcome (Dina, 2013; OECED, 2009).

The most recent relationship between school leadership and its practices is perceived in the academic achievement of students in TVET secondary school, which has been major concern to the parents, teachers and even the principals themselves (Northouse, 2015). However, some secondary school principals are confronting leadership challenges which have resulted in low quality of instruction, indiscipline among staff and students. The school leadership practice in TVET secondary schools through effective and efficient mechanism is paramount to sustainable development in the education sector that support socio-economic development as well. It is in this respect that good principal-parents relationship leads to better school effectiveness and facilitate positive student-learning outcomes in school (Antunes, 2016; Northouse, 2015). From the above perspectives, successful school leaders do, however, have one thing in common. They influence those around them in order to reap maximum benefit from the institution's resources. In fact, the influence of leaders and their effectiveness in moving people and resources to a shared vision that can directly shape the students' academic competence and achievement in their life-long learning as far (Dina, 2013).

2.10 Challenges of school leadership practices towards students' academic competence

Leadership is invested in or expected in persons of formal authority and encompasses a set of functions that may be performed by many different persons in different roles throughout the school. Then, school leaders are those persons occupying various roles in the school, who provide direction and exert influence in order to achieve the school's goals while school leadership functions can be carried out in many different ways depending on individual leader, context, the nature of the goals being pursued (Liethwood & Riehl 2009). There are many factors affecting school leadership and therefore they affect learners' achievement and outcomes in line with the students' academic competence as well. These factors include economic, political, and administrative constraints which may hinder a successful completion of planned activities (Forojalla, 2013).

The other problems faced with secondary schools in leadership are that many school leaders do not know much about developing educational leadership. It is generally assumed that educational leadership is a technical process and that the educational management, in an attempt to plan, requires not only technical know-how relevant to leading but also knowledge about their responsibilities and to what extent (Shukla, 2016). Another point to raise is that school leaders have an impact, as a matter of policy practice and extension of significant decisional influence to others in the school community, on teachers and students' outcomes. The negative relations come in when there is much weaker of relationship between school leadership and teachers' capacity in a sense of professional development opportunities rather than the skills that the teachers need to foster students' achievement (Vidoni & Grassetti, 2005).

In addition to this, the present study adds on the low professional inputs and settings available to both learners and teachers in schools contribute negatively to the learners' performance in a way that they may not learn what they are supposed to learn in the hands of school leadership duties and practices (Shukla, 2016). In the same vein of perspectives, there are also challenges that the school leaders face when dealing with their job in striving for students' academic competence. These include ensuring consistently of good teaching and learning; integrating a sound grasp of basic knowledge and skills within a broad and balanced curriculum; managing behavior and attendance of teachers and students; strategically managing resources and the environment; building the school as a professional learning community; and developing partnerships beyond the school to encourage parental support for learning and new learning opportunities (Day, & Sammons, 2014).

2.11 Most commonly used leadership style in TVET Schools

The most commonly used leadership styles are laissez-faire leadership style, autocratic leadership style, democratic leadership style, administrative leadership style, instructional leadership style, transformational leadership, and critical self-reflection. The Laisser-faire leadership style is a leadership which allows complete freedom to group decision without the leader's participation. Subordinates are free to do what they like. In this type of leadership, the role of leader is just to supply materials. The leader does not interfere with or participate in the course of events determined by the group. It is also a leadership style which is known as delegate style (Shukla, 2016; Adeyeni , 2011).This leadership style the leader hands off and allow group member to make decision and lack direct supervision of employees and fails to provide regular feedback to those under their supervisions. Highly experienced and trained employees requiring little supervision fall under laissez-faire leadership style. However, not all employees possess those characteristics.

This leadership style hinders the production of employees needing supervision. The laissez-faire style produces no, leadership or supervision efforts from manager which can lead to poor production lack of control and increasing costs. In laissez-faire leadership style leader turns over almost all authority to group members and does as little. (Kendra, 1948).According to Smile and Jack (1990) it is also known as authoritarian, directive, or homothetic leadership style. Power and decision making reside in authoritarian leader. It is characterized by individual control over all decisions and little input from group members. In autocratic leadership style a manager centralizes decision making power him or herself.

The autocratic style is high in control; autocratic leaders typically make choices based on their own ideas and judgments and rarely accept advice from followers. The autocratic leader directs group members on the way things should be done. In this type of leadership style, the leader does not maintain clear channel of communication between him or herself and the subordinates. He or she does not delegate authority nor permit subordinates to participate in policy making. The autocratic leadership style results in group members reacting aggressively and apathetically in the work environment. Autocratic leadership style involves absolute authoritarian control over a group and presents some characteristics among which is little or no input from group members. Leaders make decisions without consulting the followers. Group leaders dictate all the work methods and process, in this leadership style, group members are rarely trusted with decisions or important tasks. The Autocratic leadership style is often resulted in lack of creative solution to problems, which can ultimately hurt the performance of the group. Also, other weakness of this style is that it will not tolerate difference of opinions. It is observed that autocratic and harsh climate leads to poor performance in academics (Shukla, 2016).

The democratic leadership style emphasizes on group and leader participation in the making of policies. The key to democratic leadership style is communication, seeking the opinions of others and the sharing of opinions too. In the organization, decisions about organizational matters are reached at after consultation and communication with various people. The attempts as much as possible to make each individual feel he is an important member of the organization. Democratic leadership style encompasses discussions, debates and sharing of ideas and encouragement of people to feel good about their environment. In democratic leadership style the communication is multidirectional while ideas are exchanged between leader and employees. In this type of leadership style, the teachers morale is always enhanced at high level (Adeyeni , 2011). Democratic leadership boosts employee's morale because employees make contribution to the decision-making process. It is a type of leadership style in which members of the group take more participative role in decision making than in either the laissez faire or the autocratic styles. This style has advantages because group members are encouraged to share their ideas. It can lead to better ideas, and more creative solutions to problem. Group members also feel more involved and are committed to projects making them more likely to care about the end results. It causes them to feel that their opinion matter. This style works best in situations where group members are skilled and eager to share their knowledge. It is also important to have plenty of time to allow people to contribute, develop a plan and vote on the best cause of action. The different researchers have found that democratic leadership style is usually one of the most effective and lead to high productivity, better contributions from the group members and increased group morale. The democratic leadership subordinates in the institution high performance of academic (Gastil, 2014).

The administrative leadership style focuses on administrative tasks, enforcing rules and procedures and accountability. In schools, emphasis that school leadership is an organic activity, dependent on interrelation and connections where school managers are only one source of leadership. Teachers, governors, and students also contribute to the leadership of a school. Again, there is an understanding that school principal cannot be sufficiently informed to make all decisions in school, nor can they be present in all places and situations where decision need to be made and therefore

some decisions must be made by teachers, and at times, by students as well as governors (Moos, 2008). Successful principals provide instructional leadership. They spend more of their time working with teachers and students and less of their time in the office. They observe what is going on in the classrooms, hold high expectations for teacher performance and student achievement, and provide necessary resources, including own skills and knowledge. They are active and involved. As a result, they create schools that make a positive difference in the lives of students (UNESCO, 2005). Thus, the major tasks of the principal as an instructional leader are determining objective, program coordination, being didactic leader organizing enrichment programs, undertaking evaluation and examinations, taking remedial steps creating conducive school climate.

Contrary, transformational, and transactional leadership, describing transactional leadership as a more traditional model and transformational leadership as a more holistic approach. Transformational leaders raise followers' levels of awareness of the vision of the future and provide a set of morale and motivational factors that guide the actions of the organization. Burns also described alignment of follower skills with the tasks required to meet organizational goals. It was argued that leaders could be transactional or transformational depending on the context. Schuh et al (2013) maintain that transformational leading is amoral and that leaders could use this model of leadership to motivate their followers for good or bad. Critical self-reflection, considered the most important skill that educators can impart to an adult learner, is "a critique of a premise upon which the learner has defined a problem" (Mezirow, 2008). This skill is a technique that facilitates an adult re-examining his or her basic beliefs in order to improve understanding. Critical self-reflection has applications beyond professional practice. Flores, Matkin, Burbach, Quinn, and Harding (2012) argue that critical thought is a key part of effective leadership and that college graduates have, for the most part, not developed the techniques necessary to reflect on their performance as leaders. In school, students learn models and frameworks that will be transferred to their life world after leaving the academic environment. Finally, in the framework of leadership and its different associated practices have an immense impact on how students perform for their positive institutional outcome.

The school leadership practice is differentiated into diversities of activities that have been subjects to responses to the followers. In corporate context of the dynamics of the school principal as a leader and the teachers as led play a key role in shaping the destiny of their students which is academic achievement. The above diversities of definitions have discrepancies in their relations. However, a leader as a fore shadow or reflection of what they expect from their subjects must personify the qualities desired through hands on practices that enhance the learners' performance and the followers' productivity that turns into the progress of the whole school (Shukla, 2016). Understanding how various leadership styles affect productivity allows leaders to analyze and adapt for effectiveness of actions to improve teachers' instruction directly supervise and learning outcomes (OECD, 2009).

3.0 Methodology

This study utilized a correlation research design to investigate the relationship between school leadership practices and students' academic competence in TVET secondary schools within the Musanze District. The target population comprised 172 respondents. Based on Krejcie and

Morgan's table (1970), a sample size of 118 respondents was deemed sufficient for a population of 172 individuals. Data collection was performed using questionnaires, observations, and guided interviews. Simple random sampling was employed to select the study respondents, ensuring each member of the population had an equal chance of being chosen. This strategy minimizes bias and facilitates a representative sample. To maintain the validity of the research instrument, questionnaires were distributed to expert respondents in the area of study for review and feedback. This process ensured that the instruments accurately measured the concepts they were designed to measure. The reliability of the research instruments was also upheld, ensuring consistent results when the study is replicated under similar conditions and with similar participants. This study employed correlation research design in order to investigate the relationship between school leadership practices and students' academic competence in TVET secondary schools in Musanze District. The target population was 172 respondents. Basing on Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table that declared that for a population of 172 individuals, the sample can be 118respondents as sample size. Questionnaire, observation and guided interview were used as data collection instruments. The simple random sampling technique was used to get the respondents of the study. The validity of the research instrument was maintained by distributing the research instruments to the expert respondents in the area of the study. The reliability was maintained.

4.0 Findings

The primary objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between school leadership practices and students' academic competence in TVET secondary schools in Musanze District. The findings, which were determined in light of this objective, included the identification of any associations between these variables.

4.1 Identifying school practices that influence students' academic competence
This is to show that the mean and standard deviation of the variables of school leadership practices and students' academic competence to investigate their relationship between the two factors. Based on mean values, the school leadership practices influence student performance as it is showed high satisfaction with their work as presented in the hereafter table.

Table 1: School leadership practices

Statements	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The school leadership involves itself in the implementation of the curriculum through teaching and learning activities	118	1.00	4.00	3.4153	.77709
The school leadership has a direct influence upon the students' better performance	118	1.00	4.00	3.2203	.68107
Do the school leadership practices play a vital role in influencing the students' discipline for competences?	118	2.00	4.00	3.6695	.52388
The school leadership shapes institutional strategies that appear at any level of an institution for the students' performance	118	1.00	4.00	3.3220	.65217
The school leadership provides the direction and expertise advices to motivate teachers and students for high performance	118	1.00	4.00	3.3644	.56486
The school leadership influences the teachers' commitment aiming at improving students' academic competence	118	1.00	4.00	3.2797	.66520
The school leadership works lead enough to students' academic competence	118	2.00	4.00	3.4492	.63512
The school leadership often improves teachers' supervision aiming at learners' competences.	118	2.00	22.00	3.4068	1.83152
Do the school leadership practices place the teacher training at the heart of learning for improving their students' academic competence	118	2.00	4.00	3.3390	.63002
The school leadership provides teachers' salary, bonus and other incentives that facilitate students better competences	118	1.00	4.00	3.2203	.64232
Valid N (listwise)	118				

Table 1 reveals that school leadership practices aimed at improving teachers' working conditions to boost student competencies only marginally impact student learning, with a mean (M) of 3.4068 and standard deviation (SD) of 1.83152, suggesting no significant positive relationship. Similarly, the involvement of school leadership in implementing the curriculum through teaching and learning activities is represented by a mean of 3.4153 and SD of .77709, indicating no substantial positive correlation. The table also shows that another vital aspect of school leadership practices

is their direct influence on students' performance (M = 3.2203, SD = .68107). Other factors, such as shaping institutional strategies, providing direction and expert advice, implementing student discipline, and motivating and training teachers, were associated with high satisfaction levels among the respondents. The least impactful indicator of school leadership practice satisfaction was pay, with secondary school teachers indicating dissatisfaction. These indicators of job satisfaction showed no significant relationship with test scores.

In conclusion, this study corroborates previous research findings suggesting that school leadership practices are not the sole influencers of students' academic competence. Other factors, such as teacher motivation, student discipline, and teacher supervision, also contribute to students' performance and achievements (Bobbitt et al., 1994). School leadership has been found to boost teacher productivity, reduce absenteeism, and lower turnover rates (Khanka, 2007). However, this study found only a weak, non-significant relationship between the average means of school leadership practices and students' academic competence in TVET secondary schools. This relationship suggests that students' academic competence can benefit from school leadership practices through teacher motivation, supervision, training, and student discipline. However, these relationships are not strong enough to be statistically significant.

4.2 Examining students' academic competence in TVET secondary schools

School leadership practices is a demanding job that requires leaders to make decisions that can result in significant changes in schools, especially enhancing students' academic competence. By explaining and analysing the role of school leadership in the context of school leaders, followers, and situations, Spillane's (2005) framework provided the groundwork for the examination of leadership, with a particular focus on the most effective type of leadership in schools that promotes students' performance. The present work examined different aspects among many others that can satisfactorily characterise students' academic competence as illustrated in the Table 2.

Table 2: Students' academic competence

Statements	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The students' academic competence is marked as the results from school leadership practices that often fosters continued training targeting professional growth	118	2.00	4.00	3.2542	.62956
A good number of learners in TVET secondary schools failed over the last four years	118	1.00	4.00	3.1610	.72760
The number of learners in TVET secondary schools who failed increased over the last four years	118	2.00	4.00	3.1356	.71510

The number of learners in TVET secondary schools who failed decreased over the last four years	118	1.00	4.00	3.4661	.68790
Many students got the pass mark in integrated assessment together with other during the last four years	118	2.00	4.00	3.2966	.60354
During the last four years, the sum of students who got the pass mark in integrated assessment together with other integrated assessment decreased	118	1.00	4.00	3.3220	.59745
The number of students who got the pass mark in integrated assessment together with other integrated assessment increased during the last four years	118	1.00	4.00	3.3390	.58792
The number of students who failed in integrated assessment together with other integrated assessment increased in the last four years	118	2.00	4.00	3.2712	.62239
A big number of students failed in integrated assessment together with other integrated assessment decreased in the last four years	118	1.00	22.00	3.4237	1.85549
More than a half of TVET students got scholarships for their further studies in the last four years	118	1.00	4.00	3.1271	.73434
Valid N (listwise)	118				

The historical perspective of school leadership indicates that leadership undergoes various phases of development. The theoretical framework of the current table focused on the influences of school leadership practices to enhance effectiveness in students' academic competence where student performance nationally shows the average performance of M=3.4237, SD=1.85549 that signifies the gradual increase in performance and mastery at the public and national levels. Reflecting on the opinions of respondents on students' academic competence from the selected schools in this study, there were some of the indicators for students' academic competence which were positively appreciated by respondents in this study. Those are the decrease of failed students on the mean of 3.4661 which is interpreted as high mean since it falls in the interval of 3.26-4.20 and this is resulting from the respondents. Besides, the respondents reported that the students' academic competence appears to the results of school leadership practices on the mean of 3.2542 with standard deviation of .62956 and the sum of students who got the pass mark in integrated assessment together with other integrated assessment decreased on the mean of 3.3220 which are

interpreted as high mean. The other remaining variables were rated moderately because their means fallen in the interval of 2.61-3.25 which is interpreted as moderate mean; those are a big number of students' percentage getting scholarships that are stretching but achievable and encouraging others to rethink on their performance and decreasing the number of failed students in their academic learning.

In fact, as it mentioned in the table above that showed how the students' academic competence results from the school leadership practices provide a good outcome, improve good results (outcomes), provides creativity and innovation for effective participation, increases learners' capability in case of confidence, to be main motivator especial in school retention, improved their knowledge, made them to make own decision, handle to solve their problems, helps to be reliable among others, to be exemplarily at their school, improved their participation in learning computer. In this regard, the research depicted that there were very high achievements for students' academic competence when school leaderships tirelessly participate in the learning of their learners by enforcing students' discipline, motivating teachers and making follow-up of the school activities as much as they complement one another.

The opinions of respondents on indicators which were taken as school leadership practices and students' academic competence. The respondents perceived positively the following: they revealed that the school leadership practices play a vital role in influencing the students' academic competence since the mean is 3.6695 and the standard deviation is .52388. Secondly respondents reported that school leadership involves itself in the implementation of the curriculum through teaching and learning activities on the mean of 3.4153, SD of .77709. In addition, school leadership works lead enough to students' academic competence 3.4492 and standard deviation of .63512. Furthermore, the respondents asserted that the school leadership often improves teachers' working conditions aiming at learners' competences on the mean of 3.4068 and the standard deviation of 1.83152 which fall in the interval of 3.26-4.00 which is interpreted as high mean. Contrary, the respondents reported that The TVET students who got scholarships for their further studies decreased in the last four years at the mean of 3.2288 and the standard deviation of.64597. Moreover, the report proves valuable that the school leadership has a direct influence upon the students' better performance with the mean of 3.2203 and the standard deviation of .68107. They lastly confirmed that the school leadership practices place the students at the heart of learning for their competences with the mean of 3.2203 and the standard deviation of .64232 which are enlightened as high indicators as much as they are in 2.51-3.25 of the mean range.

Finally, it was noted that school leadership practices showcased effectively as they can inform implanted fostering both teachers and students' motivation, intellectual simulation, and dissemination of teacher training, reflect on students' attitudes for future improvement and prospective citizens instead of reporting and most importantly reshape students' discipline in specifically private schools by providing individual consideration. The findings also revealed that in Musanze district students in selected schools perform moderately and to this the leadership practices to be recommended has to strengthen the identification of other challenges of efficient performance of students and seek effective solutions to them.

4.3 Correlation between school leadership practices and students' academic competence

Both of the average mean confirmed that active school leadership practices in education process of the children contributed to the students' academic competence.

It was found that, pivoting on correlational method, there is positive significant relationship between school leadership practices and performance of students since the latter takes place from many perspective dimensions. It means that as the school leadership practice is highly used as the students perform better. A positive relationship also was found between democratic style and performance of students statistically significant based results as well.

Table 3: Correlational coefficient of the two variables

		F1	F2
F1	Pearson Correlation	1.000	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	10	
F2	Pearson Correlation	.094	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.797	
	N	10	10

As can be observed in table 3 the calculated r-value is .797 indicating that there exists high and positive correlation between the average means of school leadership practices and students' academic competence in TVET secondary schools. This relationship implies that students' academic competence increases from the school leadership practices. Therefore, there is a positive correlation between school leadership practices and students' academic competence since the significant level for the calculated r-value is .797 which is less or equal to Pearson correlation which is 0.9 of significance level. This is meant that the observed positive relationship is significant. Therefore, there is a high significant correlation between the two variables under discussion. School leadership had positive and moderate correlation with students' discipline, teachers' training, teachers' motivation, and supervision with which influence students' academic competence in TVET secondary schools.

Students' academic competence in TVET secondary schools are multifaceted features that depend on many aspects, including work values and organizational commitment (Gutierrez, Candela, & Carver, 2012). As an indicator of productivity, performance has been highly demanded throughout the history of education, either from school leader, teachers or from students. Since the job satisfaction of teachers and their achievement scores are interlinked, they represent a vital potential source for improving the educational process. However, the goal of achieving academic goals remains unfulfilled if teachers cannot demonstrate quality performance in the form of students' achievement score. Above all, the most important indicator is academic achievement in the teacher learning process. That aspect is also the most important area of research and at the heart of educational psychology in academic assessment (Rahmani, 2011).

All indicators demonstrated a positive, significant correlation with each other except for teachers' training, perhaps the government, not supervisors, are responsible for teachers' training. Colleagues and conditions support each other because they are primary factors of work, while the relationship between supervision and students' performance is inconsistent, namely because institutional heads do not have the authority to increase or decrease refresher courses on the basis of the better or poor performance of teachers in TVET secondary schools. Refresher courses might be offered to train teachers in ways to improve teacher–student relationships, which will in turn improve the students' academic competence. Dinham (1994) revealed that teachers' greatest indicator of fulfilment was students' achievement, and there is a modest relationship between school leadership practices including teacher training and academic competences.

Using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, and Regression analysis, data were analysed, the results of the study revealed that there were positive significant relationships between school leadership practices and students' academic competences. The findings also revealed coherent significant relationships between teacher supervision and students' academic competence. However, the findings further revealed that there is positive significant relationships between students' discipline and student competences in secondary schools. Based on these findings, it was recommended among others that school leadership explore ways and means of using varying administrative practices that could yields much-needed results of enhancing students' academic competence in secondary schools together with the fore mentioned dimensions.

4.4 Summary of findings

The objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between school leadership practices and students' academic competence in TVET secondary schools in Musanze District. The study revealed that there is a positive correlation between school leadership practices and students' academic competence since the significant level for the calculated r-value is .797 which is greater than .05 significance level. This was meant that the observed positive relationship is highly significant. Therefore, there is a strong positive significant correlation that exists between the two variables under discussion.

5.0 Conclusion

This study concludes that a positive correlation exists between school leadership practices and students' academic competence. The significant level for the calculated r-value stands at .797, which is above the .05 significance level. This indicates that the observed positive relationship between these variables is highly significant. The implications of these findings are important for educational practice. They suggest that effective school leadership practices have the potential to enhance the level of students' competence, particularly in academic activities. When school leaders employ effective strategies, they create an environment that fosters academic growth and achievement. This correlation highlights the key role that school leaders play in promoting academic success among students. Consequently, it is essential to ensure that school leaders are well-equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to foster an effective learning environment. This could involve professional development programs for school leaders that focus on implementing effective teaching strategies, promoting a positive school culture, and supporting

student achievement. By doing so, schools can better prepare students for success in their academic pursuits

6.0 Recommendations

The first recommendation is directed at school head teachers, emphasizing the significance of their role in promoting effective school leadership practices. These practices should align with the overall vision of the school, primarily focusing on students' academic competence. It's important to understand that school leadership extends beyond administrative duties and should encompass a strategic plan to improve academic performance. A successful head teacher encourages a positive, inclusive school culture where every student feels valued and supported. This could be achieved through various strategies like implementing evidence-based teaching methods that have been proven to be effective in enhancing students' learning experience. A head teacher's role should also include the promotion of student-centered learning approaches that cater to the diverse needs of every student. Through these practices, schools can create a conducive environment that nurtures academic excellence. The second recommendation is intended for the Ministry of Education. The Ministry has the power to shape educational policies and guidelines that directly impact schools. It is recommended that they organize motivational talks for students before they undertake integrated assessments. This can be a critical tool in boosting students' morale, reducing test-related anxiety, and providing students with necessary strategies to excel in their exams. Furthermore, it is important that the Ministry establish a comprehensive set of guidelines or a framework detailing effective school leadership practices. This would provide clear directives for schools, offering a robust roadmap on how to create an environment conducive to academic success. The Ministry has the overarching responsibility to ensure that every school is well-equipped to provide a quality education for every student. Hence, these directives can act as a beacon, guiding schools towards the desired academic outcomes.

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