INFLUENCE OF PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP STYLES ON STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT IN KENYA CERTIFICATE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION IN AWENDO DISTRICT, KENYA

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for award of a degree in any other university

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my husband Mr. Benard O. Owiro, my chidlren Dorcus Atieno, Olivia Achieng, Oscar Ishmael, Eucabeth Awuor. It is also dedicated to my mother Mrs Yucabeth A. Okode.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DEO   District Education Officer

EFA   Education for All

GoK   Government of Kenya

KCSE   Kenya Certificate for Secondary Education

KEMI   Kenya Education Management Institute

L.B.D.Q   Leadership Behaviour Descriptive Questionnaire

MoE   Ministry of Education

MoEST   Ministry of Education Science and Technology

UNESCO   United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural

          Organization

ABSTRACT

In this era of accountability, principals are being called upon to exercise strong instructional leadership in their schools. They are faced with the task of increasing student achievement while maintaining order through acceptable student behaviour which may require changing school performance. The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of principals' leadership styles on students' academic achievement in K.C.S.E in Awendo district. Specifically, the study sought to determine the influence of principals' autocratic, democratic and laissez faire leadership styles influence students' achievement in KCSE. It also to establish the influence of principals' transformational leadership style on students' performance in KCSE in Awendo district. This study was anchored on the contingency theory of leadership suitable for assessing the leader according to underlying traits; situations faced by the leader and construct a proper match between the two. This model was used to determine principals' styles effectiveness in schools.

The study was conducted using the ex-post facto design where the principals' leadership styles and students' performance were assumed to have occurred and could not therefore be manipulated by the researcher. The target population consisted of the 18 public day secondary schools in Awendo district which consisted Form one to Form four classes. This study targeted 18 schools that had done KCSE for at least two years. Teachers (180) and head teachers (18) were the target respondents for this study. Simple Random sampling was used to select 114 teachers from schools and then purposive sampling techniques to select the 15 principals from 18 of the selected schools after the random sampling. This sampling gave a total of 129 respondents consisting of 15 principals' and 114 teachers. Questionnaires were used as the tools for collecting the data from both the teachers and principals. These questionnaires were designed based on the objectives of the study and on the literature review. The researcher used the test retest method to enhance instrument reliability. The study yielded data that required both qualitative and quantitative analysis. Quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS while qualitative data was organized into themes and patterns based on analysis of meanings and implications emanating from respondents information and documented data on academic performance. Quantitative results of data analysis were presented in mainly tables, and pie-charts.

Contingency theory explores leader effectiveness on the basis of prevailing situations. Linking the results of this study to the school leadership, it is expected that, principals exercise good leadership skills and experience for quality results to be realized. The study was to establish leadership styles that are largely used by principals influencing academic achievement of the students. The study also was

to establish if the lowest academic achievement consistently experienced in the schools was as a result of principals exercising autocratic leadership style without blending it with participatory leadership. As part of recommendations, principals should use democratic form of leadership as this type of leadership style involves all the other parties in the school and thus creates a better environment for teachers to work well, and enhance higher academic performance in K.C.S.E. Principals who use autocratic leadership enacts dictatorship and free reign where teachers are not self-driven and others use laissez-faire where teachers are self-driven. Given the scope and limitations of this study, the researcher recommends a replica of the study to be performed in upper primary schools to determine whether the same variables derived from this study would be the same as those at primary level. The study should also cover other districts apart from Awendo district to provide comparison in findings.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Educational leadership in the 21st Century is expected to be focused for purpose of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and vision 2030 especially in Kenya. This requirement necessitates a leadership that is clearly defined for all involved. Leadership involves authority and responsibility in terms of deciding the way ahead and being held responsible for the success or failure of achieving the agreed objectives (Okumbe, 1998). The success or failure of managers can be judged on their leadership qualities. In a constantly changing social, economic, and technological environment, leadership is a more important attribute of management today than before. Whereas managers are concerned with bringing resources together, developing strategies, organizing and controlling activities to achieve agreed objectives, leadership performs the influencing function of management. Leadership increases the effectiveness and proficiency of management and sustainable performance (Reed, 2005) and effective management of resources. Organizations and environment have changed rapidly over the past years and as a result a new type of leadership that is less and more democratic is needed in order to ensure survival of the organization (Johnson, 1995). Maicibi (2005) observes that proper leadership style leads to effective

performance in learning institutions. Leadership effectiveness is most conveniently quantified by organizational outcomes (Johnson, 1995).

Gamage (2009b) also note that school systems around the globe are focusing on student achievements empowering school leaders along with curriculum and accountability frameworks. Improvements in student achievements are recognized as the foremost objective of school leadership. The legislation on *No Child is Left Behind by 2020* signed into law in January 2002 in the United States of America (USA) is one of the most prominent and visible action taken by any government towards achieving this goal. Many scholars have acknowledged that the role of school leadership is the most significant in enhancing school performance and student achievements (Kelly & Williamson, 2006; Janerrette & Sherretz 2007; Gamage, 2009b).

Globally, it has been found that effective leaders develop school climates and cultures that help motivate both the students and teachers leading to the creation of better teaching and learning environments which are more conducive to higher levels of student achievements. Besides, in most school systems, school principal is required by the systemic authorities to improve student learning and is held accountable for it by building commitments in developing a shared vision for motivating and energizing the teachers and students (Ross & Gray, 2006; Mulford, 2003).

According to Cotton (2003), Governments of the world have found that the following types of behaviours by a principal have a significant impact on student's achievements: the establishment of a clear focus on student learning by having a vision, clear learning goals, and high expectations for learning for all students; interactions and cordial relationships with relevant stakeholders with communication and interaction, emotional and interpersonal support, visibility and accessibility, and parent/community participation; developing a school culture conducive to teaching and learning through shared leadership and decision-making, collaboration, risk taking leading to continuous improvements; providing instructional leadership through discussions of instructional issues, observing classroom teaching and giving feedback, supporting teacher autonomy and protecting instructional time; and being accountable for affecting and supporting continuous improvements through monitoring progress and using student progress data for program improvements (Cotton, 2003).

Moreover, extensive studies in the developing countries, Kenya included, demonstrate that particular leadership styles of school leaders could have positive impacts on teaching and learning environments and processes leading to improvements in student performance and academic achievements (Harris, 2004; Hale & Rollins, 2006; Guskey, 2007). Thus, it is clear that the school leadership provided or shared by a school administrator is one of the key factors in enhancing school performances and student achievements.

The quality of the school in any given nation is affected by how the internal processes work to constantly improve its performance. One of the processes involves leadership. As its basic purpose, leadership designates the school principal as the central school figure to continuously articulate the school's mission and vision to the school's staff and community. The school principal oversees curriculum and instruction management and facilitates teachers' professional development that is supportive of best practice. The school principal monitors student progress to provide individual attention for specific students and to identify areas of curriculum and instruction in need of change or improvement in the school (Hale & Rollins, 2006).

The school principal is also tasked with promoting a positive learning environment. However, there is question regarding the leadership and school administration in general. According to Murphy (2002), for some time and again, the education profession has been marked by considerable ferment as it has struggled to locate itself in a post behavioural science era. During this time of professionalism and aiming to attain the goals of vision 2030 and education for all, secondary school administration and management by principals has been thrown into question, especially the legitimacy of the knowledge base supporting school administration and the appropriateness of programmes for preparing students for good results in national examinations.   Leadership, in education, is an evolving discipline. School principals and aspiring administrators need to become familiar with leadership as a discipline to practice, learn their strengths

and weaknesses infuse themselves with best practice so they can provide leadership that best fits their circumstances, and work diligently to perfect and implement the behaviours that will enable deep sustained improvement in schools.

According to Zame, Hope and Respress (2008) in their study about education reform in Ghana, they reveal that leadership is key and the head teacher has a vital role in an effective school and student achievement. They further suggest that attention be paid on the head teachers' leadership styles in the school. In addition, Luthans (2002) supports this fact by arguing that the success or failure of any school is highly attributed to the principal's leadership. Leadership is crucial because principals are key in influencing school's activities to attain set goals and objectives. Luthans (2002) further notes that to realize success, principals use a range of leadership styles towards teachers and students in an attempt for exemplary performance in examinations. Some of these leadership styles are: autocratic, laissez-faire and transformational.

Kenya is not left behind in the journey of attaining the goals and objectives of vision 2030 and education for all (EFA). Kenya is ranked 17th out of 54 countries in terms of efficiency in education sector based on students' performance, staff turnover, motivation and managerial competence (World's Competitiveness Report, 2009). Performance of the academic institutions in meeting the goals and objectives of education in Kenya relies heavily on the type of leadership that

prevails in the institutions. In Kenya, secondary school principals are appointed by the Ministry of Education (MoE) through the Teachers Service Commission (TSC). The principals are accounting officers at the school level and are directly accountable to a District Education Officer (DEO), the school's Board of Governors (BoG) and the school's Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) on the management of secondary school resources (World Bank, 2008). Malusu (2007) observes that the increase in secondary education necessitates instituting responsible leadership in secondary education institutions. It has been observed that many schools still perform poorly due to poor leadership besides inadequate funds and poor facilities (Mulusa, 1988)

Many a times, when the KCSE results are released during the months of February or March, several reports come up trying to appraise principals that their schools did well and on the other hand trying to criticize those that performed poorly anchoring on the factor of leadership styles used. In this regard, the study aims to look at the influence of principals' leadership styles on students' Kenya certificate of secondary education achievements in Awendo district, Kenya. According to the District Education Officer's (DEO's) office Awendo district (2009-2012) report, the district has a total of 18 public secondary schools but a keen look at the results indicate that there has been a dismal positive index. This study therefore aims at finding out whether the principals' leadership styles influence students' performance in KCSE examinations in Awendo district as compared to the neighbouring Rongo district, Migori county.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Secondary schools in Kenya continue to face pressure to attain set international and national goals, among them the educational MDGs and Kenya's Vision 2030 (World Bank, 2008). Worldwide there is increasing efforts to improve student-learning outcomes at all levels in the education sector. This is greatly changing the way secondary schools are now being managed.

Secondary schools in Kenya, however, continue to face a myriad of management problems. Various stake holders have continued to raise accusing fingers on the management styles used by secondary school principals. There is continued disharmony precipitated by the way school principals manage their respective schools. The problem to be addressed therefore is what leadership styles do the principals adopt in their day today management of schools?

The government of Kenya (GoK), however, has set up goals and objectives in line to Education for All (EFA) and Kenya vision 2030 to equip principals with education policies through Kenya Education Management Institute (KEMI) that is endorsed with responsibilities to empower principals with prerequisite leadership skills for administration and management of secondary schools to realize quality results in KCSE examinations (MoE, 2007). The government also aims at achieving the goal of education which is to equip the youth with relevant knowledge, skills attitude and expertise to enable them play an effective role in the society (GoK, 2005). Several reports from the Ministry of Education Science

and technology (MoEST) have indicated that principals' leadership styles have direct bearing on the overall effectiveness of school because both the teacher and student perform under the leadership of school principal (UNESCO,2012). However, for the past four years there has been slight positive trend in KCSE results in Awendo district as shown in Table 1. This means there is a room for improvement, and still full potential for better mean score as compared to the neighbouring Rongo district where the mean score has been deteriorating for the past five years as indicated in table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Awendo and Rongo Districts KCSE mean score from 2009-2012

Year	Awendo district	Rongo district
2009	4.46	5.15
2010	4.88	5.08
2011	4.93	5.32
2012	5.77	4.83

The present trend made it imperative to find out whether the principals' leadership styles influence students' achievement in K.C.S.E performance. Awendo district which has 18 schools has at least recorded a positive index in the mean score as

compared to Rongo district which has 22 schools but has continued to record a negative index for the past five years.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of principals' leadership style on students' academic achievement in Kenya certificate of Secondary education in Awendo District.

1.4 Research objectives

To realize the purpose of the study, the following objectives were explored:

i. To determine the influence of principals' autocratic leadership style on students' achievement in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examinations in Awendo District.

ii. To establish how principals' democratic leadership style influences the performance of students in Kenya Certificate Secondary Education in Awendo District.

iii. To determine how principals' laissez-faire leadership style influences students' performance in Kenya Certificate Secondary Education in Awendo district.

iv. To establish the influence of principals' transformational leadership style on students' performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education in Awendo district.

1.5 Research questions

The following were the research questions formulated from the objectives of the study:

i. How do the principals' autocratic leadership styles influence students' achievement in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examinations in Awendo district?

ii. To what extent do principals' democratic leadership styles influence students' performance of in Kenya Certificate Secondary Education in Awendo district?

iii. How do principals' laissez-faire leadership styles influence students' performance in Kenya Certificate Secondary Education in Awendo district?

iv. What is the influence of principals' transformational leadership styles on students' performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education in Awendo district?

1.6. Significance of the study

Information from the findings of the study may enable education policy-makers, managers and administrators to identify leadership styles that are necessary when

planning for strategies that would help principals in public secondary schools to carry out administration and management that would assist them to attain quality results in KCSE examinations. The findings of the study may also give a vivid picture on the extent to which the principals influence teachers' and students' performance in the attempt to achieve quality results in KCSE examinations. The data gathered from the study may provide a useful reference point for further research to other and also generalizations to other areas.

Besides, this study is significant due to the demands set by No Child Left Behind for states and schools to improve student achievement and to close the achievement gaps between children. The results of this study may provide meaningful insight to principals and teachers as to how a principal's leadership style influences a school's performance. For those who aspire to become principals, they use the results from this study to assist them with the development of their leadership styles.

1.7 Limitation of the study

The limitations of study are hindrances to a given study area making the researcher not to carry out the study effectively as intended. In this study, the researcher may not have control on the respondents' unwillingness to respond to research questions. In addition, the researcher may encounter the problems of some of the principals in selected schools failing to allow access to KCSE results of the past years. These may be major limitations to the study.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

According to Mutai (2000), the term delimitation refers to the boundaries of the study. In this research, the study will be delimited to public secondary schools in Awendo district. The study will be restricted to 18 public secondary schools within the district having 18 principals, and 180 teachers (DEOs Office, Awendo district, 2013).

1.9 Basic assumptions of the study

The main assumptions of the study were that:

  i.   The respondents would be cooperative and willing to give honest information.

  ii. Also, the researcher would be allowed access to the past KCSE results in the schools.

1.10 Definition of significant terms

Autocratic leadership style refers to a leadership where the principal makes most of decision for the staff without consultation.

Democratic leadership style refers to a leadership where a principal encourages members to express their opinions then makes decision

Laissez-faire leadership style refers to leadership where the principal as a leader offers a lot of freedom to the subordinates to make decision either in a participatory manner or being single

Leadership refers to the way the principal plans, organizes and controls a secondary school either in a participatory manner or being single handled

Leadership style refers to actions or manner in which the principal engages in the process of influencing his/her followers to achieve the school objectives

Principal refers to a trained teacher who has been appointed by Teachers Service Commission (TSC) or the Ministry of Education (MoE) to manage a public school in Kenya.

Public secondary schools –schools for the communities which get policies from Ministry of Education (MoE) as well as financial support

Students' performance refers to the student academic level in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) graded from the lowest E grade to highest A grade

Transformational leadership refers to leadership where people are committed to decisions which they participate in the will to exercise self control, self direction and be motivated

1.11 Organization of the study

Chapter one of this study focuses on the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objective, research questions, significance of the study, limitation of the study, delimitation of the study assumption of the study, definition of significant terms. Chapter two on literature review focuses on concept of leadership, leadership styles, influence of leadership style on academic performance, teacher involvement in decision making, theoretical framework, conceptual framework, summary of literature review. Chapter three explored the research design, target population sample size and sampling procedure, researcher instruments, instrument validity, instrument reliability, data collection procedure and data analysis techniques. Chapter four presents data analysis while five presents summary, conclusion and recommendation of the study

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, related literature on leadership styles and performance consists of: the concept of leadership styles, influence of principals' autocratic leadership on students' achievement, how democratic leadership style influences students' achievement, how laissez-faire leadership influence students' performance, influence of transformational leadership on students' performance, theoretical framework and conceptual framework of the study.

2.2 Concept of leadership

In this era of accountability, principals are being called upon to exercise strong instructional leadership in their schools. They are faced with the task of increasing student achievement while maintaining order through acceptable student behaviour which may require changing school performance (Tableman, 2004). This new accountability is measured by adequate yearly progress (AYP) like KCSE examinations requirements, coupled with increasingly stiff sanctions if all student subgroups do not meet established goals (NCLB, 2001).While teachers are ultimately responsible for improving student learning in schools, changing the organizational conditions for improvement across schools is the central task of school leaders (Halverson, Grigg, Pritchett and Thomas, 2005). In Tableman's

best practice brief (2004), principal accountability to instructional leadership is related to school climate. She states that school climate is a significant element in discussions about improving student achievement. Therefore, school climate accountability is also a critical component of the principalship.

Effective leadership and a climate conducive to student's achievement are important to all schools. Effective leadership increases an organization's ability to meet all challenges, including the need to obtain a competitive advantage, the need to foster ethical behaviour, and the need to manage a diverse workforce fairly and equitably (Moorhead & Griffin, 2004). Bennis (2003) identifies four characteristics of effective leadership. First, leaders must have the ability to engage others in the formulation of a shared vision. Second, leaders must possess a distinct voice to his followers. Third, a leader must have strong moral codes. Finally, leaders must have the ability to adapt to pressure to change.

According to Bennis, these behaviours are critical for leadership in the 21st century. An important study of the relationships between school climate and student achievement was reported by Brookover (1979). Looking at school climate and its performance as a shared social system of both norms and expectations, the viewpoints of students, teachers and administrators were all considered. These researchers found that school climate was good or better at predicting student achievement than were socioeconomic status and ethnicity.

Therefore, it can be implied that effective leadership, student achievement and school climate are related.

This study will investigate how principals' leadership styles impact school performance, from the perception of teachers also. Teachers are critical components to the establishment of school performance because their duties are very similar to those of the principal. Additionally, teachers have similar administrative training and skills that will enable them to give detailed opinions or perceptions of how they believe principal leadership styles impact on students' performance.

It has been reported that the leadership behaviour of a principal and his/her role as a leader has a significant impact on creating more effective schools leading to higher levels of student achievements (Gamage, 2006b; Gentilucci & Muto, 2007). Educational leaders play important role with the intension to make teaching and learning more effective and to give quality education to students. Most educational experts consider administrators as the driving force and main source of the organizational development and academic growth of students (Gamage, 2006b; Gentilucci & Muto, 2007). The successes of an administrator have been taught to be, due to the various methods that are used in their administration process. Different experts have identified different leadership styles have distinctive characteristics. For example (Bass & Avolio,1994) presented full range leadership theory according to which three leadership styles

known as transactional, transformational, laissez-fair were identified. Okumbe (1998); Kemp and Nathan (1989) argued that it is necessary for principals to be aware of their management styles. They identified three styles of leadership to be key ones. These were autocratic, transformational and laissez-faire leadership styles.

Leadership style refers to the pattern of behaviour a leader adapts to plan, organize, motivate and control. It is the extent he/she listens, sets goals and standards, develops action plans, directs others and gives feedback (Okumbe, 1998). The extent by which a principal succeeds in achieving the school objective by incorporating both human and physical aspects depends on his administrative behaviour (Okumbe, 1998). Hersey, Blanchard & Johnson (2008) further argues that it is necessary for principals to be aware of their leadership styles. Several empirical evidences from scholars suggest that leadership styles can be interwoven and if applied effectively they can breed better results. They continue to state that not only one leadership style is appropriate in all situations. They identified three styles of leadership to be key ones. These are autocratic, transformational and laissez-faire; whichever angle the scholars may view the styles, the best is that which helps to achieve the objectives by using both human and material resources by being effective in managing people and task.

Examination performance has aroused great interest among researchers who have tried to look at the factors that influence performance of students. The parents

have also blamed poor performance in KCSE on headteacher and principals in their management leadership styles (Eshiwani, 1983). The leadership style issued by principals in their management determines how well administrative factors influencing performance in examination are. Most of the studies done on leadership styles on KCSE performance have different opinions either in agreement or disagreement on the various leadership styles employed by various managers. The study therefore will seek to find out the influence of the identified leadership styles on students' achievement in KCSE examinations in public secondary schools in Awendo district, Kenya.

2.3 Autocratic leadership style and students' achievement

Basing on a global perspective, autocratic leadership style also referred to as authoritative leadership is the leadership style where by the leader either gives no explanation when giving an order. Okumbe (1998) says that a principal using this kind of leadership allows for no participation at all in decision making. In this leadership style the leader unilaterally makes decision and is task oriented, hard on workers, is keen on schedules and expects people to do what they are told without much questioning or debate. The principals who subscribe to this style are influenced by the scientific management approach and succumb to McGregor's theory x which presume people are naturally lazy and need close supervision. In schools where this style is used, the staff, students or subordinate lack motivation and they show less involvement in their work.

Okumbe (1998) notes that, one merit of autocratic leadership was that the workers are compelled to work quickly for high production. Okumbe also states a demerit of this leadership style which was the work being strictly structured and was always done following certain set of procedures. Hence it may be assumed that head teachers who employ autocratic leadership style get high performance in their schools since there was close supervision of teachers and students. Deadlines may also be met at appropriate time. The schools headed by autocratic principals, teachers may have no time for decision making. Thus, it was considered suitable to have an insight into the leadership styles exhibited by school principals in secondary schools and how they influence students' performance in KCSE examinations in Awendo District.

2.4 Democratic leadership style and students' achievement

Democratic leadership style also referred to as interactive or participatory leadership is characterized by cooperation and collaboration (Okumbe, 1998). It can also be consultative and participative Hersey and Blanchard (1984). In this leadership style the leader seeks opinion of the subordinates on a tentative plan of action and then makes decisions or the leader may ask for group input in formulating plans before making a decision. The style decentralizes power and authority (Okumbe, 1998).

The principal who applies this style tend to use the behavioural science theory which advocates for both staff and task. These are what Neil Miller as cited in

Kemp and Nathan (1989) called "Omega Manager". These are managers who are strong on both the management of people and task. There is sense of ownership by the subordinate in institutions where this leadership style is practiced as well as a sense of accountability and responsibility at each stage.

According to Lippit and White (1938) as quoted by Cole (2002), this style is based on the belief that where people are committed to decision making which they participated in they will exercise self direction and are motivated. Mostly the institutional climate and internal environment allow for interactions which breed high team spirits, cohesion and adherence to the institutional ethos (Mutuku, 2005). It is common in such schools to find suggestion box, notice board magazines and councils (Kibunja, 2004). Other activities that may involve teachers concerning the welfare of the school may include setting of internal examinations, academic day's co-curricular activities and dormitory inspections. These encourage students and teachers to work towards the attainment of the set goal as they freely express their feeling concerning the school. The staff becomes more collaborative and the social commitment to one another is great as they work towards common goals.

2.5 Laissez-faire leadership style and students achievement

This is another commonly used leadership style in schools. Nzuve (1999) describes laissez-faire leadership style as one where the leader waives responsibility and allows subordinate to work as they choose with minimum

interference. This leader lets the subordinate decide on what will be done with or without their influence.

Generally either the group may make decisions on what to do with the group or the leader presents the problem to the group and then leaves it to them to decide on what to do (Hersey & Blanchard, 1984). Laissez-fair managers succumb to the sociological theory of management and McGregor's theory Y which argues that people are innately motivated, naturally like work and are interested in doing their work (Nathan & Kemp, 1989). The leaders who use this style of leadership believe that there should be no rules and regulations since everybody has inborn sense of responsibility. Here communication flows horizontally among group members.

Okumbe (1998) describes this leadership style as a kind of leadership which encourages no rule or code of regulation in an organization. The leader is merely a symbol since there is no hierarchy of authority and his/her primary role is to only supply materials needed by the group. Okumbe (1998) also points out the merit of Laissez-faire leadership as those decisions that are easily accepted and subordinate provide their own motivation. On demerits he states that there is no control and chaos and conflicts arise due to unguided freedom and unhealthy competition among the members are high.

An institution where laissez-faire leadership style is practiced students performance has some implications that may be negative as it affects the school

working environment. For example in a situation where teachers have to set examinations during a given period there may be dalliance in evaluation and feedback and no action taken. For such students may also relax due to the prevailing situations since they do what they want. This can have adverse influence on the performance of students in KCSE examinations. The study seeks to find out if this is one of the leadership style applied by principals in public secondary schools in Awendo district, Kenya.

2.6 Transformational leadership style and students' achievement

Transformational leadership is based on the belief that where people are committed to decisions which they participate in, they will exercise self control, self direction and be motivated (Cole, 2002). Such leaders most probably can enhance the motivation, morale and performance of staff through a variety of mechanism. Transformational Theory is one of the most current leadership theories. It involves leaders adapting to the needs of those in their sphere of influence. Transformational leaders are considered agents of change who have a clear vision and lead from the knowledge of those in the organization. Most importantly, transformational leadership depends on one's ability to motivate in order to inspire others.

Mumbe (1995) conducted a study to investigate principal leadership styles and influence on academic achievement in secondary schools. In the study, he concluded that transformational leadership style affected students and the general

school performance positively and motivated teachers to work with principals towards the achievement of school objectives. The schools headed by transformational principals, both the head and teachers use the term "our school" in reference to the school ensuring that there is sense of ownership, responsibility and accountability at every stage of decision making (Odewunmi, 2008). Thus, it was considered suitable to have an insight into the leadership styles exhibited by school principals in secondary schools and how they influence students' performance in KCSE examinations in Awendo District.

2.7 Studies on influence of leadership styles on student academic achievement

Kamunge (1987) noted that heads of institutions were central to successful management of educational institutions and the implementation of the curriculum in totality. Examination performance has aroused great interest among researchers who have tried to look at the factors that influence performance of students. Eshiwani (1983) on policy study on factors enhancing poor performance among Primary and Secondary Schools found out that lack of competence, dedication and commitment of heads of institutions contributed to poor performance of students in National Examination. The leadership style issued by principals in their management determines how well administrative factors influencing performance in examination are. Most of the studies done on leadership styles on KCSE performance have different opinions either in agreement or disagreement on the various leadership styles employed by various managers. Huka, (2003)

noted that the autocratic leadership style had higher mean score than democratic leadership style while Okoth (2002) indicated that democratic leadership style had higher mean scores compared to autocratic leadership style on student KCSE performance. Manguu, (2010) noted that principals in Kitui District used both autocratic and democratic leadership styles and performance in KCSE indirectly depends on leadership styles of the principals.

Mohammed (2012) studied the impact of head teachers' leadership styles on KCSE performance in Mombasa District, Kenya. The results indicated the most used styles were democratic and autocratic or dictatorial. The results also indicated that the principal did not involve all stake holders in decision making and running of the schools and that no relationship existed between principal's leadership styles and the student's performance in KCSE; all stakeholders to be involved in decision making for better performance

Another study by Obama (2009) on how leadership styles affect performance in KCSE in public Secondary Schools in Homabay District, Kenya indicated that there was a significant relationship between leadership styles and performance at KCSE. The studies done by both Okoth, (2000) and Kimacia, (2007) indicated that principals' democratic leadership style had high means performance index than those who practiced autocratic leadership styles. Huka, (2003), Muli, (2005) and Wangui, (2007) on the other hand indicated that autocratic leadership styles

influenced students KCSE performance as there was higher mean score in KCSE compared to the democratic leadership style

2.8 Summary of literature review

Literature review, in this study, deals with principals' leadership styles on students' academic achievement. Literature review was based on the objectives of the study that yielded more information from the previous studies. The study was to: determine the influence of principals' autocratic leadership on students' achievement, establish how principals' democratic leadership style influences students' achievement, determine how principals' laissez-faire leadership styles influence students' performance, and establish the influence of principals' transformational leadership styles on students' performance.

Finally, the study is based on contingency theory of leadership (Cole, 2002) which is supported by Okumbe (1998) model that has been used to determine head teachers' leadership styles effectiveness in schools. It is therefore appropriate because it advocates for the teacher to use appropriate leadership styles depending on the situation. According to Hoy, (2006) the contingency theory states that leadership effectiveness is said to be dependent upon many variables. Hoy, (2006) asserts that leaders fall under two categories: task oriented leaders (homotheic) which emphasizes the job performance at the expense of human characteristics and human oriented leaders (idiographic) emphasizing on human elements of an organizations for example, welfare of individual

employees. The studies done by both Okoth (2000) and Kimacia (2007) also are based on contingency theory which advocates that principals' democratic leadership style had high means of performance index than those who practiced autocratic leadership styles. Huka (2003), Muli (2005), and Wangui (2007) on the other hand indicated that autocratic leadership styles influence students' KCSE performance as there was higher mean score in KCSE compared to the democratic leadership style. This study was to establish whether principals who use a blend of these leadership styles improve the performance of students at school.

2.9 Theoretical framework

Leadership theories give possible critical explanations of how leadership behaviours and styles develop (Bass, 1990). Even though this study will focus on how principal leadership styles influence students' performance, it is critical to show if leadership styles are strictly based on theory. Additionally, theoretical perspectives may serve as a guideline for aspiring principals as they develop and seek the knowledge and skills to lead a school. In early studies of leadership theory (Stogdill 1948), researchers tended to focus on the traits and behaviours of leaders that were common to all. Leadership styles that might vary from school system to school system were infrequently mentioned. Additional investigations of leadership considered leaders as individuals endowed with certain personality traits which constituted their abilities to lead. These studies investigated individual traits such as intelligence, birth order, socioeconomic status, and child-

rearing practices (Bass, 1990). More recent authors realized that leadership styles vary from situation to situation (Hershey, Blanchard, and Johnson, 2008), and contingency theories (e.g., Fiedler, 1967) were developed, although these theories still paid little attention to cultural variables (Zepp, Eckstein, Khalid, and Li, 2009).

The study therefore is anchored on Contingency Theory of Leadership, developed by Fiedler (1964) cited in (Cole, 2002) which suggests that a leader's ability to lead is contingent upon various situational factors, including the leader's preferred style, the capabilities and behaviours of followers and also various other situational factors. According to Northouse (2007), Fiedler developed contingency theory by studying the styles of many different leaders who worked in different contexts, primarily military organizations. As a result, Fiedler was able to make empirically grounded generalizations about which style of leadership was best and which styles were worse for a given organizational context (Northouse, 2007). Fiedler categorized leadership as task motivated and relationship motivated. Task motivated leaders are concerned primarily with reaching a goal, whereas relationship motivated leaders are concerned with developing close interpersonal relationships. Fiedler's Contingency Model was used to help determine a leader's level of leader-member relations, task structure and position power (Northouse, 2007). According to Chance and Chance (2002), contingency theory produces practical application for school leaders. The Chances' believed that understanding contingency theory will help school leaders

in several ways. First, this theory helps to identify outside variables that impact a school. Secondly, contingency theory helps to appraise the impact of school's organization structure on responses to external pressures and demands. Most importantly, Contingency theory matches leadership styles with the needs of the school and consider relationships among teachers' personalities and attitudes (Chance & Chance, 2002).

Hanson (1979) applied the Contingency Theory to education by identifying five subsystems of overall school systems as leadership, students, teaching, guidance, and maintenance. Each of these subsystems involves interactions among task, structure, technology, and people. Technical, cultural, political, and economic forces were identified as impacting the total school system. Hanson (1979) indicated that educational institutions often place tight constraints on various subsystems by applying standard operation procedures that result in responses that ignore turbulent issues. This calls for a skilled principal to apply prerequisite leadership styles to realize quality results in the school.

This model had been used to determine head teachers leadership styles effectiveness in schools (Okumbe, 1998). It is therefore appropriate because it advocates for the teacher to use appropriate leadership styles depending on the situation. According to Hoy, (2006) the contingency theory states that leadership effectiveness is said to be dependent upon many variables. Therefore the theory argues that a specific trait under a particular situation makes a particular leader

effective. The same trait in another situation may make the leader ineffective. Contingency theories are a class of behavioral theory that claims that there is no one best way of leading and that a leadership style that is effective in some situation may not be successful in some situations. The contingency theory therefore conforms to the researchers target population in selecting principals who have been in a school for a minimum of two years as the entire teaching population will be able to make perception on the leadership style and its contribution to the performance towards KCSE.

2.10 Conceptual framework

Figure 2.1: Influence of principals' leadership styles on students' achievements

```
┌─────────────────┐
│ Autocratic      │
│ leadership style│
└─────────────────┘
┌─────────────────┐                ┌──────────────────────┐              ┌──────────────┐
│ Democratic      │                │                      │              │ Students'    │
│ leadership style│ ──────────────▶│ Teaching and learning│ ────────────▶│ performance  │
└─────────────────┘                │ process              │              │ in KCSE      │
┌─────────────────┐                │                      │              └──────────────┘
│ Laissez-faire   │                └──────────────────────┘
│ leadership style│
└─────────────────┘
┌─────────────────┐
│ Transformational│
│ leadership style│
└─────────────────┘
```
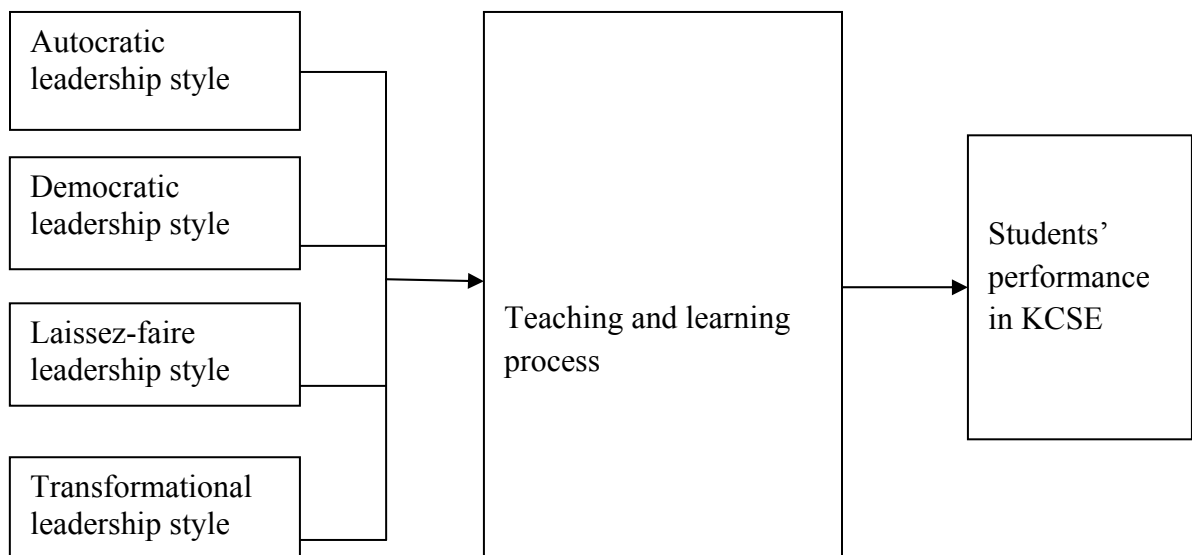
The principal has his own leadership styles. He interacts with the teachers and students in the school to produce the leadership style. The achievement of

students from school over a given period of time depends so much on the impact of various leadership styles, originating from principals. These leadership styles influence the achievement of students directly or indirectly. Principals at school play a vital role of making the student achieve quality results at school. They do this by using a blend of leadership styles which in turn influence students' achievement. This conceptualization highlights the complexity of leadership styles influencing achievement of students; most of these independent variables are interrelated and influence each other.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The research methodology used in this study focused on the following sub-sections: research design, target population, sample size and sampling procedure and research instruments, instruments validity, instruments reliability data procedures and data analysis techniques.

3.2 Research design

Research design is the process of creating an empirical test to support or refute knowledge claims (Borg & Gall, 1989).The study used ex-post facto research design. Best and Kahn (2002), defines ex-post facto design as a descriptive research where variables that exist have already occurred with non intervention of the researcher. The design was used in this study because leadership styles were already in the principals and had already been used. The performance of students in KCSE had already occurred.

3.3 Target population

According to the DEO's office Awendo (2012), the district had a population of 18 public secondary schools, out of which 16 had been presenting candidates from 2009 to 2012. The study targeted 18 principals and 180 teachers who had the

information on the influence of principals' leadership styles on students' Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education achievements in Awendo district.

3.4 Sample size and sampling procedures

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), sampling is carefully selecting a sub group from the accessible population so as to be a representative of the population with relevant characteristics. By selecting some of the elements in the population, about the entire population can be drawn. The researcher employed simple random sampling technique to select schools. There were 18 schools available for the main study. According to the table for determining sample size from a given population designed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970), it was recommended that from a population of 18 schools, 15 were to be used as study sample. The strata included 3 boys' schools, 3 girls' schools and 9 mixed schools. Six teachers were selected from each school in accordance with Krejcie and Morgan table giving a total of 114 teachers were used in the study. All the principals in the sampled schools were also used in the study.

3.5 Research instruments

The researcher used two sets of instruments: principals' questionnaire, and teachers' questionnaire. Mulusa (1988) defines a questionnaire as a written set of questions to which the subject responds to in writing. He further states that questionnaires are cheap to administer to respondents scattered over a large area

and convenient for collecting information from a large population within a short space of time. He adds that the interviewees are free to give frank answers to sensitive and embarrassing questions, especially if they require disclosing their identity.

The teachers' questionnaires had parts A and B. Part A gathered data on demographic variables. Part B had profile of leadership behaviour description questionnaire (LBDQ). Principal's questionnaire fully adopted a profile of leadership behaviour description questionnaire (LBDQ). It consists of statements each describing a particular form of leadership behaviour (Refer to appendix ii). The chapter attempted to have data on self perception of the principals' leadership styles namely autocratic, democratic, laissez-faire and transformational. Each item was followed by a five point Likert and Likert Scale (1967) modified by Asunda (1983), having adverbs indicating frequency with which the principal engaged in a particular form of leadership behaviour. The items also captured the teachers' rating on the leadership styles of the principals.

3.6 Instrument validity

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) states that, validity is the degree to which result obtained from the analysis of the data actually represents the phenomenon. This study based on content and construct validities as a measure to determine whether data obtained from the instruments correctly and accurately represents what they purport (Borg & Gall, 1996). The researcher used at least principals' and

teachers' questionnaires. Both content and construct validities will be obtained by a panel of specialists, most probably, the university lecturers and supervisors who will be consulted to give their judgement and advice. Besides, before distributing questionnaires to the participants, a pilot study was carried out to provide information for deficiencies and suggestions for improvement.

3.7 Instrument reliability

Kombo and Tromp (2006) define reliability as a measure of how consistent the results of the tests are. A pilot study was conducted amongst selected five (5) potential respondents to pretest the instruments in presence of research assistants. The researcher selected a group of the principals and teachers and then administered the questionnaires to them. The researcher adopted test-retest method that is, administering the same instrument to the same respondents twice and then correlating the scores from both the tests in order to acquire a reliability coefficient. Given that the positive co-efficient reliability ranges from 0 to 1, the reliability values of 0.91 and 0.92 for head teachers and teachers respectively, were significant and, therefore, the instruments were considered reliable.

3.8 Data collection procedure

The researcher obtained the research permit from the National Council for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). A courtesy call was also made to the District Education Officer before the research onset. The interviewees were

informed in advance before the data collection date. The researcher visited the schools selected and gave the questionnaires to them. Once filled in, the researcher collected them after a week.

3.9 Data analysis techniques

Polit & Hungler (1999) argue that qualitative data is very intensive activity that requires insight, ingenuity, creativity, conceptual sensitivity and sheer hard work. It is more demanding than quantitative analysis. Due to the demand of collecting qualitative data, data analysis and data collection occurred simultaneously throughout the study. Merriam and Associates (2002) state that simultaneous data collection and analysis is beneficial because it allows the researcher to make adjustments throughout the study and to test emerging concepts, themes, and categories against subsequent data.

Data analysis was anchored on the research questions adopted by the study. The filled in questionnaires were collected and edited by the researcher for completeness and consistency. Data were then summarized, coded, edited and then the information synthesized to reveal the essence of data. The issues requiring open-ended questions were analyzed qualitatively. Data was then analyzed both manually and by use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Once data was analyzed, interpretation was carried out by looking at relationships among categories and patterns that would

suggest generalizations and conclusions (Best & Kahn, 2006) as per the objectives

and research questions of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter gives a detailed analysis of the research findings on the influence of principals' leadership styles on students' achievement in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education in Awendo district, Kenya followed by interpretation of the same. In this study, two types of questionnaires were used to collect data, from the respondents. These are the principals' questionnaires and teachers' questionnaires. Presented are the findings on questionnaire return rate and principals' leadership styles in public secondary schools in Awendo district, other findings presented are influence of principals' autocratic leadership style on students' achievement in KCSE, influence of democratic leadership style students' performance in KCSE, influence laissez-faire leadership style students' performance in KCSE, and the influence of transformational leadership style on students' performance in KCSE in Awendo district. Data was analyzed both manually and by use of SPSS computer programme.

4.2 Questionnaire return rate

Two sets of questionnaires were used to collect data for this study; principals' and teachers' questionnaires. The table below shows the questionnaires received back dully completed.

Table 4.3: Questionnaire return rate

Respondents	Number expected	Number returned	Percent (%)
Principals	15	13	86.7
Teachers	114	100	87.7

Table 4.3 shows that 114 teachers' questionnaires and 15 principals' questionnaires were distributed. One hundred teachers' questionnaires (87.7%) and principals' questionnaires (86.7%) were returned dully completed. The return rate was considered reliable for the purpose of study because it was above 70%.

4.3 Demographic data analysis

It was necessary for the study to gather data on the respondents' background in terms of age, gender, academic and professional qualifications. The teachers' demographic data are summarized as follows:

4.3.1 Teachers' responses on gender

Gender of teachers was considered important in this study because it directly or indirectly enable the researcher to establish the reason why some principals adopt some leadership styles in secondary schools. The results are tabulated in figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2: Teachers' responses on gender
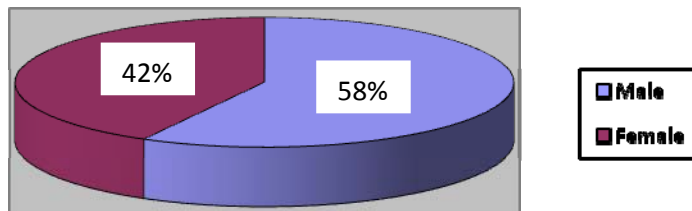
Figure 4.2 shows that the male teachers were predominant. Out of 100 respondents, 58.0% were males. This could enable the study establish how both male and female principals in most public secondary schools in Awendo district apply varied leadership styles which influence the performance of students in KCSE examinations.

4.3.2 Teachers' academic and professional qualifications

Academic and professional qualification of teachers was also a factor to consider in this study. Teachers' academic and professional qualifications directly or indirectly determine why principals sometimes behave differently when applying varied leadership styles in management of public secondary schools which in turn influence students' performance in KCSE examinations. Teachers' academic and professional qualifications are shown in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Teachers' academic and professional qualifications

Qualification	Teachers	%
MA/MSC	2	2.0
M.Ed	5	5.0
BA/BSC with PGDE	10	10.0
B.Ed	75	75.0
Diploma	8	8.0
Total	**100**	**100.0**

Results from Table 4.4 show that the majority of the teachers (75.0%) were Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) degree holders. This implies that teachers in most public secondary schools possess quality qualifications that could positively influence students' achievement in KCSE.

4.3.3 Teachers' years in service

Teachers' years in service would directly or indirectly influence principals' leadership styles which in turn affects students' performance in KCSE examinations. Data are as presented in Figure 4.3

Figure 4.3: Teachers' years in service
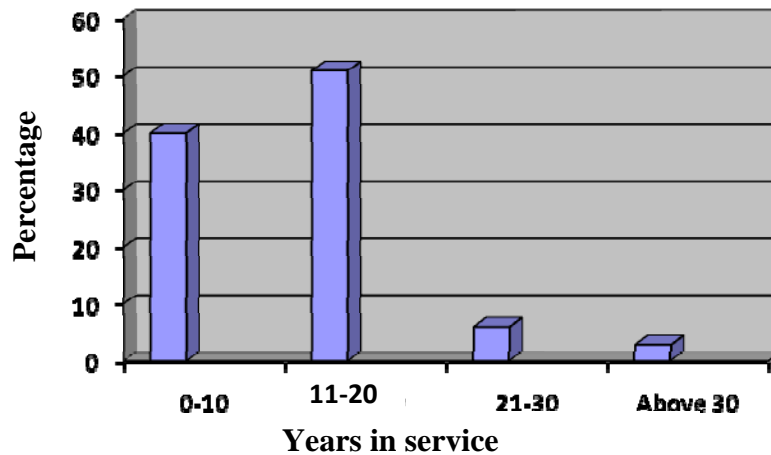
Figure 4.3 shows that the majority of teachers had a teaching experience of between 11-20 years (51.0%). This implies that a majority of teachers have served for many years in the same station this would indirectly influence students' achievements in KCSE.

4.4 Principals' autocratic leadership style on students' achievement

Principals' autocratic leadership style has a significant impact on students' achievements in KCSE examinations. The study considered it necessary to collect data on autocratic leadership style exhibited by school principals in public secondary schools in Awendo district.

4.4.1 Principals' response on autocratic leadership style

Principals were to respond to questionnaire items on autocratic leadership styles to indicate if they do apply it in some situations in school. Their responses are tabulated in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Principals' response on autocratic leadership style

Leadership style	A	%	B	%	C	%	D	%	E	%
Reluctant to allow members any freedom of action	-	-	1	7.7	2	15.4	4	30.8	6	46.1
Taking full charge when emergencies arise	4	30.8	5	38.4	4	30.8	-	-	-	-
My word carries weight with my supervisors	1	7.7	7	53.8	5	38.5	-	-	-	-
Driving hard when there is a job to be done	2	15.4	9	69.2	2	15.4	-	-	-	-
Persuading others that my ideas are to their advantage	2	15.4	3	23.1	8	61.5	-	-	-	-
Refusing to explain my actions	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	53.8	6	46.2
Getting confused when too many demands are made of me			1	7.7	5	38.4	4	30.8	3	23.1
Easily recognized as the leader of the group	4	30.8	9	69.2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Acting without consulting the group	1	7.7	1	7.7	1	7.7	6	46.7	4	30.8
Keeping the group working up to capacity	4	30.8	5	38.4	2	15.4	1	7.7	1	7.7

From the Table, principals' response to autocratic leadership style in school indicates that a fair percentage of the principals often exercised autocratic leadership style in school. For instance, 69.2% often drive hard when there is a job to be done and easily get recognized as the leader of the group. Another 53.8% often made sure that their word weight wishes their supervisors. Besides, 38.4% kept their group working up to capacity and often took full charge when emergencies would arise.

4.4.2 Teachers' response on principals' autocratic leadership style

To gather more information on principals' autocratic leadership style in school, teachers gave their response basing on the statements provided in the questionnaire. Data are as tabulated in table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Teachers' response on principals' autocratic leadership style

Statement	SA	%	A	%	D	%	SD	%	U %
Principals dominate and are spokesmen in staff meetings	-	-	1	7.7	9	69.2	3	23.1	- -
Principal sometimes see themselves as the only one maintaining definite standards of school performance	11	84.6	2	15.4	-	-	-	-	- -
Principals at times refuse to explain their actions to teachers and students	12	92.3	1	7.7	-	-	-	-	- -
Principals are slow to change	2	15.4	10	76.9	1	7.7	-	-	- -

From Table 4.6, the results indicate that the majority of the teachers stated that principals sometimes regarded themselves as the only ones who maintain definite standards of school performance (84.6%), refuse to explain their actions to teachers and students (92.3%) and that they are slow to change (76.9%). Other previous studies like that of Huka (2003), Muli (2005), and Wangui (2007) agreed that autocratic leadership styles influence students' performance in KCSE.

4.5 Principals' democratic leadership style on students' achievement

Principals and teachers were also asked to indicate how they cooperate or collaborate in school.

Democratic leadership style is where the principal seeks for the opinion of the others before making a decision. The principal is regarded to be consultative and participative. In this study, principals were to indicate how they cooperated and collaborated with their teachers in school. On the other hand, teachers were to state whether their principals sought their opinion on a tentative plan of action before making decision or by asking the others' in put in formulating plans before making a decision.

4.5.1 Principals' response on democratic leadership style

Principals were to respond to questionnaire items on democratic leadership to show whether they usually apply it in school through their daily interaction with the teachers. Their response would help the researcher compare with teachers'

response on principals' democratic leadership style in school. Data collected are as tabulated in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Principals' response on democratic leadership style

Leadership style	A	%	B	%	C	%	D	%	E	%
Taking part in the group	1	7.8	6	46.1	6	46.1	-	-	-	-
Coordinating group work	1	7.8	5	38.5	7	53.7	-	-	-	-
Allowing group initiative	3	23.0		30.9	6	46.1	-	-	-	-
Helping settle differences	-	-	5	38.5	8	61.5	-	-	-	-
Trusting good judgement	-	-	-	-	2	15.4	5	38.5	6	46.1
Maintaining a peaceful group	2	15.4	7	53.7	4	30.9	-	-	-	-
Maintaining cordial relationship with supervisors	3	23.0	4	30.9	6	46.1	-	-	-	-

The results from Table 4.7 show that (61.5%) percent of principals occasionally helped group members to settle their differences. This would ensure that teachers feel a sense of recognition and motivated at work. Data from this table show that the democratic leadership style of principals is rated occasionally by most of the principals. Democratic leadership should be exercised always in school.

4.5.2 Teachers' response on democratic leadership style of headteachers

To gather more information on how principals' leadership style influences students' achievement, teachers were to respond to statements given on principals' democratic leadership style and data were recorded in Table 4.8

Table 4.8: Teachers' response on democratic leadership style

Democratic leadership style	SA	%	A	%	D	%	SD	%	U	%
Principal assigns group members to particular tasks	20	20.0	60	60.0	15	15.0	5	5.0	-	-
Principal keeps the group informed	14	14.0	80	80.0	5	5.0	1	1.0	-	-
Principal puts teachers' suggestions in action	27	27.0	60	60.0	10	10.0	3	3.0	-	-
Principal keeps the staff working as team	5	5.0	50	50.0	30	30.0	15	15.0	-	-

The teachers' response from Table 4.8 indicates that a good percentage of teachers agreed that the principal keeps the group informed (80.0%). Principals' democratic leadership style could motivate teachers in teaching and learning and therefore positively influencing students' performance in KCSE examinations.

4.6 Influence of the principals' laissez-faire leadership style on students achievement

Laissez-faire leadership style is where principals let the teachers and subordinate to decide on what will be done with or without their influence. Principals allow the others to work as they choose with minimum interference.

4.6.1 Principals' response on laissez-faire leadership style

To solicit for more information about leadership styles applied by principals in schools, principals were to respond to questionnaire items on laissez-faire leadership style and data was recorded as shown in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Principals' response on laissez-faire leadership style

Laissez-fair leadership style	A	%	B	%	C	%	D	%	E	%
Getting swamped by details	2	15.4	3	23.0	6	46.2	1	7.7	1	7.7
Allowing members principal's authority	4	30.8	7	53.8	2	15.4	-	-	-	-
Permitting members to take it easy in work	8	61.5	4	30.8	1	7.7	-	-	-	-
Getting things all tangled	3	23.0	4	30.8	4	30.8	2	15.4	-	-
Working own way to the top	5	38.5	5	38.5	3	23.0	-	-	-	-
Permitting group its own pace	7	53.8	4	30.8	1	7.7	1	7.7	-	-

Principals' response from Table 4.9 indicates that most of the principals had adopted laissez-faire leadership style because their responses tended to incline towards always (A); Often (B); and Occasionally (C). For instance, data says that principals always permitted members to take it easy in their work (61.5%). The many other remaining subsequent responses except a few pointed towards; Always (A), Often (B), and Occasionally (C). An institution where laissez-faire leadership style is practiced, students' performance has some implications that may be negative as it affects the school working environment.

4.7 Influence of transformational leadership style on students' performance

Transformational leadership style is also regarded as one of the principals' style of leadership that impacts on students' performance in KCSE examinations in Awendo district. The study was to establish whether principals are committed to decision making, self-control, self direction and motivating teachers. Thus it was considered suitable to collect data from principals' and teachers to have insight into the leadership styles exhibited by school principals in secondary schools and how they influence students' performance in KCSE examinations.

4.7.1 Principals' response on transformational leadership style

Principals were required to give their response on transformational leadership style items and data was recorded in Table 4.10

Table 4.10: Principals' response on transformational leadership style

Transformational leadership style	A	%	B	%	C	%	D	%	E	%
Being calm when uncertain about coming events	1	7.7	1	7.7	4	30.8	5	38.4	2	15.4
Scheduling work for the group	5	38.5	5	38.5	3	23.0	-	-	-	-
Willing to make changes	-	-	6	46.2	7	53.8	-	-	-	-
Delay action until proper time occurs	1	7.7	2	15.4	3	23.0	4	30.8	3	23.0
Getting assistance from superiors	-	-	5	38.5	8	61.5	-	-	-	-
Maintaining definite standards of performance	-	-	-	-	10	77.0	3	23.0	-	-
Overcoming attempts to challenge leadership	-	-	2	15.4	10	77.0	1	7.7	-	-
Anticipating problems and plans for the group	-	-	1	7.7	12	92.3	-	-	-	-
Worrying about outcome of any new procedure	-	-	3	23.0	2	15.4	4	30.8	4	30.8
Inspiring enthusiasm for projects	1	7.7	3	23.0	9	69.2	-	-	-	-
Asking group members to follow standard rules and regulations	2	15.4	6	46.1	5	38.5	-	-	-	-

Results from Table 4.10 show that many of the responses from the principals

emphasized that transformational leadership style was occasionally exercised in

school. For instance, 92.3% of the principals anticipated future problems and

plans the group. Another group of principals (77.0%) stated that they maintained definite standards of performance and were capable of overcoming challenges in leadership. Most of the data captured in the table indicate that transformational leadership was often applied in secondary public schools in Awendo. Transformational leadership is necessary for quality results in any school. Principals have to exercise it always instead of applying it occasionally.

4.7.2 Teachers' response on transformational leadership style

Teachers were also asked to respond to questionnaire items having elements attributed to principals' transformational leadership style in school. Data collected was tabulated in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11: Teachers' response on principals' elements attributed to transformational leadership style

Transformational leadership style	A	%	B	%	C	%	D	%	E	%
Scheduling work for teachers and students	40	40.0	50	50.0	10	10.0	-	-	-	-
Emphasizing meeting of deadlines	30	30.0	60	60.0	10	10.0	-	-	-	-
Treating all teachers equal	10	10.0	40	40.0	30	30.0	20	20.0	-	-
Speaking as a representative of the group	10	10.0	10	10.0	40	40.0	40	40.0	-	-
Getting teachers' and other superiors' assistance	10	10.0	60	60.0	10	10.0	10	10.0	10	10

From Table 4.11, the results indicate that (60.0%) of teachers agreed that principals emphasized the meeting of deadlines and getting teachers' and other superiors' assistance. Such elements portray the principals' exercise of transformational leadership style in school could positively influence the performance of students in KCSE examinations in Awendo district.

4.8 Students' achievement in KCSE examinations

Students' achievement in KCSE examinations goes hand in hand with types of leadership styles applied by principals in schools. Teachers were asked to indicate the results of their students in KCSE examinations for the past four years and data was recorded in Table 4.12 below.

Table 4.12: Teachers' response on students' achievement in KCSE

Year	Entry	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E
2012	1613	1	28	70	123	176	216	241	217	230	208	90	11
2011	1456	7	13	62	87	117	171	191	193	232	247	114	14
2010	1099	0	8	29	52	88	121	154	210	177	161	88	7
2009	969	0	5	21	47	68	110	133	161	177	155	58	6

The results from the table indicate that for the past four years, there has been very few numbers of students scoring between grade A and B+ in the district. This could be as a result of principals not applying a blend of leadership styles that that

could motivate teachers who in turn could influence students' performance in KCSE examinations.

4.8 Summary

The study was to determine the influence of principals' autocratic leadership style on students' achievement in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examinations in Awendo district. A good percentage of the principals' responses indicated that autocratic leadership was exercised in schools where principals often drive hard when there is a job to be done (69.2%) and want to be recognized easily as group leaders (53.8%). Teachers' responses also revealed that most principals were autocratic; they want to be recognized as the only ones maintaining definite standards of school performance (84.6%), refuse to explain their actions to teachers and students (92.3%), and are slow to change (76.9%). For quality results to be realized in schools in Awendo district, principals need to give support and motivate teachers but at the same time remain firm. That is, they have to marry autocratic leadership style with democratic or transformational.

The study established that democratic leadership style has a great influence on students' achievements in KCSE examinations. Democratic leadership would encourage interaction or participation between principals, teachers and students which would yield to quality results. The study findings indicate that a majority of teachers' and principals' responses were rated low. They indicated that democratic leadership style was being exercised in schools by the principals but

not always. This leadership style has to be exercised by principals always for quality results in the school. Findings show that (61.5%) percent of principals occasionally helped group members to settle their differences and teachers (80.0%) agreed that the principal keeps the group informed.

The study, also, established that most principals in Awendo district exercised laissez-faire leadership where they avoided responsibilities and allowed teachers to work as they choose and with minimum interference. For instance, principals always permitted teachers to take work easy (61.5%). This could be one of the major contributing factors to students' poor performance in KCSE examinations in Awendo district where the results from the table 4.12 indicate that for the past four years, there has been very few numbers of students scoring between grade A and B+ in the district. Principals could be applying laissez-faire leadership styles.

Transformational leadership style is crucial. It is one of the major factors influencing students' achievement in KCSE examinations in Awendo district. From the findings, a good per cent of the principals occasionally exercised transformational leadership in school. However, a few of the principals indicated that they always applied this style in school. Besides, a few teachers strongly agreed (SA) that transformational leadership was applied in school. This leadership style has to be prioritized by principals. Findings indicate that (60.0%) of teachers agreed that principals emphasized the meeting of deadlines and getting teachers' and other superiors' assistance. Such elements portraying the principals'

exercise of transformational leadership style in school could have positively influenced the performance of students in KCSE examinations in Awendo district where there has been a positive improvement in the number of students scoring between B+ and A in 2011 and 2012 as compared to 2009 and 2010 KCSE.

Students' achievement in KCSE examinations goes hand in hand with types of leadership styles applied by principals in schools. From the findings of the study, there has been very few numbers of students scoring between grade A and B+ in the district for the past four years despite the fact that the student entry is so high. This could be as a result of principals not applying a blend of leadership styles that that could motivate teachers who in turn could influence students' performance in KCSE examinations. These results that show a link between the dependent variables in the study could influence students' performance in KCSE examinations.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This study aimed at capturing data on the influence of the principals' leadership styles on students' achievement in KCSE examinations in Awendo district. This chapter, therefore, provides a brief summary of the study, conclusions and recommendations basing on the data findings. The study also offers suggestions for further research.

5.2 Summary of the study

The main purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of principals' leadership style on students' academic achievement in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examinations in Awendo district. The study focused on four objectives targeting principals' and teachers' responses on questionnaire stems anchored on: the influence of principals' autocratic leadership style on students' performance, the influence of principals' democratic leadership style on students' performance, influence of principals' laissez-faire leadership style on students' performance, and influence of principals' transformational leadership style on students' performance. Therefore, research questions were formulated.

The literature review in the study provided more information from empirical documents to enhance knowledge and clarity of the research questions

formulated. The variables of the study were summarized in the conceptual framework that showed their link. The study ideas were anchored on contingency theory of leadership by Cole (2002).

The study used descriptive survey design and simple random sampling technique to select teachers and principals who participated in answering questionnaire items. Data collected was analyzed using mainly descriptive statistics, particularly frequencies and percentages. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for effective analysis of data.

5.3 Summary of the study findings

The study was to determine the influence of principals' autocratic leadership style on students' achievement in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examinations in Awendo district. A good percentage of the principals' responses indicated that autocratic leadership was exercised in schools where principals often drive hard when there is a job to be done (69.2%) and want to be recognized easily as group leaders (53.8%). Teachers' responses also revealed that most principals were autocratic; they want to be recognized as the only ones maintaining definite standards of school performance (84.6%), refuse to explain their actions to teachers and students (92.3%), and are slow to change (76.9%). For quality results to be realized in schools in Awendo district, principals need to give support and motivate teachers but at the same time remain firm. That is, they have to marry autocratic leadership style with democratic or transformational.

The study established that democratic leadership style has a great influence on students' achievements in KCSE examinations. Democratic leadership would encourage interaction or participation between principals, teachers and students which would yield to quality results. The study findings indicate that a majority of teachers' and principals' responses were rated low. They indicated that democratic leadership style was being exercised in schools by the principals but not always. This leadership style has to be exercised by principals always for quality results in the school. Findings from Tables 4.7 and 4.8 respectively show that (61.5%) percent of principals occasionally helped group members to settle their differences and teachers (80.0%) agreed that the principal keeps the group informed.

The study established that most principals in Awendo district exercised laissez-faire leadership where they avoided responsibilities and allowed teachers to work as they choose and with minimum interference. For instance, principals always permitted teachers to take work easy (61.5%). This could be one of the major contributing factors to students' poor performance in KCSE examinations in Awendo district where the results from the table 4.12 indicate that for the past four years, there has been very few numbers of students scoring between grade A and B+ in the district. Principals could be applying laissez-faire leadership styles.

Transformational leadership style is crucial. It is one of the major factors influencing students' achievement in KCSE examinations in Awendo district.

From the findings, a good per cent of the principals occasionally exercised transformational leadership in school. However, a few of the principals indicated that they always applied this style in school. Besides, a few teachers strongly agreed (SA) that transformational leadership was applied in school. This leadership style has to be prioritized by principals. Findings from Table 4.11 indicate that (60.0%) of teachers agreed that principals emphasized the meeting of deadlines and getting teachers' and other superiors' assistance. Such elements portraying the principals' exercise of transformational leadership style in school could have positively influenced the performance of students in KCSE examinations in Awendo district where there has been a positive improvement in the number of students scoring between B+ and A in 2011 and 2012 as compared to 2009 and 2010 KCSE in Table 4.12.

Students' achievement in KCSE examinations goes hand in hand with types of leadership styles applied by principals in schools. From the findings of the study, there has been very few numbers of students scoring between grade A and B+ in the district for the past four years despite the fact that the student entry is so high. This could be as a result of principals not applying a blend of leadership styles that that could motivate teachers who in turn could influence students' performance in KCSE examinations. These results that show a link between the dependent variables in the study could influence students' performance in KCSE examinations.

5.4 Conclusions of the study

From the findings of the study, several conclusions were arrived at:

i. Principals need to involve all stakeholders in decision making and running of the schools and there has to be a cordial relationship between principals' leadership styles and the students' performance in KCSE. Teachers, students and subordinate members have to be involved in decision making for better performance.

ii. Principals' democratic leadership styles had a high response which is a good indicator that if applied well could have quality results than autocratic leadership styles.

iii. There is no one leadership style that can be exclusively attributed to students' achievement in KCSE examinations. These leadership styles are interrelated. Principals have to blend them well in their daily managerial activities in school for quality results to be realized.

5.5 Recommendations of the study

Basing on the already stated findings and conclusions, the study recommends the following:

i. Principals should adopt democratic and transformational leadership styles that involve all other parties in the school in making decisions

and thus creating a better environment for teachers to work well, and enhance higher academic performance in K.C.S.E.

ii.   Given the scope and limitations of this study, the researcher recommends a replica of the study to be performed in primary schools to determine whether the same variables derived from this study would be the same as those at primary level. The study should also cover other districts apart from Awendo district to provide comparison in findings.

5.6 Suggestions for further research

The following are the suggested areas for further research:

i.   The role of Kenya Education Management Institute (KEMI) in training and research in administerial and managerial skills as perceived by headteachers and teachers. This study could reveal whether the top management appreciates the provision of personnel for the administration and management across the nation and hence maintaining high standards of education.

ii.   The impact of information and communication technology (ICT) in school management. This could be researched on because to improve management and also teaching and learning programme in the school, the head teacher may need to introduce the use of media, such as overhead projectors, computers and wall charts. It also calls for a more qualified

iii.   Given the scope and limitations of this study, the researcher recommends a replica of the study to be performed in primary schools to determine whether the same variables derived from this study would be the same as those at primary level. The study should also cover other districts apart from Awendo district to provide comparison in findings.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

INTRODUCTION LETTER

Elizabeth Ogalo
Department of Educational Administration & Planning
University of Nairobi
P.O. BOX 30197
Nairobi

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: REQUEST TO FILL THE QUESTIONNAIRE

I am a student of the University of Nairobi undertaking a Master of Education and currently gathering data for the research project. In connection with I am requesting you to provide the required information in the questionnaires to the best of your knowledge. The information you provide will be solely used for academic purposes. Therefore no name should be written on the questionnaires.

Thank you in advance for your co-operation.

Yours faithfully,

Elizabeth Ogalo

APPENDIX II

PRINCIPALS' QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire was designed to gather general information about yourself and

your school for the use of the study of the principal's leadership style and its

influence on students' KCSE performance in Awendo District.

Your response will be accorded great confidentiality hence do not write your

name or the name of your school. Please indicate the correct option as honestly as

possible. Kindly respond to all items.

Instructions:

a. READ each item carefully.
b. THINK about how frequently you engage in the behavior described by the
    item.
c. DECIDE whether you (A) Always (B) Often, (C) Occasionaly, (D) Seldom or
    (E) Never act as described by the item.
d. DRAW A PARENTHESIS around one of the five letters (A B C D E)
following the item to show the answer you selected.
    A = Always
    B = Often
    C = Occasionally
    D = Seldom
    E = Never
e. MARK your answers as shown in the examples below.
    Example: Often act as described   A **(B)** C D E
    Example: Never act as described   A B C **(D)** E

    Example: Occasionally acts as described   A B **(C)** D E

1. I get my superiors to act for the welfare of the group   A B C D E
   members
2. I get swamped by details   A B C D E
3. I can wait just so long, then blow up   A B C D E
4. I speak from a strong inner conviction   A B C D E
5. I make sure that my part in the group is understood by the A B C D E
   group members

6. I am reluctant to allow the members any freedom of action   A B C D E
7. I let some members have authority that I should keep   A B C D E
8. I look out for the personal welfare of group members   A B C D E
9. I permit the members to take it easy in their work   A B C D E
10. I see to it that the work of the group is coordinated   A B C D E
11. My word carries weight with my superiors   A B C D E
12. I get things all tangled up   A B C D E
13. I remain calm when uncertain about coming events   A B C D E
14. I am an inspiring talker   A B C D E
15. I schedule the work to be done   A B C D E
16. I allow the group a high degree of initiative   A B C D E
17. I take full charge when emergencies arises   A B C D E
18. I am willing to make changes   A B C D E
19. I drive hard when there is a job to be done   A B C D E
20. I help group members settle their differences   A B C D E
21. I get what I ask for from my superiors   A B C D E
22. I can reduce a madhouse to system and order   A B C D E
23. I am able to delay action until the proper time occurs   A B C D E
24. I persuade others that my ideas are to their advantage   A B C D E
25. I maintain definite standards of performance   A B C D E
26. I trust the members to exercise good judgment   A B C D E
27. I overcome attempts made to challenge my leadership   A B C D E
28. I refuse to explain my actions   A B C D E
29. I urge the group to beat its previous record   A B C D E
30. I anticipate problems and plans for them   A B C D E
31. I am working my way to the top   A B C D E
32. I get confused when too many demands are made of me   A B C D E
33. I worry about the outcome of any new procedure   A B C D E
34. I can inspire enthusiasm for a project   A B C D E
35. I ask that group members to follow standard rules and   A B C D E
      regulations
36. I permit the group to set its own pace   A B C D E
37. I am easily recognized as the leader of the group   A B C D E
38. I act without consulting the group   A B C D E
39. I keep the group working up to capacity   A B C D E
40. I maintain a closely knit group   A B C D E
41. I maintain cordial relationship with superiors   A B C D E

Thank you for your participation

TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Instructions

The questionnaire is designed to gather general information about yourself and your principals' leadership behavior for the use of the study of; **influence of principals' leadership styles on students' KCSE achievements in Awendo District.** Your response will be accorded great confidentiality hence do not write your name or the name of the school.

Please indicate the correct option as honestly as possible using a tick (✓) or circle (o) on one of the option for the questions options.

Part A: Personal information

1. Please, indicate your sex. Male   (   ) Female   (   )
2. Please indicate your age. ---------------------years
3. What is your highest academic qualification?

   (a) PhD ( ) (b) MA/MSC ( ) (c) M.ED ( ) (d) BA/BSC with PGDE (e) B.ED(   )   (f)Diploma   (   )   (g)   any   other   (specify)
   ………………………………………..

4. Indicate your teaching experience. ----------- years

Part B

Below are 21 simple questions. Read each and decide the most appropriate option according to the scale provide. Key: Always (1) Often (2) Occasionally (3) seldom (4) Never (5).

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1. Principals have to assign group members to particular tasks					
2. Principals should be spokesmen of the members					
3. Principals have to schedule the work to be done					
4. Principals have to maintain definite					

standards of performance					
5. Principals always refuse to explain their action					
6. Principals always keep the group informed					
7. Principals back up members in their actions					
8. Principals emphasize the meeting of deadline					
9. Principals treat all group members as equals					
10. Principals encourage the use of uniform procedures					
11. Principals are always willing to make changes					
12. Principals are friendly and approachable					
13. Principals fail to take necessary action					
14. Principals make members feel at ease when talking with them					
15. Principals speak as a representative of the group					
16. Principals put suggestions made into action					
17. Principals are slow to change					
18. Principals treat members of staff as their equals					
19. Principals make sure their part in the school is understood by all members					
20. Principals keep the staff working as a team					

PART C: SCHOOL PERFORMANCE IN KCSE FOR THE PAST FOUR YEARS

Kindly indicate the total number of students who obtained the following grades in KCSE examinations in your school as per the years given.

Year	Entry	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E
2012													
2011													
2010													
2009													

Thank you for your participation

APPENDIX IV

AUTHORIZATION LETTER

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Telephone: 254-020-2213471, 2241349, 254-020-2673550
Mobile: 0713 788 787 , 0735 404 245
Fax: 254-020-2213215
When replying please quote
secretary@ncst.go.ke

P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA
Website: www.ncst.go.ke

Our Ref:

Date:

NCST/RCD/14/013/973

10th June, 2013

Elizabeth Atieno Ogalo
University of Nairobi
P.O.Box 92-0902
Nairobi.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application dated *31st May, 2013* for authority to carry out research on *"Influence of principals' leadership styles on students' Kenya Certificate of Secondary education Achievements in Awendo District, Kenya,"* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Awendo District** for a period ending **31st July, 2013.**

You are advised to report to **the District Commissioner and the District Education Officer, Awendo District** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf** of the research report/thesis to our office.

DR. M. K. RUGUTT, PhD, HSC.
DEPUTY COUNCIL SECRETARY

Copy to:

The District Commissioner
The District Education Officer
Awendo District.

"The National Council for Science and Technology is Committed to the Promotion of Science and Technology for National Development".

APPENDIX V

PERMIT

PAGE 2

PAGE 3

Research Permit No. *NCST/RCD/14/013/97*

Date of issue   *10th June, 2013*

Fee received   *KSH. 1,000*

HIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:

of./Dr./Mr./Mrs./Miss/Institution

izabeth Atieno Ogalo

(Address) University of Nairobi

O.Box 92-0902, Kikuyu.

s been permitted to conduct research in

	Location
Awendo	District
Nyanza	Province

the topic: Influence of principals' leadership

yles on students' Kenya Certificate of Secondary

ducation Achievements in Awendo District, Kenya.

Applicant's Signature

for Secretary National Council for Science &Technolog

or a period ending: 31st July, 2013.

CONDITIONS

1. You must report to the District Commissioner and the District Education Officer of the area before embarking on your research. Failure to do that may lead to the cancellation of your permit
2. Government Officers will not be interviewed with-out prior appointment.
3. No questionnaire will be used unless it has been approved.
4. Excavation, filming and collection of biological specimens are subject to further permission from the relevant Government Ministries.
5. You are required to submit at least two(2)/four(4) bound copies of your final report for Kenyans and non-Kenyans respectively.
6. The Government of Kenya reserves the right to modify the conditions of this permit including its cancellation without notice

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

RESEARCH CLEARANCE PERMIT

GPK6055(3mt10/2011

(CONDITIONS—see back page)