

**INFLUENCE OF PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP STYLES ON
STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN KENYA
CERTIFICATE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION IN MERU
SOUTH DISTRICT, KENYA**

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**A Research Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for
the Degree in Masters of Education in Educational Administration**

University of Nairobi

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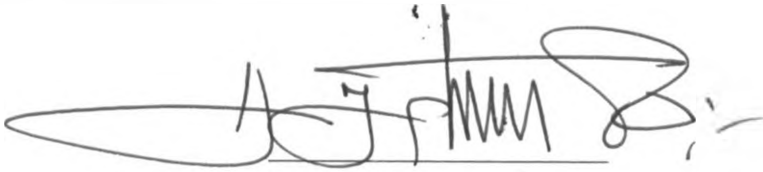
DECLARATION

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



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This research project has been presented for examination with our approval as the University Supervisors



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DEDICATION

In memory of the late Mrs. Zita Njeru and to my son Devlin Mwiti Kimakia.

May the Lord be your shield and protector all the time

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BOG	Board of Governors
DEB	District Education Board
GOK	Government of Kenya
HAA	Higher Academic Achievement
HE	Higher Education
HOD	Head of Department
KCSE	Kenya National Secondary Examination
KESI	Kenya Education Staff Institute
KNEC	Kenya National Examination Council
KSSHA	Kenya Secondary School Heads Association
MOE	Ministry of Education
NGO	Non Governmental Organizations
SAA	Students' Academic Achievement
SMASSE	Strengthening of Mathematics and Science in Secondary Education
TSC	Teachers Service Commission

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of principals' leadership styles on students' academic achievement in K.C.S.E in Meru South District. Specifically, the study sought to determine the extent the principals' use of autocratic leadership style influences students' academic achievement; the principals' use of democratic leadership style to influence students academic achievement; the influence of the principals' use of laissez faire leadership style on students' academic achievement as well as determining the influence of principals' personal factors such as age, professional qualification and experiences on students' academic achievement in KCSE. Past studies in the literature review support that poor performance is due to incompetence on the part of the principal. As such a principal, one should possess the much required leadership qualities such as commitment and dedication in order to steer the education institution towards the right direction. For this, a principal requires the necessary professional knowledge, training and experience

The study was conducted using the ex-post facto design where the principals leadership styles and students academic achievement were assumed to have occurred and could not therefore be manipulated by the researcher. The target population consisted of the 44 public secondary schools in Meru South which had Form one to Form four classes. This study targeted the schools that had done KCSE for at least two years. Teachers and headteachers were the target respondents for this study. Random sampling was used to select 20 schools and then purposive sampling techniques to select the principals of the selected schools after the random sampling. This sampling gave a matrix of 120 respondents consisting of 20 principals' and 100 teachers.

A questionnaire was used as the tool 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 instruments were piloted in two secondary schools in Meru South, which were not included in the actual study. At the same time, the researcher used the split half method to enhance instrument reliability. For this study the reliability co-efficient for the headteachers' questionnaire was 0.87 while that of teachers was 0.91 thus the research instruments were reliable. 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, bar-graphs and pie-charts.

The study therefore concluded that the democratic type of leadership style was necessary to adopt to improve students' performance. Linking the results of this

study to the school leadership, it is expected that, the older the principal, the more the leadership skills and experience they will have. This enables them to adopt the best leadership style that is largely participatory that authoritative. In addition to this, a principals' academic achievement highly contributes the students' academic achievement. The study also established that, the lowest academic achievement was consistently experienced in those schools with principals below 5 years of experience. 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. Moreover, principals should adopt democratic leadership style which enabled all stakeholders and personal to participate in school administration. 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. Principal use autocratic and laissez-fair leadership enacts, dictatorship and free reign will never encourage teachers and students to work hard, hence contributing to failure in KCSE academic performance. 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 Meru South District to provide comparison in findings.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

In any part of the world the contemporary society has a notion that, attaining higher education is associated with socio-economic status and success in life and it also determines an individual's profession. The importance of education in achieving a sustainable future for all cannot be underestimated. In United States of America for instance, education is seen as the key to poverty alleviation, environmental sustainability, and removal of prejudices and shaping of economic well-being. This notion of the benefits of education have now been spread everywhere in the world (Journal of Educational Leadership and management, 1999).

The development of education in Africa and other low income countries is receiving renewed efforts (Ndala, 2006). However many students continue to fail in their final examinations. In South Africa students failure in exams has been linked to poorly trained teachers, inadequate learning resources and unsupportive families (Gelder, 2010). To conclude, the school environment contributes a lot to the performance of learners in the examination. Consequently, providing quality education requires efforts from multiple stakeholders including the teachers, administrators and the government. Numerous researchers on school effectiveness

individual to pursue either science based or arts/humanity based courses at degree, diploma or post-secondary school certificate levels of education. Some of the most marketable degree courses include medicine, law, engineering, Pharmacy, Business studies, Education among others. Post-secondary education is also referred to as higher education (Republic of Kenya, 1997) and it is necessary if a society is to succeed economically, culturally and politically.

Using the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) scale, the current minimum qualification to join a degree course at both public and private university is a mean grade C+. The admission into a reputable middle level college and university for diploma and post-secondary certificate course in education and perhaps other reputable courses require C as a minimum mean grade.

The study categorized Students' Academic Achievement (SAA) as shown in below.

Table 1.1

Categorization of S.A.A based on qualification to pursue training in Education

Description	Those who qualify for admission for Degree / Diploma Courses							Those who qualify for certificate courses in Education				
	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E
Grade Points	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

Source: MOEST Headquarters Office, 1998

Therefore, it implies that high academic achievement in KCSE examination is a pre-requisite for admission into higher professional courses. In addition, students' High academic achievement (HAA) can be used as an indicator of an effective or successful principal.

As a result, therefore, it is not surprising that many people in Kenya SAA in national examinations has become a matter of life and death (Anyalo, 2010). Cases of suicide attempts are quite rampant among students who have not performed as they had expected in the national examination.

HAA is also important because it is a means of securing an admission into courses offered at higher education level both nationally and internationally and it acts as a consideration into the current competitive job markets. The need for HE is acute among majority of individuals in the society who are poor because they have limited socio-economic opportunities and HE is likely to bale them out from their low socio-economic status (UNESCO, 2002).

Given the importance of attaining HAA in K.C.S.E examination every secondary school in every district in Kenya attaches high value to KCSE examination hence they strive to realize HAA and become more effective. This study focuses on Meru South district one of the newly created districts for the reason that schools that perform well and have consistently been performing well was based on the aspect of the principals' effective leadership and it has resulted to the promotion of some principals and transfers of the principals of the non-performing schools.

The table below has schools results of the district for the four years since the district was incepted.

Table 1.2

K.C.S.E performance in Meru South district from 2008-2011

Year	2008	2009	2010	2011
Mean Score	4.763	4.8125	5.330	5.818
Mean Grade	C-	C-	C	C

Source: District Education Office Meru South

Although the district has registered an improvement some schools had barely produced any students to go to the university, while others schools are not producing students to pursue the highly competitive and marketable courses.

Another aspect that has generated the study is the complain by Board of Governors (BOG), Parents, students from various schools in Meru South that principal’s styles of leadership are largely responsible for the perceived low academic achievement in the district. Such sentiments have been echoed during education days and prize-giving days in the district.

Other factors have contributed either directly or indirectly to the students’ academic achievement. However the principal’s leadership skills become one of the central elements to consider. The major need for leadership is to enable an organization to achieve its goals (Sagimo, 2002). Mbiti (2007) supports this by

saying that although there are other factors that contribute to a success of a school, principals play a crucial role. A principals' leadership refers to the process in which s/he influences the activities of the members of a school community towards goal setting and goal achieving. It involves the exercise of authority, the making of decisions and performing core duties in a school (Okumbe, 1998).

In addition, a principal's leadership will, therefore, influence a school's community either towards or against the achievement of the set target. More so, the principal should adopt the "right" leadership style to match the prevailing situation in the school in order to make the school realize its goals of attaining HAA in the KCSE examination.

Thus; a principal's leadership styles especially in Meru South district should enable the students to register high academic achievement in KCSE examinations. There is a strong relationship between leadership and achievement of organizational goals as Okoth (2008) notes a successful organization has one major attribute that sets it apart from unsuccessful organization: dynamic and effective leadership. Most of the failures can be attributed to ineffective leadership.

This can be expounded to mean that a school's high academic achievement is a mark of an effective leadership style, which may be portrayed through a principal's leadership behavior or skill. Leadership behavior denotes the specific

acts of a principal in directing and coordinating the work of the school community personnel. On the other hand, leadership styles refer to the underlying need-structure of the principal that motivates his/her behavior in various leadership situations (Okumbe, 1998). The two terms can be used interchangeably.

A principal's motivational orientation may be either task-oriented or relation oriented. A task oriented principal shows behavior that primarily stimulates an enthusiasm for meeting the schools goal of realizing high academic achievement. The task oriented leadership style is characterized by a leader being non-consultative and stresses on task completion. A relation oriented principal basically exhibits behavior that encourages members of the school to develop close, mutually satisfying relationships. The latter style involves consultation, participation and the leader sharing power with subordinates. (Bush & Jackson, 2002)

As a result the principal in pursuit of his/her core duties either portrays relation oriented or task-oriented style or both. The change is necessary to enable both the principal and the school to be effective in all situations. Fielder's theory does not limit a principal to practice either relation oriented or task-oriented style of leadership or both in any situation. Therefore, the researcher will explore the influence of principals' leadership styles that contribute to students' high or low academic achievement among schools in Meru South district in the KCSE examinations.

1.2 Statement of the problem

In Kenya, the leadership effectiveness of secondary school principals is gauged by the students' academic performance in the KCSE examination and to be an effective leader one should appropriately match his/her leadership style with the situation (Njuguna, 1998).

Releasing 2012 KCSE results the Minister for Education said that there is a high wastage rate of the 8.4.4 system of education since the candidates who scored low grades were more than those who obtained top grades. Therefore, school principals need to address the aspect of thoroughly guiding students to achieve good grades in their KCSE. A lot of resources from the government and Non Governmental Organizations (NGO's) have been put in place to enhance quality education. Data obtained from the DEO's office 2012 indicate that academic performance in secondary schools in Meru South district has been improving although some of the schools even with intensive guidance and counseling programmes, remedial teaching and adequate learning materials still seem to lag behind in KCSE performance. The government has also been providing leadership programmes to head teachers in association with Kenya Education Staff Institute and seminars to provide in service training for leadership yearly. In anticipation to perform some students have resulted to copying as we note schools like Chuka girls, Njuri high school, Ikawa secondary school were some of the schools whose students' examinations results were cancelled (PDE Report, 2012). This harsh punishment befalls the students, but what could the principals' have

done to prevent this? On the other hand, students feel they need to pass the exam since it is a lucrative task to enable them to proceed and be admitted for higher learning.

Thus, HAA for students cannot be underestimated in examination but it is not automatic for students to pass. Apart from the students' personal initiative, the school's leadership system is equally important in enabling students' to perform. It is one of the most important recipes for success or failure of an institution. Internal managers of schools are the principals who are constantly in constant touch with the students and sometimes influence their decisions immensely. The government has played its role by providing bursaries, staffing, Smasse programs and seminars for teachers, but the HAA of learners in some schools in the district is still wanting. This is a drawback, since the university entry points are raising day by day. This says, SAA of learners to enable entry for higher learning requires consorted efforts of both the learners and the school management. Though performance is determined by many factors, leadership style plays a very significant role in its quality. Head teachers' leadership styles have a significant input on students achievement in national examinations (Obama, 2009). Therefore the study, seeks to investigate the leadership styles used by school principals' that are influencing students' academic achievement in KCSE examination in Meru South District over the years.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of principals' leadership styles in students' academic achievement in K.C.S.E in Meru South district.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study were as follows;

- i) To determine if the principals' use of autocratic leadership style influences students' academic achievement in KCSE in Meru South district.
- ii) To determine if the principals' use of democratic leadership style influences students' academic achievement in Meru South district.
- iii) To determine if the influence of the principals' use of laissez faire leadership style influences students' academic performance.
- iv) To determine if the influence of personal factors such as age, professional qualification and experiences on students' academic achievement in KCSE.

1.5 Research questions

The study will be guided by the following research questions;

- i) To find out whether the principals' autocratic leadership styles influence students' performance in KCSE in Meru South district?
- ii) To find out whether the principals democratic leadership style influence students' academic achievement?
- iii) To find out whether the principal's laissez faire leadership styles influence students' academic achievement?

iv) To find out whether the principals' personal factors like age, professional qualifications and experiences influence students' academic achievement?

1.6 Significance of the study

The findings will benefit various stakeholders. The education officers in the area will be enlightened on areas that need more resources, attention and effort. The findings will be an eye-opener to the principals' and managers of schools. It will equip the principals with specific information on areas that need improvement and guide their actions. The findings will expose the importance of using appropriate leadership styles in schools to achieve high academic achievement. This study will give an insight about the performing schools in the district to enable the poorly performing schools to emulate. This being the case, the government resources (input) will ensure a high output (KCSE performance) and not result into wastage.

1.7 Limitations of the study

According to Orodho (2008) limitations refer to constraints that the researcher has no control over. It is an aspect of the study that the researcher knows may adversely affect the results or generalization of the results of the study but which he/ she has no direct control over. Some respondents were not willing to disclose some information due to fear. The researcher tried and convinced them of confidentiality of their identity.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

The study was carried out in public secondary schools in Meru South. It did not cover the primary schools and higher institutions. This was as a result of time and the large population necessitated for the study. Private schools are not included in the study as the roles and powers of the principals in those schools might be different. The study covered responses from principals and teachers leaving out those of BOG and guardians/parents whose responses are equally important. The logistics of the availability of the parents was not viable. The students were also left out.

1.9 Assumptions of the study

The researcher assumed that respondents would be cooperative and give correct and valid information. The other assumption was that variables in the study would not change in the course of the research period. Finally it was assumed that the then form four students followed the existing trend in the KCSE performance.

1.10 Definition of significant terms

This study used the following significant terms,

8-4-4 refers to the system of education in Kenya introduced in 1985 where primary education takes 8 years in primary, 4 years in secondary, 4 years at the post-secondary institution.

Administration leadership refers to the leadership practices used by principals in their school administration.

Autocratic/Authoritarian leadership refers to a leadership where the leader makes most of decision for the group.

Democratic leadership refers to a leadership where a leader encourages members to express their opinion in group discussion and make decision.

KCSE refers to Examination given to students at the end of secondary cycle of education in Kenya.

Laissez-faire/free leadership refers to a leadership where the leader offers a lot of freedom to the subordinates to make decision.

Leadership refers to the way the head-teacher/principal plans, organizes and controls a secondary school.

Leadership styles refer to the manner in which the principal uses various ways to control or organize people in a school set-up such as democratic and autocratic.

Mean score it refers to average points showing how individuals or group achievement in examination ranging from the highest 12 (A) to the lowest 1 (E)

Performance refers to the ability of the students to sit for their KCSE examinations at the end of four years in secondary school and score grade A-E.

School administration refers to the total process through which appropriate human and material resources are made available and effectively used for accomplishing the purpose of a secondary school.

1.11 Organization of the study

This study consists of five chapters as follows; Chapter one is the Introduction consists of the background to the problem, the statement of the problem, purpose

of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations and limitations of the study, assumptions of the study, definition of the significant terms. Chapter two contains the literature review. This chapter is analyzed as follows; the concept of leadership in an educational institution, the various leadership styles, the role of the principal in leadership and students achievement. Chapter three consists of the research methodology used in the study, the following sub-topics were discussed; research design, target population, sample and sampling techniques, research instruments, instruments validity and instruments reliability, data collection procedures and data analysis techniques. Chapter four consists of data analysis, presentations and interpretation. This chapter analyses the instruments used in gathering and the discussion of the findings. Chapter five gives the summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study. The chapter also gives information on the suggested topics for further study. The reference section gives information on the documented sources used in the research and finally the appendices which contained the letter of introduction, questionnaires, and all other relevant documents used in the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter gives a summary of relevant to explain the research objectives. This review gives an overview of the concept of leadership followed by various leadership styles used by principals' and the role of the principal in School leadership on students' academic achievement, finally the theoretical and conceptual frameworks. The review intensively focused on the three leadership styles used in public Secondary Schools and their influence on students' academic achievement.

2.2 Concept of leadership in educational institutions

Studies have shown that a leader is a person with commanding authority or influence. Griffin (1996) argues that leadership is one of the most popular explanations for the success or failure of organization. Gakii (2010) says that at the manifest level of behavior, a leader has to be able to carry his/ her followers with him or her, inspire them, make decisions on their behalf with their collaboration and communicate the decision to others, he/she has to be able to act in ways that will not only further task performance but enlist the co-operation of his/ her followers by mobilizing the appropriate basic assumptions. Boma (2008) concurs to say, that an administrator's work is very much concerned with offering leadership to the work group.

Therefore, the Republic of Kenya (2000a) informs that heads of Institution are Central to the successful management of education institutions. Mbiti (2007) adds that the success of any school depends on how effective the principals' is as an administrator. He further, says leadership is the ability to conduct or guide the subjects, the ability to assimilate and translate ideas, rules, regulations and procedures to guide subjects in carrying out a mission within a defined mandate. Kibunja (2004) defines leadership as a process whereby an individual influences the behavior of others or groups regardless of the reason so that the influenced party acts without its own volition.

Chanya (2010) cited Wiwcharuch (1973) defines leadership as the art of getting things done through people. As an art, leadership requires imagination and skill and it can be improved and developed to a high degree by those who have special talents, provided that they will be willing to study carefully and diligently. It can therefore be learned and perfected. Secondly, leadership is the art of combining ideas, people things time and faith to achieve predetermined objectives. Leadership is influencing people by providing purpose, direction and motivation while operating to accomplish the mission and improving the organization.

Griffins (1996) informs us that for the principal to carry out his/ her duties should display, utilize or assert his/ her status authority on a few occasions with as little ostentation as possible. He adds that leadership is one of the most popular explanations for the success or failure of an organization. At the manifest level of

behavior, a leader has to be able to carry his/her followers with him/her, inspire them, make decisions on their behalf with collaboration and communicate the decisions to others; he/she has to be able to enlist the co-operation of his/her followers by mobilizing the appropriate basic assumptions. Mbiti (2007) advises that a principals should not only respect his position of responsibility but must also prove by actual performance that the employer was right in appointing him or her to the principals's post. The principals should always strive to create a conducive working environment hence the truism 'there can be no such thing as a good school without a good principals.'

Mbiti (2007) adds that when a school principal exercises effective leadership the symbol he/ she embodies gains public respect and in turn increases leadership ability' when he/she fails to lead, respect for his or her personality declines. Eshiwani (1993) observes that education systems in Kenya as well as in many developed countries have weak managerial capacity. He suggested that schools and other education institutions be run by competent professionals. This is to ensure the main goals of the school are achieved. It is with this in mind that Eshiwani (1993) informs us that the government of Kenya (GOK) established the Kenya Education staff Institute (KESI) in 1981 to serve as an instrument for the development of administrative staff of the Ministry of Education (MOE).

This would reduce incompetence among principals, and as the school leader must lead so that he/she influences the school organization towards the accomplishment

of their set school objectives. Consequently good leadership is indispensable if an organization is to be successful (Kyalo, 2010). The principal is the school leader and must lead so that he/she influences the school organization towards the accomplishment of their set school objectives.

2.3 Influence of leadership style on academic achievement

This refers to the manner and approach of providing direction, implementation of plans and motivating people says (Kyalo, 2010). It constitutes what the leader chooses to do and when they do it and the manner in which they act. The styles of leadership adopted by the leader depends on the beliefs, values, preferences and culture Kyalo (2010); whether the leader is respected by the subordinates; the extent and quality of interpersonal communication within the organization, the remuneration system adopted, the experience and capacity of the leader and the degree of homogeneity of employees within the working group.

Kemp and Nathan (1989) argued that the principal should be aware of their management styles. These scholars observed that there are many types of leadership styles; these are autocratic, nomothetic, ideographic, democratic, laissez faire and transactional leadership styles. Okumbe (1998) defines a leadership style as a particular behavior applied by a leader to motivate his/her subordinates to achieve the objectives of the organization. He adds leadership styles are usually identified as points on a continuum. This study will discuss at least three of the above leadership styles. These are autocratic, democratic and

laissez faire styles. However it should be noted that the best leadership style is that which helps to achieve the objectives by using both human and material resources by being effective in managing people and task (Kasinga, 2012)

2.3.1 Influence of autocratic style of leadership on academic achievement

This is also known as authoritative leadership. This leadership style centralizes power, authority and decision making (Okumbe, 1998). It involves issuing detailed instructions and close supervision of subordinates work. Relationship between managers and their subordinates are highly formal and sanctions are imposed if subordinates under perform. Kyalo (2010) states in this style leaders dictate to their employees what they want done and how they want it accomplished without getting the advice of their followers. Njoroge (2003) argues that an autocratic leader commands and expects compliance, is dogmatic, negative and leads by the ability to give or withhold rewards and punishment.

Autocratic leaders formulate policies alone, assign duties without consultation and issue directives expecting people to follow without quest. Autocratic style is best where the leader has all the information to solve the problem is short of time and the employees are well motivated (Okoth, 2000)

This style is meritorious in that there is timely completion of work, tasks requirements and interpersonal relations are clearly defined and it eases and hastens decision making progress. The demerits of using this system is that the employees' enterprise is suppressed and their knowledge and experience are not

applied to the maximum extent. Kinyua (2010) states that decisions are transmitted by the superior to the subordinates who is expected to accept them. The subordinate expects decisions from his superior and it is these decisions which determine his/her conduct. The behavior of the subordinate is governed by the decision of the superior who selects for him/her the required behavior pattern. In other words the subordinate holds in abeyance his/her own critical faculties for choosing between alternatives and uses the formal criterion of the receipt of a command as his/her basis of a choice.

Okoth (2008) cites Mutuku (2005) who argued that this system might lead to professional burnout. In Okoth (2000) contends that autocratic leadership is where all the authority centers in the manager. Therefore, the manager enforces decisions by use of rewards and the fear of punishment. Though Huka (2003), Muli (2005) and Wangui (2007) all confirmed that leadership style influenced students KCSE performance, they noted that autocratic headteachers had higher mean scores in KCSE than democratic counterparts. In this style of leadership communication tends to be primarily in one direction from the manager to followers (Nganyi, 2001). Such schools are lead by principals who use the terms "my school." Kyalo (2010) asserts that principals using this leadership style lack confidence in the staff and there are high incidents of fearing the principal but no respect as characterized by systematic soldering when not under close supervision. Autocratic leadership can be compared to directive leadership which

according to (Okoth, 2000) is where a leader decides and announce his/ her decision without consulting subordinates before hand

2.3.2 Influence of democratic style of leadership on academic achievement

The leadership style is also known as participative or consultative leadership. It decentralizes power and authority. Kyalo (2010) defines it as a system where a leader uses one or more employees in the decision making process and it is consultative in nature. This style decentralizes power and authority (Okumbe, 1998). Mutuku (2005) in Mbiti (2007) says that democratic leadership is where power and authority must be derived from the governed. That is to say the authority to lead must be rendered legitimate by the people. Nganyi (2001) stresses that a person's basic needs, rights and freedom must be guaranteed and respected by the organization. Decisions by organization matters should be arrived at after making the necessary consultations and communication by various sections of the organization. Republic of Kenya report (1997) recommended that school develop an organic structure which has an open democratic, collaborative and participatory system with verbal and lateral communication.

Okoth (2008) asserts that participative leadership requires a leader with power who is willing to share it. With his/her power the leader sets the boundaries within which subordinates participation or consultations are welcome. The leader who makes decisions concerning the school personnel by involving them is highly democratic. Griffin (1996) adds that high consultation style in which emphasis is

placed upon the use of face to face discussion on the administration of the school and a high relation style that displays a mutual concern for maintaining the organization relations. The leader who makes decisions concerning the school personnel by involving them is highly democratic. Mbiti (2007) agrees that institutions of today tend to lean towards democratic leadership style that emphasis on more freedom of participation and reciprocal co-operation and less on dictatorship. He adds stakeholders should be given a chance to volunteer ideals without coercion. There should be free flow of ideals from the principals to other personnel in the school vice versa. The rights of the individual and their freedom of expression are acceptable and respected. Opportunities should be provided where the stakeholders in consensus discuss issues affecting the school freely without inhibition, intimidation and victimization.

Principals who use this system tend mostly to lean towards behavioral science theorists, who advocate for both staff and task are what Neil Miller cited in Kemp and Nathan (1989) called "mega managers". These are the managers who are both strong on management of people and tasks. They are team players who often use the phrase 'our school' in reference to the institution. This shows a sense of ownership, responsibility and accountability at each stage.

It is a common feature to such schools to find students' suggestion boxes, notice boards, magazines and students councils noted (Kibunja, 2004) in her study on secondary schools students' attitude to principals' participatory leadership style.

Okoth (2003) and Kimancia (2007) found out that headteachers that are rated as being democratic had high mean performance index than autocratic headteachers. She further noted that students want to be involved in decisions that involve students personnel, financial management, school community relations to name a few. The students portrayed a very positive attitude towards democratic management leadership style. These facilities are present in some schools in meru south but in some rarely opened and therefore minimal feedback to the students who wait in vain. Gakii (2010) sums it up by saying Democratic manager leadership practices like open mindedness understanding, flexibility, persistence, accommodation and consultative are aspects stakeholders should consider in ensuring partnership in decision making.

2.3.3 Influence of laissez – faire style of leadership on academic achievement

This is an antithesis of the autocratic style, besides being relation oriented. In this style the leader tends to avoid power and authority and depends largely on the group to establish goals and means for achieving progress and success (Okumbe, 1998). Here the leader allows the employees to make the decisions although the leader is still responsible for the decisions made.

Okoth (2000) cites Huseman (1976) arguing that laissez faire sets goals for his/ her subordinates as well as clear parameters such as policies, deadlines and budget and sets his/ her subordinates free to operate without further direction,

unless the subordinates themselves request for it. He says that this style comprises the essence of full managerial delegation with its benefits of optimum utilization of time and resources. Okoth (2008) says the leader who avoids power and authority and largely depends on the group to establish goals and means for achieving progress and success.

It is used when the employees are able to analyze the situation and determine what needs to be done and how to do it that is set priorities and delegate certain tasks. The demerits of this style are that it only works well when the leader fully trusts and confides in the people below them leaders who use this free-rein system use their power very little if at all, giving subordinates a high degree of independence in their operations (Njuguna, 1998). More noted is that the high degree of freedom for both students and teachers has been known to breed indiscipline which may result low performance. This affects the teaching and learning environment and performance. Where there is no absenteeism, time wasting, the National examination outcome is good (Kyalo, 2010).

2.4 Role of the principal in leadership and academic achievement

A prime task of the school head is to exercise leadership of the kind that results in a shared vision of the direction to be pursued by the school and to manage change in ways that ensure the school is successful in realizing its vision. The ability of leadership may differ in various ways as Kimancia (2007) studied the relationship between principals' leadership styles and girls' students' performance in KCSE in

public secondary schools in Narok, Kenya. The findings show that there is a significant difference between principals's age and leadership styles. This contradicts Okoth (2000) in her study that leadership styles are a result of age. Head teachers aged 41-45 years are most democratic.

Kimancia (2007) found out that age does not influence perception of teachers in their rating of principals in their leadership styles. This contradicts Boma (2008) who notes that teachers aged averageiy 40 years and above rated principals as being autocratic. This according to Mbiti (2007) could attributed to certain innate factors in the leader such as traditions which view any person who disobeys the leader as being disloyal, aspects of giving material gains such as gifts and recommendations of job promotions. This is yet to be proven true. Further, Njuguna (1998) found out that there is a relationship between principals leadership styles and professional experience. Head teachers with professional experience of 16 years and above are rated higher on consideration behavior. This concurs with Okoth (2000) that principals with an administrative experience of 11-15 years are rated as being democratic than those with less administrative experience. This also concurs with Wangui (2007) but contradicts Kimancia (2007) who found out that there is no relationship between professional experiences of a principals in relation to the leadership styles.

Njuguna (1998) noted that principal's level of professional qualifications practice a high-initiating structure and low-consideration structure. Kimanci (2007)

contradicts this position by observing that there is no relationship between academic and professional qualifications of principals and their leadership styles. Okoth, (2000) notes that highly educated principals are most democratic than those with low academic and professional qualifications. Boma (2008) further notes that low qualification of principals in academics is a source of misunderstanding in schools. The principals' leadership seems not be felt at all. Mbiti (2007) sums it up by saying, if education is a process of planned individual growth and direction towards the realization of the good life in society then those charged with the responsibility of overseeing the provision of that education should be men/women of proven professional abilities.

Okoth (2000) notes female principals' are found to be more autocratic while the male counterparts are democratic. She adds that leadership seems particularly appropriate at the extremes of experience in a very stable environment and in a very turbulent and life threatening times. In stable times a leader can make control more acceptable by being a good communicator and can humanize the structures and procedures. In turbulent times such amalgamation as gaining the sixth sense or directed progress, reports a strong leader. The principal therefore should have an ability to influence the thoughts and behavior of others by directing and controlling the group so that the purposes of the group are achieved. Mullins (2005) says a key role of the leader is to ensure that each of the elements contribute to improved learning outcome is present, working effectively and in alignment with other elements.

This means that the principal is the chief architect of the school, the one who has the overview of the systems, processes and resources and how they combine to produce intended student learning outcome. This implies that the principal is able to articulate the significance of all key elements to justify their design and configuration, and to be in a position to make judgments regarding the operational effectiveness of each element and the total impact of all the elements as they function in combination with another (Kinyua, 2010).

According to Griffin (1996) a principal who concentrates on creating a happy school by developing qualities of integrity and habits of service in its students will find academic success is added to him. A school's spirit of co-operation once established has great powers to stay. It should be noted that the principal's role as a responder, manager and initiator contributes to teachers and staff morale either by fostering a rough atmosphere or by supporting them and collaborating with them. Okoth (2008) concurs with this by saying when a principal is at the centre of a teaching and learning process he/she is fulfilling the major role of his profession and what the society expects him/her to do. The test for his/her leadership skills is to be found in the quality of the personal relationship in the school and the extent to which he/she has forged the staff into a united team. A team that is expected to yield results. In this case the principal is encouraged to provide dependable leadership which will boost the students' academic achievement.

Not to attempt to control students' by offering rewards, gifts and punishment (Griffin, 1996). According to him, a leader should change people not by coercion or intimidation but by example. A leader depends on the goodwill of those he/she leads and this should continually be inculcated in those being led, be they students or staff for them to give support and co-operation to attain the set goals. The principal is the leader of the school, thus, according to Boma (2008) the principal is to be held responsible for seeing to it that an appropriate learning environment is established and maintained. The above argument was supported by Kyalo (2010) who stated that the basic reasons why some schools performed better than others in examination was that while some principals organized the learning process for their students, others left it to chance. It is true those principals who were committed in their work were responsible and had sound moral conduct that greatly influenced academic performance.

Nganyi (2001) asserts that poor academic achievement in Kenya is due to incompetence on the part of some principals. This is supported by Okoth (2008) who feels that principals may be concerned with other privileges that come with leadership and spare little time and energy for their schools. Participation in leadership ought to be full so as to ensure maximum satisfaction of members. Principals should note that leadership is not a chance one has been given to 'pour' scorn and humiliation to the teachers but a chance to assist individuals or groups to move towards productive goals that are acceptable. Since highly motivated

teachers also motivate their students' academic performance to improve (Kimathi, 2010).

2.5 Summary of literature review

Nganyi (2001) supports that poor performance is due to incompetence on the part of the principal. This has been supported by a few others like Boma (2008) and Okoth (2000). As such a principal, one should possess the much required leadership qualities such as commitment and dedication in order to steer the education institution towards the right direction. For this, a principal requires the necessary professional knowledge, training and experience, however, Kimancia (2007) contradicts this by saying that there is no relationship between academic, experience and professional qualifications of the principals in relation to the leadership styles that influence students, performance. Njuguna (1998) disagrees with this as Kyalo (2010) states the organization of a leader will contribute a lot to students' academic achievement. All this has been captured in this study but despite the literature reviewed it remains unclear whether a principal's leadership styles influence students' academic performance or not.

2.6 Theoretical framework

The earliest studies on leadership were based on traits and this dates back to the ancient Greeks and Romans who came up with the 'great man theory'. They believed that leaders were born. The trait theorists claim that it is more the inborn qualities than anything else that makes an effective leader. This study differs with

the trait theorists since leadership traits are not completely inborn but can be acquired through learning and experience.

The study is based on the path-goal leadership theory. The modern development of this theory is usually attributed to Martin Evans and Robert House (Okumbe, 1998). The theory emphasizes on how leaders can facilitate task performance by showing subordinates how performance can be instrumental in achieving the desired rewards. The theory states that leaders' behavior should be motivating or satisfying to the extent that it increases goal attainment by subordinates and clarifies the paths to these goals. The theory is applicable in this study since it concurs with the researcher's target population in selecting principals as part of respondents as they would be able to make a perception on his/her styles of leadership and its contribution towards KCSE performance. The principals, teachers and students in schools exhibit different characteristics and as such considered to perform their roles, when they ensure that these roles and expectations are geared towards goal achievement. The path-goal theory stresses that effective leadership is a function of the interaction between leader's behavior and situational variables which enacts performance.

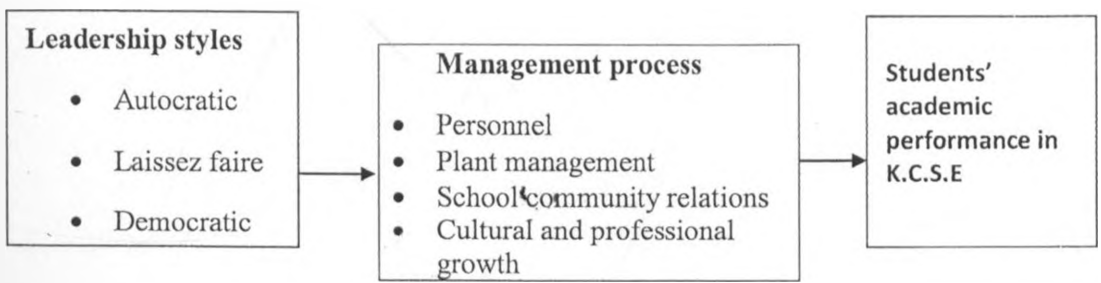
2.7 Conceptual framework

The figure below summarizes the variables used in this study and their relationship to students' academic achievement. A principal's leadership styles

will have direct impact on student's academic performance. A favorable style will stimulate all the key players towards the achievement of the school goals.

Figure 2.1

Principals' leadership styles and other factors affecting students' performance



The framework is developed to provide the clear links of dependent and other variables; independent and extraneous variables as they relate to each other in the research. The principals has his/her own internal value system, needs, leadership indicators and behaviors. In managing schools, he/she can be democratic, autocratic or laissez-faire. The kind of leadership style that he/she employs influences the teachers' and students' body in the teaching and learning process.

If the leadership style is preferred by both, teachers may feel motivated in their teaching job which ensures syllabus coverage at the right time. Students on their side would devote all their efforts in learning with cases of indiscipline. As a result, good results in K.C.S.E. will be achieved because all the three will be working as a team. On the contrary, when the principal's leadership style poses a

threat to the teachers, this may affect their work output which will definitely lead to students' poor performance at K.C.S.E. The variables indicated will directly or indirectly affect the students and teachers behavior towards the achievement of good results in KCSE.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the methods utilized to carry out the study. It is organized under the following sub-topics; research design, target population, sample and sampling techniques, research instruments, instruments validity, instruments reliability, data collection procedures and data analysis techniques.

3.2 Research design

The study was conducted using the ex-post facto design. Ex-post facto refers to those studies that investigate the possible cause and effect relation by observing an existing condition or state of affairs and searching back for plausible causal factors. According to Kerlinger (1973) cited in Kombo and Tromp (2009) says that in ex-post facto the researcher does not have a direct control of the independent variable because they have already occurred or are inherently not manipulated.

The design is the most suitable for educational and social research since many research problems do not lend themselves to experimental inquiry. In this study principals leadership styles and students academic achievement were assumed to have occurred and could not therefore be manipulated by the researcher.

3.3 Target population

Target population refers to the population to which a researcher wants to generalize results of a study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The target population consisted of 42 principals of public secondary schools in Meru South district. The study also targeted the 500 teachers based in the district. According to a report in the Ministry of Education there are 52 secondary schools but only 44 have Form one to Form four classes (PDE, 2012). Two schools were ruled out from the study since they were private schools. The district has low performing and high performing schools. The researcher restricted the research to schools that had done the formal examination (KCSE) for at least two years. Categorisation was also done on merit of the schools performance on KCSE for the last four years. Any school that had below mean of C was ranked as a low performer for the reason that students may not get admitted to do a diploma course with a grade lower than a C-.

3.4 Sample and sampling techniques

A sample is a smaller population carefully selected to represent all the main traits of the whole population (Kombo & Tromp, 2009). It is a small proportion of a target population selected for observation and analysis. Stratified sampling was used to identify the two categories of schools, followed by random sampling. Random sampling was used to select 20 secondary schools from the 40 public secondary schools in Meru South district to participate in the study. This is

equivalent to 50 percent of the target population. Gay (1996) recommends 20 percent minimum sample size. The schools were then be stratified into two categories; well performing and low performing schools. Under each category, 10 schools were selected. This forms a sample of 20 schools for the study. For each school five teachers were selected through the use of simple random sampling from the 20 schools sampled totaling to 100. The researcher used purposive sampling techniques to select the principals of the selected schools after the random sampling. This sampling gave a matrix of 120 respondents consisting of 20 principals' and 100 teachers.

Table 3.1

Category of respondents and their numbers

Category of respondents	Population of respondents	Sample size of respondents
Principals	40	20
Teachers	500	100
Total	540	120

3.5 Research instruments

Questionnaires were used as the tool for collecting the data. The questionnaires were appropriate for the study as Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) notes; they allow measurements for or against a particular view point.

The researcher preferred a questionnaire because it ensured anonymity of the respondents, thus was expected to enhance their honesty. The questionnaires were

for principals and teachers. Items in the questionnaire were designed based on the objectives of the study and on the literature reviewed.

The demerits of the questionnaire was that there was no opportunity for the researcher to ask for further information or probe deeper into answers given by the respondents. The researcher was also not able to predict if the respondent have answered all the questions until after the questionnaires were collected.

3.6 Instruments validity

According to Mugenda and mugenda (2003), validity is the degree to which a test measures the variables it claims to measure. The instruments were piloted in the two secondary schools in Meru South, which were not included in the actual study. After the categorisation of the schools, the schools piloted were picked randomly from the basket which contained the names of the schools. Two schools belonging to the two categories were picked. Pilot study helped improve validity and reliability.

3.7 Instrument reliability

Reliability means the consistency levels of results of data after repeated trials (Mulusa, 1990). The researcher used the split half method to enhance instrument reliability. This is a method in which the research questions were split into two on the basis of odd and even numbers to generate two instruments. The two instruments were administered and the reliability coefficient was established using the Spearman Brown prophecy formula given by:

$$R_e = \frac{2r}{(1 + r)}$$

Where R_e shows the reliability co-efficient and r = reliability. Reliability coefficient varies from 0.00 to 1.00, with 0.00 showing no consistent and +1.00 showing perfect consistency while negative correlation has a magnitude of -1.00. Reliability coefficient above 0.86 generally reflects a good consistency (Kombo & Tromp 2009) hence administer the instrument.

3.8 Data collection procedures

The researcher obtained a research permit from the National council for science and Technology and letter of authorization from the District Education Office of Meru South district. A copy was presented to the principal of the selected schools to request for data collection.

The researcher collected the data personally by administering the research instruments to the various selected respondents. The researcher allowed the respondents' sufficient time to respond to the items on the questionnaires which were collected at an appropriate agreed upon time. The researcher ensured that in the course of the data collection there was rapport created between her and the respondents.

3.9 Data analysis techniques

The study yielded data that required both qualitative and quantitative analysis. Analysis of data started with editing in order to identify errors made by the

respondents. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the quantitative data obtained. The statistics included frequency counts, means and percentages as well as the standard deviations. For quantitative data the Statistical package for social science (SPSS) was used.

As Maina (2002) observes, SPSS is able to handle large amount of data and given its wide spectrum of statistical procedures purposefully designed for social sciences, it is also known to be quite efficient. Qualitative data generated from the open-ended questions in the research instruments was organized into themes and patterns based on analysis of meanings and implications emanating from respondents information and documented data on academic performance. The data was categorized through content and then tabulated. The results of data analysis were presented in tables, bar-graphs and pie-charts. A conclusion and recommendations was made based on the findings regarding the influence of principals' leadership styles on students' academic achievement.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings on the influence of principals' leadership styles on students' academic achievement in K.C.S.E in Meru South district. It gives the data analysis, presentation and interpretations. The data was analyzed using SPSS where frequencies, percentage as well as standard deviation guided the researcher to interpret the data. The chapter is divided into sections based on the research questionnaires including determining the extent the principals' use of autocratic leadership style influences students' academic achievement in KCSE; to determine the principals' use of democratic leadership style to influence students academic achievement; to determine the influence of the principals' use of laissez faire leadership style on students' academic performance as well as to determine the influence of personal factors such as age, professional qualification and experiences on students' academic achievement in KCSE.

4.2 Questionnaire return rate

The target respondents were the principals and teachers and the return rate is as illustrated by Table 4.1

Table 4.1 indicates the questionnaire response rate was credible enough to give data for the study since the two categories of respondents had over 90 percent return rate.

Table 4.1

Questionnaire Return rate

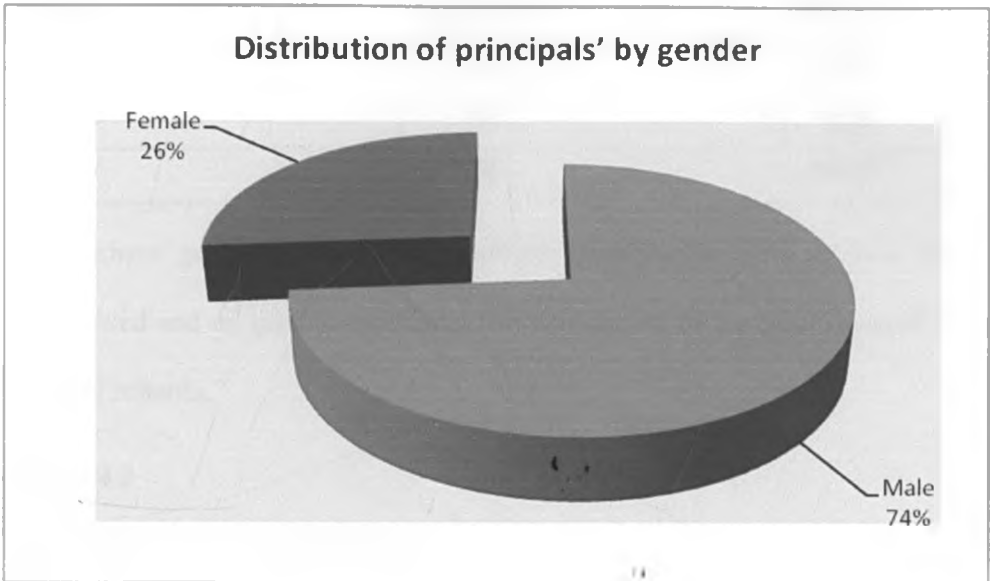
			Return rate
Return rate	Sample size	Response	(%)
Principals	20	19	95.0
Teachers	100	92	92.0

4.3 Demographic information

Demographic information was based on the gender of teacher and principals, their age, level of experience as teachers, their highest professional qualifications and the principals' level of experience as a principal. The section also presents the length of time the principal had been in their current station and if they had ever taught in any other station as well as if they attended any seminar of education management or education. The respondents' type of school and their responses on whether meetings are called by principal involving teachers and parents to discuss performance (principals) were also analyzed in this section.

Figure 4.1

Distribution of principals' by gender



The study indicated that, majority of the principals interviewed were male. This is an indication that most principals in public secondary schools in Meru South district were male. This disparity in distribution could have been caused by the fact that most of the schools sampled for the study were mixed schools. Most are headed by male principals assisted by female deputies according to the Ministry of Education regulations. Investigation on gender of principals would enable the researcher to determine if gender had any impact on the performance of secondary schools and also the gender of the teachers' who are the main personnel in a school. The table below shows the distribution of the teachers' by gender.

Table 4.2

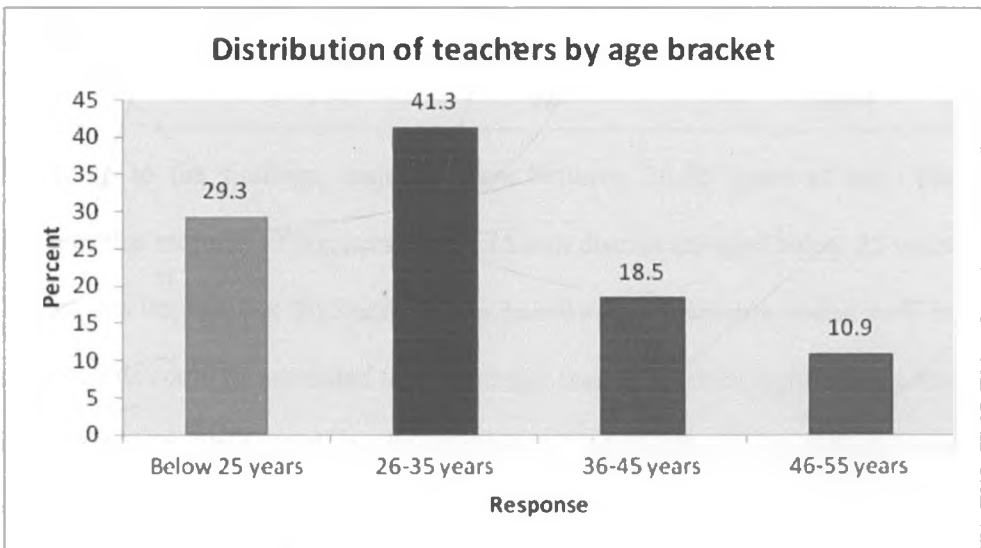
Gender of teachers

Response	Frequency	Percent
Male	46	50.0
Female	46	50.0
Total	92	100.0

The teachers' gender was equally distributed owing to the fact that most schools were mixed and no gender dominated the constitution of the teaching staff in the sampled schools.

Figure 4.2

Distribution of principals' by age



On the side of principals' majority are aged 36-45 years. It is therefore clear that majority of the principals' in Meru South are over 35 years. This corresponds to

Okoth (2008) who stated that principals need time to get acquainted with the basic theories of leadership, motivation, discipline, budgeting and accounting, and staff development if they are to exercise effective instructional leadership and this demands adequate time in teaching before getting promoted to headship. It was also noticed that minority are below 35 years.

Table 4.3
Age of teachers

Age bracket	Frequency	Percent
Below 25 years	27	29.3
26-35 years	38	41.3
36-45 years	17	18.5
46-55 years	10	10.9
Total	92	100.0

According to the findings, majority were between 26-35 years of age. This indicates that majority of teachers in Meru South district are aged below 35 years. Further this implies that the district relies heavily on a relatively young staff for teaching this could be attributed to the fact that they are at their highly productive stage in life to yield good results in students' performance and schools need teachers of different ages for continuity.

Table 4.4**Principals' highest level of education**

Level of education	Frequency	Percent
Diploma in education	5	26.3
B.Ed	9	47.4
Masters in Education	5	26.3
Total	19	100.0

On the principals' highest qualification, majority had a bachelor's degree in education. Meru South being a relatively young district had some newly incorporated schools thus a few principals had diploma as their highest level of education. Although majority were enrolled in universities to further their education. Majority are graduates. This implies that high qualification of principals' in the area of study was expected to be an added advantage in as far as understanding students performance was concerned thus the continuous improvement of the KCSE mean grade in the district.

Table 4.5**Teachers' highest qualification**

Qualification	Frequency	Percent
Diploma in education	18	19.6
B.A/B.Sc with P.G.D.E	6	6.5
B.Ed	56	60.9
Masters in Education	11	12.0
Others	1	1.1
Total	92	100.0

This indicates that most of teachers in Meru South District are college and university graduates, this could be attributed to the fact that secondary school education is highly demanding and requires highly educated staff. According to the findings, the teaching staff in the area is well trained although they needed in servicing and encouragement from principals to pursue further studies especially the diploma teachers to equip them with better teaching skills.

Table 4.6
Distribution of principals by teaching experience

	Frequency	Percent
6-10 years	2	10.5
11-15 years	9	47.4
16-20 years	8	42.1
Total	19	100.0

This indicates that majority of principals in Meru South district have teaching experience of above 11 years, showing that they are highly experienced and thus capable to supervise effectively. This information allows the researcher to determine whether experience of principals effects performance. Griffin (1996) concurs with this to say a leader should change people not by coercion or intimidation but by example. The principal being an experienced teacher can be able to identify areas of correction and may advice accordingly.

The teachers' teaching experience was equally important for the study to identify whether their teaching experience contributed to the students' performance. The table below gave results of the teachers' teaching experience.

Table 4.7

Distribution of teachers' by their teaching experience

Teaching experience	Frequency	Percent
1-5 years	9	9.8
6-10 years	21	22.8
11-20 years	56	60.9
Over 20 years	6	6.5
Total	92	100.0

According to the teachers' experience, majority had worked between 11-20 years. This indicates that most teachers in Meru South District have a teaching experience of more than 10 years entailing that, the experience gained and proper management of supervision of students ensures high performances in KCSE. The teachers are able to be guided through training by attendance of seminars and workshops supported by the headteachers to run better and appropriate teaching approaches.

Table 4.8

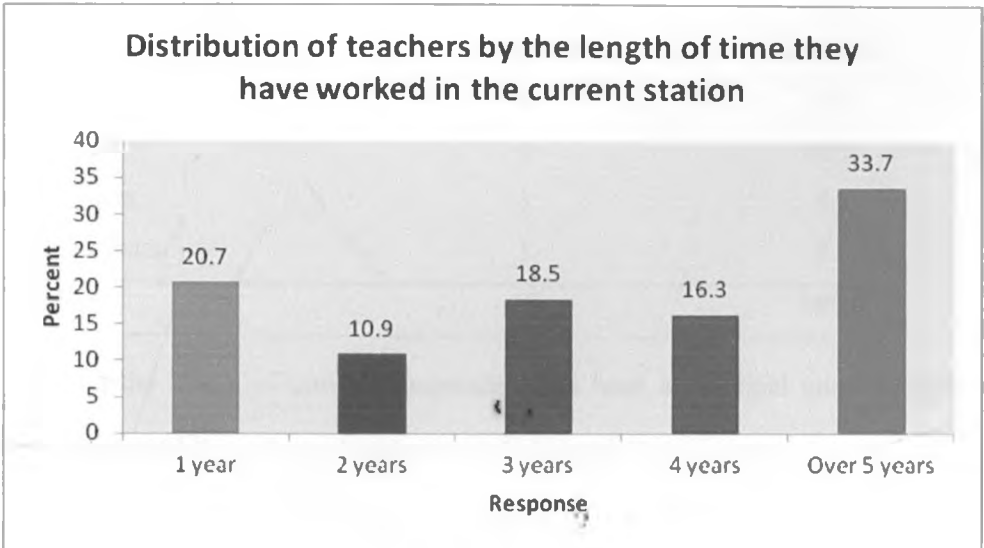
Distribution of principals' by the length of time they have worked in the current station

Years of experience	Frequency	Percent
1-5 years	12	63.2
5-10 years	7	36.8
Total	19	100.0

Findings on the length of time they have worked in the current station majority had served in their current stations for 1-5 years. This is an indication that majority of the principals in Meru South District have worked as heads of their respective schools for less than 5 years and none of the principals in the school sampled for the study had worked in the current station for over 10 years. This was for the reason that Meru South district was created in the years 2008 and thus majority of the principals' may have come from other stations in or outside the district, others may have been promoted from deputies to principal. Duration of principals in a certain station would give the minimum duration required for the head of school to effect changes based on their leadership style.

Figure 4.3

Distribution of teachers by the length of time they have worked in the current station



Findings on the length of time they have worked in the current station majority, said over 5 years. This shows that most teachers are aware of their principal's leadership styles in that station. Teachers' who had stayed in one station for long are expected to give valuable information on the effective leadership styles employed by the school principal to influence students' academic achievement.

Table 4.9**Duration the respondents had served as principals'**

Years	Frequency	Percent
1-5 years	8	42.1
6-10 years	9	47.4
11-15 years	1	5.3
Over 15 years	1	5.3
Total	19	100.0

Regarding the length of time the respondent has been a principal minority had over 20 years while majority had between 1-5 years. This indicates that majority of principals in Meru South District have less than 10 years of experience. These results imply that, new generation of leadership in public secondary schools could be accompanied by new leadership style particularly at the time when subsidized secondary education is fully operational. Job mobility was also quite high in the education sector where most principals' opted for other jobs or promotions.

Table 4.10**If the teachers had taught in any other stations**

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	33	35.9
No	59	64.1
Total	92	100.0

Findings on whether the respondents had taught in any other station showed that, minority had taught in other stations while majority had not. The results indicate

the average duration in which a teacher was based in one station before they transfer. This could further translate to the probability in which leadership culture can be sustained in a particular station. It also implied that most teachers' in the area of study are well versed in matters of students' academic achievement and could confidently give information on how to improve students' performance.

Table 4.11
Length of time teachers had taught in other stations

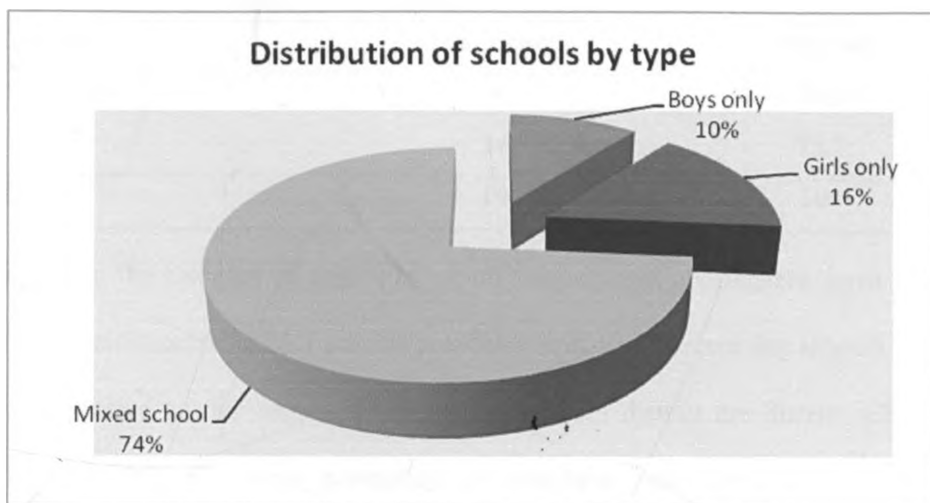
Year	Frequency	Percent
1 year	27	29.3
2 years	20	21.7
3 years	7	7.6
4 years	2	2.2
Over 5 years	7	7.6
Not applicable	29	31.5
Total	92	100.0

This could further indicate that majority of the teachers had spent more time in their current station than in other station thus were aware of any methods that can be applied to improve performance and mentor their peers who are getting employed.

Figure 4.4

Type of the school

Figure 4.4 presents the length of time teachers had taught in other stations



Results indicated that, majority of the respondents' schools were mixed. This indicates that most schools in Meru South are mixed schools while boys' schools are fewer than girls' schools. This can explain why there are more male principals as compared to female principals since most of the sampled for the study had male principals.

Table 4.12

Category of school by administrative ranking

Category	Frequency	Percent
Provincial	5	26.3
District	14	73.7
Total	19	100

Regarding the category of school in which the principal administers, most (73.7 %) are district schools, 26.3 percent provincial and 10.5 percent day schools. This clearly shows us that most schools in Meru South district are district schools. Although currently, some provincial schools have been elevated to national schools.

Table 4.13

Category of school by day/boarding

	Frequency	Percent
Boarding	7	36.8
Day	4	21.1
Day and boarding	8	42.1
Total	19	100.0

Findings on whether the school category are either day, boarding or day and boarding showed that majority of the schools are day and boarding and mixed schools (refer to table 4.15). As a government policy mixed schools should be led by either a male or female principal and vice versa for the deputy. Thus, the

finding in the areas of study indicates the presence of more male principal as compared to females.

On whether the principal has attended any seminar of education management or education, all the principals (100 percent) said they had attended such seminars implying that all principals in Meru South district have ever attended a seminar and thus have been informed about good leadership skills.

A follow-up question was posed on any management skills that principals had in their course of their duty to manage the schools.

Table 4.14

Duration and frequency of the seminar

Duration (Weeks)	1	2	Mean	Standard deviation		
Seminar	68.4	31.6	1.7	0.46		
Workshop/conference	100	-	2.0	-		
In-service	94.7	5.3	1.9	0.22		
Frequency (Times)	1	2	3	4 and above	Mean	Standard deviation
Seminar	31.6	42.1	15.8	10.5	2.9	0.89
Workshop/ conference	15.8	36.8	26.3	21.1	2.5	0.72
In-service	89.5	10.5	-	-	3.89	0.31

On the duration in which the principals attended seminar of education management or education, workshop/conferences took the small duration of 1 week with a mean of 2.0 and no standard deviation, In-service followed with a

mean of 1.9 and standard deviation of 0.22, and lastly Seminars follow, been the one taking a large duration with a mean of 1.7 and 0.46 standard deviation.

On the frequency to which different seminars were attend, In-service was the least attend with a mean of 3.89 and standard deviation of 0.31, seminar follows with a mean of 2.9 and standard deviation of 0.8 and lastly, workshop/conferences follows with a mean of 2.5 and standard deviation of 0.7. This implies that workshops/ conferences takes the least duration and is the mostly attended.

Seminars and workshop are organized mostly to enrich the principals' skills in management as well as meet with their colleagues in other stations for idea sharing particularly on leadership. On whether meetings are called by the principal involving teachers and parents all the principals and teachers acknowledged that such meetings are there implying that principals in Meru South district call meetings involving teachers and parents to discuss performance of their students. This indicates that communicate to both teachers and parents through meetings as face to face meeting are effective way of communicating policies hence they are well understood.

4.4 General information

The next section was based on the principals and teachers responses on the leadership styles (behaviour) employed in their respective stations. The section also presents the methods/approaches used in teaching influencing KCSE performance. Likert scale was used, from point one to five points where 1 point

represented those factors that respondents agreed most while 5 points indicated high disagreement with the stated factors. Those who neither agreed nor disagreed were regarded as undecided and their responses were awarded 3 points and thus, the lower the mean, the high the agreement with the statements and vice versa. At the same time, lower standard deviation was an implication that respondents unanimously agreed with the factors and vice versa.

Table 4.15

Principals' response on their leadership behaviour

Principal's leadership behavior	Mean	Standard Deviation
a) Am friendly and social	1.9	0.3
b) Allow members complete freedom in their work	2.2	0.7
c) Encourage use of uniform procedures	2.2	0.7
d) Encourage creativity in the group	2.1	0.6
e) Keep the group in good standing with higher authority	2.4	0.7
f) Let others take your leadership in a group	3.8	0.5
g) Patiently wait for results of an action	3.6	0.7
h) Let members do their work the way they think best	3.7	0.7
i) Decide on what shall be done and how it shall be done	3.2	1.0
j) Am willing to make changes with decisions agreed upon	2.3	1.0
k) Act without consulting the group	3.7	0.7
l) Support teachers and students welfare	1.7	0.5

From the findings, the principals alleged that, they support teachers and students welfare, they are friendly and social, encourage creativity in the group, allow members complete freedom in their work and encourage use of uniform procedure. In addition, the principals are willing to make changes with decisions agreed upon and keep any group created in their respective schools in good standing with higher authority.

This implies that, most public secondary schools in Meru South district use democratic style of leadership with majority of principles seeking for consultation with teachers and other stakeholders within their station before making major decisions. As recommended by the Republic of Kenya report (1997), decisions by organization matters should be arrived at after making the necessary consultations and communication by various sections of the organization and thus, school should develop an organic structure which has an open democratic, collaborative and participatory system with verbal and lateral communication. However, Okoth (2008) asserts that participative leadership requires a leader with power who is willing to share it with his/her power the leader sets the boundaries within which subordinates participation or consultations are welcome and the leader who makes decisions concerning the school personnel by involving them is highly democratic.

Table 4.16**Teachers' response on the principals' leadership behaviour**

Principal's leadership behavior	Mean	Standard Deviation
a) Friendly to you and easy to talk to	1.9	1.1
b) Shares information frankly	2.5	1.3
c) Bases praise/ criticism on opinion rather than fact	3.1	1.3
d) Expect each member to do his/her best	1.8	1.1
e) Supervises you sufficiently	2.4	1.2
f) Displays confidence and trust whether or not he/she agree with you/them	2.3	1.2
g) Is sensitive to individuals needs of members	2.4	1.4
h) Treat all teachers equally	2.6	1.4
i) Allows members of staff to quest his/her views	2.6	1.4
j) Sets goal for the group	2.6	1.3
k) Accepts blames in case of mistakes or failure	2.4	1.1
l) Shows no favor and treats all students equally	2.3	1.4
m) Give recognition and rewards to students' achievement	1.6	0.8
n) Put suggestions made by students into operation	2.1	1.2
o) Emphasizes on good performance	1.3	0.5

Regarding teachers responses on the leadership behaviour of the principals in their respective school, they highly agreed that, the principals greatly emphasizes on good performance, give recognition and rewards to students' achievement, expect each member to do his/her best, friendly to teachers and are easy to talk to, put suggestions made by students into operation and displays confidence and trust whether or not he/she agree with you/them.

At the same time, the principals' normally, shows no favor and treats all students equally supervising the teachers sufficiently is sensitive to individual's needs of members, does accept blame in case of mistakes or failure and normally do share information frankly.

Responses from teachers confirm the principals' allegations that their leadership behaviour is democratic. As stated by Kibunja, (2004) in her study of secondary schools students' attitude to principals' participative leadership style, democratic characteristic of such principals' encourages such schools to find students' suggestion boxes, notice boards, magazines and students councils noted. These facilities are present in some schools in Meru South but in some rarely opened and therefore minimal feedback to the students who wait in vain.

Table 4.17

Teachers response on methods/approaches used in teaching influencing KCSE performance

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	91	98.9
No	1	1.1
Total	92	100.0

The respondents were also asked whether methods/approaches used in teaching influence KCSE performance where an overwhelming majority were positive to agree with this. This indicates that teaching approaches/methods are effective tools in enhancing academic performance of public secondary schools. For

effective teaching approaches, teachers need to participate in schools leadership through making opinions a fact that would improve their morale and ownership of ideals. The teaching method that is identified to be appropriate for teaching, will be embraced by teachers for use to improve performance through the support of the principal as the administrator of the school. Support by providing financial and physical resources.

It should be noted that the principal's role as a responder, manager and initiator contributes to teachers and staff morale either by fostering a rough atmosphere or by supporting them and collaborating with them. Griffin (1996) and Okoth (2008) concurs with this by saying when a principal is at the centre of a teaching and learning process he/she is fulfilling the major role of his profession and what the society expects him/her to do.

The researcher also sought to know the challenges the teachers encounter in managing students so as to improve their performance. Some of the challenges stated were; lack of role models, negative attitude of the students towards education, low entry behavior, missing classes due to school fees, inadequate learning resources, laxity by students, cases of indiscipline which sometimes keep them away from school, lack of parental support, lack of focused students and lastly lack of role models in the surroundings. This indicates that teachers put a lot of efforts to ensure students perform as we note that they agree to using various methods and approaches to improve the students performance. However,

principals have a huge role to play to assist the students and teachers to overcome these challenges stated.

Table 4.18

Teachers' responses on how they can rate themselves in submission of various documents

Document	Very				Mean	Standard Deviation
	good	Good	Fair	Poor		
Schemes of work	34.8	50.0	10.9	4.3	3.2	0.4
Records of work	32.6	15.2	25.0	27.2	2.5	1.0
Mark book/ mark register	30.4	52.2	17.4	-	3.1	0.3
End of term mark	44.6	46.7	8.7	-	3.4	0.5

On how the teachers rated themselves in submission of various documents, end of term mark book were the most submitted. schemes of work follows and the mark register as well as records of work. This implies that, end of term mark book and the scheme of works are the most submitted documents by teachers in public secondary schools. This shows that teachers may not take onto consideration all the teaching/learning documents but are quite essential in teaching. They should be considered as core documents to keep track of the students' performance.

4.5 Academic performance of school

Academic performance of schools in Meru Schools was based on a four year analysis of KCSE performance, the extent to which the school has been on track

in meeting its academic performance goals, and the attributes to the students' performance.

Table 4.19

KCSE performance for 2008 to 2011 for secondary schools in Meru South district

Year	Below 5	5-6	6-7	7-8	Above 8	Total
2008	57.9	15.8	10.5	10.5	5.3	100.0
2009	52.6	26.3	0	15.8	5.3	100.0
2010	47.4	31.5	0	15.8	5.3	100.0
2011	47.4	21.0	10.5	5.3	15.8	100.0

To analyze the academic performance of public secondary schools in Meru South district, the study considered 4 years (2008 – 2011) and the Mean Standard Score ranging from 1 point to 12 points. In 2008 and 2009, most of the schools had below 5 points which is equivalent to grade C- and below 57.9 and 52.6 percent respectively. However, most of the schools 52.5 percent had over 5 points indicating a positive academic performance trend. Most schools that had over 5 points' indicated that the principal leaned more on democratic style of leadership as compared to other leadership styles. The use of democratic leadership style enabled the students performance to improve as principal and teachers own the policies and regulations of the school as Kemp and Nathan (1989) concur by saying they are team players who refer to the institution as 'our school'.

Table 4.20

KCSE performance for 2008 to 2011 for secondary schools in Meru South district against the different leadership styles

Leadership style	Average Mean Grade (for years 2008 – 2011)					Total
	Below 5	5 – 6	6 - 7	7 - 8	Above 8	
Democratic	5.3	5.3	29.4	44.2	15.8	100.0
Autocratic	58.7	26.3	-	9.7	5.3	100.0
laissez faire	23.7	31.5	23.7	15.8	5.3	100.0

From the findings, high performance was recorded in those schools with democratic leadership style as indicated by 15.8% with mean grade above 8, 44.2% above 7 while 29.4% of schools registered mean grade of above 6. Conversely, the study disclosed that autocratic style of leadership leads to low KCSE performance as indicated by majority (58.7%) of those schools with such leadership recording an average mean grade of below 5. This implies that, democratic type of leadership leads to good KCSE performance.

Table 4.21

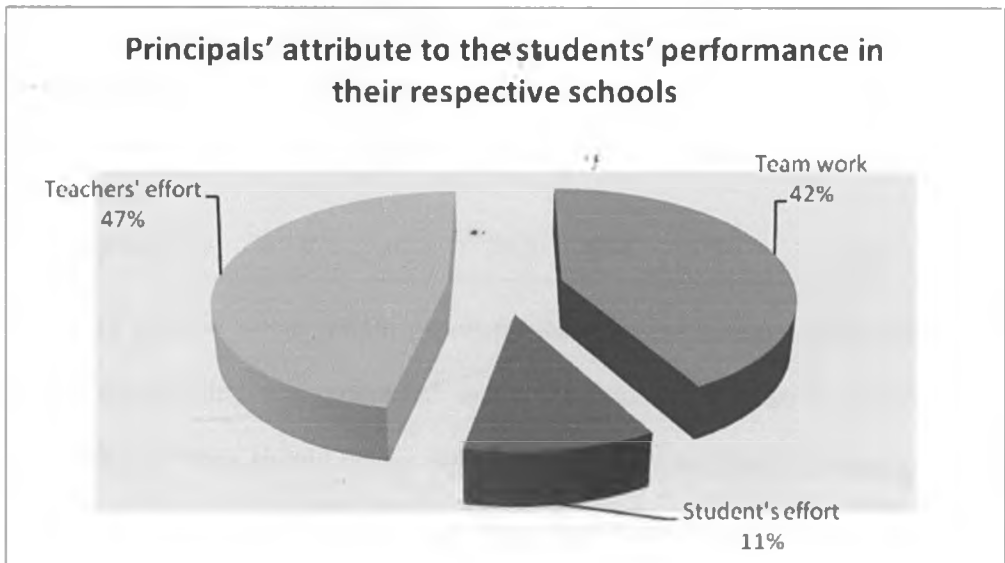
Principals response on the extent to which the school has been on track in meeting its academic performance goals

Record	Frequency	Percent
Very much on track	1	5.3
On track	6	31.6
Not on track	11	57.9
Barely on track	1	5.3
Total	19	100.0

Regarding the extent to which the school has been on track in meeting its academic performance goals, majority of principals admitted that the performance had not been on track. Only a handful of principals' said that the performance has been very much on track. This implies that, most public secondary schools in Meru South district have not been on track in meeting its academic performance goals. This could be attributed to frequent transfers present in the area of study.

Figure 4.5

Principals' attribute to the students' performance in their respective schools



The researcher also sought to know the principal's attributes to students performance. From the findings, majority attributed the performance to the teachers' efforts, team work, students' effort and lastly parents' responsibility. This shows student's performance is attributed to the teachers' efforts and team work (as earlier stated) rather than students' effort. It is therefore notable that,

participation in leadership ought to be full so as to ensure maximum satisfaction of members. Performance of students was not attributed to learners since most schools in the area of study were mixed boarding and day schools, which gave students options of not attending schools everyday giving minor excuses.

Table 4.22

Principals’ ranking of certain factors which they perceive attribute to the academic performance

Rank	Very high	High	Fairly high	Low	Mean	Standard Deviation
a) Teachers effort	5.3	73.7	15.8	5.3	2.2	0.6
b) Team work	5.3	57.9	36.8	-	2.3	0.6
c) Students effort	0	21.1	73.7	5.3	2.8	0.5
d) Parents responsibility	0	10.5	26.3	63.2	3.5	0.7

Ranking in order in which certain factors attributes to the students performance, parents responsibility was perceived to be the least contributor to students’ performance yet they should be the main contributors to students’ performance. This could be attributed to the fact that many parents are illiterate or ignorant of their children performance in school, which is very sad. Student’s performance according to the study was mostly attributed to teachers’ efforts and team work rather than parents responsibility.

As asserted by Kimathi (2010), principals should note that leadership is not a chance one has been given to ‘pour’ scorn and humiliation to the teachers but a chance to assist individuals or groups to move towards productive goals that are

acceptable. Since highly motivated teachers also motivate their students' academic performance to improve.

4.6 Influence of principals' personal factors on academic achievement

This section was based on the influence of principals' age bracket on KCSE performance; the influence of principals' professional qualification on KCSE performance as well as the principals' level of experience to influence students academic achievement.

Table 4.23

Influence of principals' age bracket on KCSE performance

Age bracket	Annual KCSE performance				Average Score
	Year 2008	Years 2009	Year 2010	Years 2011	
36-45 years	4.57	4.71	5.14	5.14	4.89
46-55 years	4.80	4.80	5.60	6.00	5.30
Aggregate Score	4.69	4.76	5.37	5.57	5.10

The study indicated that, the best performance in Meru South District was experienced in the years 2010 and 2011 with Mean Standard Score of 5.60 and 6.00 respectively. This performance was realized in schools with principal aged above 45 years. The overall performance also indicated that since 2008 to 2011, the academic achievement has been divided in the line of the age bracket of the school head with principals within 46 – 55 years of age yielding the best performance (5.10) as compared to those aged 36 – 45 years. This indicates that

the age bracket of the principals largely determine the academic achievement of the school. Although most of the schools had principals aged between 36-45 years (refer to table 4.4). The principals whose performance was good were said to lean more on democratic leadership style, it is expected that the older the principal, the more the leadership skills and experience they will have. This enables them to adopt the best leadership style that is largely participatory that autocratic which they felt enabled them to yield good results.

Table 4.24

Influence of principals' academic qualification on KCSE performance

Qualification	Annual KCSE performance				Average Score
	Year 2008	Years 2009	Year 2010	Years 2011	
Diploma in Education	4.00	4.00	4.20	4.00	4.05
Bachelor in Education	4.82	5.00	5.73	6.00	5.39
Masters in Education	5.00	5.00	5.33	5.33	5.17
Aggregate Score	4.61	4.67	5.09	5.11	4.87

Regarding the influences of principals' professional qualification on students' achievement, the study established that the highest academic achievement was attained by principals with at least a Bachelor Degree, that is, Mean Standard Score of 5.39 and 5.17 respectively. The principals with Diploma in Education were found to have consistently registered lower academic achievement (4.05) than their colleagues with higher professional achievements.

This indicates that, the principals' professional qualification, highly contributes to students' academic achievement in KCSE performance. The professional qualification enables the principal to identify the best type of leadership to lead students to academic achievement.

Table 4.25

Influence of principals' experience as principal on KCSE performance

Experience as a principal	Annual KCSE performance				Average Score
	Year 2008	Years 2009	Year 2010	Years 2011	
Below 5 years	4.11	4.33	4.56	4.56	4.39
5-10 years	5.00	5.00	5.88	5.88	5.44
11-15 years	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.25
Above 15 years	7.00	7.00	8.00	9.00	7.75
Aggregate Score	5.03	5.08	5.61	6.11	5.46

The study also revealed that the best performance in Meru South District has been achieved by the most experienced principal in headship with those having over 15 years of experience as principals yielding a mean score of 7.75. The study also established that, the lowest academic achievement were consistently experiences in those schools with principals below 5 years of experience. This tells us, the older the principal the more the years of service, the more the experience which is brought about by the number of conferences, seminars and workshops attended. They are also able to particularly identify areas of correction in their leadership to better students' performance.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter contains the summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations. The aim of the study was to investigate the influence of principals' leadership styles on students' academic achievement in KCSE in Meru South District. The targeted population was 20 principals and 100 teachers working in stations in Meru South district.

5.2 Summary of the study

The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of principals' leadership styles in students' academic achievement in K.C.S.E in Meru South district. Specifically, the study sought to determine the extent the principals' use of autocratic leadership style influences students' academic achievement in KCSE; to determine the principals' use of democratic leadership style to influence students academic achievement; to determine the influence of the principals' use of laissez faire leadership style on students' academic achievement as well as to determine the influence of personal factors such as age, professional qualification and experiences on students' academic achievement in KCSE.

The study was conducted using the ex-post facto theory design where the principals' leadership styles and students academic achievement were assumed to

have occurred and could not therefore be manipulated by the researcher. The target population consisted of all principals of public secondary schools in Meru South district. According to a report in the Ministry of Education there are forty-four secondary schools. Random sampling was used to select 20 secondary schools from the 40 public secondary schools in Meru South district to participate in the study. The researcher used purposive sampling techniques to select the principals of the selected schools after the random sampling. This sampling gave a matrix of 120 respondents consisting of 20 principals' and 100 teachers.

A questionnaire was used as the tool for collecting the data from both the teachers and headteachers where its items were designed based on the objectives of the study and on the literature review. The instruments were piloted in the two secondary schools in Meru South, which was not included in the actual study. At the same time, the researcher used the split half method to enhance instrument reliability. For this study the reliability co-efficient for the headteachers' questionnaire was 0.87 while that of teachers was 0.91 thus the research instruments were consistent.

For ethical purpose, the researcher obtained a research permit from the National council for science and Technology and letter of authorization from the District education Office of Meru South district and thereafter collected the data personally by administering the research instruments to the various selected schools. The study yielded data that required both qualitative and quantitative

analysis. Analysis of data started with editing in order to identify errors made by the respondents. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the quantitative data obtained. Qualitative data generated from the open-ended questions in the research instruments was organized into themes and patterns based on analysis of meanings and implications emanating from respondents information and documented data on academic performance. The results of data analysis were presented in mainly in tables, bar-graphs and pie-charts.

5.3 Findings of the study

The analysis of the data enable the researcher to come up with the following findings; The study indicated that, the principal use of autocratic leadership affects the students' academic achievements in KCSE, as per the finding they use the following ways; deciding on what shall be done and how it shall be done, acting without the group, basing praise/ criticism on opinion rather than facts, supervising teachers more sufficiently as well as setting goals for the group. All these ways does not involve teachers' views and thus teachers may not work best due to principals' dictatorship, hence contributing to failure in academic performance in K.C.S.E. this has been noted in the KCSE mean grade of those schools which had 6 points showing autocratic leadership styles having a mean of C and below.

Regarding the extent to which the principals use of democratic leadership affects the students' academic achievements in KCSE, showed that principals use some

behaviors such as; been friendly and social, patiently waiting for results of an action, willing to make changes with decisions agreed upon, supporting teachers and students welfare, sharing information frankly, allowing members of staff to quest his/her views, accepting blames in case of mistakes or failure, showing no favor and treats all students equally, giving recognition and rewards to students' achievement as well as putting suggestions made by students into operation. This involve all the other parties in the school and thus creating a better environment for teachers to work well, hence higher academic performance in K.C.S.E is achieved. This was witnessed in school which had a mean of C+ (7) points and above. The principals felt that participatory leadership gave all personnel a chance to participate in decision making management of the institution.

Conclusions on the extent to which the principal use of laissez faire affects students academic performance in K.C.S.E showed that they use different ways such as; letting others take his/her leadership in a group, letting members do their work the way they think best, displaying confidence and trust whether or not he/she agree with him/her and expecting each member to do his/her best. In this case you find that some teachers are not good at setting their own deadlines, managing their own schedules and solving problems on their own. In such situation, students' academic performance may go down when team members do not get enough guidance or feedback from the school principal which practiced this unstable mean. During the different years understudy the mean was flexible.

This would be contributed to also the candidates students who sat for the exam that year.

On teachers and principals view of principals behavior showed that principals are; friendly and social, support teachers and students welfare, gives recognition and rewards to students' achievement as well as putting suggestions made by students into operation. These attributes are all in democratic leadership and thus the students' academic performance in Meru South District is in a position of improving and that is why schools in Meru South district are improving from one year to another as per the findings.

On the influence of personal qualification, most teachers are aged below 35 years and add efforts in improvement of academic performance and on the principal's age most are between 46-55 years and thus are more aware of better ways of leadership which can improve academic performance. In part of professional qualification most teachers and principals have a bachelor degree in education and thus have best teaching qualifications which can be applied in bettering the students' academic performance. On experience most teachers have low experience of below 5 years and thus require to work harder to learn better ways of improving students' academic performance. However, the principals have great experience in school leadership and hence aware of better skills which may lead to good students' performance in K.C.S.E.

5.4 Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, the conclusion made was;

The conclusion as per the findings of the objectives was that schools in the areas of study were poorly performing because the style of leadership that was inculcated by the principals. The study therefore concluded that the right leadership style was necessary to adopt to improve students' performance.

The study therefore concluded that principals should adopt democratic leadership style which enabled all stakeholders and personal to participate in school administration. The personnel understood were the teachers since they were immediate to the students who directly took part in dealing with students to better their academic performance. Most of them preferred aspects or abilities of a principal who was democratic.

The study also concluded that factors like age, professional qualification and experience of a principal played a key role in determining students' performance. In age the older the principal the more the experience he/she presents. This was attained by the number of workshops, seminars and conferences the principals attended.

These trainings were especially relevant to be used in the current education sector. Since education has become very dynamic. The principals' need to be at par with issues present in the contemporary society.

Regarding the professional qualification of principals' influence of students' performance, the level of qualification did not affect students' performance as long as the principal had essential skills required of them for leadership.

To conclude, Meru South district although, relatively young shows great potential in producing students who can competitively undertake professional marketable courses like medicine, education, pharmacy to name a few. Thus the non-performing schools adopt appropriate leadership style used by heads of performing schools to better their performance.

5.5 Recommendations

Meru South district is a newly created district and since its inception the district has been registering improvement in its KCSE results, however some schools seem to lag behind in performance. Thus guidance is required to encourage the democratic leadership skills for those schools where students' performance in KCSE is wanting. Therefore;

- 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.

- Principal use autocratic and laissez fair leadership enacts, dictatorship and free reign will never encourage teachers and students to work hard, hence contributing to failure in KCSE academic performance.
- The government should closely follow up performance of the non performing schools in the district and create ways of boosting and motivating the work force to perform as education remains the key aspect in enabling our youth to become useful personnel in the society.

5.6 Suggestions for further studies

Given the scope and limitations of this study, the researcher recommends further studies in the following areas.

- The study to cover other districts apart from Meru South District to provide comparison in findings,
- 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 to be expanded to cover the challenges affecting leadership in public secondary schools.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Letter of introduction

University of Nairobi,
Department of Educational Administration and Planning,
P.O Box 30197

Date:

EMAIL: fniura@yahoo.com

Dear Respondents,

RE: RESEARCH ASSISTANCE

I am a student at the University of Nairobi doing a Masters Degree in Administration and planning. I am carrying out an academic research on *'The influence of principals' leadership styles on students' academic achievement in K.C.S.E in Meru South District.'*

I hereby promise that all the information offered to me will be treated with the necessary confidentiality and will not be unduly disclosed.

However, you are free to request for a soft copy which can be sent to you by email. Your assistance and cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Yours faithfully,

Fugda Njeru

Appendix II: Principals' questionnaire

Instructions

This questionnaire is divided into 3 sections, A, B and C. Please complete each section according to the instructions

Do not write your name or your school's name to ensure complete confidentiality
(Please respond to all questions)

Part A. Demographic variables

Tick in the appropriate box.

1. What is your gender? Male [] Female []
2. What is your age? Below 25 years []
26 – 35 [] 36 – 45 []
46 – 55 []
3. Please state your highest qualification/ professional qualification
Diploma in Education [] B.A/ B.Sc with P.G.D.E []
B.Ed [] Masters []
4. Indicate your experience as a teacher years?
2-5 years [] 6-10 years []
11-15years [] 16-20 years []
Over 20 years []
5. How long have you been a principal _____ years.
6. How long have you been a principal in the current station? _____ Years
9. What is the type of your school? Boys only [] Girls only []
Mixed school []
10. What category is your school National []
Provincial []
District []
Boarding [] Day []
Day and boarding []

6.Let the others take away your leadership in a group					
7.Patiently waits for the results of an action					
8.Let members do their work the way they think best					
9.Decides on what shall be done and how it shall be done					
10.Am willing to make changes with decisions agreed upon					
11.Act without consulting the group					
12.Support teachers and students welfare					
13. Emphasize on students achievement					
14.Make consultations before arriving at decisions					
15.Give prizes and rewards based on performance					

Part C: Academic performance of the school

1. In the table below, indicate the schools mean scores in K.C.S.E for each of the years indicated

Year	2008	2009	2010	2011
Mean Score				

2. To what extent would you consider the school to be on track in meeting its academic performance goals?

Very much on track [] on track []

Not on track [] Barely on track []

3. What would you attribute to the students performance?

Students' effort []

Teachers' effort []

Parents' responsibility []

Team work []

4. Rank in the order in which they are perceived to contribute to academic performance

4 .

Contribution	Very high contribution	High contribution	Fairly high contribution	Low contribution
Students effort				
Teachers effort				
Parents responsibility				
Team work				

Thank you for your participation

Appendix III: Teachers' questionnaire

Instructions

This questionnaire is divided into 3 sections. A, B and C. Please complete each section according to the instructions

Do not write your name or your school's name to ensure complete confidentiality.

(Please respond to all questions)

PART A. Demographic Variables

(Tick in the appropriate box)

- 1. What is your gender? Male [] Female []
- 2. What is your age? Below 25 years [] 26 – 35 []
36 – 45 [] 46 – 55 []
- 3. Please state your highest qualification/ professional qualification
Diploma in Education [] B.A/ B.Sc []
B.Ed [] Masters in Education []
Others _____
- 4. Indicate your experience as a teacher
1-5 years [] 5-10 years []
10-20 years [] Over 20 years []
- 5. How long have you taught in the current station _____ years
- 6. Have you taught in any other station in the past? Yes [] No []
- 7. If yes, for how long? 1 year [] 2 years []
3 years [] 4 years []
Over 5 years []

8. Meetings are called involving the principal, teachers and parents to discuss performance? Yes [] No []

Section B: Kindly place a tick () in the relevant column to show the extent to which each of the statement applies to the leadership behaviour of the principal in your school

Strongly Agree = SA **Agree = A**
Undecided = U **Disagree = D**
Strongly disagree = SD

Leaders Behaviour	SA	A	U	D	SD
The principal is;					
1.Friendly to you and easy to talk to					
2.Shares information frankly					
3.Bases praise/ criticism on opinion rather than fact					
4.Expects each member to do his/ her best					
5.Supervises you sufficiently					
6. Displays confidence and trust in you and others whether or not he/ she agrees with you/ them.					
7.Is sensitive to individual needs of members					
8.Treats all teachers equally					
9.Allows members of staff to quest his/ her views					
10.Sets goals for the group					
11.Accepts blames in case of mistakes or failure					
12. Shows no favor and treats all students equally.					
13. Give recognition and rewards to students' achievement.					

14. Put suggestions made by students into operation.					
15.Emphasizes on good performance					

Part C: Teaching approaches

1. In your opinion, do you think the methods or approaches used in teaching influence KCSE performance? Yes () No ()

2. What challenges do you encounter in managing students so as to improve their performance?

3. How would you rate yourself in submission of the following documents?

- Very good-If done before or on the day require'd
- Good-Done after one week
- Fair-Done two weeks later or within the term
- Poor-Not done at all

Documents	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor
Schemes of work				
Records of work				
Mark book/mark registers				
End of term marks				

Thank you for your participation

Appendix IV: List of the schools

Ikuu Boys	Kiunguni secondary school
Chuka Boys	Kambandi secondary school
Chuka Girls	Magumoni girls
Ikawa secondary school	Ibiriga secondary school
Magumoni day secondary school	Mutuguni secondary school
Njuri secondary school	Itugurururu secondary school
Kiereni secondary school	Makawani secondary school
Rubati secondary school	Kanyuru secondary school
Ikuu Girls high school	Kangoro secondary school
Mukuuni secondary school	Kiangondũ secondary school
Ndagani secondary school	St. Pauls Njaina secondary school
Magenka secondary school	Allamano Boys secondary school
Kiamuchii secondary school	Ntumbari secondary school
Ndagoni secondary school	Makanyanga secondary school
Karamugi secondary school	Kiaritha secondary school
Mpukoni secondary school	Chief Petro secondary school
ACK Kanwa secondary school	Maabi secondary school
Kathigiririni secondary school	Kajiampau secondary school
Kamwimbi secondary school	Kirege secondary school
Kibumbu secondary school	MCK Kiangiri secondary school
Kiamuriuki secondary school	Ndagoni mixed secondary school

APPENDIX V: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Telephone: 254-020-2213471, 2241349

254-020-310571, 2213123, 2219420

Fax: 254-020-318245, 318249

When replying please quote

secretary@ncst.go.ke

P.O. Box 30623-00100

NAIROBI-KENYA

Website: www.ncst.go.ke

NCST/RCD/14/012/776

22nd June 2012

Our Ref:

Date:

Fudga Njura Njeru
University of Nairobi
P.O.Box 30197-00100
Nairobi.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on *"Influence of principals' leadership styles on students' academic achievement in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) in Meru South District, Kenya,"* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in Meru South District for a period ending 30th September, 2012.

You are advised to report to the District Commissioner and the District Education Officer, Meru South 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. RUGUTI, PhD, HSC.
DEPUTY COUNCIL SECRETARY

Copy to:

The District Commissioner
The District Education Officer

APPENDIX VI: RESEARCH PERMIT

PAGE 2

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
Prof./Dr./Mr./Mrs./Miss/Institution
Fudga Njura Njeru
of (Address) University of Nairobi
P.O.Box 30197-00100, Nairobi.
has been permitted to conduct research in

**Meru South
 Eastern**

**Location
 District
 Province**

**on the topic: Influence of principals' leadership
 styles on students' academic achievement in
 KCSE in Meru South District, Kenya.**

for a period ending: 30th September, 2012.

PAGE 3

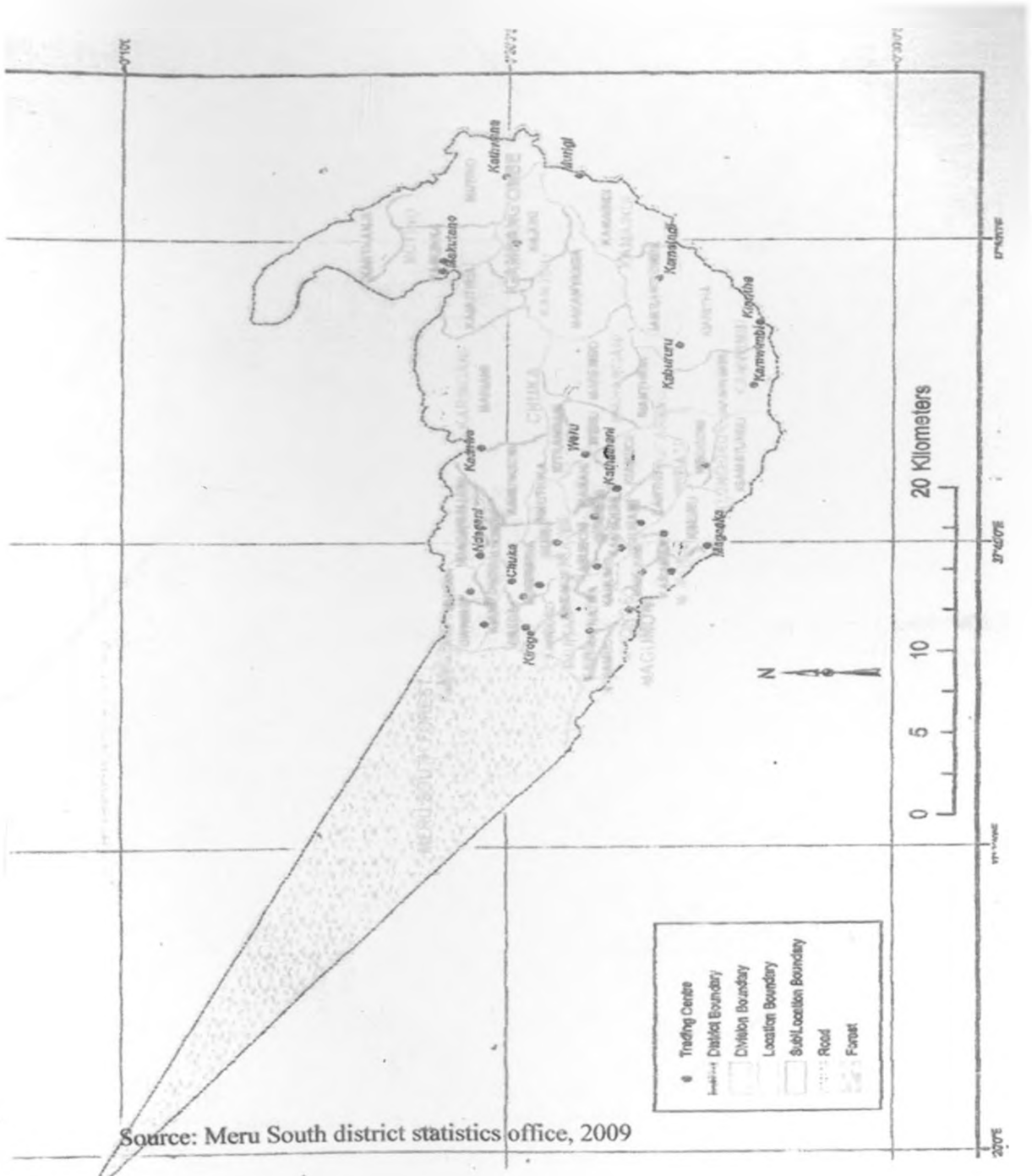
Research Permit No. NCST/RCD/14/012/776
Date of issue 22nd June, 2012
Fee received KSH. 1,000



**Applicant's
 Signature**

**Secretary
 National Council for
 Science & Technology**

APPENDIX VII: ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARIES OF MERU SOUTH DISTRICT



Source: Meru South district statistics office, 2009