

Relationship between Selected Management Practices and Students' Performance in KCSE in Public Secondary Schools in Kiambu County, Kenya

Margaret W. Ruinge

Abstract

Performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) of public secondary schools in Kiambu County has been an area of concern for the last five years. Poor management practices by principals have in particular been identified as one of the possible factors that lead to poor performance. However, there were no conclusive research findings or evidence to show how management practices related with students' performance in these schools. This study attempted to fill this particular gap by investigating the relationship between selected management practices and students' performance in KCSE in public secondary schools in Kiambu County. The study specifically looked at five management practices; school focus on meeting student's needs, goal setting (establishment of performance objectives) by the school on curricular activities, team collaboration in curricular activities, communication on curricular issues, involvement of teachers and students in decision making by the school administration. Specific objectives of the study were to determine the application of these selected management practices and to investigate their relationship with students' performance in KCSE in public secondary schools in Kiambu County. Correlational research design was used for this study. The design was appropriate because it allowed the researcher to collect data from the respondents and to describe the degree of relationship between the selected school management practices and students' performance. One questionnaire for principals and teachers was used as research instrument. Pre-testing was conducted in eight schools and Spearman rank correlation coefficient (ρ) was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. Items in the questionnaire had Spearman rank correlation coefficient (ρ) equal to 0.5654. This value was statistically significant since it exceeded the critical value of correlation coefficient $r = 0.506$ obtained from the statistical tables on level of significance of 0.05 for a two tailed test for 16 number of pairs. Target population comprised of principals of the 227 public secondary schools in Kiambu County and 3736 teachers in these schools. Sample size was determined using Cochran's sample size formula. Calculations gave the sample size for schools as 143 and that of the teachers as 348. There were 10 sub-counties in Kiambu County. The researcher ensured that, there was equal representation of principals and teachers from schools in each sub-county. Fourteen (14) schools ($143 \div 10$ sub-counties = 14.3) from each sub-county were selected using simple random sampling. Sample size for schools became $14 \times 10 = 140$ schools. All the principals of the sample schools made the sample for principals. Three (3) teachers ($348 \div 140$ sample schools = 2.5) from each sample school were also selected using simple random sampling. Sample size for the teachers became $3 \times 140 = 420$. The researcher requested the principals and teachers in the sample to fill the questionnaire. Respondents from 125 schools public secondary schools in Kiambu County returned their questionnaires. This interpreted to a return rate of 89.29%. Frequencies and percentages were used to present and describe the data on application of the selected management practices in public secondary schools in Kiambu County and on suggestions from the respondents on how these practices can be improved. To answer the research questions correlation coefficients were obtained to find the relationship between each of the selected management practices and students' performance in KCSE. Analysis of data revealed that there was a positive relationship between each of the five selected management practices and students' performance in KCSE. Management practices applied by a school principal have a relationship with students' performance in KCSE. Adequate training of principals in quality management and administration would be useful to improve not only students' performance in KCSE but also organizational performance.