

Ways through Which Principals Acquire the Leadership Competencies Required for Effective Management of Secondary Schools in Nairobi County, Kenya

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Abstract

The last two decades have seen principals in Kenya come under heavy criticism over some serious cases of mismanagement that resulted in some of the worst institutional accidents, disasters/tragedies, unrests and even social and economic crimes that Kenya has witnessed. This study sought to find out ways that principals acquire the leadership competencies required for effective management of secondary schools in Nairobi County. It adopted both qualitative and quantitative methods. The target population was all the principals/deputy principals, heads of departments, teachers, students' leaders and members of the Boards of Management of all public secondary schools in Nairobi County. A sample of 30 schools and their 30 principals/deputy principals, 60 heads of departments, 120 teachers, 180 student leaders and 20 members of the Boards of Management participated in the study. Stratified random technique was used to select the schools, the teachers and the heads of departments to participate in the study. All principals/deputy principals, senior student leaders and their student leaders and heads of Board of Management of the selected schools automatically participated in the study while the other student leaders and other members of Board of Management were selected through random sampling procedure. Data was collected using questionnaires, focus group discussion and interview guide. The quantitative data collected was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 11.5. The findings of the study established that, leadership competencies were acquired through pre-service, in-service and on-the-job training. In pre-service training, the principals who had a bachelor's degree had been exposed to a one unit course in education administration in the universities. The unit was also offered as an area of specialization at masters level in public and private universities for those principals who had masters degrees.

Keywords: Principals, Leadership, Competencies, Effective Management

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