

TITLE: The relationship between school leadership and performance in KCPE examination: The case of primary schools in Ganze sub county-Kilifi County

AUTHOR: Kazungu, Florence

ABSTRACT

Whenever the cabinet secretary for education announces the KCPE results one is almost sure that schools from Ganze Sub-county are among the least performing nationally. There are natural difficulties experienced in the region but these difficulties are not uncommon in other regions like Samburu and Pokot yet the schools in the latter regions are among the top performing schools in the country. This begs the question of whether the leadership of these schools is really up to the task. Literature is divided on extent to which leadership accounts for students achievement with some saying there is an indirect influence. Leadership is responsible for the level of motivation, school culture and staff development, community participation and resource allocation, all which have a bearing in students' achievement. This was the premise of this study. The purpose was to establish any relationship between school leadership and students' achievement. The objectives of the study are to establish if leadership style, leadership skills and leadership focus has any relationship with pupils' performance in KCPE. In order to achieve this, the researcher had set out on a comparative study of the schools considered top performing and low performing. Two questionnaires were piloted in 3 schools, one from each zone where 4 teachers and the head teachers were involved in each school. A Cronbach coefficient of .732 was obtained on the data that was collected hence making the instruments reliable. In the actual study, responses were compared using t-test for independent samples and relationship ascertained using Pearson's correlation on the backdrop of the schools' performance in KCPE. The study established that the head teachers of primary schools in Ganze combined different leadership styles but the head teachers of High Performing schools were on High Range' while those from Low Performing schools were on 'Moderate Range'. Among all the styles, democratic style had a strongest positive relationship: $r=.675$; $p=.016$; $\alpha = 0.05$ (2-tailed) with the KCPE Mean score of school ($M=261.58$; $SD=57.937$); Head teacher's score on Democratic style ($M=23.667$; $SD=2.461$). On leadership skills, head teacher who employed more technical skills posted better results in pupils' performance in KCPE. The technical skills had strongest positive relationship; $r=.732$; $p=.007$; $\alpha = 0.01$ (2-tailed) with the KCPE Mean score of school ($M=261.58$; $SD=57.937$); Head teacher's score on Technical skills ($M=20.66$; $SD=3.498$). On leadership focus for improved performance, the focus on redesigning the school organization had the strongest positive relationship; $r=.654$; $p=.000$; 0.01 level (2-tailed) with the Mean score of the school in KCPE ($M=261.58$; $SD=56.258$); Mean score in Redesigning the school organization ($M=20.69$; $SD=4.464$). The researcher concluded that the head teachers of primary schools in Ganze combined different leadership styles but the head teachers of High Performing were on High Range' while those from Low Performing schools were on 'Moderate Range'. Head teachers of primary school in Ganze combined the three skills in different magnitudes but those who employed more technical and conceptual skills posted better results in pupils' performance in KCPE. The researcher recommends that the head teachers should allocate the scarce resources prudently. They should not give priority to attending heads conferences which are mere talk shows; instead

allocate resources to areas which have a direct bearing on learning by filling Teacher shortages gaps with BOM Teachers. It is hoped that the findings of this study will be useful to the department of Education, the head teachers, and aspiring head teachers.