

**AN INVESTIGATION OF PRINCIPALS' MANAGERIAL  
EFFECTIVENESS ON STUDENTS ACHIEVEMENT IN KENYA  
CERTIFICATE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION EXAMINATION:  
A CASE OF IMENTI NORTH DISTRICT  
MERU COUNTY**

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## ABSTRACT

The education system in Kenya is largely examination oriented. The quality of education tends to be evaluated in terms of the number of students passing national examinations. Educators and the general public have time and again expressed concern over factors that influence students performance in examinations. The principals' role in secondary schools is to promote academic performance within the schools. The success of what is done in the school is attributed to the principal's ability to coordinate resources in an effective and efficient manner, which consequently, translate to improved academic performance in their respective schools. The principal is the pivot around which many aspects of the school revolve, being the person in charge of every detail of running the school, be it academic or administrative, his managerial effectiveness can make a difference between poor performance or improved performance. It is therefore, important that the performance of a school is appraised against the performance of the person who leads it. The purpose of the study was to investigate the managerial effectiveness of the principals in academic achievement in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examinations in Imenti North District, in Meru County. The study was occasioned by the continued poor performance by most secondary schools in Imenti North District. The study used descriptive research design from which a sample of 294 respondents was chosen using stratified sampling method. Schools were classified into high performing with an average mean score of 5.5 and above, average performing with an average mean score of 4.0 – 5.49, and low performing with an average mean score below 4. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and the findings of the study drawn according to research questions presented. Considering the findings of this study, it was revealed that principals used quality improvement measures and teamwork that ensured the staff was well established with organizational skills that influenced academic achievement. The Principals were also involved in academic activities by observing and checking the students' and teachers' work, monitoring students' discipline and helping in eradicating cheating in examinations. In conclusion, based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that, a clear policy be developed showing the yardstick for establishing and measuring managerial effectiveness in secondary schools and also the Ministry of Education needs to train practicing and aspiring secondary school principals on school managerial programs necessary to equip them with skills to run their respective schools.