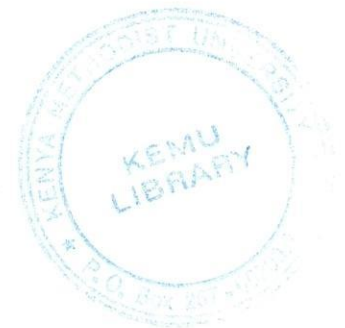


**INFLUENCE OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP ON STUDENTS'  
PERFORMANCE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN PUBLIC  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN TETU DISTRICT,  
NYERI COUNTY, KENYA**

**BY**

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## ABSTRACT

There is a wide recognition that school principals exert a powerful influence on the quality of teaching and students' learning. Research has shown that principals of effective schools impact them through their administrative behavior, policies and practices that affect school effectiveness. The principal's involvement often dictates whether curriculum implementation is done effectively in their schools. The principal must therefore create a supportive environment and promote an academically oriented, orderly and purposeful school climate. The objectives of this study were; to investigate the role of the principal as a leader in influencing the students performance in English language in public schools in Tetu District, establish types of leadership employed and establish the challenges faced by principals as leaders of public secondary schools. The student performance in English was chosen as dependent variable in this study because of the importance attached to the English language in our school system. English plays a strategic role because almost all subjects are taught using the English language. However, students' performance in English in many public secondary schools is not encouraging. Students who master English are likely to reap many academic, social and professional benefits. The independent variables in the study were school leadership, school infrastructure and teacher competence. Literature review centered around the concept of instructional leadership and its impact on the student performance in English. Transactional and transformational style of leadership and how they influence student performance was also reviewed. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The target population was all the principals in thirty secondary schools in Tetu, teachers of English, all the form four students in Tetu District students and the District Educational Officer. The study made use of a sample of ten principals, fifteen teachers of English, one hundred and seventy one students and one District Educational Officer chosen from the target population using stratified random sampling technique. The study confined itself to leadership factors that influence students' performance in English in public secondary schools in Tetu District. Data was collected using questionnaires, documentary analysis and interview. Data was analyzed as per objectives using descriptive analysis such as frequencies, means, and percentages derived through the SPSS. Data was presented using bar graphs, pie charts and tables. Report from open ended questions and interviews were presented in the form of explanatory notes. The results of this study indicate that despite prudent instructional leadership in schools, students' performance of English is still poor with 60% of the sampled schools registering a mean score of D while 40% of the schools had a mean score of C and below. Factors such as use of mother tongue and *sheng* by students in schools, lack of well equipped libraries and inadequate teaching and learning resources were identified as impacting negatively on students' performance. The study recommends that school principals should establish and maintain language policies in their schools. Also, more teaching and learning materials should be sourced for to avoid over reliance on classroom textbooks. Finally, principals should move more towards transformational leadership that empowers students and teachers to work diligently towards achievement of set goals.