INFLUENCE OF PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP STYLES IN ESTABLISHING SCHOOL CLIMATE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MALINDI DISTRICT

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DECLARATION

This research project report is my own work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university

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This research project report has been submitted for examination with our approval as university supervisors

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my children Joy and Solomon, and my sister Terry

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DEO   District Education Officer

KESI   Kenya Education Staff Institute

SPSS   Statistical Package for Social Sciences

CDCP   Centre for Disease Control and Prevention

NCBL   No Child Left Behind

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate influence of principal's leadership styles in establishing school climate in secondary schools in Malindi district. The objectives of the study were: to determine the influence of principal's autocratic leadership styles in establishing school climate, to determine the influence of democratic leadership style in establishing school climate and determine the influence of Liassez-faire leadership style in establishing school climate.

The literature review relevant to this study laid the background for the study. Using a cross-sectional survey design and systematic random sampling, the researcher sampled 15 schools in Malindi district. From each school a head teacher and six regular teachers were interviewed using a structured questionnaire during the early part of June 2013. A pilot study was carried out prior to data collection.

On the influence of principals' democratic leadership style on the school climate, the principals' responses indicated that they always allowed members to participate in decision making, assigned school members particular tasks in school after consultations, a few principals indicated that they never allowed students to elect school prefects. Some principals indicated that they had a good working relationship with the school members. In their responses most teachers indicated that in a democratic school environment, morale was always high, and they always enjoyed working in such an atmosphere. Majority of the teachers always spent time after school with students who had individual problems. It was important that none of the teachers indicated that they were never friendly to students in a democratic school environment. On the effect of principals' Laissez-faire leadership style on the school climate, the study found that some principals never expected teachers to set their own targets and accomplish them on their own. Principals never allowed teachers to establish quality control standards in school without supervision.

The researcher concluded that autocratic leadership style was the most popular style of leadership employed by principals in Malindi District. The study also concluded that the type of leadership styles employed by the principals in school management had an influence in establishing a positive or negative school climate.

The study recommended that among others the Teachers Service Commission in its management of teachers should train principals in school leadership. The principals should also undertake in-service courses in order to improve school climate through leadership.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

School climate, is the feel of a school that affects everything that happens within a school setting, it has great influence on the success of the teachers as well as student achievement (Halpin, 1966). (Marzano, & McNulty, 2004) reported that effective school leadership substantially boosts student achievement. Effective leadership increases an organization's ability to meet all challenges, including the need to obtain a competitive advantage, the need to foster ethical behavior and the need to manage a diverse workforce fairly and equitably (Moorhead & Griffin, 2004). Therefore, it is imperative that principals develop leadership styles that enhance a school's climate, which in turn, helps in meeting the mandates of a nation. As a result, these leadership styles might ultimately lead to increased student achievement, increased staff job satisfaction, and overall improvement of the schools' climate (Hoy & Miskel, 2000).

The impact of the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation on schools across the United States is of critical interest to the public and has been a frequent focus of the media (Ribbins, 2001). When President Bush signed into law the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001, reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, one of the primary mandates was to improve student achievement. Since school climate has been found to be positively related to

student achievement (Tabuse, 2003), the impact of principal leadership styles on school climate should be considered. Moreover, Leithwood (1990) found that principal leadership exercised the strongest independent influence on planning, structure and organization, as well as on school climate. In addition, Witziers, Bosker and Kruger (2003), found that school climate and leadership style are two things that principals can influence. Consequently, school principals find themselves in the spotlight as they are held accountable for student achievement as well as school climate.

Hoy and Miskel (2001), describes a school climate as a relatively enduring quality of the whole school which is experienced by school members, reveal their shared perceptions of beliefs, and influences their attitudes and behaviour in school. This implies that positive school climate is related to the effectiveness of the whole school. A number of studies in developed countries have demonstrated that the principals play a major role in establishing School climate. Parson, (1967) asserts that, the creation of any school climate start with the principal and is reflected in his relationship with school members and ethos of the school.

The creation of any school climate is dependent on the leadership styles employed by the principal while managing the school. Taylor (2007), argues that, the principal deliberately establishes the school climate through application of selected leadership styles. Consequently, schools with effective leadership styles set high but achievable school goals and academic standards. Such schools believe in the

capacity of their students to achieve and encourage them to respect and pursue academic success.

Research has also demonstrated that there is a strong relationship between school climate and educational outcomes including school attendance, higher grades and classroom test scores (Mc Craken, 2001). In turn students who do well academically are less likely to engage in risky behaviuor such as alcohol and substance abuse compared to students with low academic grades (Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDCP), 2008). Un-Nisa (2003), states that directive supportive, participative and goal oriental leadership styles result in job satisfaction among teachers, and a conducive teaching and learning environment where students feel safe and cared for.

Dunklee (2000), argues that differences in student behaviour and academic outcomes are influenced inter alia by principal's leadership styles. Autocratic leadership style employed by some secondary school principals have been blamed for the rising cases of violence and indiscipline among student, an indicator of negative school climate. Baron (1997), revealed that in schools where principals employed autocratic and compulsive styles of leadership, a considerable percentage of students were victims of bullying, aggression and victimization which reflect the existence of a negative school climate.

Eaxon (2005), argues, that any form of school aggression can contribute to negative school climate which affect the student emotionally, contribute to student low academic achievement and increase dropout rates.

In the recent past the Government of Kenya through the Ministry of Education has attempted to create a conducive teaching and learning climate in schools. However, despite the posting of more trained teachers, banning of corporal punishment and enhanced democracy in schools by allowing students to elect their prefects, most schools have not been able to operate to their full potential (Education Insight June ed., 2011).

The KCSE results released in 2011 indicated that most schools in Coast Province had registered a decline in the school mean scores an indicator of negative school climate. Eshiwani (1993), asserts the quality of education is seen in terms of the number of students passing national examinations. While the public has often expressed dissatisfaction with student performance in national examinations, the whole issue of student performance in Coast Province should be investigated from a broad framework of leadership and existing school climate.

Performance in national examinations in Malindi district has been declining as indicated in Table 1.1. Malindi District Annual Education Report of 2011 indicates that parents and other stakeholders are not only concerned with their children's' poor performance in national examinations but also lament that schools are

infested with drugs, alcohol, in fighting and vandalism. (Malindi District Annual Report, 2011). Other acts of indiscipline reported among students were wanton destruction of school property while protesting against highhandedness of the school leadership (Malindi District Annual Report, 2011). A total of 19 schools had protested in Malindi district in the last four years. This suggests that a negative school climate existed in secondary schools in Malindi district.

Table 1.1

Performance in KSCE 2007-2011

YEAR	NO. OF C ANDIDATES	MEAN SCORE
2011	1685	3.479
2010	1262	4.089
2009	1133	4.140
2008	1200	4.310
2007	1112	5.383

Source: Malindi District Education Office

Most studies conducted on leadership in Malindi district mainly focused on the challenges faced by principals in management of their schools, motivation of teachers and the influence of principal's leadership styles on students' academic performance.

Though physical facilities, student background and teachers qualifications are known to affect teachers and students performance in national examinations, little

seems to have been done on the influence of principal's leadership styles in creation of school climate which is a major factor in school performance. There is need therefore to investigate the influence of a principals leadership styles in establishing school climate.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

School climate does not exist by chance; rather, the principals' leadership styles and values shape it (O'Hanlon & Clifton, 2004). Principals can promote either a positive or a negative school climate through the type of leadership styles they employ in the process of administration of schools.

Secondary schools in Malindi district continues to register low academic grades in national examinations while students engage in anti-social behavior such as alcohol and drug abuse and other forms of indiscipline including bullying and aggression, school strikes characterized by wanton destruction of school property have also been witnessed over the last five years. This situation has prevailed despite various interventions by the government through the Ministry of Education such as posting of more trained teachers, provision of free day secondary tuition, textbooks and school infrastructure. The government has also tried to expand democratic space in schools by allowing students to elect their own prefects. (Malindi District Annual Report, 2011). The question that arises is whether principal's leadership styles influence establishment of school climate in Malindi

district. This study will seek to investigate and establish the influence of principal's leadership styles in establishing school climate in secondary schools in Malindi district. Unless a positive school environment is created to enhance quality academic performance in national examinations, the massive financial investment the government has put in schools in Malindi district will go to waste.

1.3 The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of principal's leadership styles in establishing school climate in public secondary schools in Malindi district.

1.4 Specific objectives of the Study

The following were the objectives of the study;

  i. Determine the influence of principals' autocratic leadership style in establishing school climate in secondary schools in Malindi district.
 ii. Determine the influence of principals' democratic leadership styles in establishing school climate in secondary schools in Malindi district.
iii. Investigate the influence of principals' Laissez-faire leadership style in establishing school climate in secondary schools in Malindi district.

1.5 Research Questions

The following were the objectives of the study;

i. What is the influence of principals' autocratic leadership styles in establishing school climate in secondary schools in Malindi district

ii. To what extent does principals' democratic leadership styles influence establishment of school climate in secondary schools in Malindi district.

iii. Investigate the influence of principals' Laissez-faire leadership style in establishing school climate in secondary schools in Malindi district.

1.6 The Significance of the Study

The study findings will contribute to the pool of knowledge on influence of leadership styles in establishing school climate. The study came up with proposals to assist teachers training colleges and Kenya institute of curriculum development to assess the contents of the courses necessary for prospective and incumbent principals, acquire relevant skills to promote positive school climate.

The findings of this were expected to influence principals adopt leadership style that could promote positive school climate.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to public secondary schools leaving out private secondary school in Malindi district therefore the research findings could only be generalized to other schools in the country with caution. The respondents were also likely to

give socially acceptable responses due to fear of intimidation. In order to mitigate the above challenge the respondents were advised not to write their names on the questionnaires to ensure confidentiality.

1.8 Delimitation

The study was limited to public secondary schools in Malindi district leaving out private schools because principals' leadership styles in public schools were more standardized compared to private schools. It therefore implied that the result of the study could only be generalized to other settings with caution.

1.9 Assumptions of the Study

The study was carried out on the premise that the respondents will be willing to participate in the study and that the data given by the respondents will be correct and accurate for this study.

1.10. Definitions of Significant Terms

Autocratic leadership style refers to a leadership style characterized by decision making solely by the manager; subordinates are excluded from the process.

Democratic leadership style is a type of leadership style in which members of the group takes a more participative role in the decision- making process.

Laissez-faire refers to a type of leadership style in which leaders are hands-off and allows group members to make the decisions.

Leadership style is a manner and approach of providing direction, implementing plans and motivating people.

Positive school climate refers to conducive teaching and learning environment.

School climate refers to the quality and character of school life as it relates to norms and values, interpersonal relations and social interactions in the school.

1.11 Organization of the Study

The study was presented in five chapters. Chapter one; introduction covered the background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, limitations and delimitations of the study, assumptions and definition of significant terms.

Chapter two; presented the review of related literature on the influence of leadership styles on the school climate, theoretical framework, and conceptual framework on the influence of leadership styles on school climate.

The third chapter highlighted the research design, target population, sample size and sampling procedures, data collection instruments, validity and reliability and data analysis.

Chapter four covered data analysis, interpretation, and presentation of the findings while chapter five is dealt with summary, discussions, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This section covers review of related literature on various leadership styles and their influence on school climate. It will mainly dwell on; the concept of school climate and principals' leadership styles, the importance of school climate and influence of various leadership styles in establishing school climate. The purpose of reviewing literature in this section will be to unravel and pinpoint the link between leadership style and school climate.

2.2 School Climate and Leadership

Schermerhorn, Hunt and Osborn (2000: 287), defines leadership as a case of interpersonal influence that get individuals, or groups of people to do what the leader wants to be done. By implication, the leader's focus is on what he/she wants from people therefore, followers' input is not encouraged with regard to what it is to be done. However, Maxwell (1999:108) is of different opinion, he argues that the leader's attention is on what he/she can put into people rather than what he/she can get out of them, so as to build the kind of relationship that promotes and increases productivity in the organisation. As the focus shifts from bureaucracy (in which the leader tends to directs others and make decision for others to implement) to non-bureaucracy, the perception of leadership appears to emphasize motivation, inclusion and empowerment of followers. For example, Jaques and Clement

(1991:4-5) define leadership as a process in which an individual sets direction for other people and carries them along in that direction with competence and full commitment. Therefore, leadership is a responsibility characterized by commitment and competence; and it takes place in a role relationship within a social structure. In essence, a leader functions by interacting with other people within a social structure. There are other views which differ from the more traditional perspectives, Sergiovanni (1999:22), for example perceive leadership as a personal thing comprising one's heart, head and hand. He says that the heart of leadership deals with one's beliefs, values and vision.

The head of leadership is the experiences one has accumulated over time and the ability to perceive present situations in the light of these experiences. The hand of leadership, according to him, is the actions and decisions that one takes. In essence, leadership is the act of leading, which reflects the leader's values, vision, experiences, personality and ability to use past experiences to tackle the situation at hand. It may be argued that leadership is a display of a whole person with regard to intelligence, perceptions, ideas, values and knowledge coming into play, causing necessary changes in the organisation. In the contemporary context, According to Dubrin (1998:2), leadership is the ability to inspire confidence and support among followers who are expected to achieve organisational goals. This has to do with change, inspiration and motivation. It can be inferred that the leader's task is to build followers' confidence in their job so as to be effective on their job. In

addition, it is the leader's responsibility to communicate the picture of what the organization should be, convince followers and channel all activities toward accomplishing it.

Sashkin and Sashkin's (2003:39) and Hoy and Miskel's (2001:393) definitions of leadership appear to be a more recent perspective. They define leadership as the art of transforming people and organisation with the aim of improving the organisation. Leaders in this perspective define the task and explain why the job is being done; they oversee followers' activities and ensure that followers have what they need in terms of skills and resources to do the job. These kinds of leaders develop a relationship between themselves and their followers; they align, motivate and inspire the followers to foster productivity. This approach's emphasis is on transformation that brings positive change in the organisation, groups, interpersonal relationships and the environment. Both the old and new concepts of leadership appear to agree on some characteristics of leadership. For example, both agree that leadership does not take place in isolation. Rather, it takes place in the process of two or more people interacting and the leader seeks to influence the behaviour of other people.

However, to a large extent, the old concept of leadership is based on exercising power over followers to maintain the status quo, while the new perspective is based on continuous improvement and power sharing with the followers. The old

concept of leadership is based on downward exercise of power and authority while the new seeks to develop respect and concern for the followers and see them as a powerful source of knowledge, creativity and energy for improving the organisation.

In conclusion, the issue of change and empowerment is the main focus of the new perspective on leadership. The leader is expected to continually generate new ideas for increasing effectiveness and productivity within the organisation. He/ She is required to provide needed strategies for executing the ideas/vision and motivate the employers to accomplish the vision by using their own initiatives to improve their inter-group relations in and outside school.

In education, the issue of capable school leadership is what it looks like, why it matters and how to develop and sustain it is a source of widening interest and concern (Educational Commission of the states (ECS), 2007). Contemporary literature delineates that countries strive to perform education systems and improve student's results. In this instance, school leadership is poised to be high on education policy as a reformatory program (Pont, Nusche, & Moorman, 2008)

But in many countries, the men and women who run schools are overburdened, underpaid and near retirement. According to Elmore (2002), Davis, Darling-

Hammond, La Pointe and Myerson (2005), despite the above mentioned circumstances, headteachers are still expected to function as educational

visionaries, in structural and curriculum teachers, assessment experts, disciplinarian, community builders, public relations experts, budget analysts, facility managers, special programs administrators and expert of legal, contractual and policy mandates and initiatives. They are then again expected broker the often conflicting interests of parents, teachers, students, district office officials, union and state and federal agencies and they need to be sensitive to the widening rage of student's needs. The demand of the job has changed so that traditional methods of preparing administrators simply don't spare aspiring head teachers for their current responsibilities (Miller, 1971).

In relation to the stated fact, there is need to engage the students teachers, school Governing Bodies (SBG's) other members of formal leadership team and other persons who contribute towards effective school leadership team and other persons who contribute towards effective school leadership in the day today activities of the school (Pont, Nusche & Moorman, 2008). (Pont et al, 2008) indicates that school leadership has become a priority in education policy agendas internationally. It plays a key role in improving school outcomes by influencing the motivations and capacities of teachers as well as school climate and environment. School climate generally reflects the extent to which the school leadership is poised towards management and governance of the school. This is indicated by the way the school leadership interacts with leaders and teachers in terms of school policing programmes & procedures (Pont, Nusches, & Moorman,

2008) for example, an open atmosphere in which shown policies are designed and discussed with a gender active participation by the teachers and students., whereas a tense environment will bring about fear and indifference in school matters (Pont, Nusche & Moorman, 2008). The authors argue that students and teachers efforts to strive for excellence and indicative of the ingenuity of the school leadership in the management and governance of the school.

An enabling school environment thus encourages exploration, inquisitiveness and assertiveness (Miner, 1995). He asserts that the proactive manner in which school leadership handles issues which relate to absenteeism, learner pregnancy, violence, drug abuse and idleness is essential in ensuing school success. Furthermore, Miner, (1995) notes that the problems that are brought about by students headed families, sickly students and teachers outlook of a bleach future as a result of worsening social economic situations demand that the school leadership should always be searching for solutions to crisis which contribute to be devil school. One way of attending to this is to provide a caring school environment in which self-expression debate and reflection are a norm rather than an exception (EGS, 2007). This is possible through the head teachers' adoption of communication strategies that enhance dialogue between the school leadership and students (Leithwood, 1990). This looks at how the school leadership through its management and governance structuring proactively deals head on with the multiplicity of problems which

manifest themselves in schools. Conclusions underline participant's school leadership as ideal in ensuring positive school climate (Sagor, 1992).

Thus as Pont et al, (2008), noted, instead there were virtually no documented instances of troubled schools being turned around without interrelation by a powerful school leadership. Although many other factors may play a role in such turnabout, effective school leadership is the catalyst.

Principal leadership style or positive school climate promotes individuals who are bonded together by natural will, and who are together bound to a set of shared ideas, and ideals. Principals must strengthen their efforts towards improving connections, coherence, capacity, commitment, and collaboration among their members. Steffy (1986), points out the importance of the role of the principal: ―In the final analysis, researcher say, any serious look at school climate and culture should lead policymakers to a simple – and challenging -- conclusion: Almost everything depends on leadership. Principal understands how to work with the existing culture -- and knows how to help it evolve into a healthier one. The abstract of a study done by Clabough (2005) regarding the effects of male and female leadership style on school climate indicated that males' and females' perceptions of principal leadership style and school climate are very similar, differing only in the amount of individual support each group perceived as coming from his/her principals. Results indicated that first year staff perceptions of both principal leadership style and school climate differ from those of more experienced

staff. Findings revealed a significant correlation in regard to the relationship between principal leadership style and school climate. Findings regarding the number of violence-related occurrences indicated no statistically significant correlation to either

Various researchers have defined school climate in different ways, however, there is consensus on what constitutes a school climate. Freiberg and Stein, (1999) states, that a school climate is the 'heart and soul' of a school; the feature of a school that motivates pupils and teaches them to love the school and desire to be there each school day. The school climate has everything to do with the atmosphere, tone or feeling that prevails in a particular school. It is brought about by the interaction between the principal and teachers, among teachers and pupils and between the principal and pupils.

In order to assess the relationship between leadership styles and school climate, which is the focus of this study, it is logical to examine various types of school climate.

According to Freiberg and Stein, (1999) there are six types of school climate. These are; open school climate, autonomous school climate, controlled school climate, familiar school climate closed school climate and paternal climate

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Open school climate describes an energetic lively school moving to defined school goals and providing satisfaction for group member's needs. The principal shows compassion in satisfying the social needs of the individual teachers and students while also balancing the goal achievement of the school. School community enjoys friendly relation with each other.

The distinguishing feature of autonomous school climate is the freedom that the principal gives to the teachers to provide their own structures for interactions and find ways in which the teachers and the students can satisfy their social needs. This climate leans more towards social needs satisfaction than the task achievement. In controlled school climate, little attention is given to satisfaction of the individual members social needs and emphasis is laid on achievement of the school goals. Hard work is the major characteristic of controlled climate. Even though the headteacher does not model commitment, hard work is over-emphasized to the extent that little or no time is given to social life. Nonetheless, teachers are committed to their work and spend considerable time on paper work. Thus, in most cases, there is little time to interact with one another. Pupils are also hardworking, but are given little time for participation in extra-curricular activities. The headteacher often employs a direct approach, keeps his/her distance from teachers, pupils and parents in order to avoid familiarity. Parents are not encouraged to visit school with their children's problems as the time on such matters could be used on something worthwhile (Silver 1983:184-18; Halpin 1966:177).

Familiar school climate is the conspicuously friendly manner in which the principal and teachers interact. The teachers and the student social needs satisfaction are extremely high while little is done to control or direct the group activities towards achievement of school goals. Familiar climate depicts a laissez-faire atmosphere. The headteacher is concerned about maintaining friendly atmosphere at the expense of task accomplishment. Thus, a considerable percentage of teachers are not committed to their primary assignment. Some who are committed resent the way the headteacher runs the school: they do not share same views with the headteacher and their colleagues. As a result, those who are not committed, form a clique because they are of the same attitude, they become friends. Most pupils do not take their studies seriously and some of them give flimsy excuses to be out of class or absent from school. Most parents are not involved in their children's education, they are not keen to find out what their children do or do not do in school. They do not think it is important to attend Parent-Teacher meetings. The familiarity between the headteacher and teachers is so much that the schoolwork suffers (Silver 1983:186; Halpin 1966:178-179).

Closed school climate is characterized by high degree of apathy on the part both the principal and the teachers. The principal is a roof and impersonal and controlling the activities of the teachers. The group achievement is minimal, the teacher's morale is low, group achievement is minimal and the school goals are

rarely achieved. This type of school climate is repressive. Hoy and Sabo (1998:129) assert that closed climate represents the 'antithesis of the open climate'. The main characteristic of this type of climate identified by Halpin (1966:180-181) is lack of commitment and or unproductive (high disengagement). There is no commitment, especially on the part of the headteacher and teachers. There is no emphasis on task accomplishment; rather the headteacher stresses routine, trivial and unnecessary paper work to which teachers minimally respond. The headteacher is rigid and controlling (high directiveness). He/she is inconsiderate, unsupportive and unresponsive (low supportiveness). Consequently, most teachers are frustrated and ineffective. Hoy and Sabo (1998:129) adds that, in closed school climate there is lack of respect for the headteacher. Not only that the teachers lack respect for the office but are also suspicious of each other, the school authority and even the pupils. Teachers are intolerant and divided, thus, there is social tension in the school. Hoy and Tarter's (1997:54) findings established the above characteristics of a closed/unhealthy organisational climate as enumerated by Halpin. In this kind of atmosphere, it would be illogical to either expect the pupils to achieve high academic standard or have positive attitude toward the school and each other simply because there is no example to be emulated.

School climate types range on a continuum from open to closed climate. In view of the characteristics of each of the above organisational climates of schools as described by Halpin (1966:174-181), the first and the last types (open and closed),

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are the two extremes. Thus, they are opposites. Each dimension in an open climate is positive: contributing to a goal-driven learning environment, while each dimension in a closed climate is negative, contributing to a confused, unproductive atmosphere. For instance, in an open climate, the headteacher is flexible and gives his/her teachers freedom to function without close scrutiny, which encourages them to put into use their creative talents and put in their best; whereas, in a closed climate, the headteacher is rigid, controlling and closely scrutinizes his/her teachers. In this situation, a considerable number of teachers are resentful and uncommitted: they show no interest in their job and simply put in minimum effort in performing task given, just for the purpose of earning a living. Similar contrast is seen in autonomous and paternal climate; the general impression in an autonomous climate is that it is a person oriented as opposed to the task-oriented that characterizes a paternal climate. Controlled and familiar climate are similar to paternal climate.

Paternal climate depicts an atmosphere where the headteacher is very hardworking, but has no effect on the staff; to them hard work is not a popular term. There is a degree of closeness between the headteacher and teachers, but the headteacher's expectation from teachers is rather impractical. All the same, he/she is considerate and energetic, but his/her leadership approach is benevolently autocratic. As a result, most teachers, pupils and parents prefer to maintain distance from the headteacher.

Often, pupils cannot express their difficulties or problems with boldness and parents visit the school only when it is absolutely necessary (Costley & Todd 1987:562), like, for example, on days when the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is meeting. No school falls rigidly on any type of the school climate there is bound to be overlapping between different types of school climates. Sashkin and Sashkin (2003:8) maintain that leadership matters because leaders help reduce ambiguity and uncertainty in organisations or society. Leaders take constructive acts to achieve long-term goals and provide clear positive reasons for their actions, goals, and accomplishments. In essence, leaders add clarity and direction to life and make life more meaningful. These scholars say that leadership matters because effective leaders make a difference in peoples' lives, these empower followers and teach them how to make meaning by taking appropriate actions that can facilitate change. Schermerhorn et al. (2000:287) maintain that leadership is the heart of any organisation because it determines the success or failure of the organisation. Thus the study of leadership in organisations is closely tied to the analysis of organisations' efficiency and effectiveness. In an organisation such as a school, the importance of leadership is reflected in every aspect of the school: instructional practices, academic achievement, students' discipline, school climate, etc. For instance, the Social Policy Research Association's findings (Soukamneuth, 2004:15-17) on how leaders create circumstances for positive inter-group relations and a caring and safe environment indicate that strong leadership is of great importance.

The headteachers in the schools studied were able to prevent disruptive behaviour by promoting positive inter group relations using different approaches to create a safe and caring environment. In essence, the headteacher as a leader needs leadership skills to reduce racial tensions among students that lead to negative social behavior and attitude. The findings of Quinn's (2002:460-461) study on the relationship between headteachers' leadership behaviour and instructional practices supports the notion that leadership impacts instruction. His findings indicate that headteachers' leadership is crucial in creating a school that value and continually strives to achieve exceptional education for pupils. Similarly, Waters, Marzona and McNulty's (2004:50) research findings indicate that headteachers' effective leadership can significantly boost pupil's achievement. The employees perceive the manager as an inconsiderate leader who is only concerned about completion of tasks. Employees see him/her as a leader who does not consider employee cooperation as a crucial issue in the organisation. Even though there is little upward communication within the organisation, suggestions from employees are disregarded by the manager because of lack of trust. Downward communication is characterized with suspicion. Thus, employees distort the messages, instructions and circulars. This is because employees believe that the communication is serving only the interest of the managers (Hersey, Zigarmy & Zigarmy 1987:12-16).

Teamwork does not exist; teachers are used to achieve goals. They have no say in how they should perform their work and they are expected to work hard to achieve the goals set by the managers. Even though teachers overtly accept their responsibilities because of fear, they resist covertly. As a result, employees disregard the process in a subtle way by giving excuses when they have to carry out their duties. Teachers are dissatisfied with their work and this leads to informal grouping for the purpose of opposing the goals of the school (Hersey & Blanchard 1993:105). McLean et al (2006) warns against this type of leadership behaviour as managers of successful organisations emphasize consultation, teamwork and participation. 2.4.1.2 System II- Authoritative-benevolent even though the manager is authoritative, he/she allows a bit of participation by the staff. He/she makes the bulk of decisions, but subordinates are allowed to make decisions within a prescribed framework. Rewards or punishment are used to motivate the workers. Employee-management interaction is characterized with fear, caution and pretence. Thus, employees' motivation is very low and they are dissatisfied with their job (Hersey & Blanchard 1993:105).

Workers attribute success to the manager. The manager has complete confidence and trusts in the employees. Thus, the workers are involved in the management of the organisation. The workers are highly motivated by their involvement in the setting of goals, improving methods and appraising progress

toward goals. There is good employee-management relationship and the workers see themselves as part of the organisation by exhibiting a high degree of responsibility and commitment (Hersey, Blanchard & Johnson 1996:110).

The employees work together as a team. This is because the manager creates a situation where everybody participates fully in the activities of the organisation. Everybody strives to make the organisation a better place to work in. Communication flows to and from the hierarchy, and also among colleagues. This is because the subordinates are well involved in decision-making. The manager's behaviours include coaching team members, negotiating their demands and collaborating with others. The manager still assumes the responsibility of whatever decision that is taken. Informal grouping exists, which works to the achievement of the organisation goals (Hersey, Blanchard & Johnson 1996:110). Conclusively, Likert's management model is mainly based on management activities such as planning, decision-making, communicating, controlling etc. These activities form the framework for defining the four managerial systems from which four management styles are derived. In other words, Likert's proposition is that a manager is categorized as authoritative-coercive, authoritative-benevolent, consultative or participative based on how he/she makes decisions, communicates, organizes and carries out other management tasks, and the amount of involvement he/she allows from group members in the decision-making process. Of all the

above management styles, the participative style is probably the one that can affect an organisation's climate positively.

Findings by Goleman et al (2002:76-77), indicate that the authoritative-coercive management style is the least effective in most situations, because followers become emotionally cold from intimidation and therefore, the climate is affected negatively. However, these scholars suggest that the style is effective during emergency or when all else has failed especially when dealing with problem employees; otherwise, it should not be used in isolation, but should be used with other styles in the interest of building commitment and team spirit.

The climate of the school is one of the vital factors that determine pupils' perception of life and therefore how they respond to daily challenges. Fopiano and Norris, (2001) and Pasi, (2001:18) argue that a supportive and responsive school climate fosters a sense of belonging, promotes resiliency and reduces possible negative circumstances of the home environment. These scholars add that social and emotional needs are congruent with learning needs. Therefore, these needs should be addressed so as to facilitate learning. Negative circumstances at home, for example, violence, overcrowding, poverty; uninformed and uninvolved parents influence pupils' perception; as well as their responses to learning objectives in school environment. Pupils who experience negative circumstances at home can be helped to actualize their potential by providing school climate that nurtures,

supports and challenges them. In essence, enhancing school climate can assist pupils who are challenged socially and emotionally.

According to Brooks, (1999) pupils are more likely to thrive when they are in school environment to which they feel they belong and are comfortable, a school environment in which they feel appreciated by teachers. Many adolescents join gangs to satisfy this need for connectedness and a sense of identity. Related to this feeling of belonging is the importance of helping each student to feel welcome, thereby reducing the feelings of alienation and disconnectedness. Pasi, (2001) observes that schools have become important in the lives of pupils especially those who face negative circumstances at home. Thus, more than ever before, the school should be a safe and positive place, which is conducive to learning, fosters positive relationships and helps pupils to prepare for future challenges. He adds that the school climate significantly influences the way pupils feel about education. A school's climate can have a positive effect on pupils or it can be a barrier to learning, that is, it can either hinder or facilitate the realization of pupils' potentials.

2.3 Autocratic Leadership Style and School Climate

Autocratic leadership also known as authoritarian leadership is a leadership style characterized by individual control over all decisions and little input from group members. Autocratic leaders typically make choices based on their own ideas and

judgments and rarely accept advice from followers. Autocratic leadership involves absolute, authoritarian control over a group. This kind of leadership style portrays the leader as an authoritative leader. He/she demands compliance with orders without explaining the reasons behind them. He/she uses threats and punishment to instill fear in the employees, sets goals for the school and his/her decisions is accepted without questioning. The leader does not have confidence in his subordinates. As a result, they are monitored at all times, and he/she focuses on followers' mistakes rather than what they did well. Employee-leadership interaction is limited and it is characterized with fear and mistrust (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993) and he/she rarely praises; rather he/she criticizes a lot, leading to followers' loss of confidence in him/her and become less committed to their work. Likewise, DuFour and Eaker, (1998) confirm that 'top-down coercive method of running a school leads to lack of commitment on the part of the teachers and students an indicator of negative school climate.

Ochieng (2001), study on influence of leadership styles on academic performance in secondary schools in Mombasa found out that poor academic performance in K.C.S.E. was exhibited by schools whose principals were rated as autocratic leaders (task-oriented behaviour). 76% of the teachers rated their principal's leadership style as autocratic. It is therefore clear from the above studies that autocratic leadership may have its advantages in other areas of management, however, it has a negative influence on the positive school climate as teachers have

no say in how they should perform their work and they are expected to work hard to achieve the goals set by the school leadership. Even though school members overtly accept their responsibilities because of fear, they resist covertly.

As a result, they disregard the process in a subtle way by giving excuses, they are dissatisfied with their work and this leads to informal grouping for the purpose of opposing the goals of the school (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993). McLean et al, (2006), warns against this type of leadership behaviour as leaders of successful schools emphasize consultation, teamwork and participation leadership that influence establishment of a positive school climate.

Autocratic leadership can be beneficial in some instances, such as when decisions need to be made quickly without consulting with a large group of people. Some situations in school management require strong leadership in order to get things accomplished quickly and efficiently.

2.4 Democratic Leadership Style and School Climate

In this type of leadership, the leader has complete confidence and trust in the employees. Workers are highly motivated by their involvement in the setting of goals, improving methods and appraising progress towards goals of the organization. There is good employee-management relationship and the workers see themselves as part of the organization by exhibiting a high degree of responsibility and commitment (Hersey & Johnson, 1996).

Democratic leadership tends to have a positive impact on school members' morale and school climate, as they are inextricably related (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 1996). The staff and students are consulted and sometimes invited to participate in decision making, policy and procedures. The principal who uses this style of leadership is making a statement to staff and students of trust and respect. The development of mutual trust and respect facilitates the mission of the school and increases morale by making the staff and students feel respected and valued.

According to a study done by Schermerhorn (2000), on influence of leadership on the school climate in Jamaica, the democratic leader encourages collaboration and teamwork and communicates effectively-particularly as an excellent listener thus creating a positive climate. The groups with democratic style of leadership were the most satisfied and functional in the most orderly and positive manner.

Njuguna (1998), on a study of leadership styles in schools in Nairobi found out that an average academic performance in K.C.S.E. was exhibited by schools whose principals were rated as democratic leaders.

There is consistence in the two studies carried out in Jamaica and Nairobi implying that democratic leadership style creates a positive school climate hence better performance in national examinations.

2.5 Laissez-Faire Leadership Style and School Climate

In this leadership style, the leader gives almost all authority and control to the subordinates. The leader leads the organization indirectly, he/she does not make decisions; rather he/she abides by popular decisions. There is no setting of goals and objectives by the leader. Therefore, this style of leadership may be effective with well-motivated and experienced employees.

O'Hanlon and Clifton (2004), found laissez-faire leadership to have positive effects on a number of school learning climates. This was an investigation of the relation between laissez faire leadership behaviours of school principals in Australia public secondary schools and seven dimensions of school learning environment. Laissez-faire leadership behaviours demonstrated a positive impact on school learning environment, in some cases more influential than alternative types of leadership behaviour.

Pasi (2007), in a study on school leadership and its influence on performance showed a negative correlation between the laissez-faire leadership style and the school performance in secondary schools in Tanzania. This study established that principals who use the laissez faire leadership style tend to fail to follow up on those they have delegated tasks to and consequently performance declines. This is in agreement with MacDonald's (2007), study of laissez-faire leadership which shows that it is associated with the highest rates of truancy and delinquency and

with the slowest modifications in performance which lead to unproductive attitudes.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

The study was based on Transformational leadership Theory. Bass (1985) the proponent of the transformational theory of leadership, describes the leader's involvement in changing the attitude of the workers in order to increase their commitment in the organization. This school of thought pays more attention to relationship at work that is intimately connected with the actual behaviour and attitude of the leaders. Bass (1985) asserts that the leader shows empathy towards the workers, exercises less supervision and encourages employee participation. The workers in turn perceive him/her from an inspirational angle with loyalty and enthusiasm. The leader's personal quality persuades and influence's his/her sub-ordinates into working towards the set goals of the organization. They use their skills, knowledge and principles of integrity and trust in transforming all those around them into willing follower.

This theory applies to this study in that the reader seeks a compromise between stressing achievement of school goals and objectives and individual needs (Blanchard & Hersay, 1998). This style of leadership influences the students and teachers to perceive the school as a safe and secure place where they feel valued

and wanted and are committed to the achievement of the institutional goals. This is what the school climate is all about.

2.7 Conceptual framework of the Study

Figure 2.1

The Relationship between the principals' leadership styles and the school climate

The variables can be conceptualized as follows:-
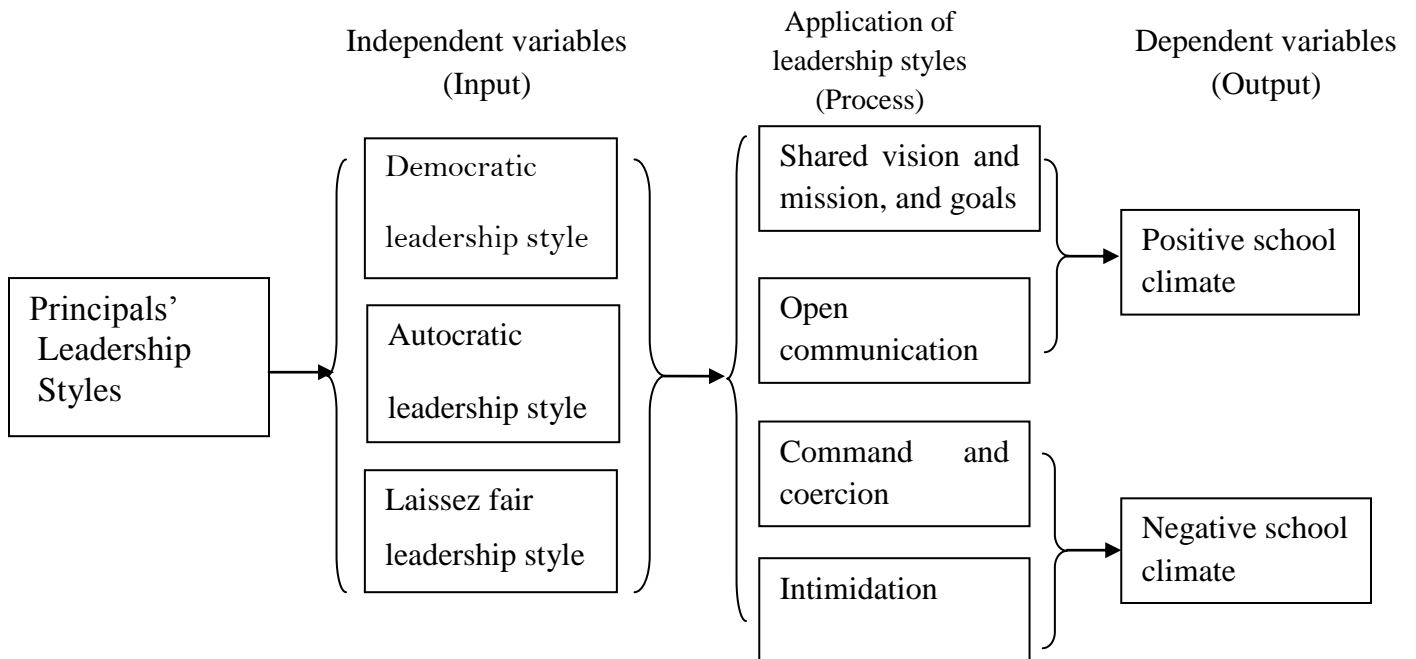
The principals' leadership styles which are the independent variables will to a large extent influence the behaviour of teachers and students, their morale, interpersonal relationships, achievement of individual and school goals and

objective which reflect positive school climate which is the dependent variables. The principal who adopts a leadership style that creates fear and suspicion among the teachers and students or uses coercion and commands influences creation of negative school climate. The students and teachers will perceive the school as unsafe and unwanted and they are likely to feel unwanted and non-committed to the achievement of school goals and objectives.

2.8 Summary of the Literature Review

The literature review reveals that different leadership styles play different roles in an organization. The interpretation of various leadership models suggests that no single leadership style is adequate to establishing a positive school climate. Rather, the combination of styles is effective if applied appropriately as the situation demands.

The school as a system of social interaction compels the principal, teachers and pupils to interrelate at administrative level in areas of planning, decision-making, problem solving and control. How best the school principal leads the school members to success, the climate will be seen to be positive. The school principal will therefore require to apply leadership styles that will motivate rather than undermine the school climate.

High performance is the aim of every school, especially the school being the brain of any country. The school administrator is looked upon to create a suitable

atmosphere where pupils can be effectively prepared to meet future challenges. Even though there are other factors, which influence school climate, the head teacher's behaviour is instrumental in enhancing a goal oriented school climate, as they are responsible for how the school is run.

Most principals have not been able to combine the leadership styles thus resulting in problems of discontent and underachievement of the school members due to unfavorable school climate. In view of the above, it was logical to assess the relationship between leadership styles and school climate in Malindi district which is the focus of this study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focused on the research design, target population, sample size and sampling procedure, research instruments, validity and reliability of the instruments, data collection procedure and data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

The study employed a descriptive survey design. According to Mugenda and Mugenda, (2003), descriptive survey designs help the researcher to determine and report the way things are. Descriptive survey design is useful in describing the characteristics of a large population. The study focused on 17 secondary schools, all the teachers and students in Malindi district.

3.3 The Target Population

The target population is defined as all the members of a real or hypothetical set of people, events or objects to which a researcher wished to generalize the results of the research study (Borg & Gall, 1989). The target population of this study was drawn from all the 17 public secondary schools principals, 202 secondary school teachers and 432 prefects in Malindi district as shown in the Table 3.1. (DEO, Malindi District, 2011).

Table 3.1

Distribution of Schools, Staffing and Prefecture in Malindi District

Zone	No. of schools	Girls Boarding	Boys boarding	Mixed Day	No of Principals	No of Teachers	No. of Prefects
Central	5	--	1	4	5	71	152
Watamu	7	1	1	5	7	78	170
Kakoneni	5	1	1	3	5	53	78
Total	17	2	3	12	17	202	400

Source: Malindi District Education office

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Procedures

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), define a sample size as a subject of the population which is representative. In selecting the number of schools to be involved in the study, the guidelines given by Orodho and Kombo (2000), that the sample should be proportionate to the target population will be considered. The researcher used stratified random sampling to select 15 secondary schools for this study which would represent 88.23% of the target population. Borg and Gall (1989), states that a 10 percent sample can represent a population, however, the bigger the sample the more representative the sample becomes.

In selecting teachers, proportionate random sampling was used to sample 100 teachers representing 49.5percent and 100 prefects representing 25percetnt for this study. Each zone contributed teachers and prefects proportional to the size of their population. This was based on the principle that the larger the population of schools in the zone, the more the teachers and prefects will be included in the sample the better the results. Therefore; Central zone contributed 27 teachers and 41 prefects; Watamu zone- 35 teachers and 42 prefects while Kakoneni zone was represented by 38 teachers and 18 prefects respectively as shown in Table 3.2

Table 3.2

Sample of Schools, Teachers and Prefects to Represent the Zones

Zone	Schools		Teachers		Prefects	
	Population	Sample	Population	Sample	Population	Sample
Central	5	6	71	33	152	60
Watamu	7	7	78	34	170	66
Kakoneni	5	4	53	23	78	24
Total	17	15	202	90	400	150

3.5 Research Instruments

The study used questionnaires developed by the researcher. The questionnaires were used to collect data from principals, teachers and students in public secondary school in Malindi district. The questionnaires were preferred in the study because they presented an even stimulus potentially to large numbers of people simultaneously and provided the investigation with an easy accumulation of data. Gay (1992), states that questionnaires give respondents freedom to express their views or opinion and also to make suggestions. The principals' questionnaires were used to collect data from principals on leadership styles they employed in school management. Teachers questionnaires would be used to collect data from teachers on the types of school climate that existed in schools. Students' questionnaire collected data from students on the type of school climate at the existing schools and how the principals created a positive school climate. The questionnaires consisted of short structured questions. The respondent were required to **tick** in the box [ ] or **write the response** in the spaces provided or **circle** the preferred choice for each item as directed by instructions.

3.6 Validity of the Instrument

Validity according to Borg and Gall (1989), is the degree to which a test measures what it purports to measure. All assessments of validity are subjective opinions based on the judgment of the researcher. The pilot study helped to improve face validity and content of the instruments. According to Borg and Gall, (1989),

validity of an instrument is improved through expert judgment. In this regard the researcher consulted experts in the field of research including the supervisors.

3.7 Reliability of the Instruments

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), defines reliability as a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trial. The test-retest technique of reliability testing was used to assess the reliability of research instrument. The questionnaires were administered to the pilot sample respondent twice within one week interval after which the researcher compared the two sets for each respondent to find out whether the responses were consistent. A correlation coefficient for the two tests was calculated using the Pearson correlation coefficient formula. Reliability coefficient of 0.7 accepted as recommended by (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999).

3.8 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher obtained an introduction letter from University of Nairobi campus and a research permit from the National Council of Science and Technology (NCST). The District commissioner was informed of the study to be carried out in the district. The researcher booked an appointment with the sampled schools through the principals to visit and administer the questionnaires himself. The principals, teachers and prefects were given instructions and assured of

confidentiality after which they were given enough time to fill in the questionnaires. The researcher collected the filled-in questionnaires.

3.9 Data Analysis Techniques

The filled in questionnaires were checked for completeness as part of the preparation for analysis. Data was coded using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17.0. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the quantitative data after which findings were presented in frequency tables and graphs. Descriptive statistics enabled the researcher to meaningfully describe a distribution of scores or measurements using a few indices or statistics (Kothari, 2008). Qualitative data was analyzed through content analysis. In order to achieve this, the researcher coded and classified various responses, identified key responses for various themes, listed and tallied key responses by specific themes, identified patterns emerging from key responses, studied the interrelationships between identified patterns and drew inferences from the patterns and their interrelationships.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study. The objective of this study was to investigate and establish the influence of principal's leadership styles in establishing school climate in public secondary schools in Malindi district. Data analysis was performed using SPSS version 19. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequencies, means, modes and percentages. Presentation was done using tables, charts and graphs for easy yet effective communication. The analysis was based on the predefined objectives and aimed at answering the following questions: What type of leadership styles do principals in secondary schools employ in Malindi district? What is the effect of autocratic leadership style on the school climate in Malindi district? What is the effect of democratic leadership style on the school climate in Malindi district? What is the influence of Laissez-faire leadership style on the school climate in Malindi district and in what ways can the school climate in Malindi district be improved?

This style of analysis is influenced by Kerlinger's (1973), principles of data analysis and interpretation, where the research analyst breaks down data into constituent parts to obtain answers to research questions.

4.2 Questionnaire Return Rate

A total of 15 questionnaires for the head teacher and 150 questionnaires for teachers were administered to the respondents. All the questionnaires were returned for analysis which formed 100 percent return rate. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), a response of 70 percent and above is very good. The questionnaire return rate was high because the researcher collected the questionnaire immediately they were filled.

4.3 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The study was conducted among 15 secondary school principals and 100 teachers and 100 prefects drawn from 15 secondary schools in Malindi District. This section presents the analysis of the demographic data collected from the respondents.

4.3.1 Distribution of Participants' Age

The following section presents findings related to the participants' age. Age is important as it would reflect the cohort of principals, teachers and students in schools on school climate investigation. The study sought to find out the age of principals, teachers and students. This was important as it would help in establishing whether there is any relationship between principal's leadership styles and school climate

4.3.1.1 Age of Principals

Figure 4.1:

Age of the principals

Figure 4.1 Age of the principals
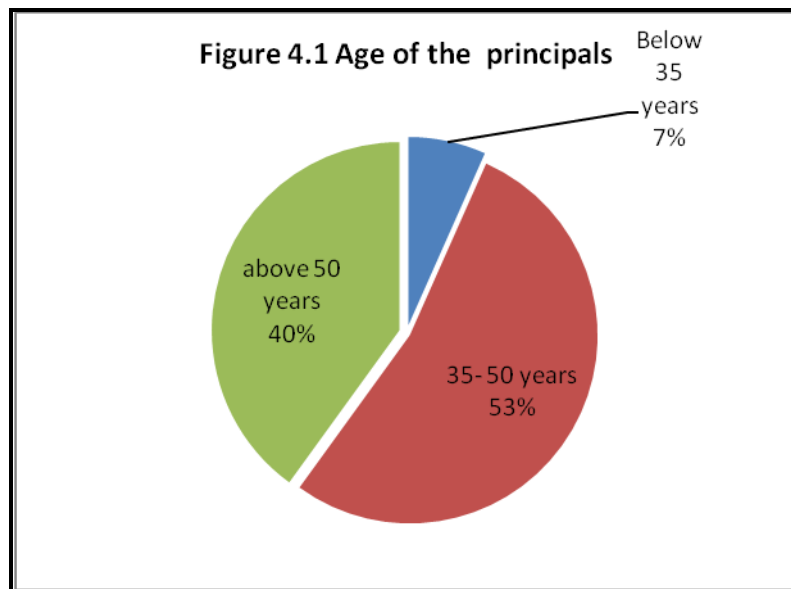
As indicated in Figure 4.1 majority principals were between 35-50 years old. The findings indicate that most of the principals have adequate job experience necessary to create a positive climate in the school.

4.3.1.2 Age of Teachers

The study was conducted among 100 teachers drawn from 15 secondary schools in Malindi district. The teachers were of varied ages as illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 4.2:

Age of Teachers

Age of teachers

Below 25 years 18%

25-50 years 62%

Above 50 years 20%
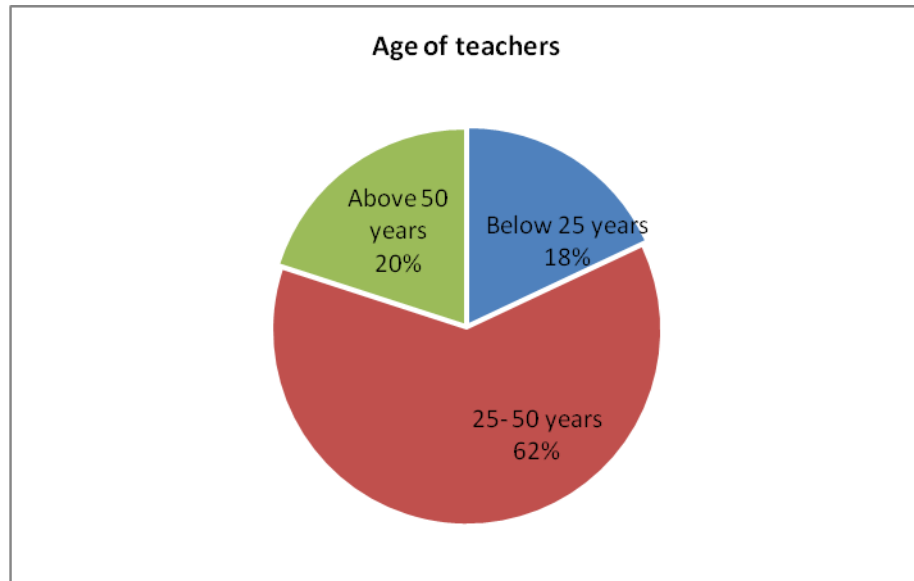
Findings in figure 4.2 indicate that most of the teachers 62 percent were between 25-50 years which means that they had adequate job experience to create a positive school climate if appropriate leadership is given.

4.2.1.3 Age of students

The students ages were distributed as indicated in the figure below.

Figure 4.3:

Age of Students
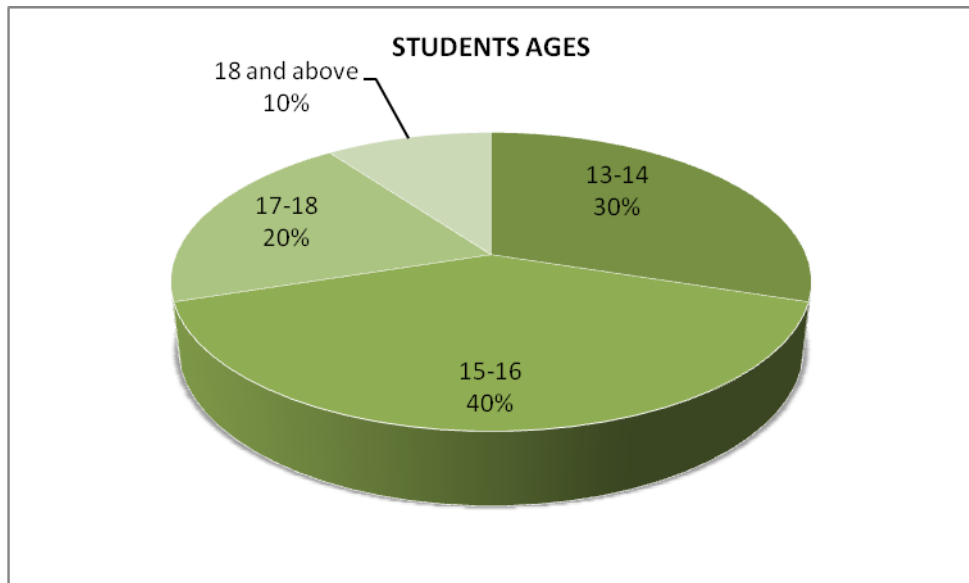
As indicated in Figure 4.3 most students were between age 15-16 years. Therefore were in a position to judge the type of school climate in their school under their current head teacher.

4.3.2 Distribution of Respondents by Academic Qualification

This section presents findings on the respondents' highest academic qualifications. A head teacher or a teacher's academic qualification determined the influence of principal's leadership styles in establishing school climate (Barker, 2001).

4.3.2.1 Principals' Academic Qualification

Figure 4.4:

Principals' Academic Qualifications
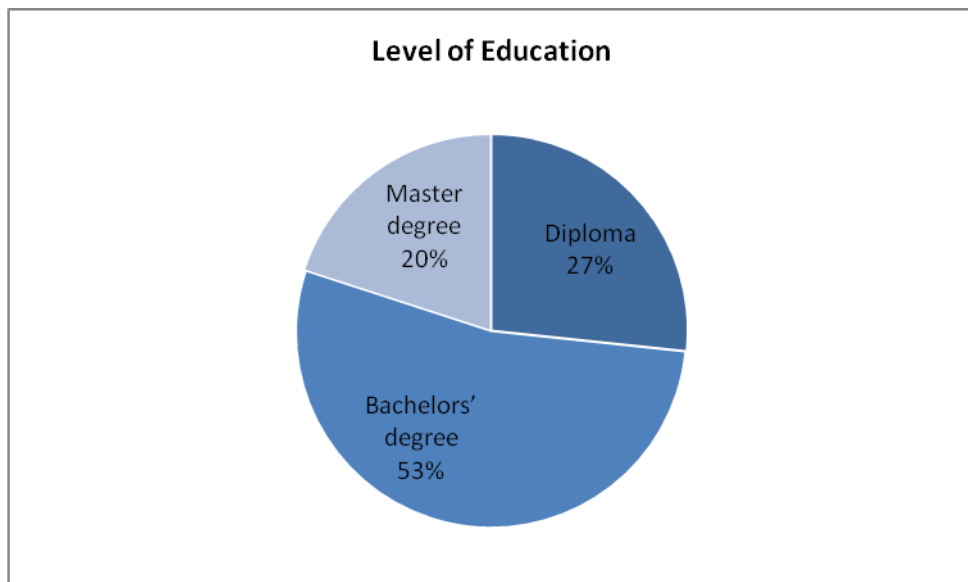
Findings in Figure 4.4 indicate most of the principals were diploma holders, while majority were BED graduates. From the findings, it can be observed that most principals had basic qualifications for headship. However as Sushila (2004), asserts, given the principals roles as leaders of the school they are, the pivot around which many aspects of the school revolve, and the person in charge of every detail of the running of the school, be it academic or administrative, they require higher

qualifications for effective leadership. The quality of leadership offered by the principal creates the difference between a positive school climate and a negative school climate.

4.3.2.2 Teachers' Academic Qualification

Teacher's level of education is indicated in the figure below.

Figure 4.5:

Level of Education of Teachers'
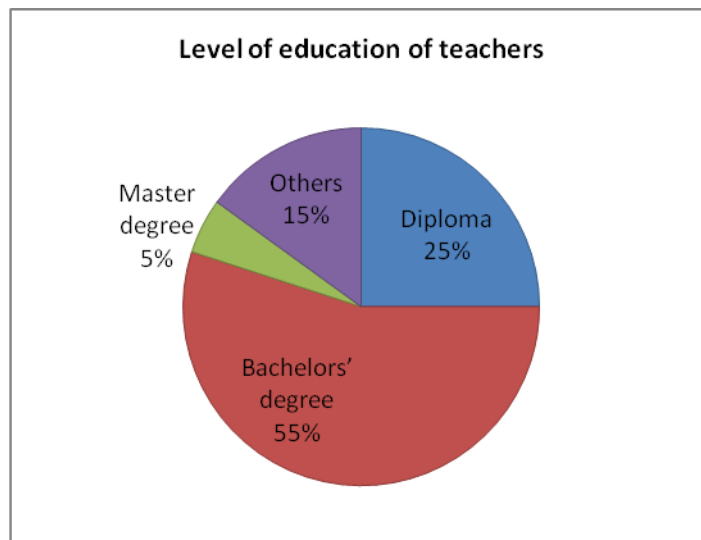
As shown in the figure, majority teachers were graduates. All the teachers had attained post-secondary education as is required by the Ministry of education. The distributions of respondents' academic qualification revealed that graduates from diploma colleges were fewer than those from universities in percentages. This could be attributed to the fact that many teachers have enrolled in colleges and universities. Higher academic qualifications among teachers give them the ability

to effectively judge the principals' leadership styles and the type o school climate that exists in a school

4.3.3 Job Experience of Participants

This section presents findings on the experience of the participants in terms of years served in their respective positions. This was important as it would assist the researcher to identify whether head teachers and teachers were experienced enough to provide quality information on the influence of principal's leadership styles in establishing school climate.

4.3.3.1 Principals' Job Experience

Figure 4.6:

Principals' Job Experience

Length of stay in the school

above 10 years 20%

1-5 years 40%
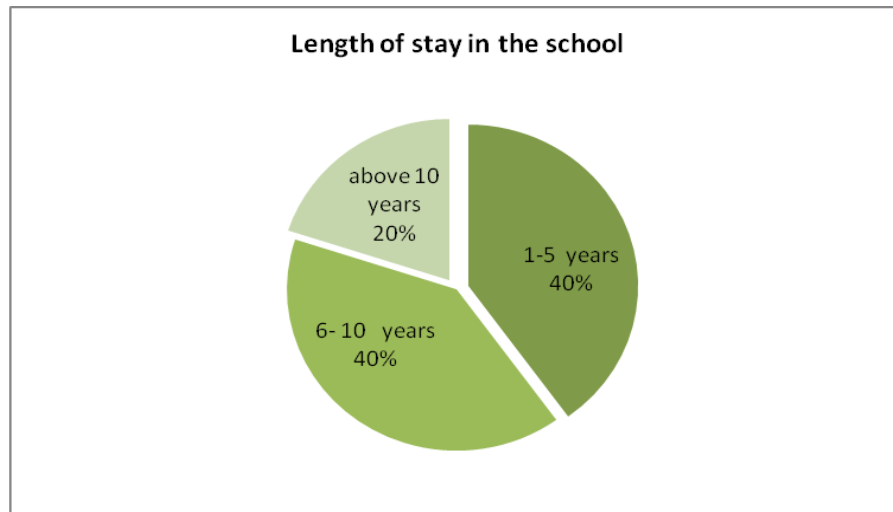
6- 10 years 40%

Majority of principals had stayed in their respective schools for between 6-10 years while most had stayed in their respective schools for between 1-5 years This

indicates that most principals had adequate time to influence school climate, which affects the teaching and learning environment. It takes leadership for a school to be transformed and to establish a conducive school climate for teaching and learning. This is evident as reported in the research findings by Barker (2001), which portrays the principal as an individual capable of creating the climate needed to arouse the potential motivation of staff and pupils. The study indicates that an effective principal can turn around a school that lacks direction and purpose to a happy, goal-oriented and productive school. Thus, it may be argued that stability in school leadership is not enough in increasing productivity and in transforming an unpromising circumstance in a School.

4.3.3.2 Teachers' Job Experience

The following is the distribution of the teachers by their teaching experience. The teachers' teaching experience would enable the teachers' to evaluate the leadership styles of their principals with competence. This was important as it would assist the researcher to identify whether head teachers and teachers were experienced enough to provide quality information on leadership styles and its influence on school climate. Their responses were illustrated in table 4.7.

Figure 4.7:

Teachers' job Expereince
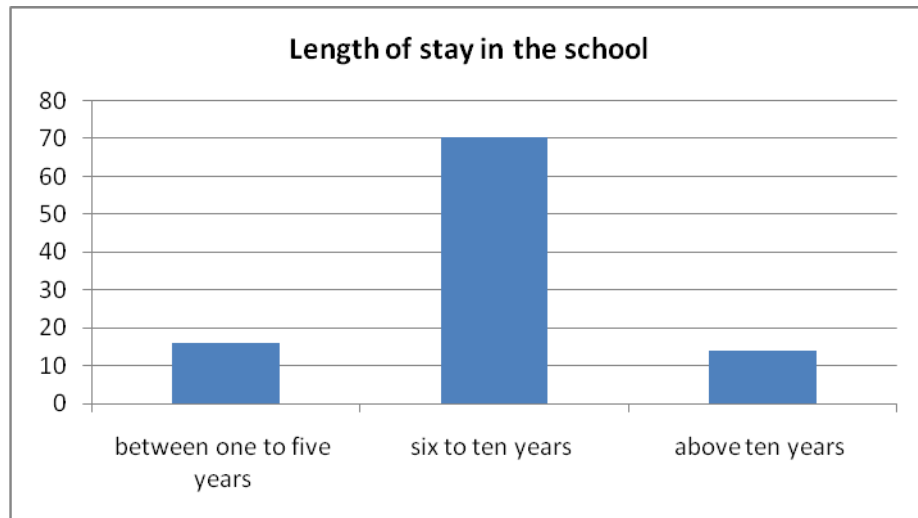
Most teachers had stayed in their respective schools for between 6-10 years, 16% had stayed in their respective school for between 1-5 years and 14% had stayed in their schools for more than 10 years. From the above findings, we can observe that most teachers are old in the profession hence able to create a positive climate if adequate leadership was provided.

4.4 Effect of Autocratic Leadership Style on the School Climate

This section presents findings related to the second objective which sought to establish the effect of autocratic leadership style on the school climate in Malindi district.

4.4.1 Principals' Responses on Autocratic Leadership Style

The principals were presented with a series of items to measure the extent to which they engage in the autocratic leadership styles in their administration.

Table 4.1

Principals' Responses on Autocratic Leadership Style

Items	Always	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
The principal rules the school with an iron fist	60%	27%	7%	7%
Supervision of teachers and students is rigorous	67%	0%	20%	7%
Members who do not meet the school set Objectives are threatened with punishment	54%	27%	13%	7%
The principal does not have confidence in his teachers	13%	47%	7%	13%
The principal-teachers-student relationship is characterized by Fear	20%	47%	13%	20%

Findings in Table 4.1 indicate that majority of the principals always issued orders expecting compliance by school members. Most of the principals indicated that members who do not meet the school set objectives are always punished. Most of the principals indicated that they occasionally had confidence in their teachers. An equal number of the respondents indicated that principal-teachers-students relationship is occasionally characterized by fear where authoritative style of leadership is practiced leading to poor school climate.

4.4.2 Teachers' Responses on Autocratic Leadership

Teachers were presented with a number of items to measure the effect of autocratic leadership style on teachers on a five-point Likert scale (always, occasionally, not sure rarely, never). This was important as it would provide information on the influence of principals leadership styles on school climate.

Figure 4.8:

Teachers' Responses on Autocratic Leadership

figure effects of autocratic leadership on teachers in secondary school climate
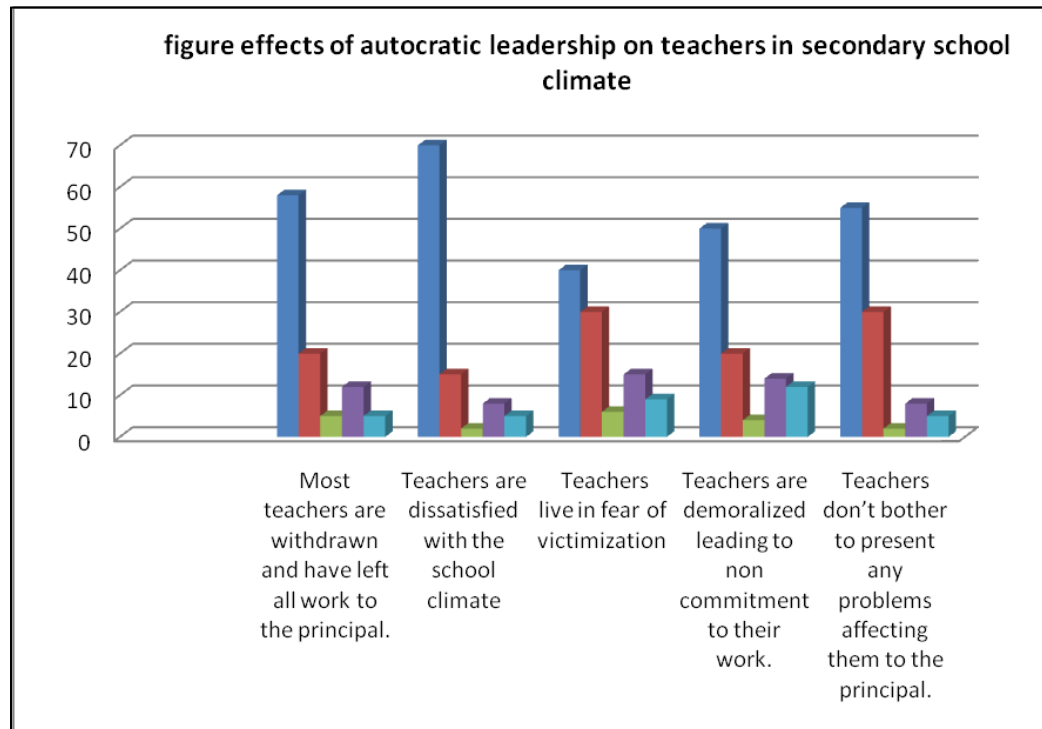
Majority teachers were always withdrawn and left all work to school principals, Most teachers always feared victimization, 55 percent said they were always demoralized hence not committed to their work. From the findings, principal's autocratic leadership styles does not foster a positive school climate.

4.5 Effects of democratic Leadership Style on the School Climate

This section presents findings related to the third objective related to the third objective of the study which sought to establish the effect of democratic leadership style on the school climate in Malindi district. According to Lunenburg & Ornstein

(1996), democratic leadership tends to have a positive impact on school members' morale and school climate, as they are inextricably related.

4.5.1 Principals' Responses on Democratic Leadership Style

The principals were presented with a series of items to measure the extent to which they engage in the democratic leadership styles in their administration which in turn affects the school climate.

Figure 4.9:

Principals' Responses on Democratic Leadership Style
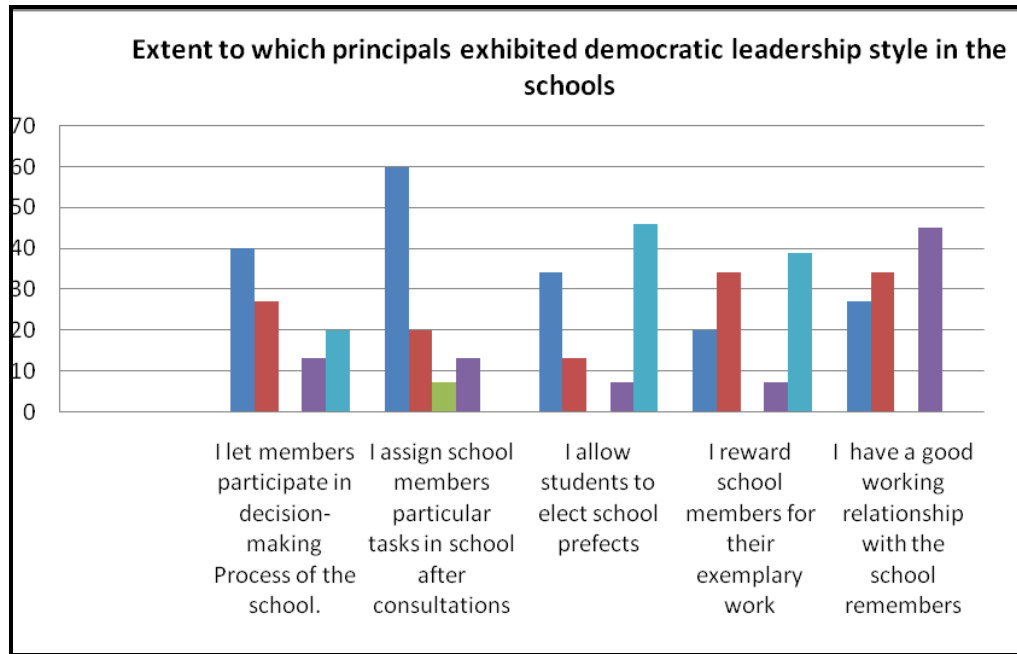
Findings in figure 4.9 indicate that most of the principals always allowed members to participate in the decision making, Majority principals indicated that they always assigned school members particular tasks in school after consultations, most indicated that they rarely have a good working relationship with the school remembers .

4.5.2 Teachers' Responses on Democratic Leadership Style

Teachers were asked to indicate the effects of principal's democratic leadership style in school showing how it affects the school climate.

Figure 4.10:

Teachers' Responses on Democratic Leadership Style

Effect of democratic leadership style on the school climate in Malindi district
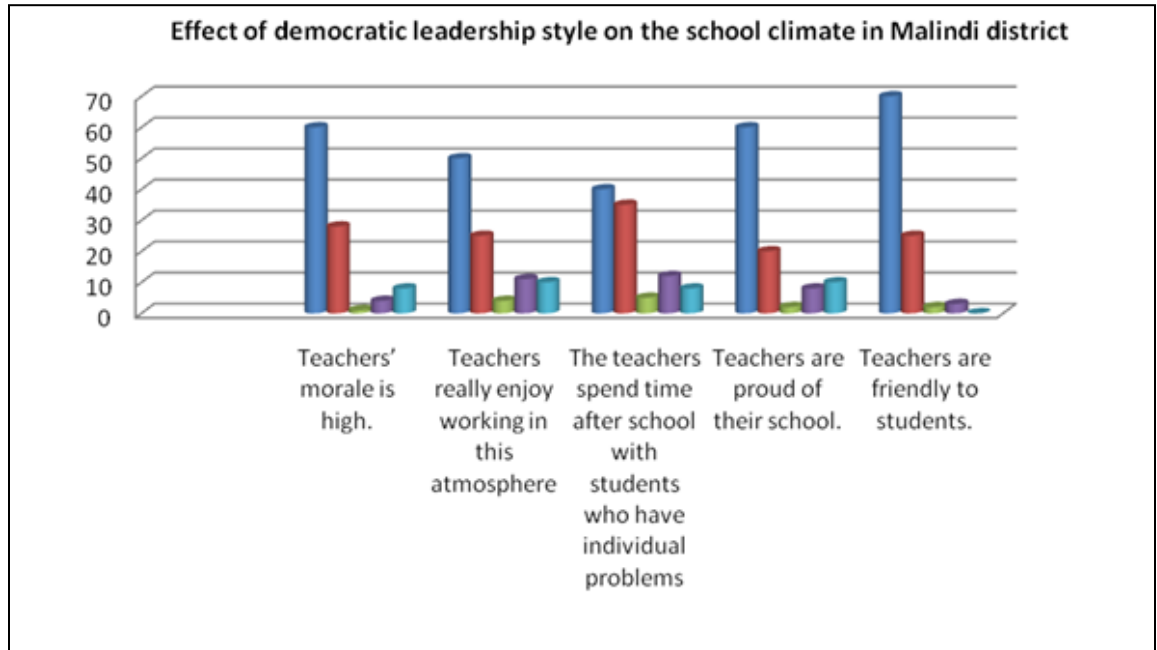
Majority of teachers indicated that where the principals adopted a democratic leadership style their morale was always high while most of the respondents indicated that they always enjoyed working in such atmosphere, 40 percent of the teachers indicated that they always spend time after school with students who have individual problems. It is important that none of the teachers indicated that they were never friendly to students in a democratic leadership. This indicates that the democratic leadership style fosters a positive school climate

4.5.3 Influence of Laissez-faire leadership Style on the School Climate

This section presents findings related to the fourth objective of the study which sough to establish the influence of Laissez-faire leadership style on the school climate in Malindi district.

4.5.4 Head teachers' Responses on Laissez-faire leadership Style

The principals were presented with a series of items to measure the extent to which they engage in the Laissez-Faire leadership styles in their administration.

Figure 4.11:

Head teachers' Responses on Laissez-faire leadership Style
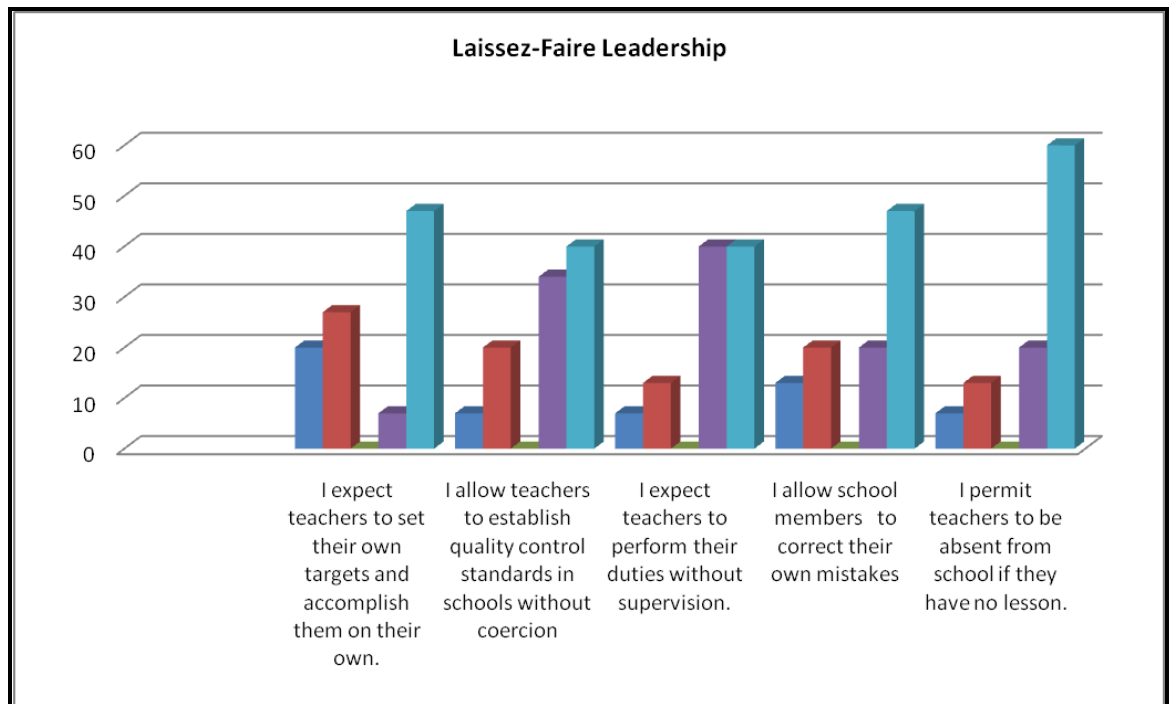
Most of the principals never expected teachers to set their own targets and accomplish them on their own and never allowed teachers to establish quality

control standards in school without supervision. This depicts the existence of a negative school climate where the teachers and the students are not committed to the achievement of school goals and objectives.

4.5.5 Teachers' Responses on Laissez-faire leadership style

Teachers were asked to indicate the effects of laissez-faire leadership style on the school climate in Malindi district, their responses were as shown in figure below.

Figure 4.12:

Teachers' responses on Laissez-faire leadership style
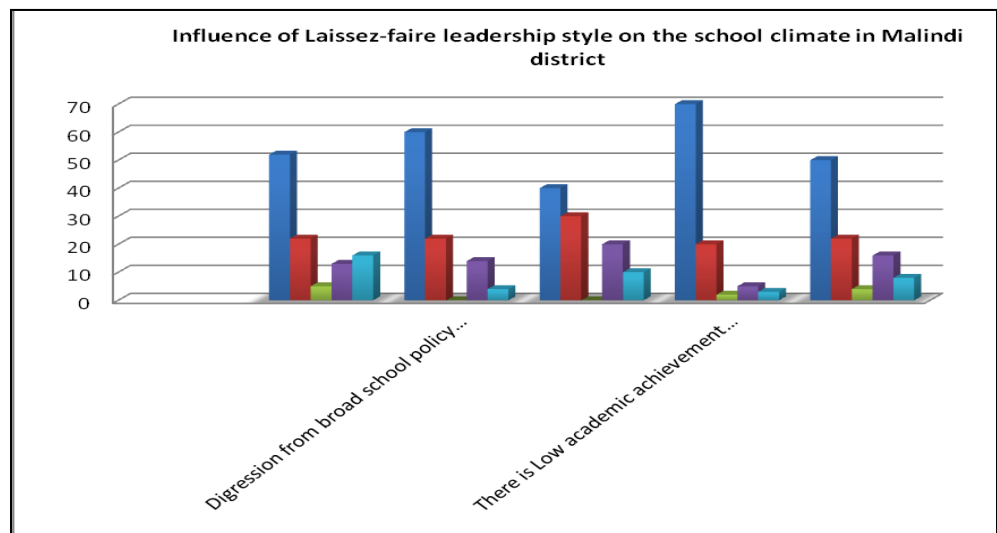
Most of the teachers indicated that lack of supervision of teachers always led to none completion of syllabuses. Majority of the teachers indicated that always digression from broad school policy is high, This is in agreement with MacDonald's (2007), study of laissez-faire leadership which shows that it is

associated with the highest rates of truancy and delinquency and with the slowest

modifications in performance which lead to unproductive attitudes.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the study, the conclusions and recommendations made by the researcher. This was done in respect to the objectives and the ultimate aim was to answer the research questions

5.2 Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of principal's leadership styles in establishing school climate in public secondary schools in Malindi district. The study hoped to achieve this aim by identifying the existing leadership styles employed by secondary school principals in Malindi district. The study also sought to determine the effect of principals' autocratic leadership style, democratic leadership styles, Laissez-faire leadership style on the school climate as well as establishing ways of improving school climate in Malindi district. Data were collected using questionnaires from 15 principals, 100 teachers and 100 prefects drawn from 15 public secondary schools in Malindi District.

The review of literature relevant to this study laid the background for the study. It focused on school climate and leadership, autonomous school climate, controlled school climate, familiar school climate and closed school climate, autocratic leadership style on school climate, democratic leadership style on the school

climate and laissez-faire leadership style on school climate. The researcher based the research on Fiedler's contingency theory, that is, the Path-goal leadership model. Summary of the literature review, theoretical framework and conceptual framework of the study

Findings of the study on influence of principals' autocratic leadership styles in establishing school climate in secondary schools revealed that autocratic leadership style was the most popular style employed by head teachers. Majority of the principals always issued orders expecting compliance by school members. Majority of the principals indicated that supervision of teachers and students is rigorous. Majority of the principals indicated that members who do not meet the school set objectives are always punished. Most of the principals indicated that they occasionally had confidence in their teachers. An equal number of the respondents indicated that principal-teachers-students relationship is occasionally characterized by fear. Most teachers were always withdrawn and left all work to school principals, Most teachers always feared victimization, most teachers were always demoralized hence not committed to their work, Most teachers always don't bother to present any problems affecting them to the principal. From the findings we can infer that principal's autocratic leadership does not foster positive attitude for teachers to work.

Findings on the effect of principals' democratic leadership style on the school climate, revealed that most of the principals always allowed members to participate in the decision making, most principals 60% indicated that they always assigned school members particular tasks in school after consultations, most 46% of the principals indicated that they never allowed students to elect school prefects.

While a few of the principals never rewarded school members for their exemplary work most of the principals indicated that they rarely have a good working relationship with the school members. Most teachers indicated that in such a climate morale was always high, 50% of the respondents indicated that they always enjoyed working in this atmosphere, 40% of the teachers always spend time after school with students who have individual problems, 60% of the teachers are always proud of their school, 20% of the teachers are occasionally proud of their school, 70% of the Teachers are always friendly to students. It is important that none of the teachers indicated that he never was friendly to students in a democratic leadership.

Findings on the effect of principals' Laissez-faire leadership style on the school climate revealed that Most of the principals never expected teachers to set their own targets and accomplish them on their own and never allowed teachers to establish quality control standards in school without supervision. Most 40% of the principals rarely expect teachers to perform their duties without supervision, and

40% of the principals never expect teachers to perform their duties without supervision. Most 47% of the principals never allow school members to correct their own mistakes and 40% of the respondents never permit teachers to be absent from school if they have no lesson. Most 52% of the teachers indicated that Lack of supervision of teachers always led to none completion of syllabuses, 60% of the teachers indicated that always digression from broad school policy is high, 70% of the teachers indicated that there is always Low academic achievement in the schools, 50% of the respondents indicated that discipline of teachers and students is always very low.

5.3 Conclusions

The study concludes that autocratic leadership style was the most popular style employed by principals in Malindi District. This is because majority of the principals strongly supported the values related to autocratic leadership style. In addition, the study concludes that autocratic leadership styles influence establishment of a negative school climate where teachers and students always felt unwanted and unsafe.

On the effect of the autocratic leadership style on the school climate the study concluded that autocratic leadership style was retrogressive and largely did not improve the school climate. This is because most teachers were always demoralized hence not committed to their work.

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The study concludes that democratic leadership style is the best style that can be employed to achieve a positive school climate for all parties in the school. This is because when teachers are involved in decision making and goal setting in school, they are likely to own the set objectives and goals and work towards the achievement.

The laissez-faire leadership style was least practiced by most principals. In addition, the principals revealed that such a leadership style would culminate in unfinished syllabus ultimately lowering students' academic achievement. This style of leadership creates a negative school climate. The study concludes that these perceptions could be due to lack of knowledge on what leadership entails.

5.4 Recommendations

The following are the recommendations of the researcher.

i. Principals should involve teachers and students in decision making in all matters regarding school administration in order to foster positive school climate.

ii. Teachers should undertake education programmes offering leadership in order to acquire skills that would promote positive school climate.

iii. The principals should undertake in-service courses to improve their leadership skills. This will enable them to adopt the best leadership style that fosters a positive school climate.

5.5. Suggestions for Further Studies

The current study focused on the influence of principal's leadership styles in establishing school climate in public secondary schools in Malindi district. The researcher recommends further research on leadership styles adopted by principals in various parts of the country so as to compare the findings of this study.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

University of Nairobi

Department of Educational Administration & Planning

P. O. Box 30197

Nairobi

The Head Teacher

……………Primary School

Dear Sir/ Madam

RE: REQUEST TO COLLECT DATA

I am a post-graduate student currently working on my research project on the influence of leadership styles on school climate in secondary schools in Malindi District. Your school has been selected through sampling to participate in the study.

I hereby request you kindly to fill the enclosed questionnaire as honestly as possible. The information that you will provide will only be used for the purpose of my academic research. Meanwhile your identity will be treated confidentially.

Thank you in advance.

Yours faithfully,

Kamurua Mary Wakanye

APPENDIX 2

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRINCIPALS

This study intended to investigated and establish the influence of leadership styles on school climate in secondary schools in Malindi District.   You have been selected to be part of the sample. The data collected will be used strictly for the purpose of this study with utmost confidentiality. Please respond to the questions as frankly as possible. Your honesty and cooperation in filling this questionnaire will be highly appreciated. Kindly do not write your name or the name of the school. Thank you.

SECTION A (Tick appropriately)

1. What is your age (in years)? Below 25 years ( ) 25- 50 years (   )
   above 50 years ( )

2. Indicate your education level. Diploma (   ) Bachelors' degree (   )
    Master degree ( )

3. For how long have you served in the current school 1-5years   ( )   6-
   10 years   ( )

    above 10 years ( )

4. How many teachers are there in your schools?

     a) Male (   )   b) Female (   )

SECTION B

4   What type of leadership styles do secondary school principals apply in school?

Please tick appropriately. Using the likert scale where (1 – not available at all, 2- least available, 3- don't know, 4- available and 5- highly available.

Democratic leadership

s/no	Item	1	2	3	4	5
1	I let school members know what is expected of them					
2	I assign school members particular tasks in school					
3	I allow students to elect school prefects					
4	I give encouragement, support and appreciate school members for their exemplary work					
5	Principals have a good working relationship with the school remembers					

Autocratic leadership

s/no	Items	1	2	3	4	5
1	The principal rules the school with an iron fist.					
2	Supervision of teachers and students is rigorous					
3	Members who do not meet the school set objectives are threatened with punishment.					
4	The principal does not have confidence in his teachers					
5	The principal-teachers-student relationship is characterized by fear					

Laissez-Faire Leadership

s/no	Item	1	2	3	4	5
1	I expect teachers to create their own targets and accomplish them on their own.					
2	I allow my teachers to establish quality control standards in school on their own.					
3	I Delegate duties to school members and expect them to accomplish them without supervision.					
4	I Expect school members to find and correct their own errors.					
5	I allow teachers may not come to school if they have no lesson.					

APPENDIX 3

TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

This study intended to investigated and establish the influence of leadership styles on school climate in secondary schools in Malindi District. You have been selected to be part of the sample. The data collected will be used strictly for the purpose of this study with utmost confidentiality. Please respond to the questions as frankly as possible. Your honesty and cooperation in filling in this questionnaire will be highly appreciated. Kindly do not write your name or the name of the school. Thank you.

SECTION A (Tick appropriately)

1. What is your age (in years) Below 25 years(   ) 25- 50 years (   )

   Above 50 years   (   )

2. Indicate your education level.

   Diploma (   ) Bachelors' degree (   )

   Master degree ( )

3. How long have you been teacher?   1-10 years (   )

   11- 20 years   (   )   21-30 years   (   ) 31-40 years   (   )

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SECTION B

What type of leadership styles do secondary school principals apply in school?

Please tick appropriately. Using the likert scale where (1 – not available at all, 2- least available, 3- don't know, 4- available and 5- highly available.)

Autocratic leadership

s/no	item	1	2	3	4	5
1	Most teachers are withdrawn and have left all work to the principal.					
2	Teachers are dissatisfied with the school climate					
3	Teachers live in fear of victimization					
4	Teachers are demoralized leading to non commitment to their work.					
5	Teachers don't bother to present any problems affecting them to the principal.					

Democratic Leadership

s/no	ITEM	1	2	3	4	5
1	Teachers' morale is high.					
2	Teachers really enjoy working in this atmosphere					
3	The teachers spend time after school with students who have individual problems					
4	Teachers are proud of their school.					
5	Teachers are friendly to students.					

Laissez-faire leadership style

s/no	ITEM	1	2	3	4	5
1	There is no supervision of teachers leading incompletion of syllabuses					
2	Digression from broad school policy is high.					
3	There is disorder in the school as no one is in charge.					
4	There is Low academic achievement in the schools					
5	Discipline of teachers and students is very low					

In what ways can the school climate in Malindi district be improved?

s/no	ITEM	1	2	3	4	5
1	Through enhanced job satisfaction among teachers.					
2	Through enhanced team work among teachers.					
3	Through recognition of teachers.					
4	By provide adequate working tools and space.					
5	Motivation of teachers for improved performance.					

APPENDIX 4

PREFECTS QUESTIONNAIRE

This study intended to investigated and establish the influence of leadership styles on school climate in secondary schools in Malindi District. You have been selected to be part of the sample. The data collected will be used strictly for the purpose of this study with utmost confidentiality. Please respond to the questions as frankly as possible. Your honesty and cooperation in filling in this questionnaire will be highly appreciated.

Kindly do not write your name or the name of the school. Thank you.

SECTION A

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Which form are you in?   1   [ ]   2   [ ]   3 [ ]   4   [ ]

How old are you?   13-14   [ ]   15-16 [ ]   17-18   [ ]   above 18 [ ]

At what level did you report in the school?

Form 1[ ] Form 2[ ]   Form 3   [ ] Form 4 [ ]

SECTION B

Please tick appropriately. Using the likert scale where (1 – not available at all, 2- least available, 3- don't know, 4- available and 5- highly available.)

4. In what ways can the school climate in Malindi district be improved?

s/no	ITEM	1	2	3	4	5
1	By being friendly and supportive to students					
2	Through provision of adequate school facilities					
3	Through encouraging students to work hard to achieve improved performance.					
4	Through Students are allowed to elect prefects council in school.					
5	Through rewarding of students for their hard work					

APPENDIX 5

RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION LETTER

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Telephone: 254-020-2213471, 2241349
254-020-310571, 2213123, 2219420
Fax: 254-020-318245, 318249
When replying please quote
secretary@ncst.go.ke

P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA
Website: www.ncst.go.ke

Our Ref: NCST/RCD/14/012/1036

Date: 26th July 2012

Mary Wakanyei Kamurua
University of Nairobi
P.O.Box 30197-00100
Nairobi.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on *"Influence of leadership styles in establishing school climate in public secondary schools in Malindi District, Kenya,"* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Malindi District** for a period ending **31st August, 2012.**

You are advised to report to **the District Commissioner and the District Education Officer, Malindi District** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf** of the research report/thesis to our office.

DR. M. K. RUGUTT, PhD, HSC.
DEPUTY COUNCIL SECRETARY

Copy to:

The District Commissioner
The District Education Officer
Malindi District.

"The National Council for Science and Technology is Committed to the Promotion of Science and Technology for National Development."

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