

**PRINCIPALS' FACTORS INFLUENCING STUDENTS' INVOLVEMENT IN
ADMINISTRATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL IN MASABA SUB-COUNTY
IN NYAMIRA COUNTY, KENYA**

Miruka Joyce Nyanchera

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for award of degree in any other University

Miruka Joyce Nyanchera
E55/72087/2011

This research project is submitted for examination with our approval as University Supervisors

Dr. Daisy Matula

Lecturer

Department of Educational Administration and Planning
University of Nairobi

Dr. Mercy Mugambi

Lecturer

Department of Educational Administration and Planning
University of Nairobi

DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to: my late father Francis Miruka, my mother Elizabeth Miruka, and my children; Francis Kiame, Audry Bosibori, Bridget Nyanchama, Immaculate Bitengo, Spranza Kerubo and Angella Kemunto.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BOM	Board of Management
CRC	Conventions on the Right of the Child
DC	District Commissioner
DEO	District Education Officer
KEMI	Kenya Education Management Institute
KIE	Kenya Institute of Education
KNEC	Kenya National Education Council
MOE	Ministry of Education
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
SRC	Student Representative Council
TSC	Teachers Service Commission
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Education Funds

ABSTRACT

Educators, trainers, and researchers have long been interested in exploring variables contributing effectively for quality of performance of learners. The role played by education in the development of human capital is critical and its inter-linkages with the well-being and provision of opportunities for better living cannot be overlooked. The purpose of this study was to determine the principals' factors influencing the involvement of students in administration of secondary schools in Masaba Sub-County, Nyamira County. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design that targeted school principals', teachers and students in secondary schools in Masaba Sub-County, Nyamira County. In total 30 school principals and 100 teachers were sampled. While the teachers were targeted through simple random sampling, the principals were purposively sampled. Two sets of instruments were used; an interview schedule targeting the principals, a questionnaire targeting teachers and a focus group discussion that targeted the students. The quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics while qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis. The study established that the students participated in the day to day running of the school by ensuring cleanliness of the school, discipline of the fellow students, presenting the views and grievances of the students to the school administrations, planning and organization of the school programmes among others. The study further established that the principals' level of education has no influence on the students' involvement in the school administration and also established that the principals' experience played a very vital role in the involvement of the students in the school administration as more experienced principals tended to involve the students more than the inexperienced ones. The democratic leadership style was seen as the best leadership style for the principals for the involvement of students in school administration. It is evident that the principal plays a pivotal role in the enhancement of student involvement in school administration. Student involvement in school administration is a very vital practice not only for the school administration but also for the students, the more students are involved in school administration, the more they are likely to have positive outcomes such as cognitive gains, satisfaction and retention. The study recommends that the school management should engage the students more especially in the area of decision making as it was revealed that increased involvement of students was beneficial to the school performance and individual performance. The Teachers Service Commission should start a mentorship programme in which the experienced principals will mentor the newly promoted principals on the effective running of the schools and principals should adopt inclusive leadership strategies where all the stakeholders contribute in the administration of the schools. There is need for similar studies to be undertaken to evaluate the effect of students' involvement in school administration on their academic performance.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Education is considered as a first step for every human activity, especially in this era of globalization and technological revolution. The role played by education in the development of human capital is critical and its inter-linkages with the well-being and provision of opportunities for better living cannot be overlooked (Battle and Lewis, 2002). According to Saxton (2000), education enables individuals to increase their productivity and improve their quality of life.

The imperative contribution of education to the development and growth of economies in the world has made it to be one of the most researched topics globally. Educators, trainers, and researchers have long been interested in exploring variables contributing effectively for quality of performance of learners. These variables have been those inside and outside school that affect students' quality of academic achievement (Crosnoe, Johnson and Elder, 2004). Mann (1985), posits that these formal investigations about the role of these demographic factors rooted back in the 17th century. Several of these investigations show that the more students are involved in their school settings, the more they are likely to have positive outcomes such as cognitive gains, satisfaction and retention (Pascarella and Terenzini, 2005).

Today, there is a growing consensus among educators that there is a need to involve students in administering the school. This has been articulated by different scholars who believe that students, educators, parents and other advocates have realized that students' involvement in administration is inherently meaningful for students, parents and the community (Fletcher, 2010). According to Muchelle (1996), students' involvement in school administration gained significance in the 1960s in the United States of America, which was to spread to other parts of the world. Shaharbi (2010), in his study of students' involvement in administration in Malaysia attributes the rise of prominence of students and their role in administration to be related with increased democratization and openness in the society.

Student involvement in many British and Commonwealth schools is through a prefectural body. Prefects are usually students in their senior grade and have considerable power and effectively run the school outside the classroom. For example, in Hornsby High school (Hornsby Girls School, 2010) there is a Prefectoral Board, which is a body of the school made of carefully selected proficient senior students. The prefect body is a government and it checks on the school. The prefects have some sort of authority over other students. The prefects in this school have their duties, responsibilities, special rights in which they are allowed to punish students who behave contrary to the rules and regulations. However, they are sometimes restrained where a case is beyond their context which is referred to the school principal. In conjunction, the school has the Student Representative Council (S.R.C.), which is the mouthpiece of the

students. The council is made up of elected representatives and it works in cooperation with the prefect body (Wambua, 2011).

In Kenya, calls for inclusion of students in the decision making structure in schools have led to various attempts by the Ministry of Education to put in place structures for inclusion. For instance, in 2009, the Kenya Secondary School Student Council (KSSSC) was formed with the aim of making secondary school administration more participatory. Students would be involved in decision making to ensure their interest is adopted in administration. The proponents of students' involvements in administration have justified their support for this on premise that decisions in a school affect the students in latent and manifest ways. Sushila (2006), argues that students are recipients of final decisions thus, recommendations made by students may be very constructive and if approached in the right manner will work positively.

According to Wambulwa (2004), the involvement of students in school administration and co-operation in decision making can result into school improvement. The link between students and school administration can influence decisions and also the improvement and maintenance of school discipline. Students can offer their opinions regarding their discipline and as a result teachers are made aware of students' feelings regarding school administration. This suggests that if students are given the opportunity to make decisions, both educators and students will get a chance to solve problems that arise together.

Today, many scholars are of the view that it's important to include all parties in decision making process on the issues that affect them (UNESCO, 1995). Such inclusion in school administration system includes Board of management (BOM), principals, students and parents. Students involvement in school administration is crucial since most of the decisions made in schools affect them. Muchiri (1998), observed that when students are encouraged to take part in the administration of the school, they learn to cultivate democratic attitudes, right attitudes towards work and a sense of belonging to both school and society. Students learn to be self-directing, law abiding and responsible. Thus, proper school administration demands involvement of students in decision making, however what is on the ground is that students are not involved in decision making of what directly affects them.

In the recent past, research on student involvement in schools has been shifting attention from the factors outside school-lever factors to the school learning environment where the principal school administrators have been found to play a key role in determining the level of students' participation. The school administrator's level of education, past experience and their leadership styles are viewed as crucial elements in giving direction to the level of student participation in schools. According to Olembo (1997), the level of involvement at many educational institutions is influenced by the leadership styles of administration and management team. This is because the school leadership is the act of influencing the activities of the teachers and students in an effort to adhere to educational objectives within the school.

According to Hoy and Miskeel (1992), a principal is usually the key figure in fostering shared administration within the school. School principals not only have increased responsibility and authority in school programmed curriculum and personnel decisions, but also increased accountability for a student and program success. Having this in mind this study sought to investigate the principals' factors influencing students' involvement in administration of secondary schools in Masaba Sub- County, in Nyamira County, Kenya.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Statistics by KNEC (2008) show that, Nyamira district was at the bottom of the rank. The poor performance in national examinations has persisted for a long time and most stakeholders in the district including parents, teachers and education officers are looking for answers to explain the state of affairs. Parents, leaders and scholars from the district have been worried causing them to wonder about the cause of this poor performance. Following these findings, Nyaboga (2011), advices that issues responsible for poor performance in examinations in Nyamira needs to be investigated.

In Masaba Sub-County of Nyamira County there have been several schools which have had several student unrest resulting to burning of school property and disruption of learning activities (DEO's office, 2013). Whereas many studies within the County have sought to address the issue of school performance, these studies have not come across any study that seeks to address the level of student involvement in these schools. Going by Fletcher (2004) assertions, that schools can strengthen themselves by creating,

learning from, replicating, and supporting meaningful student involvement so that students can work with adults to determine how to make schools better places to learn, this study sought to address the issue of student involvement in schools. The study sought to investigate the principals' factors influencing students' involvement in administration of secondary schools in Masaba sub-county.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the principals' related factors influencing students' involvement in administration of secondary school in Masaba Sub-County, Kenya.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study were:

- i. To establish ways in which students are involved in the administration of secondary schools in Masaba Sub-county, Nyamira County.
- ii. To determine how the principals' level of education influences students' involvement in school administration in Masaba Sub-County, Nyamira County.
- iii. To investigate how the influence of school principals' experience on student involvement in school administration in Masaba Sub-County, Nyamira County.
- iv. To examine the influence of principals' democratic leadership style on student involvement in school administration in Masaba Sub-County, Nyamira County.

1.5 Research Questions

The following research questions were used to meet the research objectives:

- i. How are students involved in school administration in Masaba Sub-County, Nyamira County?
- ii. How does the level of education of the school principal influence students' involvement in school administration in Masaba Sub-County, Nyamira County?
- iii. In what ways does the school principal experience influence student involvement in school administration in Masaba Sub-County, Nyamira County?
- iv. How does the school principals' democratic leadership style influence students involvement in school administration in Masaba Sub-County, Nyamira County?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study findings may provide policy makers with feedback information on the principal factors that influence students' involvement in school administration while at the same time forming a data bank for future reference by the policy makers and other interested parties in the education sector. The study findings may also provide information that could be referred to in future and form a basis for recommendation for any relevant adjustments towards efforts to enhance student involvement in secondary schools. The schools administration could also be able to find valuable information that could be used to foster the implementation best practice in student involvement in schools. School principals who are a cornerstone of the implementation of government

policy on education could be able to learn and adopt better approaches in student involvement.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

The limitations of this study included; unavailability of some of the school principals and teachers during data collection. This forced the researcher to make several trips and attempts in getting them to participate in the study. Nevertheless, the researcher made arrangements in advance to enquire about their availability or booked appointments through phone calls before visiting. This helped the research gain more participants.

1.8 Delimitations of the Study

The study was conducted in Masaba sub-county and the conditions in it were unique and different from the other regions in Kenya. The study focused on public secondary schools only because private secondary schools employed different students' involvement approaches. The respondents to this study were principals, teachers and students because they were easily accessed. Other stakeholders in school administration such as parents, sponsors and Board of Management (BOM) were not involved in the study due to technicalities involved in finding them.

1.9 Basic Assumptions of the Study

The study made the following assumptions:

- i. That the respondents gave their opinions uninfluenced and as honestly as possible.
- ii. All the secondary school principals were sufficiently informed about the concept of students' involvement in administration and were in a position to respond adequately to the items in the questionnaires.

1.10 Definition of Significant Terms

This section includes terms that are significant for this study as they are used in the study but not in their convectional dictionary meanings.

Administration refers to the range of activities connected with organizing and supervising the way institution functions. It consists of a separate process or part of management or leadership process.

Attitude refers to an organized predisposition to think, feel, perceive and behave towards a referent point.

Democracy in education, this refers to a school administrative set-up that allows students to have greater opportunities for initiative, independence and responsibilities in participating in school governance.

Discipline refers to the control of someone or ones emotions and actions for the development of desirable attitudes according to acceptable standards.

District refers to geographical area defined with a gazette political boundary and comprise of number of divisions, locations and sub-locations.

Principal the person with the highest authority or most important position in a secondary school

Secondary schools refers to post-primary institution where students receive regular instructions for four years from form one to form four.

Student involvement refers to the process of contacting students before decisions are made in administrative areas that affect them.

1.11. Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter One consist of the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, limitations of the significant terms and organization of the study. Chapter Two focuses on literature review, theoretical framework and conceptual framework. Chapter Three is the research methodology, research design, sampling, instruments validity and analysis. Chapter Four contains research analysis, interpretations and discussions while Chapter Five has the summary of research findings, conclusions, recommendations as well as suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter covers literature review on principals' factors influencing student involvement in administration of secondary schools. The section focuses on the concept of participatory administration, students' involvement in administration, principals' factors and research findings related to the study, summary of literature, theoretical framework and conceptual framework.

2.2 The Concept of Participatory Administration in School

The term "participatory democracy" was used by the New Left in the 1960s as a way of reclaiming the essence of democratic idealism in a society they believes had grown over-organized, hierarchical and authoritarian (Nelson Wright,1995). The term democracy in education refers mainly to its vertical dimension or how educational institutions themselves operate. It refers to the relationship between individuals and between groups in educational institutions. It mainly refers to the extent to which the administrative processes in schools are open and accessible to all its members (Nelson and Wright 1995).

According to the proponents of democratic education, young people like students ought to have power and responsibility in the schools where they spend so much time of their lives (Nelson and Wright, 1995). When individuals are bound by limitations, expectations or rules they have no part in establishing, then they cannot be said to live in a democratic environment, therefore, in this view, schools that are entirely managed by adults (teachers, administrators, schools boards) who do not teach democracy and do not enable young people to experience or practice meaningful participation in the social institution with which they are most intimately involved (Nelson and Wright, 1995). It is also important for school teachers to model behaviors of openness and inclusion. It is important for teachers and other participants to enact values that communicate a caring environment for students and trust of students. Communicating that all participants can achieve and are capable of success is also important and can be achieved through strategies such as celebrating the success of students learning at every level and celebrating successful teaching practices.

The school administration is related to the process of overseeing school management procedures for the welfare of the entire school. The stakeholders of a school are the community, teachers, principal and the students who are directly related to the school. Students' involvement in decision making process will help them to be good citizens in future (Fletcher, 2005). The good citizens help to positively develop their community and nation. At school level, the principals are usually the key figures in fostering shared administration within the school. They will not only have shared responsibility for

programs and students success. Principals must thus, be excellent team leaders and delegators thus seeking the involvement of their subordinates (David, 1989).

2.3 Ways in which Students are Involved in School Administration

According to Fletcher (2004), meaningful student involvement is the process of engaging the knowledge, experience and perspectives of students in every facet of the educational process for the purpose of strengthening their commitment to education, community and democracy. There are multiple approaches to changing the roles of young people in schools that can count as meaningful student Involvement. Fletcher (2004) posits that meaningful student involvement occurs when schools engage students as teachers, education researchers, school planners, classroom evaluators, system-wide school decision-makers, and education advocates. The basic goal of student involvement being to raise students above their own narrow conceptions of self-interest for the benefit of the schools and communities they are members of.

In a meaningful student involvement, all educators listen to students, and offer the following steps for teachers as they engage students in discussions about school: Come up with questions you really care about; Gather a group of students willing to express their thoughts; Write everything down; Ask for evidence; Analyze the material together, and; Value the difference in opinions (Cushman, 2003). According to Kushman (1997), there are many ways of involving students into the school improvement process among them being in the planning and preparation of school programs. Students may be involved in school administration in all aspects of school life. These aspects include

making school decisions, maintaining cleanliness, conducting co-curricular activities, students' welfare and time keeping in school. According to Sithole, (1998), students' involvement in school administration refers to the involvement of students in collective decision making and dialogue between students and other decision makers in the school.

According to Jeruto and Kiprop (2011), in their study which investigates the extent of students' involvement in secondary schools in Kenya. Their study was prompted by the recurrent students' unrest in Kenya, often blamed in media and research to unequal decision making opportunities in schools. They referred students' involvement in administration as the collective decision making at school or class level and the dialogue between students and other decision makers. It also refers to the work of students' representative bodies such as the school council, students' parliament and prefect bodies. Meaningful students' involvement in administration is the process of engaging students as partners in every facet of school life. It involves continuously acknowledging the diversity of students by validating and authorizing them to represent their own ideas, opinion, knowledge and experience (Adam, 2005).

According to Huddleston (2007), students need to be actively involved in all areas of school life, heads the range of activities that make up the work of the school can be categorized in a number of ways, however, one should expect students to have opportunities in each major area, including curriculum, teaching and learning are explored as the least by students in school administration. Gatheya (1992), argued that

secondary school students have been known to take responsibilities vested on them with scruples of adults although they are not adults in the real sense. This makes their involvement in school administration to bear fruit and the principal should be a facilitator of participatory administration in school.

Consultative decision making and delegation of responsibility has a major advantage of promoting co-operation and understanding among the various parties. Sergiovanni (1994), argued that schools should be purposeful communities in which firmly held core permeate every aspect of the school organization like student evaluation, student council, homework, school safety, mid and final examinations. This shows that students contribute to decision making in administration of schools. The rationale behind involving students in school administration is to make schools become more efficient and effective.

2.4 Influence of Principals' Academic Qualification on Student Involvement in School Administration

Education forms the basis upon which economic, social, cultural and political development of any country is founded. Investment in education can help to fasten economic growth, enhance productivity, contribute to national and social development and reduce social inequality (Council of African Ministers of Education, 2000). The level of a country's education is one of the key indicators of its level of development (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2005) globally,

education is recognized as a basic human right and according to Nelson Mandela (2012), argued that education is the only weapon that can be used to change the world.

As a result of this, nations are offering free and compulsory basic education and the need for secondary education is growing. Advances in the science, Technology and innovations have led to changes in the job market. This calls for the need for continuous reforms in the way secondary schools are administered (Glassman and Sullivan, 2008). Secondary education globally is struggling to adapt itself to the changing needs in the world and workplace (World Bank, 2008). Employers in the developed world seek employees with knowledge, skills and ability to solve problems and may measure this through assessments. For employers, educators and the public, the emphasis has shifted from education inputs to education outcomes.

School principals as leaders' of their schools, are charged with making their school perform. Osei (2006), argues that most school principals in Africa often work in poorly equipped schools and with teachers who are not adequately trained. Bush and Oduro (2006), support Osei (2006), and state that there is rarely any formal leadership training for principals and they are appointed on the basis of their teaching record rather than their leadership potential. The official requirement set for one to become a principal indicate what is formally expected from principals , it is important to be fully recognized and qualified as a teacher and to have sufficient experience ranging from five to ten years. Training offered to principals will be crucial components to successfully fulfilling the professional requirements of being a principal. Thus, highly

qualified principals will always understand the need to involve students in school administration mainly in decision making, hence minimizing students' unrest and encouraging quality standards in schools. Researchers' generally agree that programs are needed to prepare school principals if students are to attain higher levels of performance (Hallinger, 2004).

2.5 Influence of Principals' Experience on Students' Involvement in School Administration

Experience as a principal over a period of many years and continued reflection and study on administration matters lead to greater knowledge than the immediate experience of an intensive study. The principals' confidence includes a dispositional element or character trait for the principal needs not only the certain of cognitive ability but also a readiness to accept informative feed-in from others and to rely on the qualified expertise of others in particular areas.

For decades, principals have been strong authority figures at local school level. The advent democracy in society saw the position of the school gained prominence (powers and powers, 1984). Today, prevailing views of leadership suggest that the principals' role should not be to direct others but to create a school culture in which decisions are made collaboratively such administration exercises power of substantial magnitude will occur as teachers and students become more involved in the administration of schools (murphy, 1991). Until very recently (1990s), the destiny of most schools was shaped by the autocratic decisions made by whoever was in command. The achievement of many

schools is found to be influenced by the leadership styles of the principal and his or her experience (Lethwood, 1994).

Muchelle (1996), in a study on attitudes of secondary schools principals towards the involvement of students in administration mentions several factors which seem to influence the extent that a principal can allow students to participate in administration. He defines the term attitude as an organized predisposition to think, feel, perceive and behave towards a referred cognitive object. He further says that it is a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favorable or unfavorable manner with respect to a given object while individual factors clearly contribute to students' involvement in administration, individual attitudes and behaviors may be shaped by various settings or context in which students' live. Resources in particular students/teachers ratio and teacher quality appear to influence the level of participative administration even after controlling principals personal characteristics. These school factors contribute significantly to principal approach of administration by indirectly through creating conditions that influence student involvement. Another way is directly through explicit policies and conscious decisions by school personnel that cause them to volunteer to be involved in decision making because of the prevailing school climate.

2.6 Influence of Principals' Democratic Leadership style on Students' Involvement in School Administration

In a study designed to investigate the link between subordinates performance and task complexity performance and leadership styles and flexibility, Barrow (1976), found that sub-ordinates' performance was a strong causal force in the determination of the behavior a leader utilized. He indicated that low performing subordinates caused the leader to behave much more punitively, more autocratically, less considerably and to push for more production, whereas high performance from the sub-ordinates resulted in the leader being more considerate towards the workers, less punitive, less autocratic and somewhat less task emphasis oriented.

Olembo, Wanga and Karagu (1992) indicates how a principal who is frustrated may gamble the energy generated by his/her legal authority in an attempt to crush those in school opposed to his practices. If such a thing happens, then the teachers' efficiency in teaching and involving students maybe affected. A close examination of those schools, which have consistently posted good results in national examinations have revealed that strong and efficient leadership, is necessary and instrumental in enhancing student's participation in school administration.

A study carried by Eshiwani (1983), found that schools, which performed consistently well and where students level of involvement in school administration was high, tended to have sound and efficient leadership. Efficient head teachers are able to organize the learning process for their pupils, mobilize, and motivate the staff. Kathuri (1984),

points out that, large schools attract better head teachers who in turn appoint better assistant teachers who delegate proper and conducive administration, which leads to high levels of students participation hence better academic attainment. Eshiwani (1983) attributes poor results of students to the armchair head teachers who do not know what goes on in the classroom. He further asserts that head teachers are instrumental in school performance for they monitor closely all the activities in their schools.

Ogawa and Hart (1985), in a study to determine the extent to which head teachers influence the instructional performance of schools found that the head teacher variable accounted for between two and eight percent of the variance in task. They concluded that the head teacher has a significant influence on the instructional performance of pupils. Kibowen (1985), asserts that the basic reason why some schools performed better than others in examinations was that while some head teachers organized the learning process for their pupils, others leave it to chance.

One aspect of leadership that has been found to influence the success of an organization is leadership style. Muchira (1988), in a study of leadership effectiveness in primary teacher colleges in Kenya found that the head teacher's leadership styles correlated significantly to student involvement in school activities and achievement. He further found that the leadership styles were significantly correlated to the head teacher's level of education.

2.7 Overview of other Related Studies

According to Webber (1981), in a research on students' satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the school administration in Illinois high schools found out that principals involved students in school administration to achieve their own ends. On the other hand Wangeri (1986), carried out a study of discipline problems affecting secondary schools in Thika. The study involved eleven secondary schools, used questionnaires as sole instrument with principals as respondents. From the study it was concluded that students were rarely involved in the formulation of school rules. The study revealed that in all the schools the principals, deputy principals and teachers made rules. With regard to the revision of school rule 54% of schools indicated that rules were revised every year and 36% of the schools indicated that rules were rarely revised. It has been indicated that principals rarely involve students in schools' decision making for their own reasons, moreover students were not consulted in the formulation of rules affecting them.

From the studies there is evidence that the majority of students and teachers in schools would always choose to contribute fully to the development of more effective schools that valued them and the quality of their contribution (Vivian, 2003) in MOE (2003). In Kenya not much navel effect has been made towards the realization of students' involvement in schools administration. This inadequacy is reflected in absence of commitment in the government policy of the TSC. Both the education Act and the principals' manual fail to contain any explanation on how participatory administration can be enhanced in secondary schools.

2.8 Summary of Literature Review and Research Gap

From the literature review it is evident that students' involvement in administration is important for the whole school administrators and in particular it helps to improve the relationship between school administrators and students as well as parents. This relationship helps create an amicable environment in the school with reduced administrative problems and consequently this help to improve overall learning environment as well as welfare of students while in schools According to Muchelle (2006), the lack of understanding and knowledge of benefits of students' involvement in administration among principals, teachers and parents do not have an idea of participation and so they act as a barrier towards students' involvement in administration. There are those principals who believe that students are less experienced and immature, they have no knowledge about their involvement (Fetcher, 2005). There are those who believe that students should be involved to some extent in matters that affect them, others believe that students should remain passive and receive instructions from parents and teachers (Sithole, 1998).

The level of student involvement in school administration may be influenced by their characteristics in terms of academic qualification, experience and leadership styles. These are described as principals' factors but in tandem are external factors which may go beyond the level of principals' characteristics. In many occasions, students have resulted to unrest to protest against dictatorship and autocratic leadership styles. This study will provide more knowledge on areas that students need to be involved in schools for effective administration and whether principals' factors such as age, gender,

educational qualification and experience contribute to the level at which they involve students in the administration.

2.9 Theoretical Framework

This study was based on the Transformational Theory of Leadership as first developed by (Bass, 1985).

2.9.1 Transformational Theory of Leadership

The first proponent of this theory was Bass (1985). This theory belongs to the contingency school of thought and describes the leader's involvement in changing the attitude of the workers in order to increase their commitment in an organization. This school of thought pays more attention to relationship at work that is intimately connected with the actual style and attitude of the leaders. Where leaders shows empathy towards their subordinates, exercises less supervision and encourages their participation, the subordinates in turn perceive the leader from an inspirational angle with loyalty and enthusiasm.

According to the theory, subordinates trust a leader who exhibits his competence and effectiveness and results, making them gain confidence and trust in him/her. In this theory, the leaders display many techniques they use in transforming their subordinates such as direct and intimate communication with them. The leaders exhibit a friendly and face-to-face interaction with the workers. He listens to them and provides solutions to

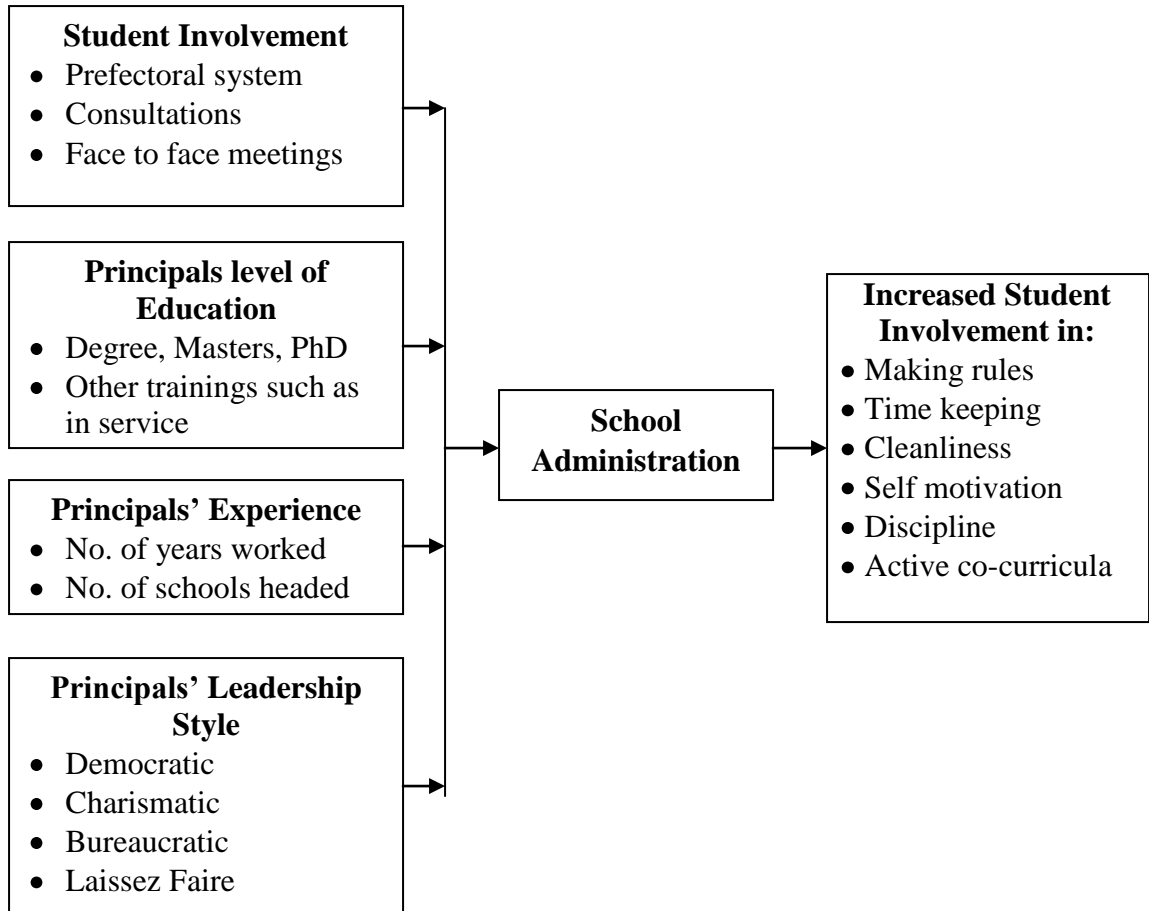
their problems or involves them in problem solving methods. They are easy to access, cheerful, pleasant and upbeat in their outlook. The leaders explain to the workers the importance of their contribution to the welfare of the organization by encouraging their participation and in delegating duties. These leaders make emotional appeals to the workers by striking the right balance between the employee's needs and goals in a given situation (Nyaboga, 2011).

In this study, the theory will be used to illustrate how a school principal (leader) cannot be effective without the cooperation of the teachers and students (workers) behind him and it is upon himself/herself to get their commitment and confidence through the outlined tactics of the transformational theory. The theory shall be fundamental in addressing the importance of Principals characteristics in enhancing students' involvement in school administration.

2.10 Conceptual Framework

According to Mutai (2000), conceptual framework is the relationship between variables in a study showing them graphically and diagrammatically. The purpose is to help the reader quickly see the proposed relationship of concepts, (Mugenda, 1999, Orodho 2004). Figure 2.1 in this study gives the conceptual framework of the study.

Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework



In the conceptual framework, the principal's academic qualification and experience form the independent variables. These two variables have been seen to influence the principals' leadership styles, which in this study shall be the intervening variable that has a direct influence on student involvement in school administration. According to Transformation theory of leadership, subordinates, in this case are the students, trust a leader whom they can interact with face-to-face and is easy to access. With such a leader the subordinates freely air their grievances and suggestions that can lead to the well being of an organization (school). Student involvement in school administration shall thus form the dependant variable that is influenced directly by the style of

leadership exhibited by a school principal and indirectly by the principals' academic qualifications and working experience.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the research design, target population, sample and sampling procedures, research instruments, instruments validity and reliability, data collection procedures and data analysis procedures.

3.2 Research Design

A research design is a logical and valuable way of looking at the world. In this study the researcher employed the descriptive survey design. Descriptive survey enable a researcher to gather data at a particular point in time with the intention of describing the nature of existing conditions or identifying standards against which existing conditions can be compared or determining the relationship that exist between specific events (Cohen and Marion, 2007). In this study the descriptive survey design enabled the researcher to look into a wide range of factors within the principal characteristics that influenced students' involvement in schools.

3.3 Target Population

Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), states that, a population is a complete set of individual cases or object with some common observable characteristics. The study targeted all the 30 secondary schools in Masaba Sub-County.

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

According to Best and Kahn (1998) a sample is a small proportion of a population selected for observation and analysis while sampling is a method of selecting subjects for a study in a way that the individual selected represent the larger group from which they were selected. This study targeted public secondary schools in Masaba North Sub-County. The sub-county has 30 public secondary schools according to the Nyamira County Statistics at the time of the study. The statistics showed that Masaba Sub-county had 30 principals and 600 teachers.

The target population for this study was the 30 principals and 600 teachers and the students within the schools. Stratified sampling was used to identify the sample schools. The schools were grouped into three strata according to the three divisions in the sub-county, namely; Gesima, Rigoma and Gachuba. Two boarding schools were randomly selected from each division, one being a boys' school while the other a girls' schools. In total six schools were sampled.

Gay (1992) states that a sample size of 10% of the target population is considered minimum, while a sample of 20% is required for smaller population and 30% for statistical analysis. In this study the researcher targeted 20% of the teachers to act as the sample size for this study. Whereas the principals were to be targeted by use of an interview schedule and the students through the use of focus group discussions, only the teachers were to be administered with the questionnaires, hence the sample size. In total 120 questionnaires were administered to the teachers. Twenty questionnaires were

administered to each of the six selected schools. The teachers were randomly selected while all the principals in the given schools were involved in the study.

3.5 Research Instruments

The study employed the use of three sets of research instruments, namely: an interview schedule, a questionnaire and a focus group discussion.

The researcher used an interview schedule to interview school principals/head teachers in the targeted secondary schools. The researcher's selection of interview schedules as one of the research instruments is influenced by Kerlinger (1973), who observed that more people are willing to communicate orally than in writing and will therefore provide data more readily in an interview. This justifies the use of interview schedules in the study. The researcher was able to probe the participants and gave explanations and clarification where necessary regarding the problem under study.

In this study, questionnaires were developed to target the teacher respondents. Each item in the questionnaire had been developed to address a specific objective and answers a specific research question. The questionnaire was personally delivered by the researcher and left with the respondents (Orodho, 2003). The respondents were then expected to read and understand the questions and write down the reply in the spaces meant for the purpose in the questionnaire itself. This method has a large coverage enabling the gathering of a large sample very inexpensively. It is also anonymous. Anonymity helps to produce more candid answers than is possible in an interview.

The questionnaire was divided into five sections: the first section was used to derive the demographics of the respondents while the other four sections were aligned along the objectives of the study. The questionnaires contained both close ended and open ended questions.

In each of the six schools, the researcher undertook a focus group discussion with twelve students who were randomly selected. The focus group discussions helped gather the students' views on their take on the influence of a principal's leadership style on student involvement. The focus group discussions were rooted for due to their ability to create an accepting environment that puts participants at ease allowing them to thoughtfully answer questions in their own words and add meaning to their answers. This was crucial in determining the type of leadership styles in the various schools and their overall influence on the management of schools.

3.6 Piloting of the Instruments

Prior to the main study, a pilot study was carried out. In a pilot study the entire research procedure was carried out, including analysis of the data collected, following closely the procedure planned for the study. Pilot studies were carried out with fewer subjects than was employed in the main study. The essence of the pilot study was to determine the instruments' validity and reliability (Nyaboga, 2011). Three schools were picked using the blind folding techniques from the thirty schools for the purposes of piloting the instruments.

3.6.1 Validity of the Research Instruments

Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) defined validity as the accuracy and meaningfulness of the inferences, which is based on the research results. It is the degree to which the results obtained from the analysis of the data actually represent the phenomena under study. The validity of the instruments is determined through the content validity of the instrument. Content validity is concerned with whether or not a test or measuring instrument is representative of the full content of the thing under study. Thus, the questionnaire developed included almost all items on the principal factors influencing students' involvement in school administration. In this study, the validity of the instruments chosen was verified through piloting the instruments in one public secondary school in Masaba Sub-County that was not included in the study.

3.6.2 Reliability of the Instrument

According to Orodho (2004), reliability refers to the extent to which instruments yield measurements that are consistent each time if it is administered to same people. The researcher employed a test-retest method in order to test reliability of the research instruments. Research instruments were pre-tested on a sample of four teachers from two schools. A two-week period was allowed to elapse between the first test and the second test. The coefficient of stability (test-retest) method was used to estimate the degree to which the same results could be obtained with a repeated measure of the same concept in order to determine the reliability of the instrument.

The following steps were followed in determining the reliability of the instrument,

- i. The developed questionnaire was given to about 20 identical respondents not included in the study sample
- ii. The completed questionnaires were scored or analyzed manually.
- iii. The same questionnaires were given to the same respondents after a period of two weeks
- iv. The completed questionnaires were again scored manually.

A comparison of answers made in (ii) and (iv) were analyzed. From the two respondents (ii and iv), Pearson coefficient correlation was used to calculate the correlation coefficient so as to establish the extent to which the contents of the questionnaires were consistent in eliciting the same responses every time the instrument was administered. A correlation coefficient (r) of 0.62 for the questionnaires was attained and this was considered high enough to judge the reliability of the instrument.

3.7 Data Collection Procedures

Upon receiving authorization for research the researcher approached the County Commissioner of Education's Office (Nyamira County) and the district education officer Masaba and obtained the necessary authority to proceed with the study. The researcher later approached the school authorities and informed them of the purposes of the study. Upon getting consent from the relevant head teachers the researcher commenced with the field work. The teacher questionnaires were administered to randomly selected teachers.

3.8 Data Analysis Techniques

The data generated by the research instruments was checked, edited organized and coded by computer to reduce the mass of data obtained into a form suitable for analysis. The coded data was then be analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science Programme (SPSS). The statistical analysis was then summarized into frequencies and percentages and presented in tables, bar charts and figures. Frequencies and percentages were adopted to present, discuss and interpret findings obtained. The research questions giving qualitative data were analyzed using content analysis procedures.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the analysis of data collected from various teacher respondents who filled in questionnaires, head teachers who took part in interview and students who participated in focus group discussions.

4.2 Response Rate

The researchers administered one hundred and twenty (120) teacher questionnaires. In total one hundred questionnaires (100) were submitted back and the basis of analysis for the study. This gave a response rate of 83.3% which the researcher found to

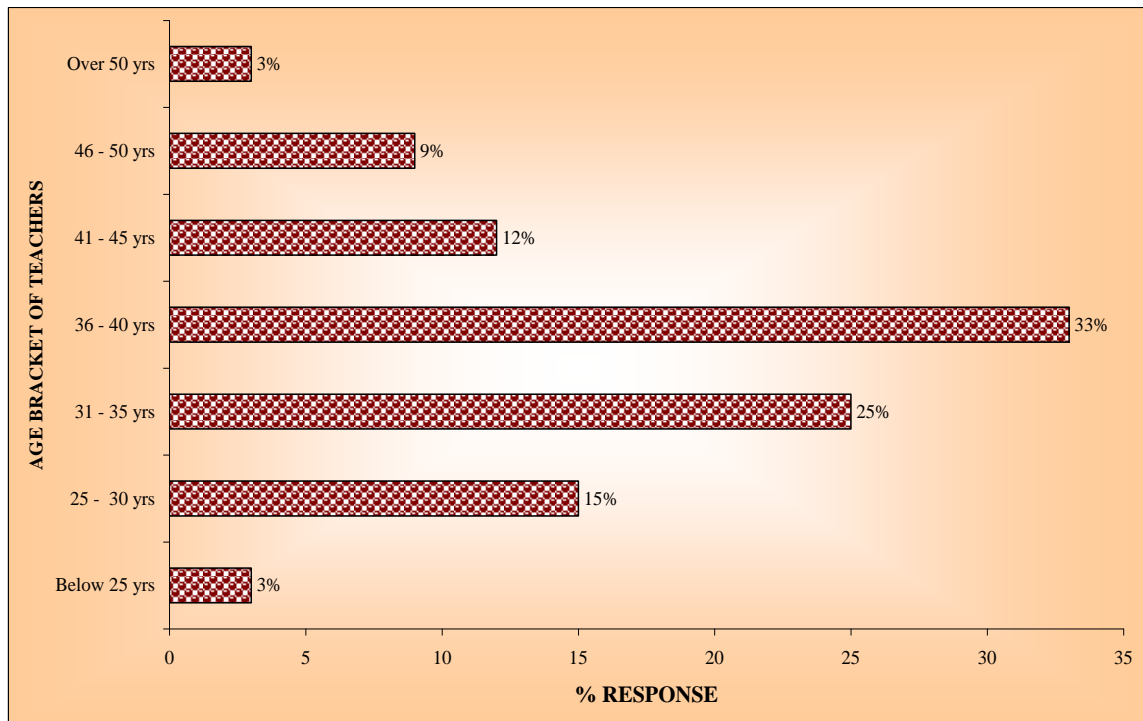
4.3. Demographic Information of the Teacher Respondents

In this section the study sought to determine the respondents' demographic information which included age, gender, academic qualification, training and duration in the school. The findings are presented in the subsequent sections. The researcher administered one hundred and twenty (120) teacher questionnaires. In total one hundred questionnaires (100) were dully filled and retained and the basis of analysis for the study. This gave a response rate of 83.3% which the researcher found to be adequate for the study.

4.3.1 Age Bracket of Respondents

This section discusses the findings of the study in regards to the age of respondents.

Figure 4.1: Age Bracket of Respondents



The findings of the study and as shown in figure 4.1 indicate that most of the respondents (33%) were aged between 36 – 40 years. Those aged between 31 – 35 years were 25%, those aged between 25 – 30 years were 15% while those aged 41 – 45 years were 12% and those aged 46-50 years were 9%. Teachers below 25 years and above 50 years were 3% in each category. Cumulatively 82% of the teachers were aged above 31 years.

From these findings, it is evident that most of the respondents had been in the teaching profession for a while hence were in a position to comprehensively answer to the research questions.

4.3.3 Gender of Respondents

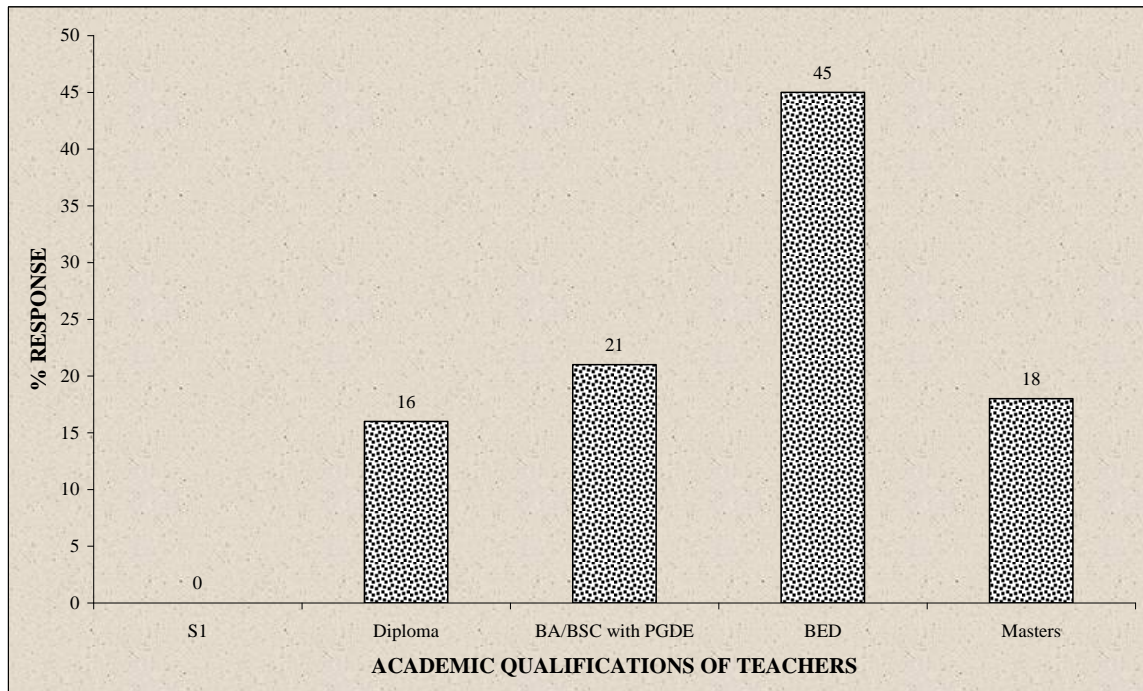
Table 4.1: Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Female	33	33
Male	67	67
Total	100	100

Out of the 100 teachers who participated in this study, 67% were male

4.3.4 Teachers Level of Education

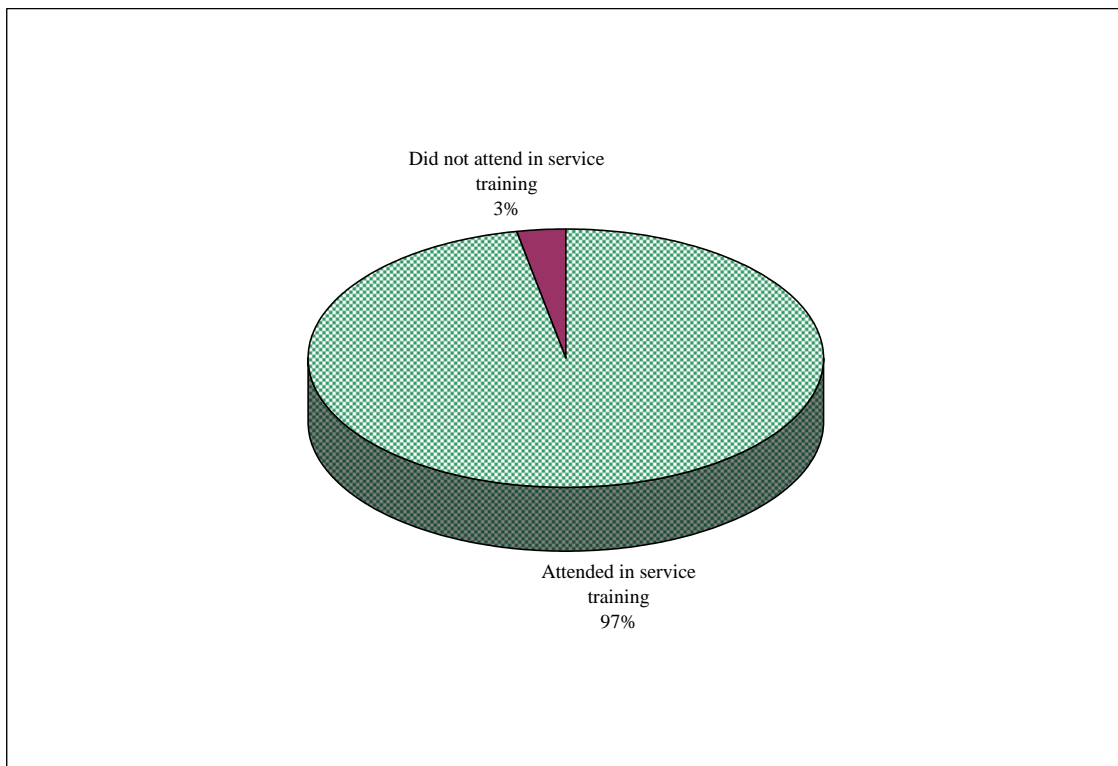
Figure 4.2: Teachers Level of Education



In this study, most of the respondents had attained academic degrees. All the principals interviewed had a first degree. Out of the six principles interviewed three had a masters degree. Amongst the teacher respondents 45% were first degree holders while 18% had masters, 21% were either BA or BSC holders with a postgraduate diploma while 16% were diploma holders. These findings as shown in Figure 4.2 indicate that most of the teachers were graduates and thus highly qualified as teachers.

4.3.5 Attended in-Service Training

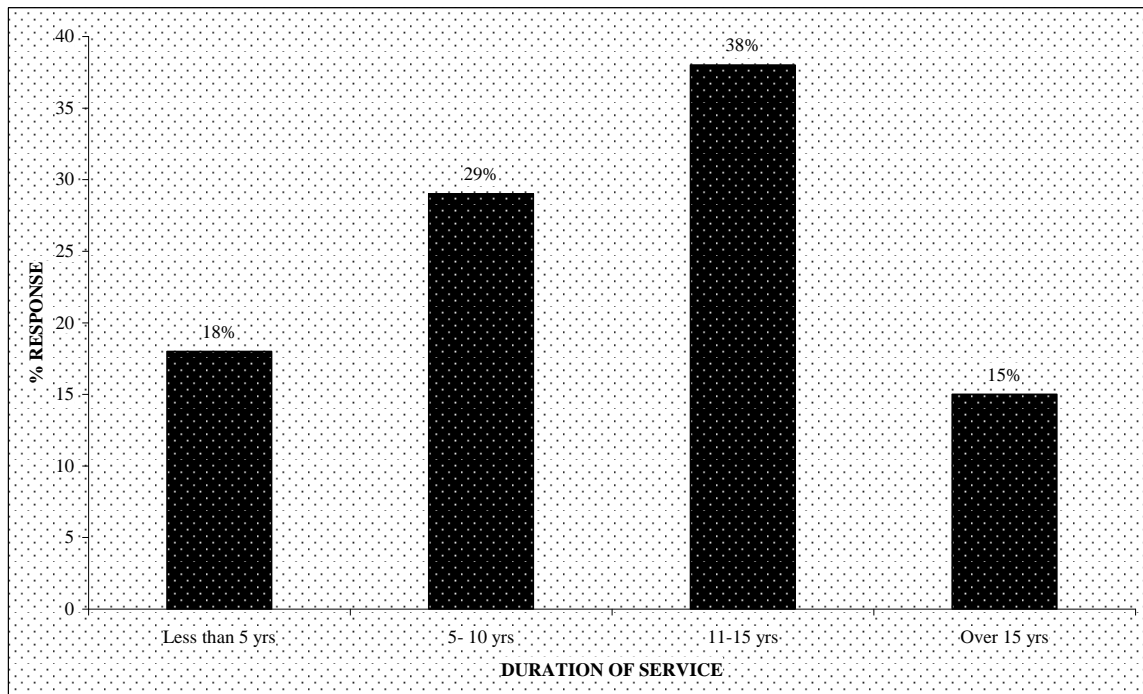
Figure 4.3: Attended in-Service Training



From the findings of the study all the school principals and 97% of the teachers had attended in service training since assuming the teaching profession.

4.3.6 Duration of Service

Figure 4.4: Duration of Service of Teacher Respondents



The study findings indicated in figure 4.4 show that 38% of the respondents had served as teachers for between 11-15 years, 29% for between 5 – 10 years, 18% for less than 5 years and 15% for over 15 years. The findings indicate that over 82% of the teachers had been in service for over 5 years. This gave the researcher the confidence that the respondents targeted were well placed to assist in meeting the research objectives out of their long period of services as teachers.

On the other hand the school principals had served in the teaching profession for over ten years which and thus had adequate interactions in the teaching profession that could be relied on in this study.

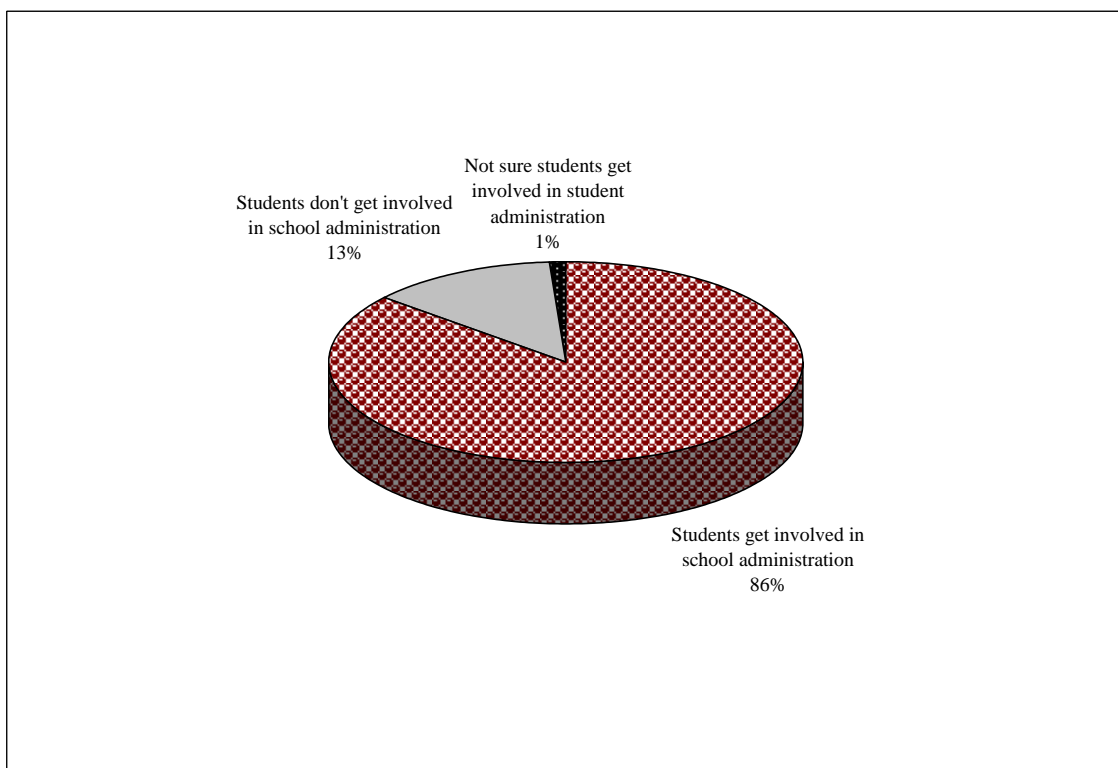
4.4 Student Involvement in School Administration

In this section the study sought to determine the extent to which the students were involved in the school administration. The findings are presented in the sub-subsequent sections.

4.4.1 Students Involvement in School Administration

To establish the extent to which the students were involved in the school administration, the teachers were asked to state whether the students in their respective schools were involved in the school administration. The findings are presented in Figure 4.5.

Figure 4.5: Students get involved in school administration

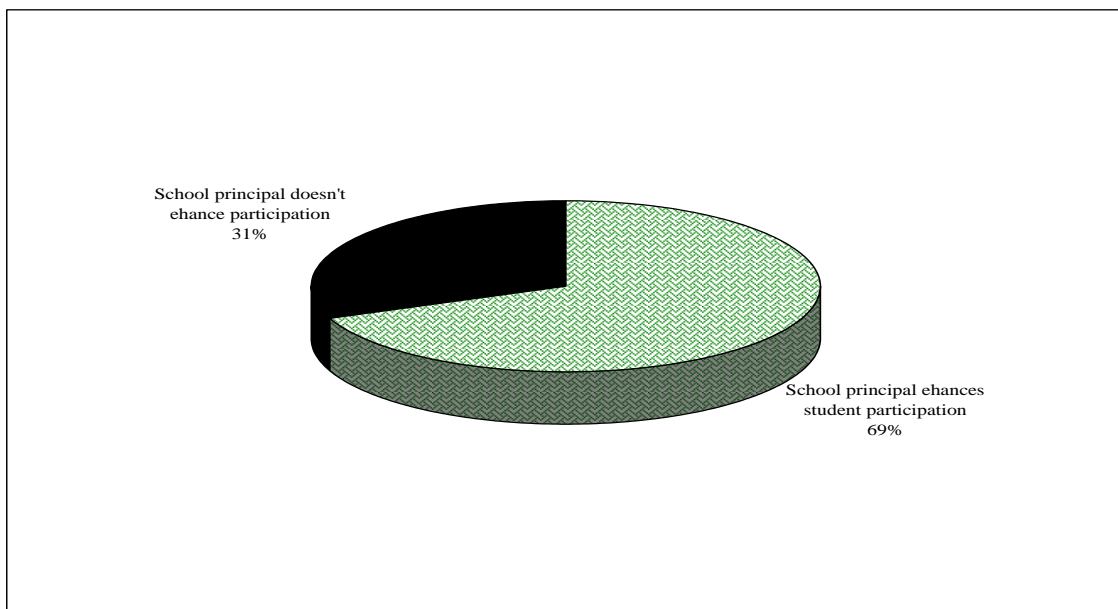


The findings of the study show that majority of the respondents (86%) indicated that indeed the students were involved in the school administration. These findings mean that the students participated to a large extent in the administration of the schools.

Asked to state their answers, the teachers stated that the students are usually given an opportunity to presents their grievances and even suggest some things they want done by the schools administration and this is usually taken into consideration. The teachers also indicated that through the student council headed by the prefects, the school administration listens to the contribution of the students. The study findings are in agreement Huddleston (2007) and Jeruto and Kiprop (2011) views that students should be actively involved in all areas of school life and that the involvement is the process of engaging students as partners in every facet of school life.

4.4.2 Role Played by School Principals in Enhancing Student Participation

Figure 4.6: Role Played by School Principal Enhancing Student Participation



The respondents were asked to state whether the principal played a role in enhancing the student participation in administration of the school. The findings are presented in Figure 4.6.

As can be seen from figure 4.7, 69% of the teacher respondents indicated that school principals played a role in enhancing student participation in school administration while 31% stated that they did not.

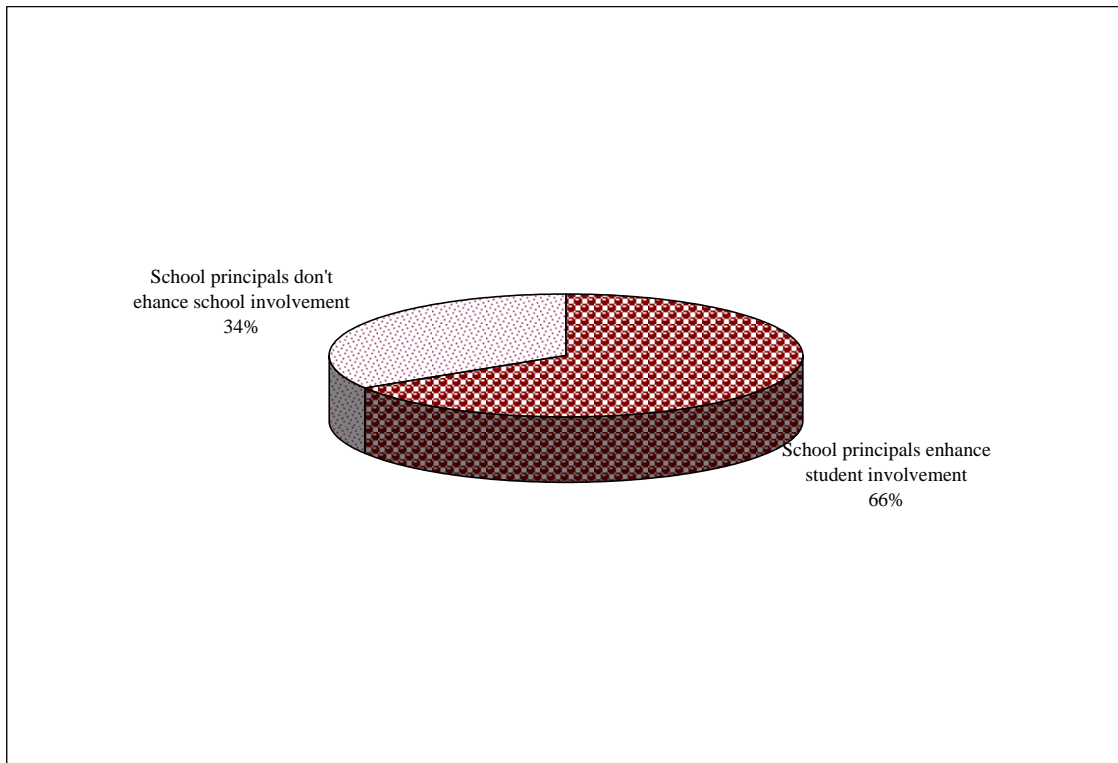
Those who indicated that the school principals played a role in enhancing student involvement in school administration mentioned several ways that this was achieved. They indicated that the principal has been urging the students through their prefects to bring forth their complaints and opinions so that action could be taken. The findings therefore mean that the principals have been playing a role in enhancing the students' participation in administration of the school.

The principals were asked to state how they facilitated student involvement in the school administration. The principals said that the prefects held meetings with the school administration at least once a term. In these meetings the principal clearly outlined the role of the prefects and that of the teachers, reinforcing the need for cooperation between the two. The principals also indicated that the prefects were encouraged to talk to their fellow colleagues and understand their problems and present to the management to avert possible confrontation between the students and the school administration. The findings that the students through prefects presents the views and

problems of the community agree with Sithole, (1998), students' involvement in school administration is through collective decision making and dialogue between students and other decision makers in the school.

The respondents were also asked to state whether in their current schools, the principals enhanced involvement of the students in school administration. The results are shown in Figure 4.7.

Figure 4.7: Way in which School Principal Enhanced Student Involvement in School Administration



The results of the study show that the majority of the respondents (66%) indicated that indeed the current principals had enhanced the students' involvement in school

administration. Asked to explain, the teachers indicated that principals brought forth some of the suggestions and opinions of the students during staff meetings. The respondents also indicated that the principals sometimes encouraged the students through their prefects to feel free to air some of their grievances to the school administration.

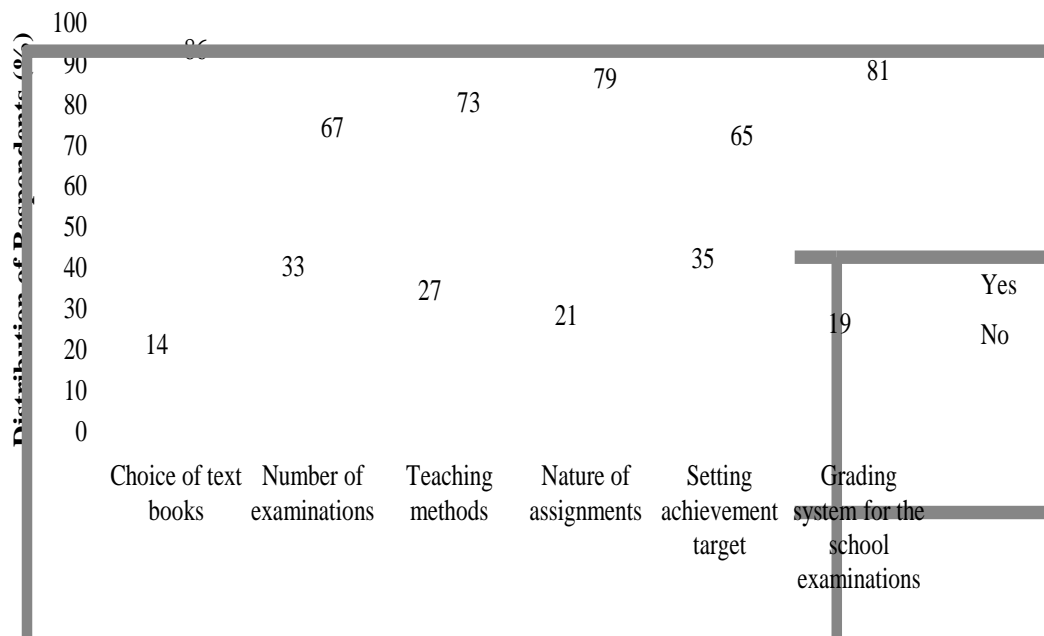
The principals were asked to state the extent of the student involvement in the school administration; they stated that the students were involved to a large extent in the school administration. And asked to indicate how the students were involved in the school administration, the principals indicated that the students through the student council were involved in the administration of the school. The head teachers indicated that the students were involved in the day to day running of the school such as ensuring that the school cleanliness and organization. The principals indicated that the prefects presented the grievances of the students to the administration which are then implemented or addressed. The principals said that the students were involved in planning and to some extent preparation of school programme.

These findings agree with Kushman (1997) who argued that student involvement in school administration include planning and preparation of school programs and maintaining cleanliness of the school.

4.4.3 Students Involvement in Decision Making

The teachers were asked to state whether the principals involved the students in decision making concerning the use of text books, teaching methods, examination and assignments and performance. The findings are presented in Figure 4.8.

Figure 4.8: Principals involve students in decision making

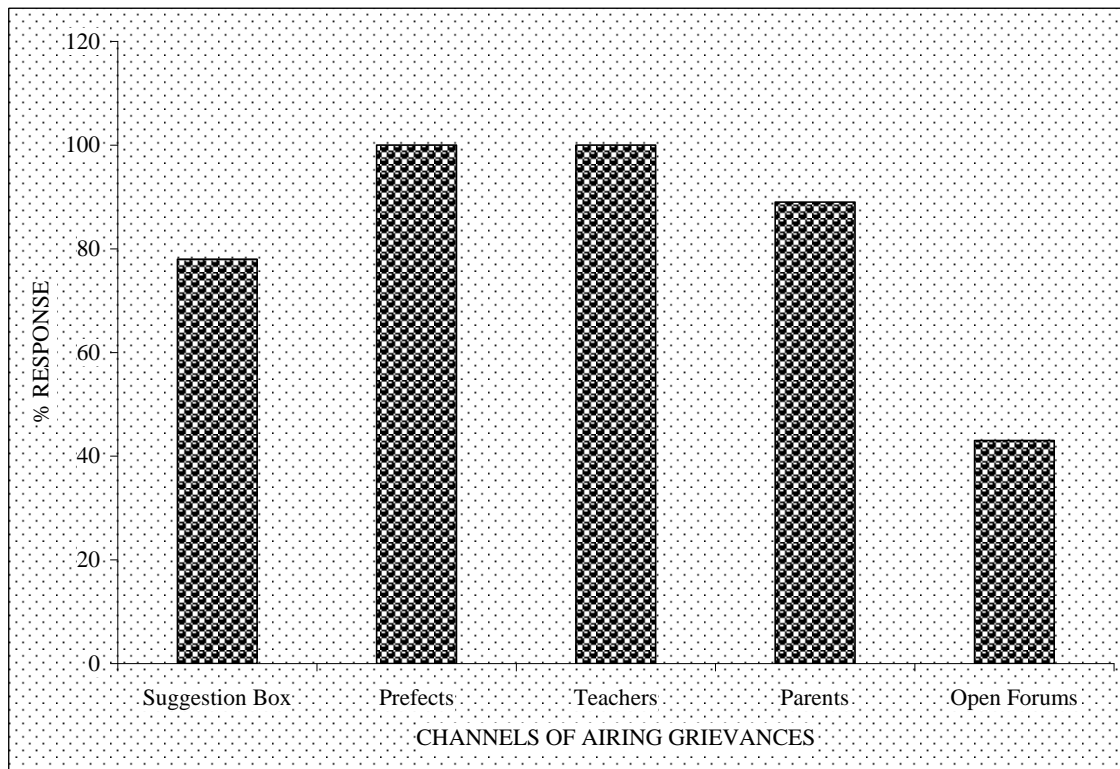


The results show that majority of the respondents indicated that the principals did not consult the students in the listed items. The results show that a majority of the respondents indicated that the principal never consulted the students on the choice of text books, the number of assignments and the grading system for the school examinations. The findings contradict those of Sergiovanni (1994) who noted that

students should participate in decision making in matters of student evaluation, student council, homework, school safety, mid and final examinations.

4.4.4 Channels through which Students air their Grievances

Figure 4.9: Channels through which Students air their Grievances



The teachers were asked to list the laid down procedure for the students to relay their grievances. The findings are presented in Figure 4.9.

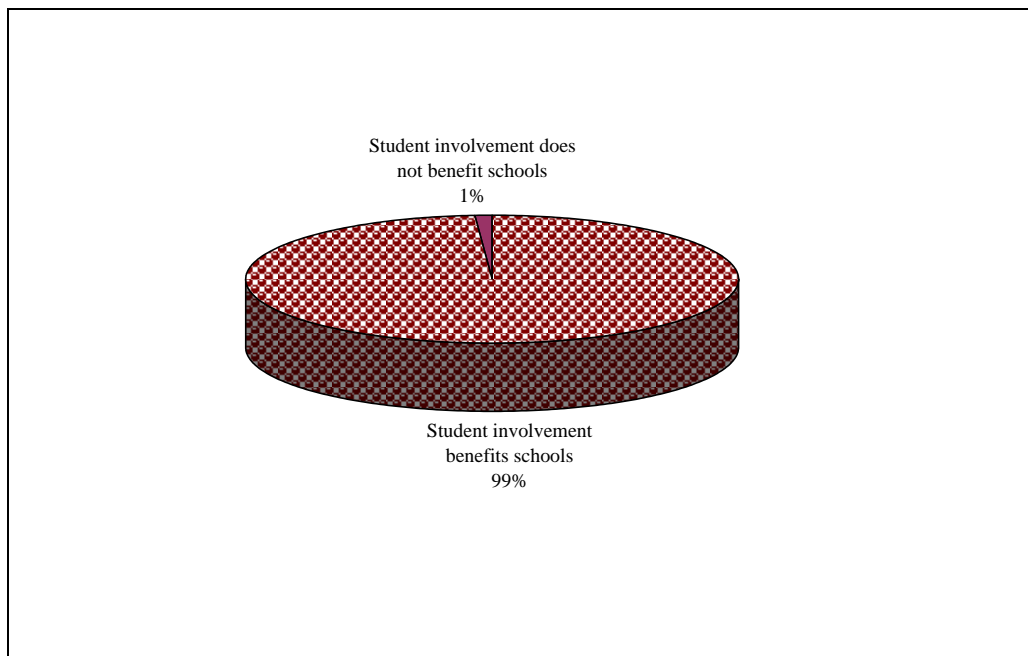
The findings show that within the schools, the teachers and prefects were the ones that the students mainly reported their grievances to. The suggestion boxes were also extensively used with 78% of the respondents using the means while 89% of the

students usually reported to their parents. The least used channel for airing grievances was the open forum which had only been used by 43% of the students. The findings mean that the channels used by the students to air their grievances included prefects, teachers, parents and suggestion box and finally, open forum. From the focus group discussions the study was able to learn that the students didn't like airing their views through the open forum due to fear of victimization.

4.4.5 Ways in which Student involvement in Administration Benefit Schools

The teachers were asked to state whether the involvement of the student in school administration had any benefit to the school. The findings are presented in Figure 4.10.

Figure 4.10: Ways in which Student involvement in Administration Benefit Schools



The results of the study show that nearly all the teachers indicated that indeed the involvement of the students in school administration will benefit the school. This means that the teachers believe that the involvement of the students in the administration of the school is beneficial.

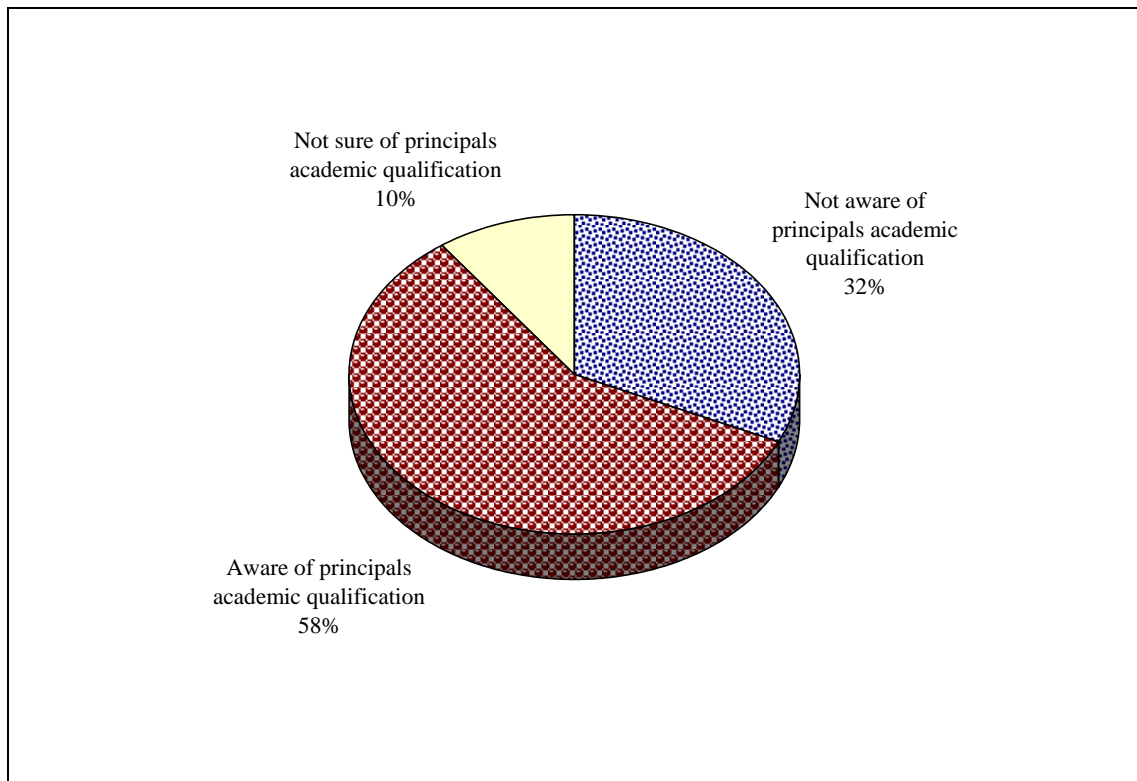
4.5 Influence of Principals' Level of Education on Student Involvement in School Administration

In this section the study sought to determine whether the principals' level of education influenced the students' involvement in school decision making. The findings are presented in the subsequent sections.

4.5.1 Knowledge of Principals Level of Education Achievements

The study sought to establish whether the teachers were aware of the academic achievements of the principals. The findings are presented in Figure 4.11.

Figure 4.11: Knowledge of Principals Academic Achievements

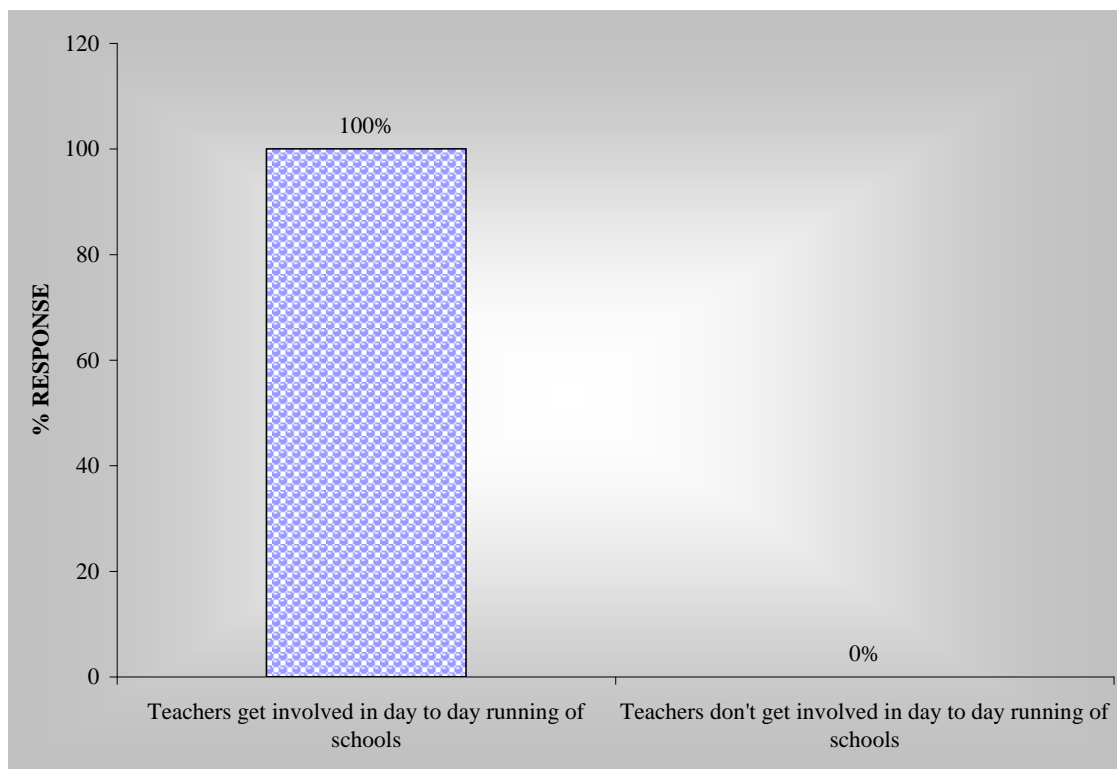


From the findings of the study, 69% of the respondents indicated that the principal academic qualification had no influence on the students' involvement. The findings however, show that 32 percent were not aware while 10 percent were not sure. Asked to state their academic qualifications, nearly all the teachers said that their principals had degrees. The results show that only a few indicated that their principals had master degrees. These findings agree with earlier findings where 90 percent of the principals indicated that they had degrees and 6 percent had master degrees. During focus group discussion there were a few students who said that they had never heard any one comment on the academic qualification of their principal.

4.5.2 Involvement of Teachers in Day to Day Running of School

The teachers were asked to state whether the teachers got involved in the day to day running of the school. The findings are presented in Figure 4.12.

Figure 4.12: Involvement of Teachers in Day to Day Running of School



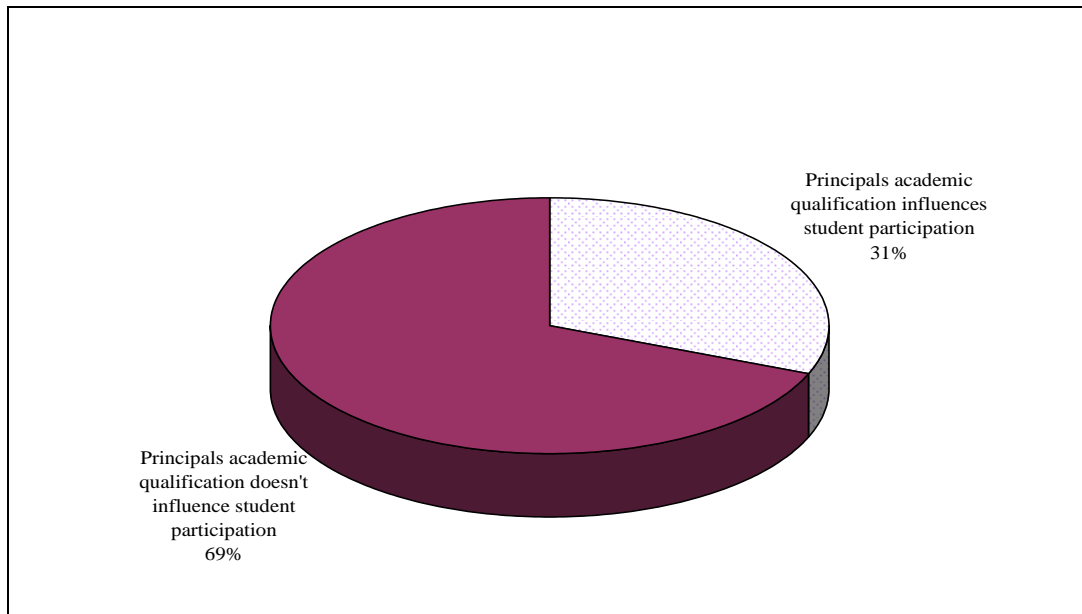
The findings show that all the teachers indicated that indeed they were involved in the day to day running of the school. The results mean that the teachers were involved in daily management of the school.

The respondents were asked to indicate how the principal involved the students in the school administration. According to thirteen teachers, the students were involved in the

school administration through the prefects who were on duty at least for one week in a term. The teachers also indicated that the prefects handled some disciplinary issues with their fellow students and only forwarding the ones which they could not handle and required higher authority. The teachers also indicated that the principals sometimes gave the students to debate on an issue which affected the schools or which was to be introduced to determine its suitability or even just to create awareness among the students.

4.6 Influence of Principals' Academic Qualification on Students' Involvement in School Administration

Figure 4.13: Influence of Principals' Academic Qualification on Student Involvement in Administration



The findings show that majority of the respondents (69%) indicated that the principals' level of education does not have any influence on the students involvement in school administration. The findings show that only one third (31%) of the respondents indicated that the principals' level of education influenced the students involvement in school management. The findings may be taken to mean that the level of education of the principal has no influence on the students' participation in school administration.

The findings from the principals on the effect of experience on involvement in school administration also are in agreement with the above findings. These findings contradict Hallinger and Bridges (2004), Osei (2006) and Bush and Oduro (2006) who all noted that highly qualified principals will always understand the need to involve students in school administration mainly in decision making, hence minimizing students' unrest and encouraging quality standards in schools.

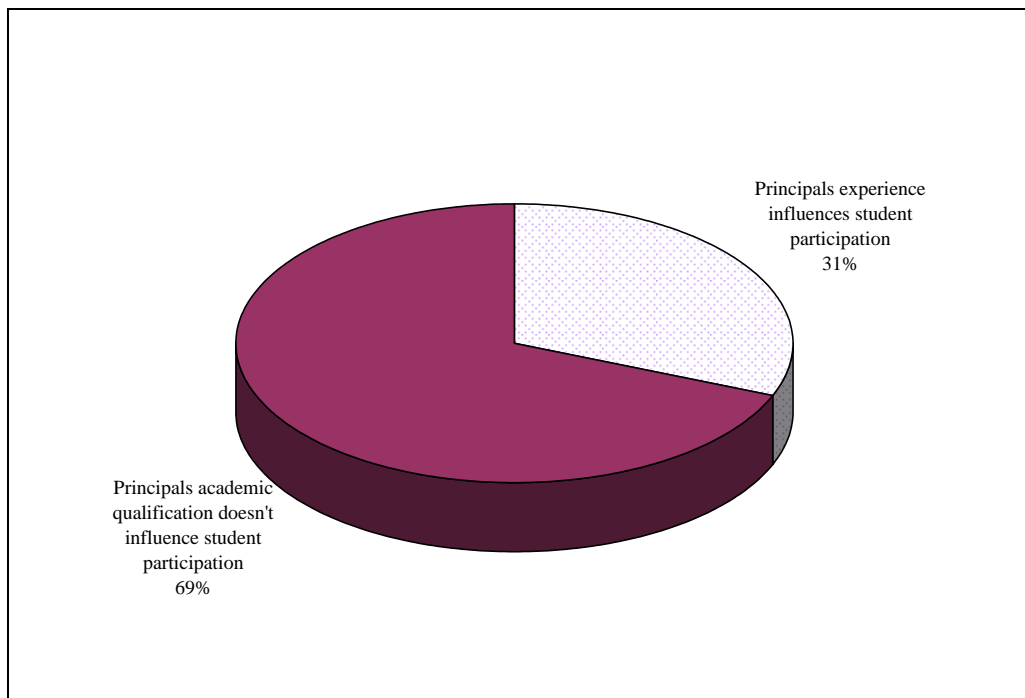
4.7 Influence of Principals Experience on Students' Involvement in School Administration

This section the study sought to determine whether the principals' experience influenced the students' participation in school administration. The findings are presented in the subsequent sections.

4.7.1 Influence of Principals' Experience on Students Involvement in Schools

The teachers were asked to whether the principals' experience influence students involvement in school administration. The findings are presented in Figure 15.

Figure 4.14: Influence of Principals' Experience on Students Involvement in Schools



The study results show that nearly all the teachers indicated that the principals' experience was very vital for the participation of the students in the school administration. On the part of the students, most of them stated that they were less concerned with the principal's experience. On the whole, the findings therefore mean

that the experience of the principal is vital in the involvement of students in school administration.

Asked to explain further, the respondents indicated that older principals with wealth of experience were more likely to include the students in the school administration as they are more inclusive and want everyone on board. The respondents also explained that the more experienced principals even take prefects and well performing students for paid trips where they interact and their views on how they think the school should be run are taken in. Asked to state the characteristics of a good principal, the teachers noted that a good principal was one who sought the views of both the teachers and the students on matters relating to the school governance. The teachers also stated that a good principal was one who assigned responsibilities to both the teachers and the students so as to be more inclusive in the running of the school. The respondents indicated that a good principal was one who led by example and mentored many students to leadership.

As to whether the experience influenced the involvement of students in decision making, all the principals indicated that indeed experience influenced students' involvement in school administration. The principals explained that through experience they have learnt the importance of inclusivity in the school administration. The interviews schedule revealed that all the school principals had served in other schools with eight of them (26.7%) having been head-teachers before their current assignment

while 73.3% were head teachers. All the principals had served for more than 3 years in their current schools.

4.8 Influence of Principals’ Democratic Leadership Style on Students’ Involvement in School administration

The study sought to determine how the principals’ leadership style influenced the students’ participation in school administration. The findings are presented in the subsequent sections.

4.8.1 Principals Democratic Leadership Style

In order to determine the principals’ leadership style the respondents were asked to indicate which of statement in table 4.2 described the principals ways of leadership. The findings are presented in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2: Principals Democratic Leadership Style

Statement	Yes	No
Let staff members know what is expected of them	77	23
Assigns staff members particular tasks	89	11
Ensure that staff members understand him/her	31	69
Seek staff approval in important matters before implementing them	39	61
Put suggestions made by the staff into operations	55	45
Allow group members diagnose group problems	39	61
Provide encouragement, support and appreciation to group members	58	42

Makes every member enjoy working with the others in the group	66	34
Mobilizes and utilize the potential resources and creativity of members for accomplishing group goals	69	31

The findings of the study show that majority of the teachers indicated that the principal usually let the staff members know what was expected of them. The results also show that majority of the respondents (89%) indicated that the principals assigned staff members particular tasks. Almost a half of the teachers indicated that the principal put suggestions made by the staff into practice.

The results show that most of the respondents (69%) indicated that the principal mobilized and utilized the potential resources and creativity of members for accomplishing group goals. The principals also made every member enjoy working with others in the group. According to the findings 66 percent of the respondents indicated that it was not in the interest of the principals to be understood.

Asked to state the most effective leadership style, the teachers indicated that the democratic leadership style in which the views of everyone is sought. The teachers stated that a leadership where they are given chance to participate in the day to day running of the school. The findings agree with Muchira (1988), who in his study found that the head teacher's leadership styles correlated significantly to student involvement in school activities and achievement.

Information gathered from the principals' interview guide shows that student involvement was a vital part of school administration. Through students' involvement the principals were able to gain support that assisted in minimizing students' unrests in schools. Most of the principals indicated that student involvement in administration eased pressure on school administration since they were able to detect problems early and put in place intervention measures. One of the issues that emerged in many of the discussions was that of school bullying. Several of the principals indicated that by holding regular discussions with the students, they opened up communication channels that greatly enabled the bullied students to open up, hence helping reduce on the problems of bullying in schools.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions, recommendations, and suggestions for further research.

5.2 Summary of the Study

There is a growing consensus among educators that there is a need to involve students in administering the school. Student involvement has been found to represent a turning point for education improvement efforts. The tide has been turning from the antiquated notion of students as passive recipients of teaching, to a new recognition of the interdependence that is necessary between students and adults. At the same time, students and adults are raising the bar of expectations for what students can do. The purpose of this study was to investigate the principal factors influencing students involvement in administration of secondary schools in Masaba sub-county, Nyamira County.

The objectives of the study were to establish the extent of student involvement in school administration, determine how the principals level of education influences students' involvement in school administration, investigate the influence of school principals experience on student involvement in school administration and to explore how the

leadership styles of school principals influence student's involvement in school administration in Masaba Sub-County, Nyamira County.

The study used descriptive survey design in which it targeted 100 teachers and 30 principals were sampled from Masaba sub-county out of which 30 principals and 100 teachers responded by completing the questionnaire and participating in interview and returning to the researcher. The data was collected by use of questionnaires, interview schedules and focus group discussions. Data was analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively.

5.3 Major Findings of the Study

The study sought to determine the extent to which the students were involved in the school administration. The study established that the majority of the respondents, 86% indicated that the students were involved in the school administration. The teachers stated that the students are usually given an opportunity to presents their grievances and even suggest some things they want done by the schools administration and this is usually taken into consideration.

The study further established that according to 69 percent of the teachers, the principals played a role in enhancing student participation in school administration which they explained that the principal urge the students through their prefects to bring forth their complaints and opinions so that action could be taken. The principals said that the prefects sat with the administration at least once a term to be told what is expected of

the teachers and what is expected of the students for the school to achieve its objectives. The results revealed that most of the teachers (66%) indicated that indeed the current principals had enhanced the students' involvement in school administration. The principals stated that the students were involved to a large extent in the school administration through the student council, day to day running of the school in terms of ensuring cleanliness and organization. The study however revealed that the students did not participate in some of the pertinent decision making such as choice of text books, the number of assignments and the grading system for the school examinations. The channels used to channel the students grievances were the suggestion teachers, parents, boxes (78%), and parents (89%).

The study further sought to determine the principals' level of education influence on students' involvement in school administration. The established that most respondents indicated that majority of the principals were graduates with a few having PGDE and master degrees. All the teachers were involved in the day to day running of the school. The students were involved in the school administration through the prefects who were on duty at least for one week in a term. The teachers also indicated that the prefects handled some disciplinary issues with their fellow students and only forwarding the ones which they could not handle and required higher authority. The teachers also indicated that the principals sometimes gave the students to debate on an issue which affected the schools or which was to be introduced to determine its suitability or even just to create awareness among the students. However, according to 69 percent of the

teachers the principals' level of education does not have any influence on the student's involvement in school administration.

The study sought to establish the influence of the principals' experience on the students' involvement in school administration. The study established that nearly all the teachers indicated that the principals' experience was very vital for the participation of the students in the school administration. They explained that the older principals with wealth of experience were more likely to include the students in the school administration as they are more inclusive and want everyone on board. The respondents also explained that the more experienced principals even take prefects and well performing students for paid trips where they interact and their views on how they think the school should be run are taken in. The teachers noted that a good principal was one who sought the views of both the teachers and the students on matters relating to the school governance. The teachers also stated that a good principal was one who assigned responsibilities to both the teachers and the students so as to be more inclusive in the running of the school.

The study explored the influence of principals' leadership style on the students' involvement in school administration. The study established that majority of the respondents (89%) indicated that the principals assigned staff members particular tasks. The study also established that the principal put suggestions made by the staff into practice. According to most teachers (69%) the principal mobilized and utilized the potential resources and creativity of members for accomplishing group goals. However,

the principals did not want to be understood. The teachers indicated that the democratic leadership style was the most appropriate for the involvement of students in the administration of the school.

5.4 Conclusion

This study reveals that in Masaba Sub-County, secondary school students get involved in the administration of their schools in various ways. The students were involved in the day to day running of the school by ensuring cleanliness of the school, maintaining discipline amongst themselves, presenting their views and grievances of the students to the school administrations, planning and organization of the school programmes among others. Whereas all the schools sampled had a prefectoral system none of the schools had a laid down policy framework that guided the nature and extent of student involvement in school administration. On the other the principals' experience had an influence on students' involvement in school administration. In schools that the school principals had longer years of service and had served in different schools as a deputy school principal or principal, the students indicated that they were more involved in school administration. Principals' experience was viewed in terms of teaching experience through length of service, the duration the principals had served in their current schools and the number of schools headed.

Finally, the principals' leadership has an influence on student involvement in school administration. The democratic leadership style of leadership where the principal sought the approval of staff and students on important matters before implementing was found

to be the most accommodating style of leadership that enhances student involvement in school administration.

5.5 Recommendations

From the findings of the study, the following were the recommendations:

- i). Even though the schools involved the students in the administration of the school, the management should engage the students more especially in the area of decision making as it was revealed that increased involvement of students was beneficial to the school performance and individual performance
- ii). The study recommends that the principals need to be trained in management and administration as lack of influence of the principals academic qualification may be attributed to lack of skills in school administration.
- iii). The study recommends that the Teachers Service Commission should start a mentorship programme in which the experienced principals will mentor the newly promoted principals on the effective running of the schools.
- iv). The study recommends that the principals should adopt inclusive leadership strategies where all the stakeholders contribute in the administration of the schools.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Studies

The study suggests the following for further research:

- i). This study was done in Masaba sub-county only, the study suggests that the study be replicated in other regions to determine the influence of principals factors on the involvement of students in school administration.
- ii). The study was limited to principals' level of education, experience and leadership style. The study recommends that further study should be done on effect of students' involvement in school administration on academic performance.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Miruka Joyce Nyanchera,
University Of Nairobi,
Kikuyu Campus,
P.O. Box 92
Kikuyu.

TO
The Principal,
.....
Secondary School

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: REQUEST TO FILL THE QUESTIONNAIRES FOR RESEARCH

PURPOSE

I am a Postgraduate student at University Of Nairobi and kindly request you to fill the attached questionnaire as sincerely as possible .The research topic focus on Principals' Factors Influencing Students' Involvement in Administration of Secondary Schools in Masaba Sub-County, Nyamira County, Kenya.

You are assured that your identity will be held in confidence.

Thank You.

Yours Sincerely,

Miruka Joyce Nyanchera.

APPENDIX II

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PRINCIPALS

I am Joyce Miruka Nyachera, a Master of Education student at the University of Nairobi. Currently, I am undertaking a study on:

“Principals’ factors influencing students involvement in administration of secondary schools in Masaba Sub-County, Nyamira County”.

I kindly request you to allow me to interview you on the same. Your participation in this study will be highly appreciated.

Questions

- 1) Age.....years
- 2) Gender
 - a) Male
 - b) Female
- 3) Indicate your current academic qualification
 - c) Diploma
 - d) SI
 - e) BA/BSC with PGDE
 - f) BED
 - g) Masters

4) Have you ever attended any in-service course? If Yes, please indicate

.....
.....

5) What other qualifications have you been able to attain?

.....

6) What is the category of your school?

a) Day

b) Boarding

c) Day and Boarding

7) How long have you been a head teacher in this school?

8) How many other schools have you served either as a head teacher or deputy head teacher?

School	Position	Period	School Type

9) What is your opinion on the extent of student involvement in school administration in this school?

.....

10) In what ways do students in your school get involved in school administration?.....

.....

.....

.....

11) What policy frameworks guide student involvement in school administration?.....

.....

.....

.....

12) How do you personally facilitate students' involvement in school administration?

.....

.....

13) Does the academic qualification of a school principal have any influence on how they involve students in school administration? If Yes, please expound.....

.....

.....

14) Does the experience of school principal impact in any way on school administration? Please explain

.....

.....

15) How does the leadership style of a school principal influence student

involvement?.....
.....
.....

16) In your own opinion, what are the merits and demerits of student involvement in

school administration?

APPENDIX III

TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRES

Dear Teacher,

I am Joyce Miruka Nyachera, a Master of Education student at the University of Nairobi. Currently, I am undertaking a study on:

“Principals’ factors influencing students involvement in administration of secondary schools in Masaba Sub-County, Nyamira County”.

Kindly you are requested to provide answers to these questions as honestly and precisely as possible. This research is meant for academic purpose and all responses provided will be treated as confidential.

Please tick [√] where appropriate or fill in the required information on the spaces provided

Section A: Demographics

- 1) Age Years
- 2) What is your Gender
 - a) Male
 - b) Female
- 3) Indicate your current academic qualification
 - a) Diploma
 - b) SI
 - c) BA/BSC with PGDE
 - d) BED
 - e) Masters

4) Have you ever attended any in-service course? If Yes, please indicate

.....

5) What other qualifications have you been able to attain?

6) For how long have you been a teacher in this school?

7) For this period of time, who were the school principals?

Period	Principal	Former school & Position

Section B: Student Involvement

8) i) Do students in this school get involved in school administration?

a) Yes b) No c) Not Sure

ii) If Yes, above, how?.....

9) In your own opinion, does a school principal have any role to play in enhancing student involvement in school administration?

a) Yes b) No

ii) If yes, which one?.....

10) i) In the current school setting, has the school principal been enhancing student involvement in school administration?

a) Yes b) No

ii) Briefly explain?.....

11) Does the principal involve students in decision making concerning:

- | | Yes | No |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Choice of text books | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Number of examinations | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Teaching methods | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Nature of assignments | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. Setting achievement target | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. Grading system for the school examinations | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

12) What are the laid down procedures for students in case they want to make request or express their grievances? (Tick all that apply).

- a) Suggestion box
- b) Prefects
- c) Teachers
- d) Parents
- e) Open forums
- f) Others? Please

specify.....

13) i) Does student involvement in school administration have any benefits to the school?

- a) Yes
- b) No

ii) Please, expound.....

Section C: Principals Level of Education

- 14) i) Are you aware of the academic achievements of the current school principal?
 a) Yes b) No c) Not sure
 ii) If yes, what is his/her highest academic qualification?
- 15) Do teachers get involved in the day to day running of the school?
 a) Yes b) No
- 16) How does the school principal involve students in school administration?.....

- 17) i) In your own opinion does, the level of academic qualification of a school principal have any influence on a student's involvement in school administration?
 a) Yes b) No
 ii) If yes, how?

Section D: Experience

- 18) Does the principals' experience influence students involvement in school administration
 a) Yes b) No
 ii) Please expound.....

- 19) In your opinion, what are the characteristics of a good school principal?

Section E: Principals Leadership Styles

20) Does the School principal

	Yes	No
Let staff members know what is expected of them		
Assigns staff members particular tasks		
Ensure that staff members understand him/her		
Seek staff approval in important matters before implementing them		
Put suggestions made by the staff into operations		
Allow group members diagnose group problems		
Provide encouragement, support and appreciation to group members		
makes every member enjoy working with the others in the group		
mobilizes and utilize the potential resources and creativity of members for accomplishing group goals		

21) How does the school principal leadership style influence student involvement in school administration?.....

22) From your own experiences as a teacher, which is the most effective leadership style for enhancing participation and cooperation amongst the school community?

APPENDIX IV

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

- 1) What is the extent of student involvement in school administration in this school?
- 2) How does the school administration involve students in school administration?
- 3) How does the school principal encourage student involvement in school administration?
- 4) Does the principals' education qualification have any influence on students participation in school matters?
- 5) Does the experience of the school principal influence student involvement in school matters?
- 6) What can you say about the leadership style of your school principal?
- 7) Does it foster student in school matters?
- 8) In what other can students be involved in school administration?
- 9) What is the importance of involving students in the administration of the school?

APPENDIX V: RESEARCH PERMIT

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT: **Permit No. : NACOSTI/P/14/9946/2262**

MS. JOYCE NYANCHERA MIRUKA **Date Of Issue : 24th June,2014**

of UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI, 0-100 **Fee Received :Ksh 1,000**

Nairobi, has been permitted to conduct

research in Kisii County

on the topic: PRINCIPALS FACTORS

INFLUENCING STUDENTS INVOLVEMENT

IN ADMINISTRATION OF SECONDARY

SCHOOL IN MASABA SUB-COUNTY IN

NYAMIRA COUNTY, KENYA

for the period ending:

27th July,2014

Applicant's **Secretary**

Signature **National Commission for Science,**

Technology & Innovation

APPENDIX VI: AUTHORIZATION LETTER



NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Telephone: +254-20-2213471,
2241349, 310571, 2219420
Fax: +254-20-318245, 318249
Email: secretary@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke
When replying please quote

9th Floor, Utalii House
Uhuru Highway
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref: No.

Date:

24th June, 2014

NACOSTI/P/14/9946/2262

Joyce Nyanchera Miruka
University of Nairobi
P.O.Box 30197-00100
NAIROBI.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on *“Principals factors influencing students involvement in administration of secondary school in Masaba Sub-County in Nyamira County, Kenya,”* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Kisii County** for a period ending **27th July, 2014**.

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Kisii County** 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.
Ag. SECRETARY/CEO

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
The County Director of Education
Kisii County.



National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation is ISO 9001:2008 Certified