

**INFLUENCE OF HEADTEACHERS' LEADERSHIP STYLES  
ON PUPILS' PERFORMANCE IN KENYA CERTIFICATE OF  
PRIMARY EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS  
IN LAIKIPIA WEST DISTRICT, LAIKIPIA COUNTY**

**Bedan Kamau Waiganjo**

**A Research Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Education in  
Educational Administration**

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## **DECLARATION**

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

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Bedan Kamau Waiganjo

Reg. No. E55/82932/2012

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

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Dr. Rosemary Imonje

Lecturer

Department of Educational Administration and Planning

University of Nairobi

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Mr. Edward Kanori

Lecturer

Department of Educational Administration and Planning

University of Nairobi

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my family who include my wife Nancy Chebet, our two children; Ben Waiganjo, Dan Mbatia and my co-workers who include teachers from Melwa Primary School.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

First of all I thank the Almighty God for giving me good health and guiding me through the entire course.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

CD	County Director
DEO	District Education Officer
EO	Education Office
KCPE	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
KEMI	Kenya Education Management Institute
KNEC	Kenya National Examination Council
M.Ed	Master in Education
MOEST	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
TSC	Teachers Service Commission

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of headteachers' leadership styles on pupils' performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education in primary schools in Laikipia West District, Laikipia County in Kenya. The study research questions were formulated to establish whether there is a relationship between headteachers leadership style and pupils' performance in K.C.P.E. The study was based on systems theory and employed descriptive survey research design. The target population for the study was all the public primary schools headteachers and teachers in Laikipia West District which comprised of 72 public primary school in the District with 72 headteachers and 600 teachers. The sample size of 60 teachers and 20 headteachers. The study used headteachers and teachers questionnaires for data collection 60 teachers revealed that there was a relationship between headteachers leadership style and pupils performance, while 20 headteachers also revealed that there was correlation coefficient between academic performance in the sampled school, demographic leadership style are applied by some head teachers and it is second in academic performance while most primary schools indicate that their head teachers applied autocratic leadership style and have dismal academic performance. Findings further showed that teachers from different school had different perceptions of the leadership style of their headteachers. Teacher's demographic variables did not influence their perception of their teacher's leadership styles. Based on the findings it was concluded that transformational leadership styles was most applied by headteachers that they identified to have better academic performance in pupils' performance in KCPE. Democratic leadership style are applied by some headteachers and it comes second in academic performance while most primary schools indicated that their headteachers applied Laissez Faire and autocratic leadership styles which have dismal academic performance; they scored very poor performance since everyone is left to do as they will. Based on the findings it was recommended that headteachers should use the most appropriate leadership that facilitates collective responsibility and which creates a conducive teaching and learning environment in schools. It was also recommended that there was need for facilitating headteacher' leadership styles as they had a direct relationship with students' academic performance. The study also recommended that headteachers should be provided with in-service sources on leadership which is a pre-requisite for academic performance. Lastly, that headteachers should involve teachers in the administration which would enhance participatory leadership and hence better academic. Taking the limitations and delimitations for the study it was suggested that a study on teachers' perception of headteachers' leadership style and their performance should be conducted. A study on effect of teachers demographic variables and their influence on performance in KCPE should be conducted and also a study on how parental involvement on students in school life affects pupils' performance.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background to the study**

Leadership involves authority and responsibility in terms of deciding the way ahead and being held responsible for the success or failure of achieving the agreed objective (Okumbe, 1998). The success or failure of managers can be judged on their leadership qualities. In a constantly changing social, economic and technological environment, leadership is a more importantly attribute of management today than before. Educational leadership in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is expected to be focused for purpose of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and vision 2030 especially in Kenya. This requirement necessitates a leadership that is clearly defined for all involved. Whereas managers are concerned with bringing resources together, developing strategies, organizing and controlling activities to achieve agreed objectives, leadership performs the influencing function of management. Leadership increases the effectiveness and proficiency of management and sustainable performance (Reed, 2005) and effective management resources.

This therefore means that for any country to develop economically. It has to have highly educated people. For anyone to be said to be educated they have to undergo examination, which enable them to progress on the next educational level and to develop in such a manner that can have an impact in this country and also

globally (Clark, 2002). In the United States of America, school administration and leadership came into focus in the 1960s. This was due to the need to involve secondary students, teachers' stakeholders in the administration management of the schools. This concept of participation in management of schools spread to other parts of the world two decades later.

The world conference in 1990 in Thailand on its deliberations about school leadership observed that principals of schools hold the greatest responsibility in creating an effective educational atmosphere in schools. The conference further noted that without necessary leadership styles, principles will be over burdened by a number of school tasks affecting students' performance. The African situation was noted as being critical due to faster educational expansion in the continent. (UNESCO, 2000)

Republic of Kenya (MOEST, 2005) emphasizes that the school headteachers in the focal point and compass of the school and shoulders the greatest burden to lead school achieve educational goals. Bell, 1988 stresses that, the kind of leadership provided by headteachers in schools has strong bearing on pupils' academic achievement, therefore, this study sought to determine to what extent did headteachers leadership styles influence pupils' performance in KCPE in Laikipia West District, Laikipia County. Organizations and environment have changed rapidly over the past years and as a result a new type of leadership that is less and more democratic is needed in order to ensure survival of the organization, Makibi (2005) observes that proper leadership style lead to effective performance

in learning institutions, improvement in student achievement are recognized as the foremost objective of school leadership. The legislation as no child is left behind by 2020 signed into law in January 2002 in the United States of America (USA) is one of the most prominent and visible action taken by any government towards achieving this goal. Many scholars have acknowledged that the role of school leadership is the most significant in enhancing school performance and student achievement (Kelly & Williamson, 2006, Janernette & Sherretz, 2007).

Harris (2004) asserts that successful leadership in schools has resulted in higher levels of both students achievement has resulted in higher levels of both students' achievement and general school achievement. In Kenya, examination performance is an important aspect in the education system. It affords individuals opportunities for further education as well as giving them, distinct advantages over those whose performance is not good in getting better paying jobs. According to Luthans (2002) a headteacher is a person who is responsible for all activities that occur in and out around the school building he or she is the main link between the school and the larger community. Owen (2002) observed that good leaders should be able to influence their subordinates forward their achievement of the organizational objectives.

According to Zane and Hope (2008) leadership is a key commodity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century organizations. The study in Ghana about educational reforms revealed that although Ghana has had many education system, there has not been a focus on leadership. They argued that headteacher had an important role in an effective

school and student achievement hence suggested for attention on headteacher needs in basic schools.

Waters, Marzano and Monutty (2003) note that the caliber of leadership in a school could have dramatic effect on student achievement. They note that there is a strong relationship between effective leadership styles and student achievement. Igba(2005) found that authoritarian leadership style had significant effect on school effectiveness, when compared to democratic style in public schools in Punjab. Nsubaga (2009) revealed that democratic or consultative style was best in Uganda schools. Most headteacher in Uganda used this style in order to create ownership. Although democratic style was preferred, it was found that depending on the situation in schools, the leader tended to use different leadership skills.

Mac Beath and Myers (1999) stress that headteacher's leadership styles have for sometimes been seen as a major determining factor in a school's high performance. The researcher emphasizes that, people working in organizations need leaders who can be instrumental in guiding the efforts of group members to achieve the goals and objectives of both the individuals and the organization. Kendra (2011) cites leadership styles as the characteristic that critically define the leaders in organizations. He further stresses that, leadership styles are mix- and – match of various traits and will in some way influence the culture of the whole organization. Kendra identified four different types of leadership. Democratic leadership style which he stresses in the most popular leadership style in the 21<sup>st</sup> century management arena.



Bass (1997) defines leadership styles as the traits, behavioural tendencies and characteristic methods of people in a leadership position. He emphasizes that transformational and transactional as modern leadership styles. Transformational leadership is defined as leadership that goes beyond normal expectations by inspiring new ways of thinking. It can also be defined as a leadership approach that causes change in individuals and social system. According to Bass, transforming leadership is a process in which “leaders and followers help each other to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation”. Engelbrecht, Oswald and Forin (2006) found working and social pattern in every school are influenced by the style of leadership provided by the headteacher. These researchers from South Africa emphasized that headteachers must belief in value and be committed in doing the work required for high level of personal and organizational performance.

Kabuchi and Gitau(2010) on their studies on influence of headteachers leadership style on pupils performance in KCPE in public primary schools found out that, there was significant relationship between headteachers’ leadership styles and pupils’ academic performance. Further these researchers found that, democratic leadership style was the most widely practiced followed by Laissez – faire and finally autocratic. The researchers noted that, school heads avoided setting performance standard goals.

District Education Officer (DEO) Laikipia West District (2010) during prize giving day, commented on Laikipia West District, Laikipia County schools on their KCPE performance since quite a number of them do not produce desired results. Many questions raised were related to what type of leadership styles are practiced by the headteachers in Laikipia West District, Laikipia County.

<b>District / year</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>
Laikipia West	240.39	240.93	238.48	235.58
Laikipia East	249.87	248.17	247.37	245.58
Laikipia North	238.29	239.42	239.95	240.83
Laikipia Central	249.23	247.63	245.87	244.86
Nyahururu	248.27	245.38	243.27	241.14

**Table 1.1 Laikipia County KCPE results 2010 – 2013**

Source: Laikipia West District Education office (2014)

The KCPE performance has generally been below average comparable to other Districts of Laikipia County. The district would be expected to perform just as well as other districts given that they share same geographical area such as environment and climate with other districts. Most studies have been done on the effect of leadership styles on students' KCPE performance are just not comprehensive. This study therefore aimed at investigating the headteachers' leadership styles and their effect on pupils' performance in KCPE in Laikipia West District, Laikipia County.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Public primary schools in Laikipia West District of Laikipia County have been performing below average over the last four years. For the last four years county analysis depicts that Laikipia West District has been declining in terms of mean score over the last four years 2010 – 2013 out of the five districts in Laikipia County. The performance index in the District has also steadily remained below the county mean score of 242. Table 1.1 presents the data. This means that most students from public primary schools are denied admission to national and country secondary schools. They are then left with the options of either joining district secondary schools, dropouts of school or repeat standard schools, dropout of social or repeat standard eight. Hence transition rate in public primary schools to secondary schools is low.

The researcher therefore, sought to establish whether headteachers leadership styles on pupils' performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Examination in Laikipia West District.

## **1.3 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of headteachers leadership styles on pupils' performance in KCPE examination in public primary schools of Laikipia West District, Laikipia County.

#### **1.4 Objectives of the study**

The objectives of the study were:

- i. To establish the influence of headteachers' autocratic leadership style on pupils' performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education.
- ii. To determine the influence of headteachers' democratic leadership style on pupils performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education.
- iii. To examine the influence of headteachers' Laissez-faire on pupils' performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education.
- iv. To establish how transformational leadership style influence pupils performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education.

#### **1.5 Research questions**

- i. To what extent does headteachers' autocratic leadership style influence pupils' performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education?
- ii. To what extent does headteachers' democratic leadership style influence pupils' performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education?
- iii. To what extent does headteachers' laissez-faire leadership style influence pupils' performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education?
- iv. What is the influence of principals' transformational leadership styles on students' performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education in Laikipia County.

### **1.6 Significance of the study**

The finding of this study might be used by Board of Management (BOM) in identifying problems in their primary schools that affect pupils' academic performance in KCPE. The study to be used by trainers including Kenya Education Management Institute (KEMI) on planning, constructing, organizing and coordinating capacity building programmes to empower educational managers and administrators in terms of their leadership styles for effective management. Finally, the results of the study would also influence scholarly research, theory and practice, leading to an educational intervention on the effect of leadership styles on pupils' academic performance.

### **1.7 Limitations of the study**

The researcher was not in control over the respondents' attitudes and chances were there to give socially acceptable answers which could affect the validity of the research findings. (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The use of ex-post factor research design had inherent limitations. The researcher however controlled this limitation by using data collection tools that give respondents freedom in responding.

### **1.8 Delimitation of the study**

The study covered public primary schools in Laikipia West District, Laikipia County. Data was collected from all teachers and the teachers of the identified schools. The study included private primary schools as they have a different

setting. The only influence and responsibilities considered are mainly administrative ones that affect effectiveness of a leader and the impact on school performance, personal and family matter are not included in this study could have been responsible for leadership style of the headteacher, the researcher investigated four leadership styles namely; autocratic leadership style, democratic leadership style, laissez-faire leadership style and transformational leadership to determine the extent to which the stated headteachers' leadership styles influence pupils performance in KCPE in Laikipia West District, Laikipia County.

### **1.9 Basic assumptions of the study**

The following constituted the basic assumptions of the study:

- i. That the respondents gave truthful and relevant information on factors that affect excellent KCPE results to the best of their knowledge.
- ii. That the questionnaire was adequate to give the relevant information.
- iii. That all the primary schools have the same facilities.

### **1.10 Definition of significant terms**

This sub-section gives the definition of significant terms as used in the study.

**Autocratic leaders** refer to primary headteachers who hold all authority and responsibility in the school with communication almost exclusively moving from top to bottom.

**Democratic leaders** refer to primary school headteachers who consults other teaching staff while performing their duties.

**Headteacher** refer to a teacher personnel appointed by the CD to be in-charge of a particular public primary school.

**Kenya National Examination Council** refers to a national test examination to measure pupils' achievement at the end of eight years in their primary education and used to select entrants to secondary schools.

**Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education** refers to a body in-charge of national examination such as Kenya Certificate of Primary Teachers' Colleges Examination.

**Leadership style** refers to patterns of behaviours by a leader in influencing members of the group. The way the leader will be having towards the group members.

**Performance** refers to pupils' marks in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education as rated by the Kenya National Examination council (KNEC) from the lowest marks 01 to the highest marks 500.

**Leadership** refers to the ability to influence people to willingly follow guidance and perform group tasks, it focused on how the headteacher of a school plans, organizes and controls primary school programmes.

**Laissez-faire** leadership refers to a style of leadership where the teacher abdicates power ruling through off hand style where the group is left at their discretion in the performance of organizational tasks.

**Transformational leadership** refers to leadership that stimulates followers to see problems in new ways and help them develop their full potential that result in enhanced creativity of their followers (Jong & Hartog, 2007)

### **1.11 Organization of the study**

This study was organized into five chapters. Chapter one consisted of introduction, background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, limitations of the study, delimitations of the study, basic assumptions of the study, definition of significant terms and organization of the study. Chapter two was on review of related literature consisting of introduction, the concept of leadership, leadership and academic's achievement, the role of effective leadership, style which entitle – democratic leadership style, laissez-faire leadership style, autocratic leadership and transformational leadership style. Chapter three consisted of introduction, research design, target population, sample size and sampling procedures, research instruments, validity of instruments, reliability of instruments, data collection and data analysis techniques. Chapter four consisted of interpretation and discussion of the research findings. Finally, chapter five consisted of introduction, summary of the study, conclusions, recommendation and suggestions for further research.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

In this chapter related literature on leadership styles and performance consist of; the concept of leadership styles, influence of headteachers' autocratic leadership on pupils, performance, how democratic leadership style influences pupils achievement, how laissez-faire style influences students' performance, influence of transformational leadership on students' performance, theoretical frame and conceptual framework of the study.

#### **2.2 Concept of leadership and performance**

Waters and Marzarno (2006) define school leadership as a process of enlisting and guiding the talents and energies of teachers, pupils and parents towards high level of pupils' achievement. These researchers noted that, the concept of school leadership in the United States of America is referred to educational leadership while in the United Kingdom is called Educational Management. Northouse (2007) defines leadership as a process whereby an individual influences a group of others to achieve a common goal. Leaders carry out this process by applying their leadership knowledge and skills. There are three basic ways which explain how people become leader (Stogdil, 1989; Bass, 1990). The first theory, the trait theory is that some personality trait may lead people naturally into leadership

roles. The second theory, the great events theory says that a crisis or an important event may cause a person to rise to the occasion. This brings out some extraordinary leadership qualities in an ordinary person. The third theory, the process leadership theory or the transformational theory says that people can choose to become leaders. Transformational theory is widely accepted today. Skills, attributes and knowledge make the leader. Sergiovani (2004) say that educational leadership comprises of educational programme, curriculum and instruction, teaching and learning, supervision and evaluation.

The leader has the responsibility of laying strategies to win his or her followers into achieving school's objectives. Leithwood and Riehl (2003), in review of American Educational Research Association conclude that school leadership has significant effect on student learning, second only of effects of quality of curriculum and teachers instruction. Armstrong (2002) defines leadership as a process of influencing and supporting others to work enthusiastically towards achieving the organizational objectives.

### **2.3 Autocratic leadership style and pupil's academic performance**

Autocratic style is based on proponent of the Scientific Management Approach advanced by Fredrick Taylor (1956) whose focus was to achieve a greater efficiency on the shop floor. It also agrees with Mc Gregor's theory X that viewed people as naturally lazy, dislike work and avoided responsibility, thus had to be coerced to do work. It is task oriented and is characterized by the leaders undertaking all the decision making process without seeking the opinions

suggestions or the views of the other junior workers. Okumbe (1998) states that autocratic leaders are task-oriented and workers are used as machines to effect productivity. Iqba(2005) found that autocratic styles had significant influence on school effectiveness than democratic style in public schools in Punjab. Mbithi (2007) notes that autocratic style involve issuing detailed instructions and close supervision of subordinates work. Relationship between leaders and subordinates are highly formal and sanctions are imposed if subordinates under perform. No initiatives are expected from the subordinates, leaders dictate to subordinates.

Muli (2005) notes that the style is best when the leader has all the information and employees are well motivated. The autocratic styles is good in that there is timely completion of work tasks requirements and interpersonal relationships. Huka (2003) argues that autocratic styles limits the workers initiative and leads to demotivation and lack of morale which then results in professional burnout and low performance. It is however a good style in situations where workers are new or untrained and do not know the tasks or the procedures on the performing the tasks, where autocratic style is used positively, the students' performance is likely to be high.

#### **2.4 Democratic leadership style and pupils' academic performance**

Authority in democratic leadership is decentralized and workers participate in decision making. Kamacia (2007) also argues that there is a significant relationship between leadership style and learners' academic performance and that democratic headteachers posted higher performance than autocratic ones.

Nsubaga (2008) found that democratic headteachers had posted the best results in gandon schools. In this leadership style, the leader integrates tasks and relationship orientations. Democratic leader involves the employees (teachers) in the decision-making process and thus workers do their work willingly, without being pushed. Cole (2002) points out that people are committed to decisions which they participated in formulating, they will exercise self-control, self-direction and will be motivated to work. It has been noted that where democratic leadership is exercised in a school situation, high productivity is exercised in a school situation, high productivity and quality work in sustained and workers or even the teachers continuously evaluate their contribution, want to offer more constructive suggestions so that their school grow and they grow with it.

### **2.5 Laissez – faire leadership style and pupils’ academic performance**

Laissez – faire leader give complete freedom to the group. Subordinates make individual decisions and the leader provides no leadership or influence, guidance or direction in the course of action. Laissez-faire leadership style is a relationship – oriented leadership style which agrees with McGregor’s Theory Y which postulates that people should be treated humanely as they naturally like work, capable of working without close supervision, are very creative and ready to seek and accept responsibilities. It is believed that, there should be no rules and regulation in the place of work. Nzube (1999) describes Laissez-faire leader as one who waives responsibility and allows the subordinates to work as they choose with minimum interference.

Goodworth (1988) describes Laissez – faire style as appropriate when leading a team of highly motivated and skilled people who had produced excellent results in the past. Once a leader finds the team was confident, capable and motivated; since interfering could generate resentment and detract the team from their effectiveness. Lawin studies note that Laissez-faire leadership style offered little or no guidance to the group members and leaves decisions making to the group members. Okumbe (1998) describes Laissez – faire leadership as a king of leadership which encourages no rules in an organization. The leader is a symbol since there is no hierarchy of authority and the primary role of the leader is to supply materials needed by the group.

## **2.6 Transformational leadership style and students’ achievement**

Transformational leadership is based on the belief that where people are committed to decisions, which they participate in, they will exercise, self-control, self-direction and be motivated (Cole, 2002). Transformational theory is one of the most current leadership theories. It involves leaders adapting to the needs of those in their sphere of influence. Transformational leaders are considered agents of change who have a clear vision and lead from the knowledge of those in the organization.

Mulford (2008) suggested that transformational leadership is a more powerful way of thinking about educational leadership than other approaches such as instructional leadership “because it leads to an investigation of all workplace conditions that contribute to all school outcomes not just instructional strategies”.

Transformational leadership are proactive, raise awareness levels of followers and help followers to achieve high performance outcomes (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Transformational leaders are those who stimulate and inspire followers to achieve extra-ordinary outcomes and in the process, develop their own leader capacity.

Transformational leaders' help followers grow and develop into leaders by responding to individual followers' needs by empowering them and by aligning the objectives and goals of the individual followers, the leader, the group and the larger organization. Evidence has accumulated to demonstrate that transformational leadership can move followers to exceed expected performance, as well as lead to high levels of followers' satisfaction and commitment to the group and organization (Bass & Riggio, 2006). They listed and explained the five components of transformational leadership; individual leadership, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, idealized influence.

Individual consideration implies that transformational leaders pay special attention to followers needs for achievement and growth, acting as mentors or coaches. Transformational leaders demonstrate individual consideration through effective listening and acceptance of employees' individual differences. Individualization consideration incorporates two way communication and personal interaction with followers. Though followers are monitored when given a task to complete, they understand the intent is for support or additional direction organization(Bass &Riggio, 2006).Bass and Riggio(2006) explain that intellectual stimulation. Applies when problems need to be solved the transformational and

leader encourages new ideas and negative answers from followers. Instead of following old approaches to situations, the transformational leader who is intellectually stimulating engages followers to contribute in innovative and creative ways, such as questioning assumptions and reframing problems. A mutual respect is shown even when a follower makes a mistake or differs from the leaders.

Inspirational motivation implies that the transformational leader inspires spirit, enthusiasm, and optimism in followers by challenging and imparting meaning to their work. In addition, leaders who practice inspirational motivation, compellingly articulate a commitment to a shared vision and organizational goals. Transformational leaders clearly communicate expectations to be met and an anticipation of a vision for the future (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Idealized influence, according to Bass & Riggio, 2006, implies that transformational leaders are careful to model behaviour that followers should emulate. Followers feel admiration, respect and trust for their leaders. They believe their leaders exhibits high levels of persistence, commitment, determination, and possess exceptional ability as a leader. Leaders who exhibit idealized influence cultivate follower admiration because they are consistent in ethical and moral behaviours. The leader is not afraid to take risks and encourages followers to take risks as well. Followers feel their leader is worth following and here is a mutual sense of loyalty to one another.

According to Willmore and Thomas (2001), transformational leaders care about people, and their inventive ideas. They support innovation when teachers or group came up with ideas they want to try a transformational leader asks questions in a supportive reflective manners and works as the part of the team to access and analyse the new ideas. Willmore and Thomas (2001) add that the quality of school leadership can be asserted by the ability of headteachers to create a climate that fosters staff and pupil productivity and creativity. They add that transformational leaders are value driven and committed to the creation of learning communities.

Griffith (2003), found that the principal transformational leadership showed a strong positive and significant relation to the school staff job satisfaction which in turn showed a moderate positive and significant relation to the school achievement progress thus schools in which principals were perceived as transformational leaders had school staff that were more satisfied with their jobs and had greater achievement progress Leithwood and Jantzi (2000) also found substantial effects of transformational leadership on students engagement. It is concluded that transformational leadership might have positive influences beyond increasing student attainment. It may lead to satisfied and committed teachers who could subsequently influence student learning and school performance in general.

Most importantly, transformational leadership depends on one's ability to motivate in order to inspire others. In the study, Mumbe(1995) concludes that transformational leadership style affected students and the general school



performance positively and motivated teachers to work with headteacher towards the achievement of school objectives. The schools headed by transformational headteachers, both the head and teachers use the term “our school” in reference to the school ensuring that there is sense of ownership, responsibility and accountability at every stage of decision making (Odewanmi, 2008). Thus, it is considered suitable to have an insight into the leadership styles exhibited by school headteachers in public primary schools and how they influence students’ performance in KCPE examination in Laikipia West District.

## **2.7 Summary of literature review**

Kendra (2011) noted that school children respond differently to different styles of leadership thus democratic authoritarian and Laissez-faire. Research findings shown that democratic had highest production followed by authoritarian and the least was Laissez- faire. Okoth (2000) agreed that high academic and professional qualification makes headteacher to be more democratic but Kimacia (2007) disagree with Njuguna (1998) when he found that there is no relationship between academic and professional qualification of headteacher and their leadership style.

Huka (2003) and Muli (2005) both agreed that headteacher who are more in consideration their pupils get low scores. Wangui (2007) disagree with Okoth (2000) when she found male headteacher to be more autocratic while their female counterparts to be democratic, Okumbe (1998) noted that task-oriented leadership styles are more effective than relationship – oriented leadership style under

extreme situations that is when situations are either very favorable or very unfavourable.

Transformational leadership initiatives requires some skills. These skills can be developed, taught and learnt. Transformational leadership can be enhanced through formal training the foregoing concept. It is imperative that primary schools headteachers undergo through training programmes before they join leadership positions (Wayne & Cecil, 2008). Wizers Bosker and Krugger, 2003 observe that head teachers does not have a positive effect on student achievement. This has been supported by a few others like Waters, Marzano and McNulty (2004) Kruger Witzers, Slegers (2007). Practice of transformational leadership behavior consistently contributes to higher levels of the student's achievements Huffman (2003) however contradicts this by saying that transformational.

## **2.8 Theoretical framework**

The study was guided by the path-goal theory. The path-goal theory of leadership was developed by Robert House in 1971, Okumbe (1998). According to House, the essence of the theory emphasizes on how leaders can facilitate task performance by showing subordinates how performance can be instrumental in achieving desired rewards. This theory points out hard if they believe that their work lead to things that are highly valued. The theory identifies four leader behaviours thus achievement – oriented, directive, participative and supportive, that are contingent to the environmental factors and followers characteristics.

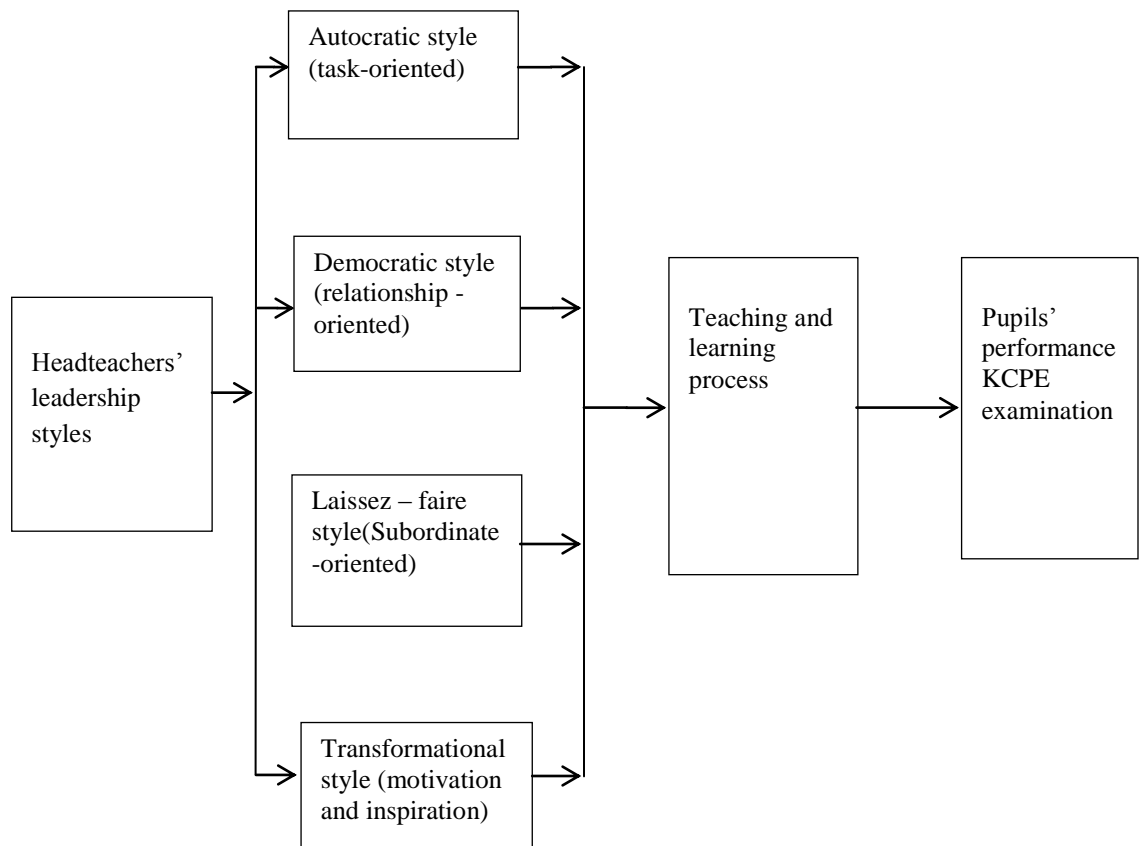
The path goal theory may be applied in school today to achieve good pupils academic in their national examinations for instance KCPE, since teaching is a highly vale work in our society. In the educational institutions, the achievement – oriented leadership behavior should be used by headteacher by setting performance targets and exhibits the confidence that the teaching staff will achieve high standards since they are endowed with the requisite potentials. This is aimed at raising the standards of pupils’ academic performance in all subjects.

In conclusion, the path-goal theory stresses that effective leadership is the function of the interaction between the leaders behavior, his subordinates, and the environmental factors. In a school setting, it is clear that headteachers should facilitate task performance to the teaching staff. It also encourage headteachers as instructional supervisors to be actively engaged in clinical supervision, which improve teachers motivation and performance of pupils at all levels and more so in their Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) examination.

## 2.9 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework shows the relationship between headteachers' leadership style in various situations in primary schools and the pupils' academic performance.

**Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework of the relationship between leadership styles and academic performance**



A headteacher can use either of the four leadership styles with various outcomes. If a headteacher uses autocratic (or task-oriented) leadership style in favourable or unfavourable situations, the outcome will be different for example, if a leader uses autocratic style in unfavourable conditions, the outcome will be good performance, while if the headteacher uses democratic (or relationship – oriented) leadership style in favourable situations, outcome is a good performance. The opposite is also true in both cases. If Laissez-faire (or subordinate-oriented) leadership style is used, the outcome is a poor performance.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter covers research methodology. It includes research design, target population, sample size, sampling procedures, research instruments, validity of instruments and reliability of research instruments, data collection, and data analysis technique.

#### **3.2 Research design**

Research design is the process of creating an empirical test to support or refute knowledge claims (Borg & Gall, 1989). Negechu (2001) defines a research design as a plan showing how problems under investigations were solved. In this study expost facto design was employed, Borg and Gall (1996) notes that expost factor research design is the type of investigation where cause are studied long after they have presumably exerted their influence on the variable(s) of interest. Since the variables under study, that is, leadership styles had been used by the headteachers and the pupils who sat and got the KCPE results. The researcher was not able to manipulate either of them therefore, expost facto design was suitable for the study. In this study, the independent variable was the headteacher leadership styles and pupils KCPE academic performance is dependent variable.

### **3.3 Target population**

Borg and Gall (1989) define target population as all the members of a real or hypothetical set people, events, or objects to which the researcher wishes to generalize the results of the research. The target populations of this study was all the 72 public primary schools, which have presented candidates of KCPE, therefore 72 teachers formed part of the target population. The district has a teaching population of 600 teachers. Thus, a total of 72 headteachers and 600 teachers formed the target population of the study.

### **3.4 Sample size and sampling procedure**

Oso and Owen (2005) define a sample as a small part of the target population that has been procedurally selected to represent it. Sampling is a research process of selecting sufficient numbers of elements from a population on characteristics that make it possible to infer such properties or characteristics to the population elements (Sekaran, 2003). To select the sample, the researcher took 30 percent of the target population as suggested by Gratton and Jones (2004). This implies that 23 primary schools were sampled. To sample the teachers, the researcher used 10 percent as suggested by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003). This gave 600 teachers, divided by the 23 sampled schools to give 26 teachers per each sampled school. The total number of respondents was 23 headteachers and 60 teachers, making a sample size of 83 respondents.

The researcher used simple random sampling to select the schools. Using a numbered list of all the primary schools in the district, small pieces of papers are numbered, folded and dropped in a box from where they picked at random, until all the first 23 schools are selected. The technique ensures all schools are given equal chances of being selected for the study. To select the 26 teachers from each samples school, a list obtained from the headteachers will be used. The researcher selected 26 teachers randomly for the study.

### **3.5 Instruments of data collection**

The researcher collected data using a questionnaire for the teachers and headteachers. Orodho (2005) notes that questionnaires are more efficient in collecting data because they require less time, are less expensive and allows collection of information from a large population. Questionnaires are cheap to administer to respondents scattered over large area. Mulusa (1990), and Best (1998) adds that it is easy to quantify responses for purposes of analysis of the data from the questionnaires. The respondents give sensitive information without fear of being victimized because they are not required to disclose their identity. The researchers developed and make use of two sets of questionnaires, one set for headteachers and another for the teachers.

The questionnaires for headteachers contain open and closed ended items. The questionnaires are divided into two sections; A, B and C. section A collect headteachers demographic data such as gender, age and teaching experience, section B require the headteachers to answer items on the school performance



while section C require the headteachers to respond to items on the leadership styles. There are 29 statements on the profiles of leadership to respond to in section C and are accompanied by a 5 point scale Likert and Likert (1967) having the adverbs, always, often, occasionally, rarely and never. This measured the extent to which the headteacher engage in a particular leadership style.

The questionnaires for the teachers contain open and closed ended items, it has section A, B and C. Section A collect teachers demographic data, section B require the teachers to respond to performance items about their school performance while section V require teachers to respond to 29 items on their headteachers profiles of leadership, by ticking in a 5-point scale with adverbs always, often, occasionally, rarely or never.

### **3.6 Instruments' validity**

The term instrument indicates the degree to which an instrument measures the construct under investigation. Validity is the accuracy and meaningful of inferences which are based on the research results (Brannen(2004). Content validity refers to the extent to which the content being examined is represented in the study instruments. Nachmias and Nachmias (1996). To ensure content validity of the questionnaires, the questionnaires were appraised by the supervisors, the researcher then did a pre-test using two schools in similar environments to the other schools of the target population and which were not used in the main study. The researcher check for the clarity of the questionnaire items in eliciting

information from the headteachers modify or discard any vague ones before the actual administration of the instrument to the sample of the study.

### 3.7 Instruments' reliability

Instrument reliability is the measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trials. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003). To ascertain instrument reliability, the researcher administered the questionnaire to the same schools in the pre-test after an interval of two weeks and check for similarity in the results. Reliability of an instrument is expressed as a correlation coefficient which measures the strength of the association between variables. Such coefficient vary between 0.00 and 1.00 for a reliability and perfect reliability respectively. Correlation coefficient is the calculated using Pearson product – moment correlation formula below;

$$r = \frac{N\sum xy - (\sum x) (\sum y)}{\sqrt{\sum(N\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2) (N\sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2)}}$$

Where;

x = odd scores

y = even scores

$\sum x$  = sum of x scores

$\sum y$  = sum of y scores

$\sum x^2$  = sum of squared x scores

$\sum y^2$  = sum of squared y scores

$N$  = number of paired scores

$r$  = correlation co-efficient of halves

(Best and Khan, 1998)

### **3.8 Data collection procedures**

The researcher obtained a research permit from the National Commission of Science Technology and Innovation (NCSTI) so as to conduct the study. The permit was presented to the sub-county commissioner and Sub-county Education Officer, Laikipia West District, before visiting the sample schools to introduce self and establish rapport with the headteacher and the teachers selected for this study. According to Best and Khan (1987) the person administering the instruments has an opportunity to establish rapport, explain the purpose of the study and strict confidentiality would be maintained in dealing with their identity. The researcher then distribute questionnaires and agree with them then the researcher collect the filled questionnaire, possible afterwards.

### **3.9 Data analysis techniques**

After data collection, the questionnaires were checked for completeness, accuracy and uniformity of the information obtained. Each of the items in the questionnaire are manually tallied, grouped accordingly, and expressed as percentages of the survey sample. The qualitative data is coded and organized into various themes and categories. Research questions one and two are tested using content analysis method (Kerlinger, 2002). Content analysis consisted of analyzing the contents of

all the documentary materials for this study the KCPE school results for all the sampled schools in the previous 5 years and the principals and teachers questionnaires. The values of the dependent variable are plotted against the values of the independent variable. The leadership styles are scored from 1-5 and the students' academic outcomes in terms of percentage pass (Kerlinger, 2002). In case of this study tables and bar graphs were used to present qualitative data. The Pearson product correlation moment is used to establish the relationship between the principals' style of leadership and the performance of the students. Pearson product moment correlation coefficient formular ( $r$ ).

### **3.10 Ethical consideration**

The following ethical consideration were adhered to, the researcher ensured equitable selection of respondents. The researcher obtained informed consent from respondents who participated in the study and ensured that all respondents participated voluntarily, respondents were made to understand the nature of the study and confidentiality and anonymity of respondents was maintained.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

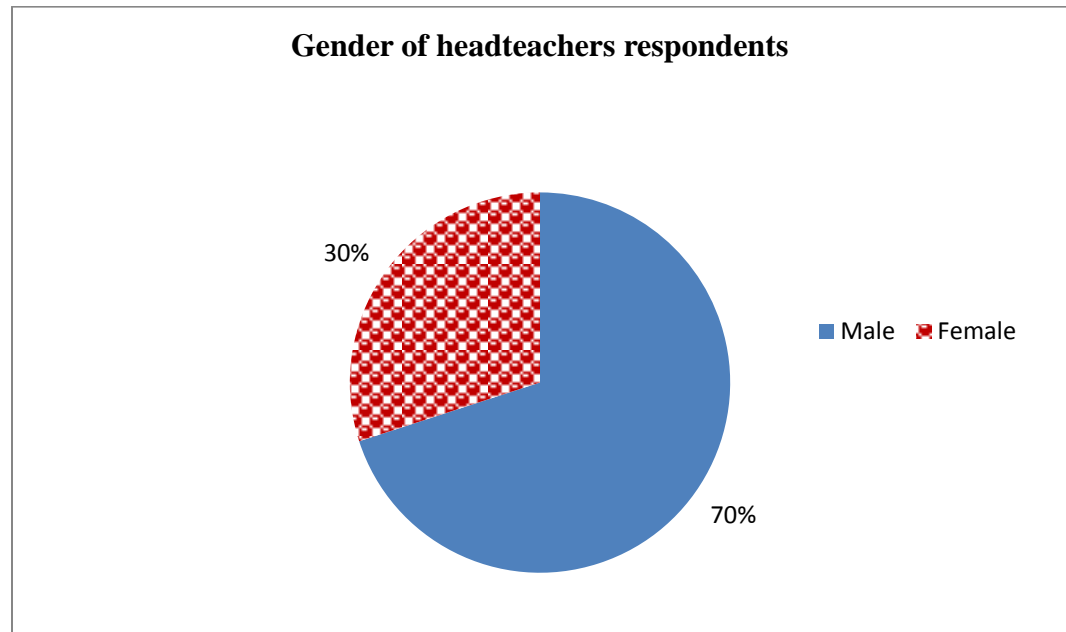
#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study on influence of headteachers' leadership styles on pupils' performance in Kenya certificate of primary examination in public primary schools in Laikipia west district, Laikipia County. The data were collected through the use of questionnaires and analysed using content analysis method and descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation. Data analysed using Microsoft excel and Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) while it was summarized using tables, charts.

From the data collected, out of the 83 questionnaires administered, 80 were filled and returned. This represented a 96.4% response rate, which is considered satisfactory to make conclusions for the study. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) a 50% response rate is adequate, 60% good and above 70% rated very good. This implies that based on this assertion; the response rate in this case of 96.4% is very good.

## 4.2 Data analysis and presentation

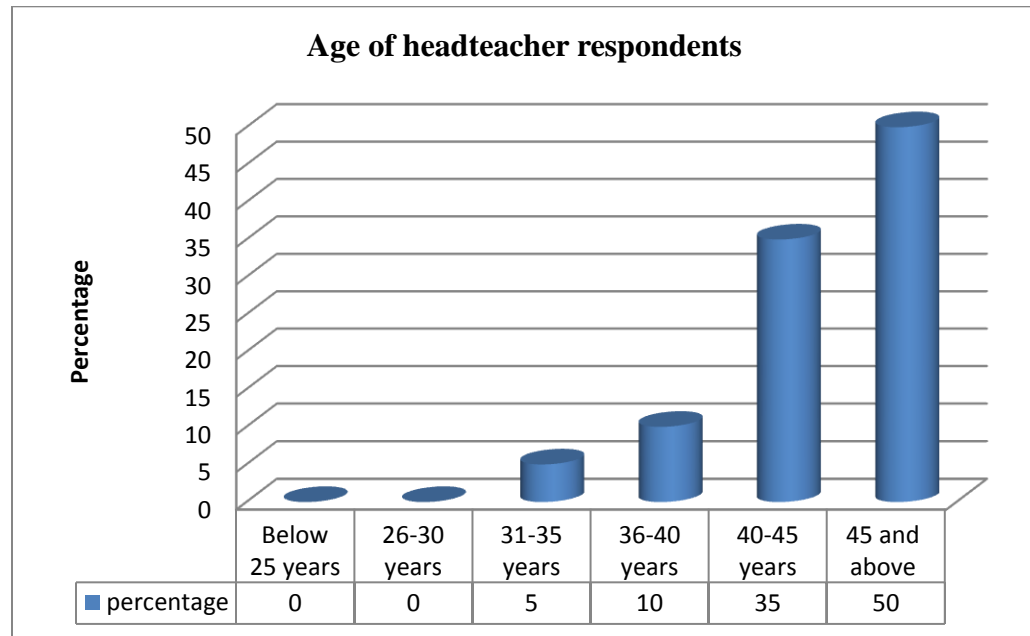
### 4.2.1 Headteachers demographic information



**Figure 4.1 Gender of the headteachers respondents**

The data in figure 4.1 shows that majority, 70%, of the headteachers who responded were male while 30% were female. This implies that both male and female headteachers participated in the contributing in responding to research questions as well as being part of the public primary school. Thus, information influence of headteachers was collected from both male and female respondents. This made them suitable to understand the institutional factor that affect pupils' performance in Laikipia West District. The study sought to establish the length of the service of head teachers as the head. They asked them to indicate the number

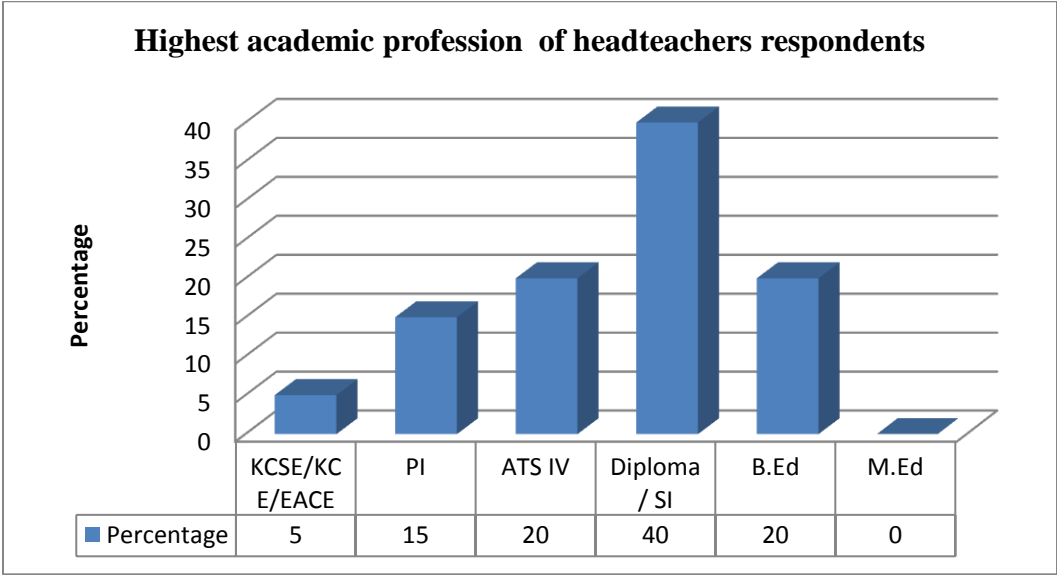
of years they have served as head teachers and their respondents are as shown in figure 4.2.



**Figure 4.2 Age of headteacher respondents**

From the findings, 50% of the respondents indicated that they were above 45, 35% were between 40-45 years and 36–40 years while 31 – 35 years were 5%.. This implies that majority of the respondents were termed as mature in age and therefore information collected from them validated.

The study requested that headteachers to indicate their highest academic qualification to determine their competence.



**Figure 4.3 Highest academic profession**

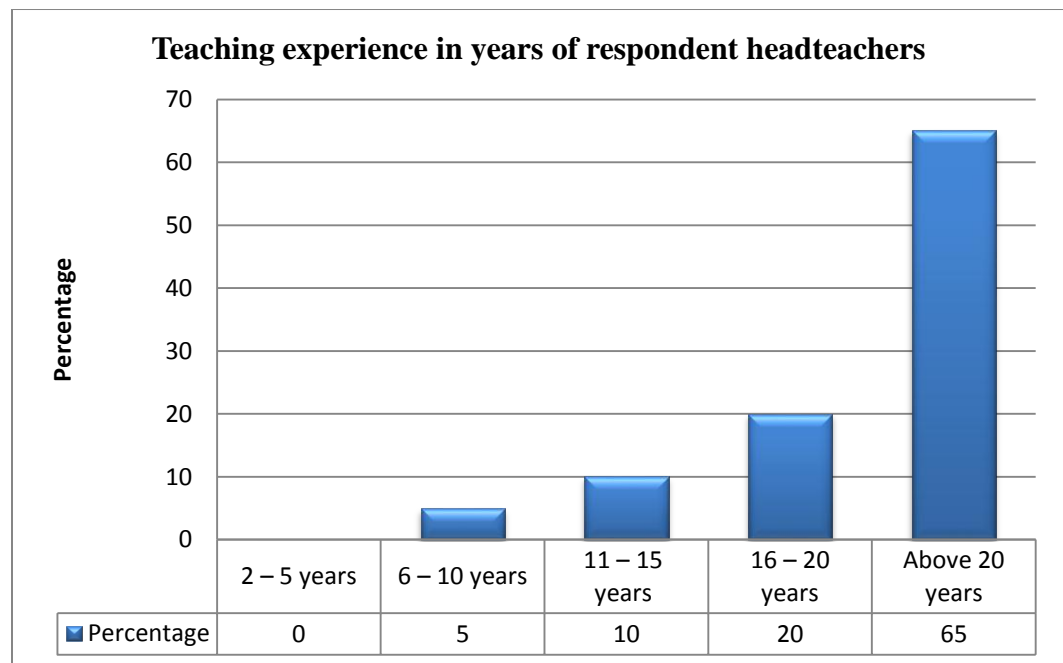
In this study, most 40% of the respondents had Bachelor of Education, followed by Diploma level of education, 30% and 15% of the respondents had ATS IV level of education. PI and KCSE/KCE/EACEs had 10% and 5% respectively. From these findings, we can deduce that the information received from these respondents was credible to help the researcher analyze the leadership styles of the head teachers and their impact on the students’ academic performance in the public primary school of the study as indicated in Figure 4.3 above.

Figure 4.3 show that the academic qualification of headteachers, majority of them indicated that they were Diploma in Education holders. These findings clearly outlined that their academic qualification is below average thus the need of in-



service and upgrade courses. Mbiti(1999) concurs when he says, a headteacher, like a captain, must be fully skilled in such things as official procedures, delegating duties, communication, human relates and modern educational techniques so as to lead this team successfully in both curriculum and other matters.

Professional expertise is determined by the experience an individual has been in an occupation. The findings were presented in figure 4.4.



**Figure 4.4 Teaching experience in years**

From the findings, 65% of the respondents had a working experience of over 20 years, 20% had taught 16 – 20 years, 10% had a teaching experience of 11 – 15 years while 5% had 6 – 10 years of teaching experience. This shows that most headteachers have a lot of experience in heading schools.

These findings concur with Armstrong (2004) who states that leadership is influence, power and the legitimate authority acquired by a leader to be able to effectively transform the organization through the direction of the human resources that are the most important organizational asset, leading to the achievement of desired purpose. This can be done through the articulation of the vision and mission of the organization at every moment and influence the staff to define their power to share this vision.

<b>Public Primary School</b>	<b>Mean Average Score</b>
1	233.4
2	230.64
3	235.60
4	241.05
5	224.17
6	264.58
7	252.62
8	205.79
9	212.61
10	226.02

11	260.53
12	222.50
13	256.27
14	233.85
15	241.99
16	236.67
17	241.99
18	224.22
19	228.61
20	246.67
Average	235.99

**Table 4.1 KCPE Mean score year 2010-2014**

From the findings as per table 4.1 above, out of the 20 school that responded, only 4 schools had a mean of 250 marks and above. The average of the schools that responded in Laikipia West District was 235.99 marks. The minimum required marks for transition for primary school to secondary school is 250 marks. From the study findings, it is clear that most schools in Laikipia West District performed poorly in KCPE in the last five years.

<b>Headteachers' ratings on school performance</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Below average	13	65
Average	7	35
Slightly above	-	-
Above average	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 4.2 Headteachers ratings on school performance**

Majority of head teachers, 65% mentioned that the performance of their schools were below average while the remaining 35% indicated that KCPE performance has been average in the last five years. Findings also revealed that the highest performance on average, according to headteachers perception is average (approximately 250 marks). This performance is highly attributed to Team Work (35%) followed by pupils effort (19%) then headteachers' effort, teachers effort and parents responsibility each scoring (15%). However, on the lower (performing) side, respondents mentioned lack of combined effort by all stakeholders, understaffing of teachers and lack of motivation as the reasons behind the poor performance.

### 4.3 Headteachers opinion on leadership their styles

In an effort to reach the objective of the study, the researcher sought headteachers opinions on leadership styles through a questionnaire likert scale where A=Always (5), O=Often (4), OC= Occasionally (3), R= Rarely (2), N = Never (1). Item 1-15 was used to measure autocratic and democratic leadership styles while items 16–29 were used to measure transformational and Laissez-faire leadership style. A mean score of >0-3 showed autocratic leadership style, while a mean score of >3- 4 showed transformational and mean score of 4-4.5 showed democratic leadership style and mean of >4.5 showed Laissez-faire leadership style.

Leadership style statement		Weighted Average	Standard Deviation
1	I am friendly and easy to approach and talk to	4.00	0.32
2	I listen to each group of schools community even when they hold different opinion from mine	3.95	0.65
3	I encourage staff to frankly express their view points	3.80	0.75
4	I express confidence in staff even when we disagree on some issues	4.35	0.48
5	I genuinely share information with staff	4.80	0.40
6	I expect the best from the staff members	3.85	0.96
7	I encourage staff to initiate new and creative ideas to benefit the school community	4.55	0.67

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8	I take risks in trying new adventurous ideas dealing with situations	3.30	1.35
9	I am open to criticisms by staff members	4.30	0.71
10	I accept I can make errors just like anybody else	4.55	0.67
11	I welcome members of staff to question matter related to school affairs	4.35	0.73
12	I am patient with progress made by staff towards goal attainments	3.45	0.92
13	I allow staff to take central position in staff meetings and informal discussions	4.40	0.66
14	I acknowledge all staff members efforts towards attainment of school affairs	4.75	0.62
15	A accept even unwarranted blame for failure or mistakes in the school	2.30	1.52
16	I initiate and direct goals for the staff	4.10	0.94
17	I give opportunity to any member to make a decision	4.55	0.59
18	I pay no attention to individual staff members interest in the school	1.55	1.07
19	I am concerned with staff welfare	4.90	0.30
20	I suppress new ideas from staff members	2.00	1.22
21	I allow staff members time to air their views before declaring my stand	4.60	0.49
22	I believe teachers are capable of self-direction	4.75	0.43

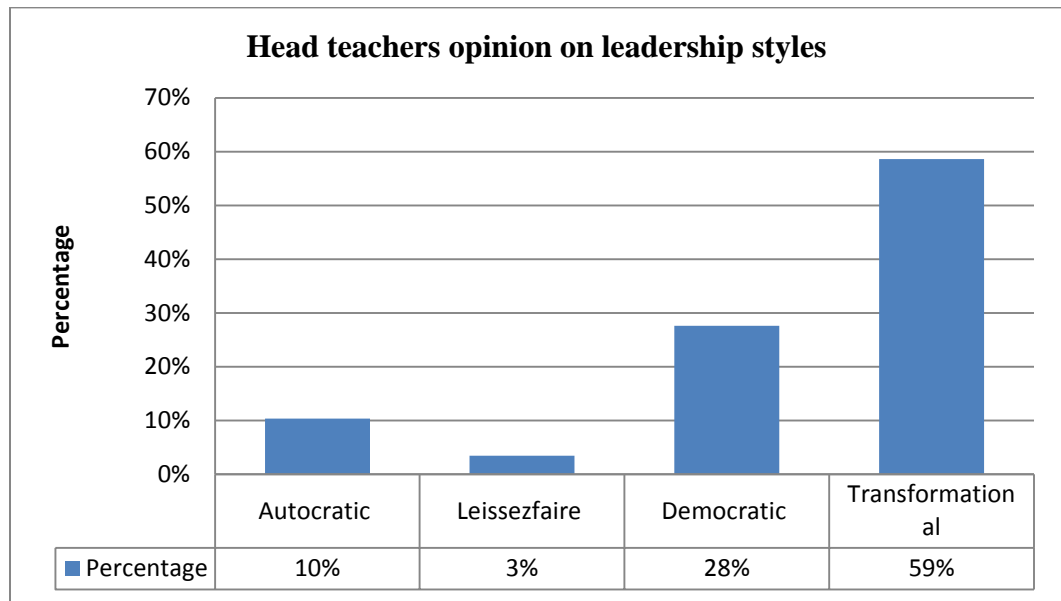
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23	I consult with other staffs towards improving standards and education in the school	4.65	0.65
24	I criticize poor work	3.45	0.50
25	I treat all staff members as equal	4.85	0.36
26	I assign staff to particular duties	4.85	0.36
27	I guide rather than control teachers in their work	4.55	0.74
28	I believe most teachers don't like work	1.95	0.94
29	I involve teachers in setting school goals	4.15	0.36

**Table 4.3 Headteachers opinion on leadership styles**

Questions 1 to 29 were used to measure leadership styles. Each question dealt with a specific leadership style of the three, either democratic leadership style, transformational leadership style, autocratic leadership style or Laissez-faire leadership style. From findings in table 4.3 above, majority of the questions score were between the mean of 2-5, which reveals that head teachers perception of their leadership style circumvents around the four leadership styles.

However, in order to reach the objectives of the study, identifying the practice of the style is not enough. Therefore, the researcher sought to determine the influence of each leadership style on academic performance after rating styles by teachers' opinion.



**Figure 4. 5 Headteachers opinion on leadership styles**

From study findings, the data, as per table 4.4 above, revealed majority of interviewed headteachers to perceive transformational leadership (59%). They indicated that they genuinely always share information with staff by a mean of 4.8 supported by a standard deviation of 0.4. In the same line, the headteachers indicated that they are always I am concerned with staff welfare (supported by mean of 4.90 and std dev of 0.30), always guide rather than control teachers in their work (mean 4.55 supported by std dev of 0.74) and always consult with other staffs towards improving standards and education in the school (mean of 4.65 supported by std dev of 0.65).



Democratic leadership style followed by 28%. Headteachers mentioned that they are often friendly and easy to approach and talk to, supported by a mean of 4.00 and a standard deviation of 0.32. Headteachers also responded that they often encourage staff to frankly express their view points by a mean of 3.8 supported by a standard deviation of 0.75, they often expect the best from the staff members, by a mean of 3.85 supported by std dev of 0.96 and are often patient with progress made by staff towards goal attainments by a mean of 3.45 supported by a std dev of 0.92. Laissezfare and Autocratic leadership styles had 3% and 10% respectively.

#### **4.4 Teachers opinion on head teachers leadership styles**

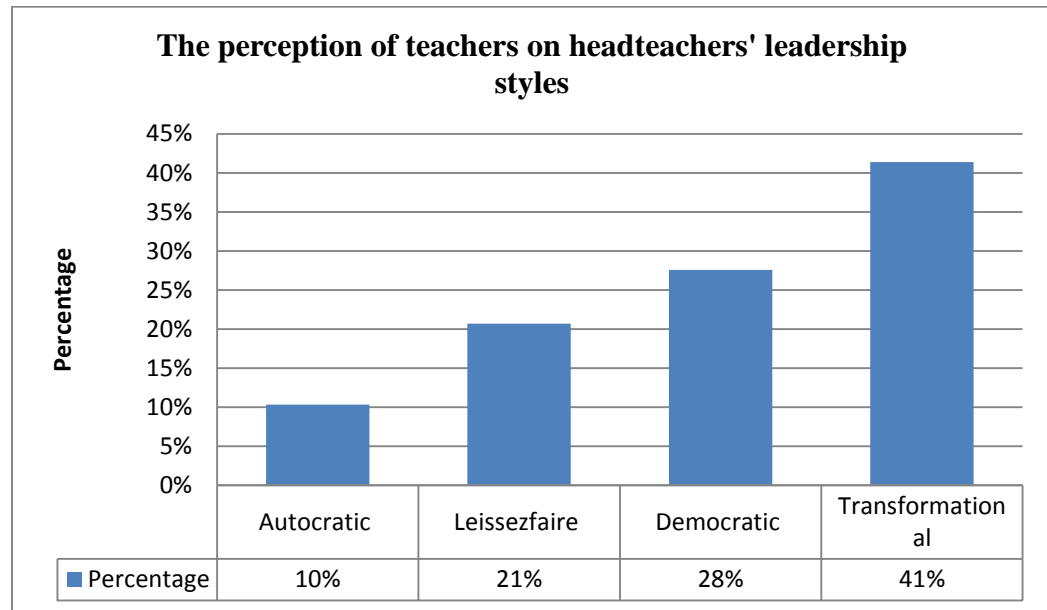
To realize the objective the study, the researcher also sought the opinion of teachers to determine the perception of teachers on leadership styles of headteachers in their respective schools by use of a questionnaire. Part C of the questionnaire which dealt with leadership styles used a likert scale where A=Always (5), O=Often (4), OC= Occasionally (3), R= Rarely (2), N = Never (1). Item 1-15 was used to measure autocratic and democratic leadership styles while items 16–29 were used to measure transformational and Laissez-faire leadership style. A mean score of >0-2 showed autocratic leadership style, while a mean score of >2- 3 showed transformational and mean score of 3-4 showed democratic leadership style and mean of >4 - 5 showed Laissez-faire leadership style. Table 4.5 shows the mean score and standard deviation of the teachers' opinion on leadership styles.

<b>Leadership style statement</b>		<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>
1	Friendly and easy to approach and talk to	4.68	0.67
2	Listens to each group of schools community even when they hold different opinion from mine	4.22	0.80
3	Encourages staff to frankly express their view points	4.42	0.99
4	Expresses confidence in staff even when we disagree on some issues	3.98	1.13
5	Genuinely share information with staff	2.93	1.22
6	Expects the best from the staff members	4.73	0.77
7	Encourages staff to initiate new and creative ideas to benefit the school community	4.00	1.13
8	Takes risks in trying new adventurous ideas dealing with situations	3.40	1.07
9	Open to criticisms by staff members	3.00	1.39
10	Accepts I can make errors just like anybody else	4.42	0.64
11	Welcomes members of staff to question matter related to school affairs	2.52	1.07
12	Patient with progress made by staff towards goal attainments	3.88	1.07
13	Allows staff to take central position in staff meetings and informal discussions	4.00	1.17

14	Acknowledges all staff members efforts towards attainment of school affairs	3.28	0.93
15	Accepts even unwarranted blame for failure or mistakes in the school	2.78	1.29
16	Initiates and directs goals for the staff	4.48	0.70
17	Gives opportunity to any member to make a decision	2.98	1.35
18	Pays no attention to individual staff members interest in the school	1.98	1.45
19	Concerned with staff welfare	4.60	0.90
20	Suppresses new ideas from staff members	1.98	1.49
21	Allows staff members time to air their views before declaring my stand	2.80	1.05
22	Believes teachers are capable of self-direction	3.47	0.72
23	Consults with other staffs towards improving standards and education in the school	4.23	1.19
24	Criticizes poor work	3.82	1.31
25	Treats all staff members as equal	4.47	0.87
26	Assigns staff to particular duties	4.87	0.34
27	Guides rather than control teachers in their work	4.58	0.74
28	Believes most teachers don't like work	1.77	0.84
29	Involves teachers in setting school goals	4.58	0.69

**Table 4.4 Perception on headteachers leadership style by the teachers**

The above table is summarized in the figure 4.6 below.



**Figure 4.6 The perception of teachers on headteachers' leadership styles**

From figure 4.6 above most teachers perceived their head teachers leadership style transformational followed by democratic then less laissez-faire and autocratic being 41%, 28%, 21% and 10% respectively.

The researcher established that the headteachers assign teachers particular tasks.

This is supported by a mean of 4.87, supported by a standard deviation 0.34.

#### **4.5 Relationship between performance in mean score and the head teacher leadership style**

To realize the influence of leadership styles on academic performance, the researcher sought to find out their relationships. The average mean score of each of the 20 public primary school under study was calculated and compared with

the exhibited leadership style employed. Schools with similar leadership style were grouped together and their averages mean score performance in KCPE for the five years calculated. Table 4.6 shows the relationship between leadership styles and the average mean score of the pupils' performance of the last 5 years (2010-2014).

		Academic_ Performance	Autocratic	Leissezfaire	Democratic	Transformational
Academic_ Performance	Pearson Correlation	1	-.497	.140	-.90	-.296
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.026	.05	.0517	.0205
	N	20	20	20	20	20
Autocratic	Pearson Correlation	-.497	1	-.106	.053	.249
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.026		.0187	.023	.0291
	N	20	20	20	20	20
Leissezfaire	Pearson Correlation	.140	-.106	1	-.503*	.254
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.05	.0187		.024	.0279
	N	20	20	20	20	20
Democratic	Pearson Correlation	-.090	.053	-.503*	1	-.294
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.0517	.023	.024		.208
	N	20	20	20	20	20
Transformational	Pearson Correlation	-.296	.249	.254	-.294	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.0205	.0291	.0279	.0208	
	N	20	20	20	20	20

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**Table 4.5 Correlations analysis**

The researcher analyzed the data gathered from the field after coding using statistical packages for social science. Coded data on various variables, that is, academic performance, autocratic leadership styles, laissez –faire leadership styles, democratic leadership styles and transformational leadership styles were quantified by SPSS and correlation analysis done using Pearson’s product moment correlation. A correlation coefficient of 1 or close to 1 is regarded as a strong positive correlation relationship between the variables.

From the Table 4.6, a correlation for efficient value far from one is regarded as weak positive correlation relationship between the variables. A negative correlation coefficient is regarded as a negative correlation and indication of negative correlation between the variables. All the significant values was found to be less than 0.05 and indicate they were statistically significant. The correlation coefficient between academic performance in the sampled schools and Laissez-faire leadership style was 0.140 indicating there was a positive relationship between the academic performance in these schools and the Laissez-faire leadership style used by the head teachers.

Academic performance and democratic leadership style had a correlation coefficient of -.090 indicating a strong negative association whereas in the schools autocratic leadership styles was used, the correlation coefficient was -.497, also a negative correlation coefficient, in addition, the transformational leadership style had a correlation coefficient of -0.296 meaning the performance may have been caused by lack of good practice of these leadership style but rather the assumption of the Laissez-faire leadership style.

The correlation analysis revealed that there exists a relationship between the leadership styles used by the head teachers and the school's academic performance in primary schools in Laikipia West. It is quite clear that the leadership style employed by the headteacher has an immense effect on the level of school academic performance. The poor performance (below average) of the pupils in primary schools in Laikipia West District can be attributed to the fact that majority of the head teachers are using Laissez-faire leadership style.

The academic performance and Laissez-faire leadership styles are indicated to be highly correlative as indicated by the correlation coefficient in the study. The findings goes in tandem with Okoth (2000) and Kimacia (2007) who concurred that there was a strong relationship between head teachers leadership styles and academic performance and that Laissez fair headteachers had had lower performance index than democratic head teachers.

From the questionnaire and the correlation analysis, the headteachers tend to believe in their staff, which, to an extent, comes down to Laissez-faire leadership style as opposed to transformational leadership style. Goodworth (1988) describes Laissez – faire style as appropriate when leading a team of highly motivated and skilled people who had produced excellent results in the past. Once a leader finds the team was confident, capable and motivated; since interfering could generate resentment and detract the team from their effectiveness. These findings, to the researcher, revealed a sense of complacency, which strike out democratic, autocratic and transformational leadership.

#### **4.6 Summary of the findings**

The results of the findings from study findings, the data, as per table 4.2.5 above, revealed majority, 59%, of interviewed headteachers perceived their style to be a transformational leadership. Teachers also majorly, 41% perceived headteachers leadership style to be the transformation leadership style, although at a lower percentage. In essence, a distribution of the teachers perception revealed a mixed use of leadership style; style transformational followed by democratic then less laissez-faire and autocratic being 41%, 28%, 21% and 10% respectively. It was clear about the weight of leadership styles in primary schools, which affect, ultimately, the KCPE results.

Majority of head teachers, 65% mentioned that the performance of their schools were below average while the remaining 35% indicated that KCPE performance has been average in the last five years. Since theoretically, transformational leadership style is attributed to better performance, to determine the relationship of the academic performance in relation to the leadership style the correlation analysis revealed even deeper different results.

The correlation coefficient between academic performance in the sampled schools and Laissez-faire leadership style was 0.140 indicating there was a positive relationship between the academic performance in these schools and the Laissez-faire leadership style used by the head teachers. Academic performance and democratic leadership style had a correlation coefficient of -.090 indicating a strong negative association whereas in the schools autocratic leadership styles was



used, the correlation coefficient was  $-.497$ , also a negative correlation coefficient, in addition, the transformational leadership style had a correlation coefficient of  $-0.296$  meaning the performance may have been caused by lack of good practice of these leadership style but rather the assumption of the Laissez-faire leadership style. The correlation analysis revealed that there exists a relationship between the leadership styles used by the head teachers and the school's academic performance in primary schools in Laikipia West. It is quite clear that the leadership style employed by the headteacher has an immense effect on the level of school academic performance.

Objective (1) from the study clearly indicates to what extent do a democratic leadership style are the stakeholders being allowed to participate in managing the school through their membership in the advisory school council (ASC) The environment in a democratic school is characterized by a democratic way of life, a democratic process of learning and a democratic participation in the life of the community of the school. For a democratic oriented principal perform better there must be good management which eager to implement strategies that would lead to a good academic achievement and also a collaborative arrangement in decision making across all levels in the school.

The study objective (II) revealed that leaders who use autocratic approach believe that teaching consists of technical skills with known standards and competencies for all teachers to be effective in their instructional practices. The study shows that autocratic leadership style significantly influences of students' academic

achievement. The result also indicates that the autocratic headteachers leadership style negatively influence academic achievement because they adopt harsh leadership style which are widely detested by teachers and pupils. It implicit that the more.

The study in objective III revealed that Laissez Faire leadership styles is based on the premise that teachers are capable of analyzing and solving their own instructional problems. It clearly argues that when an individual teacher sees the need for change and takes responsibility for it, instructional improvement is likely to be meaningful. This leadership approach is only a facilitator who provides direction to little formal structures to the plan. This behavior of the leaders should not be misconstrued as passive, or allowing complete teacher autonomy. Instead, the leaders actually uses the behavior of listening, clarifying, encouraging and presenting to guide the teacher towards self-recovery. Headteachers who use this style tend to fail to follow up on those they have delegated tasks to and consequently performance declines. This indicates that Laissez – Faire leadership style allows neglect and lack of follow-up on activities, which may water down concerns towards effective academic achievements.

Finally, the study objective IV sought to establish the extent to which transformational leadership enhances the motivation, morale and performance of followers through a variety of mechanisms. These include connecting the followers' sense of identity and self to the project and the collective identity of the organization. This being a role model for followers to take greater ownership for

their weaknesses of the followers, so the leader can align followers with tasks that enhance their performance. The style of leadership focuses on the team's performance as a whole, it encourages everyone to think of the group as a whole and rather not just themselves. It is all about moving forward as a team and not just several individuals in one group. Transformational leaders aim to make their team members better people by encouraging their self-awareness. It encourages team individuals to overcome self-interests and focus on the goals and purposes that are shared as a team.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter summarizes the study, draws the conclusions about the findings of the study and gives researchers recommendations and finally gives suggestions for further study.

#### **5.2 Summary of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to investigate whether head teacher leadership style had any influence on pupils' performance in KCPE in public primary schools in Laikipia West district. The four main objectives of the study were: to establish the influence of headteachers' autocratic leadership style on pupils' performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education, to determine the influence of headteachers' democratic leadership style on pupils performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education, to examine the influence of headteachers' Laissez-faire on pupils' performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education, to establish how transformational leadership style influence pupils performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education. The study identified the practice of all these four leadership styles. Theoretically, the study first explored all the four leadership styles and their impact on school academic performance.

The study used ex post facto research design and the target population of 72 public primary schools in Laikipia West district and 600 teachers. Out of sample size of 23 head teachers and 60 teachers, 20 head teachers and 60 teachers responded. The study used descriptive statistics to analyze data to give the percentages, frequencies and means. Data presented helped to explain the relationships between the variables of the study. Computer software that uses statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 20 and Microsoft Excel 2010 was used for analysis.

The study sought to determine the gender distribution of the respondents in order to establish if there is gender balance in teaching profession. From the findings majority were male respondents with quite a number being female head teachers. This implies there were more males than female teachers. The study further established the respondent's age distribution. From the findings majority (50%) indicated that they ranged between above 45 years. This implies that majority of the respondents were at their maturity stage and therefore able to handle the school affairs responsibly.

The study sought to determine the teaching experience of respondents. 40% of the respondents had Bachelor of Education, followed by Diploma level of education, 30% and 15% of the respondents had ATS IV level of education. PIs and KCSE/KCE/EACEs had 10% and 5% respectively. Thus, information received from these respondents was credible to help the researcher analyze the leadership

styles of the head teachers and their impact on the students' academic performance in the public primary school in Laikipia West District.

The study sought to determine the performance of Laikipia West District public schools. 65% mentioned that the performance of their schools were below average while the remaining 35% indicated that KCPE performance has been average in the last five years. The average mean score in the last five years in Laikipia West District (among the 20 schools) was 235.99 marks. The minimum required marks for transition for primary school to secondary school is 250 marks. From the study findings, it is clear that most schools in Laikipia West District performed poorly in KCPE in the last five years.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

The findings of the study suggested that good leadership style in schools is the key to success. For academic excellence to be achieved learners' discipline should be maintained following the leadership style used. A good leadership style encourages discipline in pupils which promotes peace within the school administration leading to academic achievement. The study revealed that majority of the teachers support transformational leadership style which leads to fundamental nature of goal ownership and sets goals of targets to be achieved thus encouraging pupils to work hard. A democratic leadership style was a good approach because it promotes motivation morale and academic performance since headteachers encourage team work in decision making to improve school progress.

The study concluded that majority of teachers (59%) perceived head teachers leadership styles as transformational while 28% perceived headteachers to practice democratic leadership style. Quite a number (21%) perceived their head teachers leadership styles as Laissez-faire and a few of them (10%) exhibited autocratic leadership styles. Laissez-faire leadership style influenced pupils' performance in KCPE in Laikipia West district whereby the average mean score for the schools that the style was practiced was 235.18 marks. This is below the average mean score mark of 250 marks out of the possible 500 marks. Democratic leadership style was found to have influence on pupils' performance in KCPE in the schools where the style was exhibited. The average mean score was 248 marks, which was close to the 250 marks. This was found to be better than in the other school where autocratic and Laissez-faire leadership styles were practiced.

Laissez-faire leadership style had a strong negative influence on pupils' performance in KCPE in Laikipia District, since it correlated positively with the poor results over the past five years. The average mean score for the schools where the style was practiced for the last six years was 209.56 marks which is far much below the average mean mark of 250 marks out of the possible 500 marks.

Laissez-faire head teachers on the other hand, enhance indiscipline due to non-provision of direction and structure to staff members in doing their work. Discipline is one of the key factors for improved performance. The study established that dominance of Laissez-faire leadership style breeds complacency and stagnation in work since there is no guidance but little leadership. According

to Goodworth (1988) when leader finds the team to be confident, capable and motivated he does not interfere; since interfering could generate resentment and detract the team from their effectiveness. Therefore, it is clear that the low performance in school as indicated by headteachers, 65% below average is attributed to leadership style by 14% of Laissez-faire leadership style.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

Many headteachers had attended training only once in their teaching career. Therefore, Kenya Education Management Institute (KEMI) should support head teachers by providing frequent and vigorous training in management programmes aimed at increasing efficiency and effectiveness in school management. It can also organize seminars and workshops for head teachers aimed at making them understand leadership skills better. Leadership skills are prerequisite for better academic performance. From time to time head teachers should be encouraged to review their own leadership style and check their effects on students' academic performance. This will enhance the teachers' cooperation with others teachers in day to day management of the schools.

The headteachers should feel motivated to proactively seek transformational leadership style so as to be easily sensitized on how to relate not only with the teachers but the entire community and be team players. The researcher noted the comments of many headteachers weighted on staffing. Therefore, Adequate staffing by the Teachers Service Commission in Laikipia West District in public primary school is necessary. However, while staffing TSC should appoint head



teachers on the basis of their academic/professional qualification. After the appointment of a head teacher, T.S.C should continue monitoring the performance of the head teacher by checking the progress of pupils' performance in K.C.P.E and giving feedback to the head teacher.

The Ministry of Education should organize motivational talks to the candidates before they sit for KCPE. It is envisaged that this strategy can probably help to prepare them psychologically and boost their morale.

### **5.5 Suggestions for further research**

In view of limitations and delimitations of the study, the following suggestions were made for further research;

- i. A study need to be done on the relationship between teachers' level of motivation and pupils' performance as they play a big role on instructional process since the study on headteachers' leadership proven to have a small influence on pupils' performance in KCPE examination.
- ii. A study on family background related factors to be investigated on their impact on pupils' performance in their KCPE examination since parents are part of the main stakeholders of the schools.
- iii. A similar study is recommended in other districts of the country to assess the validity of the research findings. This would also include a comparison of urban and rural schools. In addition, a larger sample to include students would enhance more opinions from a wide scope of respondents.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX I**

#### **LETTER OF INTRODUCTION**

Bedan Kamau  
Waiganjo  
P.O.Box 115  
Rumuruti

The Headteacher,

Dear Sir/ Madam,

#### **REF: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN YOUR SCHOOL**

I am a post-graduate student pursuing a Master of Education (M.Ed) degree in Educational Administration of University of Nairobi. Currently I am conducting a research on “Influence of Headteachers’ leadership Styles on Pupils’ Performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education in Laikipia West District, Laikipia County, Kenya”. Your school has been selected to participate in the research, and I am therefore seeking your support in helping to fill in the questionnaire pertaining to the research topic. The information obtained will be for academic purposes and the respondents will be in total confidence.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours faithfully,

Waiganjo Bedan Kamau

## APPENDIX II

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HEADTEACHERS

This study is an investigation of the influence of headteachers, leadership styles on the pupils' academic performance in K.C.P.E in public primary schools in Laikipia West District, Laikipia County. You are requested to participate in the study by filling the questionnaires as honestly as possible. Your independent view is required and your co-operation is highly appreciated.

#### Instructions

Indicate the correct option by inserting a tick (✓) in the appropriate box provided.

#### Part A: Demographic information

1. What is your gender?
  - a) Male [     ]
  - b) Female [     ]
  
2. What is your age?
  - a) Below 25 years [     ]
  - b) 26 – 30 years [     ]
  - c) 31 – 35 years [     ]
  - d) 36 – 40 years [     ]
  - e) 40 – 45 years [     ]
  - f) 45 and above [     ]



3. What is your highest academic and professional qualification?

a) KCSE/KCE/EACE [     ]

b) PI [     ]

c) ATS IV [     ]

d) Diploma / SI [     ]

e) B.Ed [     ]

f) M.Ed [     ]

4. What is your teaching experience in years?

a) 2 – 5 years [     ]

b) 6 – 10 years [     ]

c) 11 – 15 years [     ]

d) 16 – 20 years [     ]

e) Above 20 years [     ]

5. What is your teaching experience in years?

a) Below one year [     ]

b) 2 – 5 years [     ]

c) 6 - 10 years [     ]

d) 11 - 15 years [     ]

e) 16 – 20 years [     ]

f) Above 20 years [     ]

**Part B: performance data**

6. Have you ever attended any training course on management or leadership?

a) Yes [      ]

b) No [      ]

7. If Yes, specify the following

a) Title of the course / training \_\_\_\_\_

b) Duration of training \_\_\_\_\_

c) Organizer of training \_\_\_\_\_

8. Please fill in the pupils K.C.P.E performance in your school in the table below.

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
K.C.P.E performance (Mean score)					

9. How would you rate this school performance?

a) Below average [      ]

b) Average [      ]

c) Slightly above [      ]

d) Above average [      ]

10. What would you attribute this performance to? (Tick all that apply)

a) Headteachers effort [     ]

b) Pupils effort [     ]

c) Teachers effort [     ]

d) Parents responsibility [     ]

e) Team work [     ]

f) Others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

11. What can be done to improve this performance? Explain briefly

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Section C: perception of headteachers leadership style**

**Key**

A – Always (5), O – Often (4), OC – Occasionally, (3), R – Rarely (2),

N-Never (1)

		<b>Perception scale</b>				
	<b>Leadership style statement</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
1	I am friendly and easy to approach and talk to					
2	I listen to each group of schools community even when they hold different opinion from mine					
3	I encourage staff to frankly express their view points					

4	I express confidence in staff even when we disagree on some issues					
5	I genuinely share information with staff					
6	I expect the best from the staff members					
7	I encourage staff to initiate new and creative ideas to benefit the school community					
8	I take risks in trying new adventurous ideas dealing with situations					
9	I am open to criticisms by staff members					
10	I accept I can make errors just like anybody else					
11	I welcome members of staff to question matter related to school affairs					
12	I am patient with progress made by staff towards goal attainments					
13	I allow staff to take central position in staff meetings and informal discussions					
14	I acknowledge all staff members efforts towards attainment of school affairs					
15	A accept even unwarranted blame for failure or mistakes in the school					
16	I initiate and direct goals for the staff					

17	I give opportunity to any member to make a decision					
18	I pay no attention to individual staff members interest in the school					
19	I am concerned with staff welfare					
20	I suppress new ideas from staff members					
21	I allow staff members time to air their views before declaring my stand					
22	I believe teachers are capable of self-direction					
23	I consult with other staffs towards improving standards and education in the school					
24	I criticize poor work					
25	I treat all staff members as equal					
26	I assign staff to particular duties					
27	I guide rather than control teachers in their work					
28	I believe most teachers dot like work					
29	I involve teachers in setting school goals					

**Thank you for responding and doing it honestly**

## APPENDIX III

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

This study is an investigation of the influence of headteachers, leadership styles on the pupils' academic performance in K.C.P.E in public primary schools in Laikipia West District, Laikipia County. You are requested to participate in the study by filling the questionnaires as honestly as possible. Your independent view is required and your co-operation is highly appreciated.

#### Instructions

Indicate the correct option by inserting a tick (  ) in the appropriate box provided.

#### Part A: Demographic information

1. What is your gender?
  - a) Male
  - b) Female
  
2. What is your age?
  - a) Below 25 years
  - b) 26 – 30 years
  - c) 31 – 35 years
  - d) 36 – 40 years
  - e) 40 – 45 years
  - f) 45 and above

3. What are your highest academic and professional qualification?
- a) KCSE/KCE/EACE [     ]
  - b) PI                     [     ]
  - c) B.Ed                 [     ]
  - d) Diploma / SI       [     ]
  - e) Others (specify)\_\_\_\_\_
4. What is your teaching experience in years?
- a) Below 1 year       [     ]
  - b) 2 – 5 years         [     ]
  - c) 6 – 10 years        [     ]
  - d) 11 – 15 years       [     ]
  - e) Above 20 years     [     ]

**Part B: performance data**

5. Write the K.C.P.E mean score if your school in 2012
- \_\_\_\_\_
6. How do you rate this performance?
- a) Poor                 [     ]
  - b) Below average      [     ]
  - c) Average             [     ]
  - d) Above average      [     ]
  - e) Good                [     ]

7. What would you attribute this performance to? Tick all that apply.

a) Headteacher's effort [     ]

b) Pupil's effort [     ]

c) Teacher's effort [     ]

d) Parent's responsibility [     ]

e) Team work [     ]

f) Others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

8. What do you think can be done to improve this performance?

Explain briefly \_\_\_\_\_

**Section C: Perception of head teachers' leadership style**

**Key**

A – Always (5), O – Often (4), OC – Occasionally, (3), R – Rarely (2),

N- Never (1)

		<b>Perception scale</b>				
	<b>Leadership style statement</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
1	Friendly and easy to approach and talk to					
2	Listens to each group of schools community even when they hold different opinion from mine					
3	Encourages staff to frankly express their view points					
4	Expresses confidence in staff even when we disagree on some issues					



5	Genuinely share information with staff					
6	Expects the best from the staff members					
7	Encourages staff to initiate new and creative ideas to benefit the school community					
8	Takes risks in trying new adventurous ideas dealing with situations					
9	Open to criticisms by staff members					
10	Accepts I can make errors just like anybody else					
11	Welcomes members of staff to question matter related to school affairs					
12	Patient with progress made by staff towards goal attainments					
13	Allows staff to take central position in staff meetings and informal discussions					
14	Acknowledges all staff members efforts towards attainment of school affairs					
15	Accepts even unwarranted blame for failure or mistakes in the school					
16	Initiates and directs goals for the staff					
17	Gives opportunity to any member to make a decision					

18	Pays no attention to individual staff members interest in the school					
19	Concerned with staff welfare					
20	Suppresses new ideas from staff members					
21	Allows staff members time to air their views before declaring my stand					
22	Believes teachers are capable of self-direction					
23	Consults with other staffs towards improving standards and education in the school					
24	Criticizes poor work					
25	Treats all staff members as equal					
26	Assigns staff to particular duties					
27	Guides rather than control teachers in their work					
28	Believes most teachers don't like work					
29	Involves teachers in setting school goals					

**Thank you for responding and doing it honestly**

## APPENDIX IV

### RESEARCH 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

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

Ref: No.

20<sup>th</sup> May, 2015  
Date:

**NACOSTI/P/15/6120/5913**

Bedan Kamau Waiganjo  
University of Nairobi  
P.O Box 30197-00100  
**NAIROBI.**

#### **RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION**

Following your application for authority to carry out research on *“Influence of headteachers leadership styles on pupils performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Examination in public primary schools in Laikipia West District, Laikipia County.”* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Laikipia County** for a period ending **31<sup>st</sup> July, 2015.**

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Laikipia 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.

  
SAID HUSSEIN  
FOR: DIRECTOR GENERAL/CEO

Copy to:

The County Commissioner  
Laikipia County.

The County Director of Education  
Laikipia County.



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

