

**INFLUENCE OF PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP STYLES ON STUDENT
TRUANCY IN PUBLIC SECONDARY DAY SCHOOLS IN NAKURU
MUNICIPALITY, KENYA.**

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DECLARATION

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

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DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to my late father Pius Wangila, my loving mother Alice Wanyonyi and my brothers Dan, Dennis and Davies.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DEO	District Education Officer
FDSE	Free Day Secondary Education
K.C.S.E	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
KEMI	Kenya Education Management Institute
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation

ABSTRACT

This study aimed at investigating influence of principal's leadership styles on student truancy in public secondary day schools in Nakuru Municipality. This was motivated by the fact that School leadership plays a key role in improving school products. The objectives of the study were: to determine the influence of democratic leadership style on truancy, the influence of autocratic leadership style on truancy, the influence of laissez faire leadership style on truancy and the influence of charismatic leadership style on truancy. The study targeted principals, class teachers and form four students in the 22 public day secondary schools in the Municipality. In this regard, all the 22 principals were included in the study population together with 240 class teachers and 2943 form four students. A descriptive survey design was adopted whereby stratified sampling was used to identify the specific respondents for the study. Data collected was done using questionnaires for class teachers and form four students and interview schedules which targeted the principals. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics where data was organized in frequencies and percentages. Data presentation was done using tables. The findings of the study showed that truancy was a problem experienced in all the schools under study. Democratic and charismatic leadership styles were popularly used by the principals in the municipality. The various leadership styles employed by various principals had a great impact on truancy. Autocratic leadership style was found out to be associated with harshness and leaders who practice this style of leadership are always distant from teachers and students. Such leaders made decisions without consultations and imposed the decisions on teachers and students. They are more likely to face opposition from teachers and students. This style was associated with the highest rates of truancy in schools. Laissez Faire leadership style was established to be associated with absentee leaders who delegated most of their work and were extremely lenient with teachers and students. It was also associated with high rates of truancy. Charismatic leaders greatly inspired and motivated teachers and students and were good role models thereby controlling truancy among learners. Democratic leadership style was the most effective in curbing truancy cases among students since these leaders made consultations before making any decisions, were friendly and made necessary follow ups. They were available when needed. It was concluded that the four leadership styles used by principals greatly influenced school attendance by the learners. The study recommended awareness campaign among school administrators to enhance their understanding on the circumstances in which each leadership style is appropriate. The study also recommended wide adoption of democratic and charismatic leadership styles to help curb rising cases of truancy among learners.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

School is a place that brings out the potential of individuals and the basis for academic excellence of our next generation. Thus, regular school attendance has been made into a law of the education system in most countries where children are mandated to attend school for at least eleven years in their life. However, some students do not obey the set law because of some internal and external undesired factors, therefore leading to the prevalence of truancy. Truancy behavior also indicates the beginning of exposing students to life problems because the unsupervised time of the truants may stimulate students to initiate and commit high risk activities (Ishak & Suet, 2015).

Regular school attendance is an important factor in school success. Truancy is a problem for the individual, the family, the school and the whole society. (Carlen et al, 1992). World over, truancy has been found to be a cankerworm that has greatly destroyed the fabrics of the educational programmes and has caused a lot of problems for secondary school students in their educational pursuits (Stoll, 1993).

In the United States of America, truancy has been identified as one of the ten major problems in schools. It is often referred to as a 'gateway crime' and has been linked to delinquency among the young people and a significant negative behavior in adulthood, including an increased violence (Trujillo, 2005).

Ishak & Suet (2015) found out that truancy in Malaysia has been classified as the second top discipline problem and the four factors usually associated with truanting behavior are family, school, economic status and students themselves. The school administration has to be responsible in creating a school atmosphere that can attract truants to school and at the same time sustain student interest to be in school.

In Swaziland, truancy among adolescents is regarded as one of the major social problems as it is relatively prevalent. Truant adolescents have been reported to engage in risky sexual practices, use illicit drugs, alcohol drinking and cigarette smoking. The free time that adolescents have when they miss school gives them the chance to initiate and maintain unhealthy behaviors (Siziya, Muula & Rudatsikira, 2007).

Truancy is one of the fundamental aspects of indiscipline that is more prevalent among secondary school students. It has thwarted the aims and goals of education in Nigeria. Some of the causes of truancy have been found to be school based. These are harshness towards students, lack of communication and involvement of parents' schools' progress and too rigid administration policies (Okwakpam & Okwakpam, 2012). In Tanzania, truancy is a big problem hindering academic performance, especially in the cities. (Mlowasa, Kalimang'asi & Dodo, 2014).

Effective administration depends largely on sound leadership. Leadership has to do with the execution of those policies and decisions which help give direction to the activities of an organization towards the achievement of its specified aims. Leadership is acquired through one's ability to control, initiate or dictate the way others should behave. (Mbiti, 2007)

Effective leadership is essential in secondary schools. The success of any school depends greatly on the quality of its leadership. The leadership of a school plays a major role in improving school products by influencing the motivation and capacities of teachers and the school climate and environment (Bush, 2005).

Mbiti (2007) highlights different types of leadership styles. These are coercive, democratic, laissez faire and charismatic leadership style. The autocratic leader

clearly indicates what he/she expects to be accomplished, when and how it should be done. He often makes decisions without consulting or seeking opinions of subordinates. The democratic leader guides the subjects and allows input from the members. The laissez faire leader gives little or no direction and leaves decision making to the group members while the charismatic leader commands an unchallengeable following. They are obeyed simply because something about them is so appealing that whatever they say is accepted as dogmatic truth.

Generally, students have the best attendance records in schools with authoritative - those that make high demands and provide high levels of support - and the worst records in very lenient schools - those that make few demands and provide little support at all (Trujillo, 2005). However, Yahya (2010) argues that principals who use strict control measures are likely to experience students' and teachers' resistance and increased indiscipline since teachers and students tend to protest against dictatorship. Thus an authoritarian leader is likely to have high cases of truancy in his/her school.

Laissez faire leadership style allows neglect and lack of follow up on activities which may discourage concerns towards effective academic achievements. This style is associated with the highest rates of truancy. The democratic leader

motivates and allows everyone to take initiative and to work towards achievement of set goals and objectives through teamwork and good cooperation. Such a leader raises the urge to attend school hence very few cases of truancy.

According to Decastro (2014), charismatic leaders are in most cases authoritarian as well as democratic and therefore have a great following. They are loved and adored by many people and rarely face opposition. Schools with such principals experience very few cases of truancy (Mbiti, 2007). The government of Kenya introduced FSDE in 2008 to ensure that all students of school going age access quality education. Every parent whose child is Kenyan or lives in Kenya should ensure that the child regularly attends school or such other institution as may be authorized and prescribed by the Cabinet Secretary for purposes of total development of the child.

Kanga (2015) in his study on factors contributing to truancy in secondary schools in Meru County found out that unsupportive school culture, family, socio-economic and psychological factors significantly contributed to truancy. He identified effects of truancy to be poor academic performance, wastage of learning time, dropping out of school, poverty among others.

Aluoch (2012) conducted a case study in three day schools in Nakuru East division to establish factors contributing to absenteeism. She found out that absenteeism is a problem affecting the three schools she selected in the county. Some of the major causes of absenteeism were distance to school, temporary employment, school based reasons, sickness, community influence among others. Student absenteeism created serious problems for the administration. Some of these were poor performance in exams, failure to cover the syllabus and time wastage.

Nakuru municipality constitutes the urban area and hence the urban schools. It has a total of 25 public secondary schools out of which 22 are purely day schools. K. C. S. E analysis for the past 5 years of the 22 public day secondary schools reveal that only 7 of the 22 schools fall within 5 and 7.8 mean scores. These are shown in the table below.

Table 1.1 Nakuru Municipality Day Schools' KCSE Performance (2011-2015)

S/NO	SCHOOL	MEAN 2011	MEAN 2012	MEAN 2013	MEAN 2014	MEAN 2015
1	Langalanga	7.3595	7.8185	7.7718	7.4263	7.35
2	Nakuru Day	6.9463	6.5228	6.0695	6.4456	6.746
3	Lanet Secondary	6.03	5.92	5.421	5.6047	5.232
4	Afraha High	5.0682	5.080	5.677	5.399	5.46
5	Hillcrest Secondary	4.4104	4.987	4.5172	5.2642	5.17
6	St Mary's Girls	4.210	4.330	4.082	5.0465	5.557
7	Moi Secondary	4.0440	3.9273	5.0728	4.768	5.312

The rest of the schools have been registering poor results of below 5 mean score while others have been dropping in mean score over the 5 years. This is shown in the table below

Table 1.2 Nakuru Municipality Day Schools' KCSE Performance (2011-2015)

S/NO	SCHOOL	MEAN 2011	MEAN 2012	MEAN 2013	MEAN 2014	MEAN 2015
1	Flamingo Secondary	4.6830	4.4141	4.85	5.404	4.62
2	Tumaini Secondary	-	-	4.5242	5.1479	4.745
3	Nairobi Road	5.796	5.490	4.924	4.8712	4.541
4	Nakuru West	5.5071	5.0260	4.88	4.82	4.637
5	Upperhill Secondary	4.7200	4.4700	5.1197	4.7925	4.255
6	Crater View	4.6023	4.4592	4.1818	4.3034	4..167
7	Mogoon Secondary	4.4394	4.9833	3.025	4.2623	4.738
8	Kenyatta Secondary	4.7250	3.6000	4.3558	4.2473	4.376
9	Uhuru High	3.7708	2.8134	4.4831	4.1596	4.824
10	Nakuru Central	4.0000	3.7060	3.2975	3.6364	2.237
11	Kelelwet Secondary	2.94	3.132	2.5676	3.1111	2.765
12	Ngala Secondary	-	2.0000	1.8888	2.0714	2.40
13	Mwariki Secondary	-	-	-	-	3.351
14	Rhino Secondary	-	-	-	-	3.529
15.	Natewa Secondary	-	-	-	-	3.477

The difference in performance evident in the tables above necessitates an examination of the cause of poor performance in most of the schools and the part played by the administrator. According to the District Education Officer, rates of truancy have been found to be high in most of the day secondary schools in the municipality. On average, the attendance of students lies at 65.0% per term. This makes them cover only part of the syllabi in all subjects, leading to poor

performance in national examinations. Truant students have been discovered to be engaging in business while others just idle in town and engage in drug abuse and other illegal practices without the knowledge of the school authorities and parents/guardians. Table 1.3 shows dropout, suspension, expulsion and attendance rates of students in the schools under study for the year 2015. The information in the Table reveals that truancy has affected the education of students who end up in wastage.

Truancy is not only a global and national issue but also a severe problem in Nakuru municipality. The studies reviewed by the researcher have not specifically focused on the influence of principals' leadership styles on truancy and that is what this study sought to examine.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Despite the Government of Kenya introducing Free Day Secondary Education and banning corporal punishment and repetition in all public schools, regular school attendance still remains a problem. Truancy is one of the biggest challenges facing the day secondary schools in Nakuru Municipality, coupled with poor academic performance in most of the schools. The truants engage in drug and substance abuse and day time crime while others end up with teenage pregnancies and early marriages. All these raise questions. What could be some of the causes

of truancy in the schools? If the principals are equipped with the necessary leadership skills, are they using the appropriate styles? If they are well informed about truancy and its effects, could they help to create a friendly environment in schools that will attract the truants to school?

Studies reviewed for this study did not focus on truancy as a specific problem facing day secondary schools in Nakuru Municipality. Only one study has been conducted in the municipality and it addressed general factors influencing absenteeism. This study therefore examined the role of principals in enhancing or constraining student truancy in Nakuru Municipality.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate influence of principals' leadership styles on student truancy in public secondary day schools in Nakuru municipality.

1.4 Objectives

The study sought to achieve the following objectives;

1. To establish how democratic leadership style influences truancy among students in public day secondary schools in Nakuru municipality
2. To determine the influence of autocratic leadership style on truancy among students in public day secondary schools in Nakuru municipality

3. To examine how *laissez faire* leadership style influences truancy among students in public day secondary schools in Nakuru municipality
4. To determine the extent to which charismatic leadership style influences truancy among students in public day secondary schools in Nakuru municipality

1.5 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How does democratic leadership style influence truancy among students in public day secondary schools in Nakuru municipality?
2. What is the influence of autocratic leadership style on truancy among students in public day secondary schools in Nakuru municipality?
3. How does *laissez faire* leadership style influence truancy among students in public day secondary schools in Nakuru municipality?
4. To what extent does charismatic leadership style influence truancy among students in public day secondary schools in Nakuru municipality?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study may be of great importance to heads of schools who will be able to re-examine their leadership styles in the light of the findings and rectify where applicable to reduce truancy in their schools. The county education office may also benefit from these findings by getting the true picture of truancy

in the day secondary schools in the municipality and the leadership styles used by the heads of the schools in their region. This would therefore provide the necessary guidance to correct the situation where applicable. The findings may be used by other researchers who would be interested in conducting a similar study

1.7 Limitations of the Study

Some of the information required for this study was considered sensitive hence some respondents were reluctant to respond or give correct responses. This was solved by assuring the respondents of the confidentiality involved and asking them not to write their names on the research instruments.

1.8 Delimitations of the Study

This study focused on the influence of head teachers' leadership styles on truancy among students in public day secondary schools in Nakuru municipality. It did not involve boarding schools and private schools. 22 schools formed the target population of the study. The main respondents were the 22 principals, 240 class teachers and 2943 form four students. The research instruments for the study were interviews and questionnaires.

1.9 Basic Assumptions of the Study

The study assumed that truancy was on a high rate in day schools, especially in urban areas and that the heads of those schools, in one way or another, influenced truancy through the leadership styles they employed in the management of the schools.

1.10 Definition of Significant Terms

Autocratic leadership style refers to a leadership style in which the leader centralizes power, authority and decision making.

Charismatic leadership style refers to a leadership style that is usually associated with exceptional and unique personal power and influence and behavioral patterns

Democratic leadership style is a type of leadership style in which the leader spreads out power and authority and decisions are made through consultations.

***Leiszez faire* leadership style** is the leadership style in which the leader appears to avoid power and authority and largely depends on the subordinates to come up with goals and ways to achieve progress and success

Leadership styles refers to particular behavior applied by a leader to motivate his or her subordinates to achieve the objectives of the organization

Truancy refers to is unjustifiable or unexplained absenteeism from school/class with attempts by the student to conceal the absenteeism

Truant refers to a student who fails to attend school without a legitimate reason

1.11 Organization of the Study

The study was organized in five chapters. Chapter one consisted of: background of 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 and definition of operational terms. Chapter two consisted of literature review, theoretical framework and conceptual framework. Chapter three consisted of research methodology which included the research design, target population, sample size and sampling procedures, research instruments, data collection procedures and data analysis techniques.

Chapter four covered the analysis and interpretation of findings of the study and chapter five included summary, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Introduction

This chapter covers review of related literature on various leadership styles and their influence on truancy. It mainly dwelled on the concept of truancy and its effects and the influence of the various leadership styles on truancy. It also covered the conceptual and theoretical framework. The purpose of reviewing literature was to establish the link between leadership styles used by principals and student truancy in schools.

2.2. Overview of Truancy in Schools

Student truancy is absence from school on the part of learners without prior knowledge and consent of parents. It may also be absence of learners from school, class or lesson without the knowledge of the teacher or parent. It can be as a result of dislike for the school environment, teachers or other students. For others, it can be due to inability to cope with academic pressure from teachers, parents and their fellow students (Kanga, 2015). It is the absence of learners from school without a reasonable or acceptable excuse (Kee, 2001).

Baker, Sigmon and Nugent (2001) indicated that truancy is unexcused absence from school. It has led to serious delinquent activity in youth and to significant undesirable behavior and characteristics in adults. It is important to come up with workable strategies to intervene with chronic truants, address the major causes of truancy and stop progression of the youth from truancy into more severe and violent behavior.

Aluoch (2012) in her study on absenteeism in Nakuru east division found out that students' absenteeism was caused by lack of school fees, sickness, family problems, distance to school, school based reasons, temporary employment and community influence. Truancy caused poor performance in national examinations, failure to cover the syllabus and wasting time dealing with absentees and behavioral problems. This study does not delve into leadership styles used by heads of these schools and their influence on truancy. It addresses general aspects of the school environment. Thus the researcher seeks to fill this gap.

2.3. Influence of Leadership Styles on Truancy

The following section presents the various leadership styles and their influence on truancy as reported by various authors.

2.3.1. Democratic Leadership Style and Truancy in Schools

Democratic leadership style decentralizes power and authority. Decisions are made through consultations (Okumbe, 2013). Decastro (2014) observes that this style of leadership motivates teachers to work with principals to achieve school objectives. Democratic leaders use more dialogue with teachers and learners and allow them to talk about the constraints they face. They are more transparent and approachable. They observe at random students' work and interview them about teachers' performance.

Thami (2012) asserts that democratic leadership style positively influences students' discipline. Students like teachers who are friendly and easy to talk to and who encourage them to express their feelings frankly. This researcher examined influence of democratic leadership styles on discipline as a general aspect of the school. This study seeks to examine truancy, a specific aspect of discipline in schools and that greatly affects performance.

Kibet, Kindiki, Sang' and Kitilit (2012) in their study conducted in Koibatek found out that principals used democratic or semi-democratic approaches with both teachers and students' councils to handle various pertinent issues. They used open communication channels to pass information to the rest of the student body. This resulted in the high level of discipline reported in his study. Truancy cases

were minimal in such schools. They found a positive relationship between leadership styles used by principals and discipline of students hence the need to strengthen school leadership.

Kibiwot (2014) found out that democratic leadership style was practiced by principals who involved teachers in formulation of school policies frequently. Teachers' motivation was high in such schools. However, when heads did not implemented the decisions immediately, they negatively influenced students' discipline and de-motivated the teachers

2.3.2. Autocratic Leadership Style and Truancy in Schools

This type of leadership style centralizes power, authority and decision making (Okumbe, 2013). Autocratic principals adopt harshness which is widely detested by teachers and students alike. Principals who use strict control measures are likely to face resistance from both students and teachers and an increase in indiscipline. Students dislike harsh administrators since they make their academic records to decline tremendously (Yahya, 2010)

Kibiwot (2014) in his study found out that some principals formulated policies and made decisions without considering teachers and students. The style was not

preferred since it de-motivated teachers who in turn influenced learners' discipline negatively. Such learners were likely to engage in truancy.

Thami (2012) conducted a study in kikuyu district on influence of principals' leadership styles on learners' discipline and concluded that the style negatively influenced the discipline of students. The more the autocratic leadership style is used the poorer the student discipline.

Teachers who are not motivated to work are unable to teach effectively, making students to dislike school and not to learn well. Principals' attitude of not putting into consideration teachers' suggestions in decision making made teachers lose interest in their jobs hence negative influence on students' discipline. (Wanjiru, 2012)

Afande (2015) concludes that truancy in secondary schools is caused by factors such as bullying among students and harsh environment in schools. A negative school climate pushes students away from school.

2.3.3. *Leiszez faire* Leadership Style and Truancy in Schools

Leiszez faire is a French phrase meaning "let people do what they want". It is a type of leadership where there are very few rules, if any in the organization. The

leader is extremely tolerant with subordinates and gives them freedom to do what they want. The leader is just symbolic and does not exercise authority (Mbiti, 2007)

Principals who use this style fail to make follow up on those they have delegated tasks resulting in performance decline. They leave everything to the mercy of the teachers or partners, some of who may lack the needed skills and competence to execute the work. Schools become unproductive if their supervisor avoids exercising control. This style allows neglect and laxity among leaders. It therefore leads to very high rates of truancy. (Decastro, 2014)

Chukwuka (2013) asserts that truancy is occurs mostly when school authorities are not strict over the indiscipline of learners. He also states that negative attitude towards teaching expressed through absenteeism, laziness and indifference among teachers is another great cause of truancy. This results from principals who are *laissez faire* in their leadership.

Afande (2015) found out that causes of truancy consisted of a combination of school, home and individual factors. Among school factors, he outlined dilapidated school buildings, poor facilities, school size poor classroom

management, poor educator-learner relationship and teacher absenteeism. He concluded that these occurred in schools that had poor leaders, who only delegated their work and made no follow ups on the general running of the school.

2.3.4 Charismatic Leadership Style and Truancy in Schools

Mbiti (2007) states that charismatic leadership style is based on the faith and devotion of people to a certain leader who has shown unusual ability to lead through eloquent speeches and heroic actions for the welfare of the group. Charismatic leaders command an unchallengeable following. They are adored and loved. Charismatic leaders are in most cases authoritarian as well as democratic. They can manage this since they know the masses are fully behind them

A charismatic leader inspires subjects far beyond their self-interests. He has an extra ordinary positive effect on the followers. A charismatic leader has very high confidence, dominance and strong faith in his or her beliefs. (Okumbe, 2013)

Fullan (2001) concludes that charismatic leaders often influence their subjects negatively because they provide episodic improvement followed by frustrated or dependency. Kibiwot (2014) found out that some principals practice charismatic

style of leadership. They highly inspired their teachers. Teachers had high belief, confidence and conviction in them. Teachers were hence inspired to work with a lot of commitment which created a positive environment that attracted students to school, hence minimized cases of truancy.

Thinguri and Kituyi (2015) conducted a case study in Langalanga secondary school in Nakuru County to assess the kind of leadership exhibited by the principal. They found out that the charismatic style of leadership was so highly exhibited so that while the principal sought the optimum student performance, he did not step all over the staff, bullying them to deliver, rather was concerned about the needs of others hence acting as an effective visionary agent of change. Both students and teachers were highly motivated and found school to be attractive. This impacted positively on students' discipline and academic achievement

2.4. Summary of Literature Review

This literature review reveals that different leadership styles used by principals have different kinds of influence on discipline, performance and truancy as an aspect of discipline. Thami (2012) and Kibet (2012) agree that Principals' use of democratic style of leadership greatly enhanced discipline minimized. However Kibiwot (2014) states that principals who frequently consulted teachers and failed

to implement the decisions immediately negatively affected the discipline of the learners.

Afande (2015), Thami (2012), Kibiwot (2014) and Wanjiru (2012) all agree that use of autocratic leadership style negatively influences students' discipline. Harsh environment in schools and a negative school climate pushes students away from school. On the other hand, Chukwuka (2013) and Afande(2015) assert that truancy is mostly occurs as a result of school authorities that aren't strict on students' behavior. Leaders who only delegate their work and make no follow ups on the running of the school encourage students' truancy

Fullan (2001) asserts that charismatic leaders aren't the best since they may lead to overdependence of subordinates on the leader, which may have a negative impact on the general environment of the school when such a leader leaves. This is contrary to the findings of Kibiwot (2014); Thunguri and Kituyi (2015) who conclude that charismatic leaders highly inspire the learners and make schools attractive for them which greatly improve discipline and performance.

The literature reviewed for this study though relevant to some extent does not adequately address truancy in schools and the part that principals play in curbing

or enhancing the problem in secondary schools. This study will hence explore truancy as a discipline problem in Nakuru municipality day secondary schools in relation to principals' leadership styles.

2.5. Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by contingency theory of Fred Edward Fiedler of 1964. This theory stresses the importance of both the personality of the leader and the situation in which that leader operates. Central to this theory is concept of the situation, which is characterized by three factors: Leader member relationship deals with the general atmosphere of the group and the feelings such as trust, loyalty and confidence that the group has for its leader. Task structure is related to task clarity and the means to task accomplishment. The position power relates to the amount of rewards-punishment and authority the leader has over the member of the group.

The effectiveness of a given pattern of leader behavior depends on the demands dictated by the situation. This theory emphasizes that leaders should use different leadership styles appropriate to the needs created by different organizational situations. This theory assumes that the leader's ability to lead is dependent upon various situational factors including the style preferred by the leader, the capabilities and behaviors of followers and various other situational factors

This theory was appropriate for this study since the study concerns truancy, a discipline issue that is common in day schools and that greatly affects the general running and performance of the school (situation). Appropriate leadership styles need to be adopted by the leader in order to handle the situation, which must be properly understood by the school principal.

2.6. Conceptual Framework

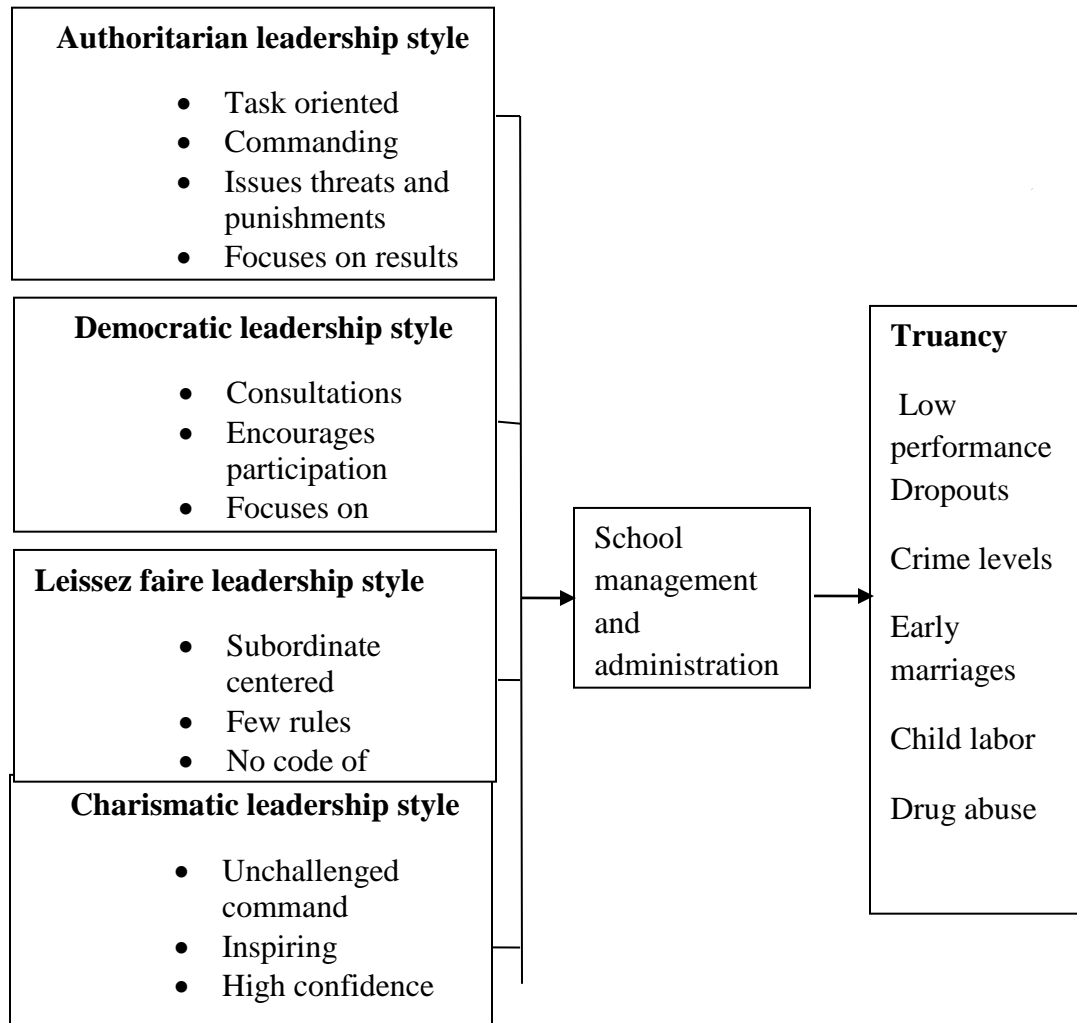


Figure 2.1 Relationship between Principals' Leadership Styles and Truancy

The independent variables which are the principals' leadership styles are manifested in the way the principals handle the staff and students and the total school climate that exists as a result of the leadership style used. Depending on the influence produced, students may end up missing classes or school altogether which has adverse negative effects on their lives as expressed in the figure above

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter's main focus was the research design, target population, sample size and sampling procedures, research instruments, validity and reliability of the instruments, data collection procedure and analysis of data.

3.2. Research Design

This study employed a descriptive survey research design. The process of a survey design entails collecting information by interviewing or administering a questionnaire to a sample of individuals (Orodho, 2003). It is concerned with existing conditions or relationships, opinions, ongoing processes and effects that are evident or trends that are developing (Kothari, 2004). The choice of the descriptive study design was based on the argument by Kothari that it obtains an in-depth description of a particular perception about a given situation, phenomena or variable and that views obtained are taken to represent those of the entire population. Further, the method was considered appropriate since it allowed for collection of qualitative data such as those aimed at measuring attitudes and opinions (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003) which this study was aimed at. This study focused on truancy in 22 public day secondary schools in the municipality. All

principals, a sample of class teachers and form four students took part in the study.

3.3. The Target Population

This refers to all the members of a real or hypothetical set of objects, people, events or items to which a researcher generalizes the results of a given study (Borg & Gall 1989). The target population of this study was 22 public day secondary schools. The target population therefore comprised of 22 principals, 240 class teachers and 2643 form four students in Nakuru municipality who were targeted based on their experience with various leadership styles as exercised by principals in their respective schools. The total target population for the study was therefore 2905 respondents.

3.4. Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) define a sample as a representative subject of the population and sampling as the process of setting aside a given number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals picked represent the group from which they are drawn. Stratified random sampling was employed by first dividing the respondents into strata to make the units within each stratum homogeneous. Random sampling was then adopted to identify class teachers and form four students who were approached to fill questionnaires. This method was

used to avoid bias as they all had equal chances of being selected to participate in the study. The following table shows the sample frame

Table 3.1 Sampling framework

Category	Number	Sample Size	Percentage
Principals	22	22	100.0
Class teachers	240	148	61.67
Form Four Students	2643	336	12.71
Total	2905	506	17.42

The sample size for class teachers and form four student was determined using the following formula of (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970).

$$S = \frac{X^2 NP (1-P)}{d^2 (N-1) + X^2 P (1-P)}$$

Where:

S = Required Sample size

X = Z value (e.g. 1.96 for 95% confidence level)

Z = The table value

N = Population Size

P = Population proportion (expressed as decimal) (assumed to be 0.5 (50%))

d = Degree of accuracy (5%), expressed as a proportion (.05); It is margin of error

i. Sample size determination for Class Teachers

$$S = \frac{(1.96)^2 * 240 * 0.5(1-0.5)}{0.05^2(240-1) + (1.96)^2 * 0.5(1-0.5)}$$
$$= 148$$

ii. Sample size determination for form four students

$$S = \frac{(1.96)^2 * 2643 * 0.5(1-0.5)}{0.05^2(2643-1) + (1.96)^2 * 0.5(1-0.5)}$$
$$= 336$$

Therefore the sample size for the study was comprised of 22 principals, 148 class teachers and 336 form four students who were randomly selected.

3.5. Research Instruments

The study used questionnaires and interviews developed by the researcher. Interview schedules were used to collect data from principals while questionnaires were used to collect data from class teachers and form four students in day secondary schools in Nakuru municipality. Interviews for the principals were used to collect data on their leadership styles and truancy in their schools. Interviews offer in-depth information since they enable the researcher to ask more questions and clarify items that may not be clear. Questionnaires were preferred for this study because they allow respondents the freedom to express their views or

opinions, feelings and also to make suggestions. Questionnaires given to class teachers were used to collect data on students' truancy and the influence of principals based on their leadership styles. Students' questionnaires were used to collect data on truancy and the kind of influence the principals have on the problem. The questionnaires had open ended items and Likert scale to allow the respondents give their opinions and suggestions.

3.5.1 Instrument Validity

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) define validity as the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences drawn from research findings. The pilot study conducted by the researcher helped to improve face and content validity. Content validity of both instruments used for the research was also ascertained through expert judgment.

3.5.2 Instrument Reliability

It is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument produces consistent results or data after being administered repeatedly (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Test retest reliability was employed to ensure that the questionnaire instrument has internal consistency. The research instruments were administered to the pilot sample respondents twice within an interval of a week after which the researcher compared the two sets for each respondent to find out the how consistent the

responses were. A correlation coefficient for the two tests was calculated using

the Pearson correlation coefficient formula.
$$r_{xy} = \frac{n\sum xy - \sum x \sum y}{\sqrt{(n\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2)(n\sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2)}}$$

$\sum x$ - sum of even scores, $\sum y$ - sum of odd scores, n-number of points x and y scores

A coefficient of 0.7 is recommended by (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Since the instrument yielded a reliability coefficient of (0.879), which was greater than 0.7, it was adopted for the study.

3.6. Data Collection Procedure

The researcher obtained a letter of permission from the University of Nairobi and later a research permit from the NACOSTI. The district commissioner was informed of the study to be carried out in the municipality. The researcher booked appointments with the sampled schools through the principals to visit and administer the questionnaires herself. The respondents were given instructions on how to fill the instruments and were assured of the confidentiality involved. They were given a span of two weeks to fill the questionnaires after which the researcher collected the filled in questionnaires.

3.7. Data Analysis Techniques

The researcher checked the filled in questionnaires for completeness. The data was edited to check for accuracy and uniformity. Descriptive statistics was used in the analysis of quantitative data obtained for purposes of generalizing the opinions of the respondents. This was done by calculating percentages and frequencies that were presented in frequency tables, charts and graphs.

Qualitative data was analyzed through qualitative analysis. The researcher coded and classified various responses, identify key responses for various themes, list and tally them by specific themes and objectives. The researcher then identified the emerging patterns from the responses and the interrelationships among them then drew inferences.

3.8. Ethical Considerations

The researcher sought permission from NACOSTI by applying for the research permit, the county director of education, school authorities and the respondents prior to carrying out the research. The respondents' identity was kept confidential and all respondents were assured of non-disclosure of any information provided. Further, the researcher assured all respondent that the information provided was only to be used for the purpose of conducting research

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The following chapter presents the findings of the study based on the questionnaires issued to the respondents and returned on time besides the interview schedule. All the 22 principals were accessed for interview. A total of 484 questionnaires were distributed among the 148 class teachers and 336 form four students. Analysis was conducted using excel spread sheets which enabled the researcher to generate findings for purposes of making valid conclusions to the study. Presentation was done using tables, charts and graphs for effective communication.

4.2 Response Rate

Among the questionnaires distributed, 139 targeting class teachers were correctly and completely filled and 306 questionnaires targeting form four students were also correctly and completely filled; hence the analysis was conducted using these questionnaires. All the 22 principals were interviewed. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) recommend a response rate of 50.0% and above is very good.

The response rate was recorded in Table 4.1

Table 4.1 Response Rate

Respondents	Sample size	Response	Percentage
Principals	22	22	100.0
Class teachers	148	139	94.0
Students	336	306	91.0
Total	506	467	92.29

The Table presents a response rate of 92.29% which is way above the 50.0% recommended by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003)

4.3 Background Information of Respondents

Background information of the principals and the schools was sought from the principals in order to understand their characteristics. This information is presented below;

4.3.1 Education Level of Principals

A total of 22 principals took part in the study. Out of these, one had a PhD, 5 had masters degrees and majority, 14, were holders of bachelors degrees. This information is presented in the Table 4.2

Table 4.2 Education background of principals

Education level	Frequency	Percent
Diploma	2	8.0
First degree	14	64.0
Masters degree	5	23.0
PhD	1	5.0
Total	22	100.0

From the Table 4.2, the education qualifications of the principals reveal that most of them had a first degree and above which shows that they were well qualified to hold those positions and therefore were expected to understand and use the most appropriate leadership styles.

4.3.2 Education Level of Class Teachers

A total of 139 class teachers gave their feedback. Out of these, 2 had a PhDs, 12 had masters degrees and majority, 110, were holders of bachelors degrees. Only 15 had diplomas. This information is presented in the Table 4.3

Table 4.3 Education background of class teachers

Education level	Frequency	Percent
Diploma	15	11.0
First degree	110	79.0
Masters degree	12	9.0
PhD	6	1.0
Total	139	100.0

The information in the Table 4.3 shows that all the teachers were qualified and had all the required skills to handle the learners and to advise the principals on appropriate leadership styles to be adopted in running the schools.

4.3.3 Principals' Working Experience

The researcher examined principals' working experience by looking at their years of service. Out of the 22 principals interviewed, 19 of them had worked for more than 6 years in the position of principal and only 3 had worked for 5 years and below as principals. This information is recorded in Table 4.4

Table 4.4 Working experience of the principals

Years of service	Frequency	Percent
Less than a year	0	0.0
1-5 years	3	14.0
6-10 years	8	36.0
Above 10 years	11	50.0
Total	22	100.0

In Table 4.4, majority of the principals (83.0%) had worked in the position of principal for more than six years hence had gained the needed experience in leadership and were expected to be effective leaders in running their schools.

4.3.4 Class Teachers' Working Experience

The researcher examined class teachers' working experience by looking at their years of service. Out of the 139 responses received, 71 of them had worked for more than 6 years, 45 had worked for between 1 and 5 years and only 23 had worked for less than a year. This information is recorded in Table 4.5

Table 4.5 Working experience of class teachers

Years of service	Frequency	Percent
Less than a year	23	17.0
1-5 years	45	32.0
6-10 years	48	34.0
Above 10 years	23	17.0
Total	139	100.0

In Table 4.5, majority of class teachers (51.0%) had worked for more than six years hence had gained the needed experience to teach and guide students in the right ways as far as discipline is concerned. They were better placed in guiding students in the importance of staying in school and leading them in achieving their goals in life.

On the part of the students, the researcher sought to understand their length of stay in their schools by asking the time they had joined their various schools. This is because the length of time a student stays in a school determines how well he/she understands the environment and the administration of the school. This information is presented in Table 4.6;

Table 4.6 Students' class of joining schools

Class joined	Frequency	Percent
Form one	188	61.0
Form two	66	22.0
Form three	40	13.0
Form four	12	4.0
Total	306	100.0

Table 4.6 indicates that majority of the students joined their various schools in form one. This implies that these students properly understood the nature of the school manager and the climate of the school which determined their behavior.

4.3.5 School Category

The categories of the schools were examined based on whether they were sub-county, county or extra-county. The data obtained showed that 17 schools out of the 22 schools studied were sub county schools. This information is recorded in Table 4.7

Table 4.7 Categories of schools in Nakuru Municipality

School category	Frequency	Percent
Sub-county	17	77.0
County	5	23.0
Extra-county	0	0.0
Total	22	100.0

Table 4.7 reveals that there is no extra-county school among the public day secondary schools in the municipality while majority are sub-county schools.

4.3.6 Gender of the School

The gender of the schools was examined to establish the distribution of the two genders in the municipality schools. It was established that none of the day schools was purely boys' school, only one was a girls' school and the rest were mixed schools. This is presented in Table 4.8

Table 4.8 Gender of schools in Nakuru Municipality

Gender of school	Frequency	Percent
Mixed	21	95.0
Boys only	0	0.0
Girls only	1	5.0
Total	22	100.0

Table 4.8 shows that almost all of the day secondary schools in the municipality were discovered to be mixed schools. There was no pure boys' school in the municipality.

4.4 The Concept of Truancy in Schools

The researcher conducted interviews for the various principals regarding the variables under study. First and foremost, majority of the principals admitted that regular school attendance is an important factor in schools' success and the success of students in their educational pursuits. In this case, it was agreed upon by the various principals that truancy could mean absence of the learner from school without the knowledge and consent of parents or teachers. These findings were consistent with the findings of (Kanga, 2015) on truancy.

Majority of the principals reported that they had cases of truancy in their schools. On factors which could have contributed to truancy, it was largely reported that factors such as inability to cope with academic pressure, dislike for the school environment and administration techniques used by the school leadership caused truancy among learners. In addition, some principals reported that truancy was also caused by lack of school fees, sickness, school based reasons and problems related to family background.

4.5 Leadership Styles and Truancy

Principals' opinions were sought on the leadership styles they preferred. Their opinions were varied as expressed in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9 Leadership styles used by principals

Leadership style	Frequency	Percent
Autocratic style	5	23.0
Democratic style	8	36.0
Laissez Faire style	3	14.0
Charismatic style	6	27.0
Total	22	100.0

Table 4.9 indicated that majority 36.0% of principals would prefer democratic leadership style. The arguments behind democratic leadership style were that it

allows for consultation among key stakeholders on key school administration decisions. As a result, it was established that democratic leadership style positively influenced students, discipline as it encouraged the learners to express their feelings freely a view shared by (Thami, 2012) who found out that democratic leadership style enhanced discipline among learners. Principals also reported that in cases where democratic leadership style was applied; pertinent issues were amicably resolved thereby enhancing discipline among learners and minimizing the truancy cases. Consequently, a considerable percentage (27.0%) of the principals reported their preference towards charismatic leadership style. They argued that the leadership style made decision making easier and faster and created a positive working environment. These findings are agree with the findings of Kibiwot (2014).

The principals’ opinion was also sought on influence of leadership styles on truancy in schools. Their responses were recorded in Table 4.10

Table 4.10 Principals response on influence of leadership styles on truancy

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	21	97.0
No	1	3.0
Total	22	100

Table 4.10 indicated that majority (97.0%) of the principals agreed that leadership styles used by school principals influenced truancy among learners. Various reasons were provided for this argument for example, it was established that the various leadership styles employed by school administrators could either improve discipline or undermine discipline of learners. The principal is the overall manager of a school and therefore his behavior and manner of leadership automatically had an effect on the learners' discipline.

Class teachers were asked to rate the average attendance rates of their classes on a scale of excellent, good, fair and poor. The findings were presented in Table 4.11

Table 4.11 Teachers response on class attendance

Class attendance	Frequency	Percent
Excellent	23	17.0
Good	46	33.0
Fair	37	26.0
Poor	33	24.0
Total	139	100.0

According to Table 4.11, majority 33.0% of the teachers reported that the attendance among students was rated to be good. However, 50.0% of the teachers rated the attendance to be good and excellent while the other 50.0% rated it fair

and poor. These findings indicated that cases of absenteeism were experienced in the various schools under study despite the good attendance reported by most of the respondents.

Teachers were also asked if they had students who intentionally stayed away from school without permission and legitimate reasons. This information is presented in Table 4.12

Table 4.12 Teachers’ response on students’ failure to attend classes without permission and legitimate reasons

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	106	76.0
No	33	24.0
Total	139	100.0

According to Table 4.12, majority of the class teachers reported that occasionally students would fail to attend classes without legitimate reasons. This therefore implies that truancy was experienced in the schools since a good number of teachers admitted having absences without permission and legitimate reasons.

Students were asked to state if there were occasions when they failed to attend school without their teachers' knowledge and parents' consent. 232 of the 306 responses received admitted having intentionally stayed away from school without permission. These findings were recorded in Table 4.13

Table 4.13 Students' response on absenteeism without teachers' or parents' consent

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	232	76.0
No	74	24.0
Total	306	100.0

Table 4.13 reveals that majority (76.0%) of students reported to have engaged in truancy. This implied that either the school authorities were not strict to ensure that students regularly attended school or the school environment was too harsh to keep them in school. It could also imply that parents were not strict on their children and did not follow up on their school attendance.

Students were further asked to state the frequency with which they engaged in truancy. They gave the responses recorded in Table 4.14:

Table 4.14 Students’ response on frequency of truancy in secondary day schools in Nakuru Municipality

Response	Frequency	Percent
Very often	51	17.0
Often	204	66.0
Rarely	51	17.0
Total	306	100.0

Table 4.14 reveals that majority (66.0%) reported that they often engaged in truancy. This implied that there was a poor trend in the day secondary schools in the municipality which could be related to the poor performance in most of the schools studied. This trend is against the requirements stated in the basic education act no 14 of 2013 which demands regular attendance of all learners undertaking basic education.

4.6 Influence of Democratic Leadership Style on Truancy

The first objective sought to determine the influence of democratic leadership style on truancy. The respondents were class teachers and form four students. The teachers were asked to rate the extent to which democratic leadership style influenced truancy in schools. Their responses were recorded in Table 4.15

Table 4.15 Teachers' Response on Democratic Leadership Style and Truancy

(1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=uncertain, 4=disagree, 5=strongly disagree)

(values in %)

Variable	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Principals who Listen to teachers and students opinions influence truancy	0.0	16.0	3.0	41.0	40.0
Principals who are have a close relationship with teachers and students influence truancy	0.0	8.0	0.0	34.0	58.0
Making follow-ups when necessary influences truancy	0.0	0.0	0.0	55.0	45.0
Allowing teachers and students to participate in decision making influences truancy	0.0	4.0	2.0	48.0	46.0
Democratic leadership style enhance discipline among learners	64.0	30.0	0.0	6.0	0.0
Democratic leadership style has been used to curb truancy	38.0	56.0	4.0	2.0	0.0

N=139

The findings in Table 4.15 show that majorities (81.0%) of teachers were of the opinion that principals who had time to listen to both the teachers' and the students' opinions built a positive school environment that attracted students to

school and did not influence truancy among learners. These findings are consistent with the findings of (Kibiwot, 2014) who found out that democratic leadership style was practiced by principals who involved teachers and students in formulation of school policies frequently and that these teachers positively influenced the discipline of the learners and made school attractive for the learners.

The teachers were asked to rate how the relationship of their principals with students and teachers influenced truancy. 92.0% of the teachers disagreed that leaders who had a close relationship with the teachers influenced truancy among learners. This implies that a school where the leader was friendly had a positive climate that encouraged students to regularly attend school.

All the teachers disagreed that a leader who makes follow ups when necessary would cause truancy among learners. Such a leader gives his subjects the autonomy to carry on their duties as required and only comes in when needed. It was reported that most teachers and students preferred such an environment. It encouraged students to stay in school and avoid cases of truancy

The findings also showed that allowing teachers and students to participate in decision making in the school encouraged students to attend school regularly. It is easier for people to own decisions when they are involved. Currently, the boards of management in secondary schools have the provision for a student representative as required by the basic education act no 14 of 2013. The student is expected to take the views of the student body to the board of management which makes crucial decisions for schools. This is a way of involving students in decision making, which creates a positive environment in school and aids in keeping students in school.

It was agreed by 94.0% of the teachers and a further 94.0% that democratic leadership style enhanced discipline in school and had been used to curb truancy in schools respectively. These findings are consistent with the view of (Mbiti, 2007) who asserts that schools with leaders who practice democratic leadership style experience very few cases of truancy.

The researcher sought students' views on the kind of influence democratic leadership style had on truancy. Their responses were recorded in Table 4.16:

Table 4.16 Students' Response on Democratic Leadership Style and Truancy
(1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=uncertain, 4=disagree, 5=strongly disagree)
(values in %)

Variable	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Listens to teachers' and students' opinions which influences truancy	0.0	8.0	14.0	42.0	36.0
Close to teachers and students thereby influencing truancy	0.0	23.0	16.0	33.0	28.0
Makes follow-ups when necessary which controls illegitimate absences	41.0	24.0	9.0	13.0	13.0
Allows students to participate in decision making and aids in curbing truancy	18.0	42.0	8.0	23.0	9.0

N=306

Table 4.16 revealed that majority 78.0% of the students disagreed that leaders who listened to their opinions made them to stay away from school. Instead, such a leader greatly motivated them to attend school regularly. In addition students reported that leaders who were close to them created a good learning atmosphere which encouraged regular school attendance. This was shown by the (61.0%) of

the students who disagreed that leaders who had a close relationship with them kept them away from school.

Further, majority (65.0%) of the students strongly agreed and agreed that making follow ups on their well being when necessary reduced illegitimate absences. 60.0% of the students indicated that being involved in decision making enabled them to easily own up the decisions that are made by school authorities and to obey them. Their morale to attend school was high since they felt valued as important stakeholders of their schools. Involving students in decision making ensures that the students' needs are fully addressed and that their voices are heard, which greatly curbs truancy among them

4.7 Influence of Autocratic Leadership Style on Truancy

The second objective sought to find out the influence of autocratic leadership style on truancy. The respondents were class teachers and form four students. The teachers were asked to rate the extent to which autocratic leadership style influenced truancy in schools. Their responses were recorded in Table 4.17

Table 4.17 Teachers' Response on Autocratic Leadership style and Truancy

(1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=uncertain, 4=disagree, 5=strongly disagree)

(values in %)

Variable		Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Principals associated with harshness influence truancy		33.0	41.0	2.0	19.0	5.0
Distant leaders influence truancy		28.0	54.0	0.0	18.0	0.0
Lack of concern for teachers' and students' feelings causes resistance from both teachers and students		19.0	61.0	5.0	15.0	0.0
Making decisions without involving teachers and students influences truancy		53.0	41.0	0.0	6.0	0.0

N=139

From the findings recorded in the Table, 74.0% of the respondents indicated that harsh leaders were likely to experience cases of student truancy. Yahya (2010) asserted that autocratic principals adopted harshness which was widely detested by teachers and students alike. They faced resistance and increase in the number of indiscipline cases. Students hated harsh administrators who made the school climate unfriendly hence keeping them away from school.

The study sought information on the influence distant leaders had on student truancy. It was established by 82.0% of the respondents that a principal who kept a distant relationship with both students was likely to experience truancy among learners. Such a leader would rarely understand the learners' needs and behavior.

The respondents (80.0%) also reported that leaders who did not show concern for the feelings of the students were likely to experience cases of truancy

Majority of the teachers (94.0%) also reported that leaders who mostly made decisions concerning teachers and students without consulting them were likely to have truancy among their students. It was hard for students to own decisions they did not take part in making. Such principals face resistance from both teachers and students and report high cases of truancy among their learners.

The researcher also sought students' opinions in reference to the influence of autocratic leadership style on truancy. Their responses were recorded in Table 4.18

Table 4.18 Students Response on Autocratic Leadership and Truancy
(1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=uncertain, 4=disagree, 5=strongly disagree)
(values in %)

Variable	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Harshness created unfavorable learning environment	0.0	53.0	7.0	25.0	15.0
Distant relationship from students influenced truancy	46.0	48.0	2.0	4.0	0.0
Lack of concern about students' feelings influences truancy	23.0	71.0	0.0	6.0	0.0
Making decisions without consultations influenced truancy	18.0	25.0	31.0	23.0	3.0

N=306

According to table 4.18, the findings revealed that from the students' perspective, autocratic leaders were harsh which created unfavorable learning environment and thus led to increased cases of truancy as reported by majority 53.0% of the students. Students fear staying in schools where punishments are the order of the

day and their views are not taken into consideration. Part IV 36(1) of the basic education act no 14 of 2013 prohibits physical punishment and mental harassment to the child. These are aspects that are related with harshness and may keep students away from school. Majority of the students also reported that leaders who were quite distant from them did not effectively monitor cases of truancy among learners. 43.0% of the students reported that leaders who made decisions without involving students were likely to have cases of truancy.

4.8 Influence of Laissez Faire Leadership Style on Truancy

The third objective sought to find out the influence of laissez faire leadership style on truancy. The respondents were class teachers and form four students. The teachers were asked to rate the extent to which laissez faire leadership style influenced truancy in schools. Their responses were recorded in Table 4.19.

Table 4.19 Teachers' Response on Laissez Leadership Style and Truancy

(1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=uncertain, 4=disagree, 5=strongly disagree)

(values in %)

Variable	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
An absentee leader influences truancy	26.0	55.0	2.0	12.0	5.0
A leader that delegates most of his work influences truancy	61.0	34.0	0.0	5.0	0.0
Very lenient principals influence truancy	48.0	42.0	0.0	10.0	0.0

N=139

According to table 4.19, majority 81.0% of the teachers agreed that an absentee leader influenced truancy. Further, 95.0% reported that a leader who delegates most of his work was likely to have cases of truancy among the learners. An absentee leader is one who does not attend to his place of work as often as he/she should. In fact, the principal, being the manager of the school should always be present at work unless he is away on official duty. He is supposed to be the role model of both learners and teachers and monitor the day to day activities of the subjects. A principal who does not fully take up responsibility by being an absentee and delegating most of his work may have negative influence on

teachers and learners who may also fail to do their assigned responsibilities. This therefore may lead to high rates of truancy among students. These findings agree with the findings of (Decastro, 2014) who established that schools became unproductive when leaders avoided exercising control. Such leaders delegated their work and failed to follow up on the same. They appeared to neglect their work, an aspect that negatively affected students' school attendance.

It was established that very lenient leaders failed to control their subjects and negatively influenced students' discipline. This style of leadership was found to greatly promote truancy among learners due to lack of strict school procedures and leaders who are habitually absent and are never committed to their work of management. This was recorded by 90.0% of the teachers. These findings are consistent with the findings of (Chukwuka 2013) who asserted that truancy is mostly caused when school authorities are not strict over the misbehaviors of learners.

The researcher also sought students' opinions in reference to the influence of laissez faire leadership style on truancy. Their responses were recorded in Table 4.20

Table 4.20 Students Response on Laissez Faire Leadership Style and Truancy (1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=uncertain, 4=disagree, 5=strongly disagree) (values in %)

Variable	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
An absentee leader influences truancy	28.0	48.0	7.0	17.0	0.0
Principals who delegates most of his work influences truancy	41.0	43.0	0.0	16.0	0.0
Very lenient principals give room for absenteeism	0.0	58.0	0.0	7.0	35.0

N=306

Table 4.20 showed that 76.0% of the students felt that absentee administrators led to increase in cases of truancy. Such leaders were poor role models since they gave students the chance to behave as they would whenever they proved to be absentees. It was also established as reported by majority 84.0% of the student that leaders who delegated their work most of the time and did not make follow ups allowed students to avoid school. Students were fully aware of leaders who always delegated their work to other teachers. They knew that such leaders were not committed to their work and therefore took the chance to stay away from school fully aware that nothing much could be done to them

Moreover leaders who were very lenient with students and teachers gave room for absenteeism on the part of both teachers and students. These findings were evidenced by majority 58.0% of the students who agreed on the matter compared to 35.0% who strongly disagreed that Laissez Faire leaders would give room for absenteeism.

4.9 Influence of Charismatic Leadership Style on Truancy

The forth objective sought to find out the influence of charismatic leadership style on truancy. The respondents were class teachers and form four students. The class teachers were asked to give their opinions on the extent to which charismatic leadership style influenced truancy in schools. Their responses were recorded in Table 4.21

Table 4.21 Teachers' Response on Charismatic Leadership Style and Truancy (1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=uncertain, 4=disagree, 5=strongly disagree) (values in %)

Variable	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Inspiring leaders influenced truancy	0.0	7.0	14.0	42.0	37.0
Leaders who greatly motivates teachers and students may influence truancy	0.0	6.0	0.0	51.0	43.0
A leader who is seen as a role model may influence truancy	10.0	24.0	0.0	34.0	25.0

N=139

According to Table 4.21, majority of the teachers (79.0%) reported that leaders who inspired teachers and students did not influence truancy among learners. Such a leader had a close and cordial relationship with his/her subjects and totally understood them thereby guiding them in the best way possible. This created a positive school environment that attracted students to school, limiting cases of truancy

It was also revealed that leaders who greatly motivated teachers and students contributed in curbing truancy as reported by 51.0% and 43.0% of the teachers

who agreed and strongly agreed on the matter respectively. This implies that such a leader identified and rewarded good work. Motivation plays a big role in boosting ones morale and spirit to work more and better. It aids in creating a healthy and positive working environment hence reducing the rates of truancy among learners

59.0% of the teachers disagreed to the fact that leaders who were seen as role models by their subjects could influence truancy among the learners. Being a role model implied that such leaders had admirable character that attracted people and encouraged them to work with such leaders. Such leaders therefore fostered a good relationship with the learners who in turn got attracted to the friendly school environment created by a leader that could be emulated. Okumbe (2013) asserted that a charismatic leader had an extra ordinary effect on the followers. He/she had high confidence, dominance and strong convictions in his or her beliefs

The researcher also sought students' opinions in reference to the influence of charismatic leadership style on truancy. Their responses were recorded in Table 4.22

Table 4.22 Students Response on Charismatic Leadership Style and Truancy
(1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=uncertain, 4=disagree, 5=strongly disagree)
(values in %)

Variable	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Inspiring leaders influenced truancy	0.0	16.0	3.0	41.0	40.0
Leaders who greatly motivates teachers and students may influence truancy	0.0	8.0	0.0	34.0	58.0
A leader who is seen as a role model may influence truancy	0.0	0.0	0.0	55.0	45.0

N=306

Table 4.22 showed that majority 81.0% disagreed to the fact that leaders who inspired their subjects would influence truancy among learners. This means that such leaders took their time to talk to students and always cared for the students' needs and feelings. These findings are consistent with the findings of Kibiwot (2014) who found out that charismatic leaders highly inspired teachers to work with a lot of commitment which created a positive environment that attracted students to school thereby curbing truancy.

Leaders who greatly motivated students encouraged them to stay in school thereby curbing illegitimate absences. This is evidenced by (92.0%) of the respondents who disagreed that great motivators kept students away from school. All the students indicated that leaders who acted as their role models encouraged them to regularly attend school. Students showed a great liking for charismatic principals since they lead by example. They make the school environment friendly and conducive for the learners thereby curbing truancy.

4.10 Principals' View on Curbing Truancy

Principals were categorical on the way forward towards curbing truancy among learners. Majority reported that curbing truancy is a collective responsibility among the various stakeholders in the education sector. They called upon the parents to play their roles in curbing truancy by actively participating in instilling discipline among their children through parental guidance. Further, it was reported that school administrators and teachers should embrace democracy and inclusivity in decision making to avert cases of rebellion among learners and instead create conducive learning environment. It was also reported that punitive measures should be put in place to caution the learners against engaging in unnecessary truancy. Part IV 40 (1) of the basic education act no 14 of 2013 states that where a pupil fails to attend school, the head teacher shall investigate the circumstances of the child's absence from school and should work with

parents to ensure children attend school. Part IV 35 (1) further states that pupils shall be given appropriate incentives to learn and complete basic education. All these are to be ensured by the leader of the school.

The constitution of Kenya of 2010 states that education is a human right and that every child of school going age should be allowed access to quality education. A truant cannot access that quality education until he/she regularly attends school. This task should be properly carried out by the school principals based on their management techniques.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary, conclusions and recommendations on findings with respect to the influence of leadership styles on truancy in public secondary day schools in Nakuru Municipality.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of principals' leadership style on student truancy in public day secondary schools in Nakuru Municipality. The study sought to determine the influence of democratic, autocratic, laissez faire and charismatic leadership styles on truancy in the schools selected for the study. Data was collected using interviews from 22 principals and questionnaires from 148 class teachers and 336 form four students in the municipality. The study adopted a descriptive survey design.

The literature reviewed for this study laid the background for the study. It focused on truancy and its effects and the influence of various leadership styles on student truancy and gave a summary of the reviewed literature and the conceptual framework. The research was based on Fred Edward Fielder's contingency theory of 1964.

The raw data was coded into themes and concepts and analyzed using descriptive statistics. Microsoft excel was used for data analysis. Data was presented in frequency tables. The findings enabled the researcher to establish the recommendations of the study. The findings are summarized according to the objectives.

5.2.1 Influence of Democratic Leadership Style on Truancy

The research findings showed that majority 38.0% of principals would prefer democratic leadership style. It was also established that democratic leadership style would curb truancy in schools within Nakuru Municipality. This is shown by the findings in which majority of the respondents (81.0%) indicated that a leader who had time to listen to his subjects helped in reducing truancy. 92.0% indicated that a close relationship with the subjects reduced truancy, 100.0% said necessary follow ups by the leader kept students in school while 94.0% reported that involving teachers and students in decision making helped to keep students in school. It was hence concluded that this style of leadership greatly helped to attract students to school since it created a friendly environment for them.

5.2.2 Influence of Autocratic Leadership Style on Truancy

A number of the principals, 25.0% reported preference to autocratic leadership style. It was reported by 74.0% of the respondents that in cases where autocratic leadership style was used, there was likelihood that the schools environment

would be harsh thereby causing truancy cases. 94.0% of the respondents indicated that a leader who kept a distant relationship with his subjects would likely experience student truancy, 80.0% reported that lack of concern for the wellbeing of the students would create an unfriendly environment for students while 94.0% stated that a leader who made decisions alone without involving the subjects was likely to have cases of student truancy. It was therefore evident that autocratic leaders made the school climate unfavorable for learners and therefore made some of them to avoid school.

5.2.3 Influence of Laissez Faire Leadership Style on Truancy

Study findings revealed that 11.0% of the principals preferred Laissez Faire leadership style. It was established that majority of the respondents agreed that an absentee leader negatively influenced his subjects, especially the students who would definitely emulate their leader. 95.0% of the respondents indicated that leaders who always delegated their work to juniors lacked authority and failed to carry out their responsibilities and that this had an effect on student attendance since they did not feel the presence of the leader. 90.0% further established that such leaders were very lenient in dealing with teachers and students, which made them, take things lightly. This leadership style was associated with the highest rates of truancy.

5.2.4 Influence of Charismatic Leadership Style on Truancy

The findings showed that 27.0% of the principals would prefer charismatic leadership style. Majority of the respondents (81.0%) indicated that leaders who inspired teachers and the students created a positive school climate that attracted students to school. Greatly motivating teachers and students was seen as an aspect that gave students morale to attend school regularly. 100.0% of the students indicated that a leader who acted as their role model motivated them to attend school. This style was therefore found to be effective in curbing truancy in day secondary schools in Nakuru Municipality.

5.3 Conclusions

The findings led to the conclusion that regular school attendance is an important factor in schools success and the success of school students in their educational pursuits. In this case, the research concludes that truancy could mean absence from school on the part of learners without the knowledge and consent of parents or teachers. It was also concluded that truancy was caused by factors such as inability to cope with academic pressure, dislike for the school environment caused administration techniques used by school leadership, lack of school fees, sickness, problems related to family background, an opinion asserted by the findings of (Ishak& Suet, 2015).

The widely preferred leadership styles by the respective school principals were democratic leadership style, autocratic and charismatic leadership styles. Leadership style used influenced truancy among learners. In cases where democratic and charismatic leadership styles were used, there was a positive school climate that would improve discipline among students thereby reducing cases of truancy with respect to a conducive learning environment.

In cases where autocratic leadership style was used, there was likelihood that the schools environment would be harsh and unfavorable to the learners thereby causing truancy cases. Laissez faire leadership style was also reported to be a poor style used by principals since it was characterized by lack of authority and failure to carry out responsibilities as was required on the part of the leader. This style gave students room to behave as they pleased hence increasing truancy cases among students.

On ways of curbing truancy, the study concluded that curbing truancy is a collective responsibility among the various stakeholders in the education sector. This would include parents and teachers playing roles effectively in following up students' progress and behavior in school and encouraging students to regularly attend school, thereby managing truancy among students.

This study concludes that no single leadership style can be used alone if excellent results have to be achieved in schools. Different situations may call for different ways of approaching them. Thus leaders should properly understand leadership styles, their advantages and disadvantages and situations in which a particular style may be used for best results.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study laid down the following recommendations:

- i. The principals in Nakuru Municipality should organize exchange programmes to help them understand the most appropriate leadership styles to be used in public day secondary schools
- ii. Principals in the municipality should attend more in-service programmes to learn management and the pros and cons of using each leadership style so that they can adopt the most appropriate styles based on the circumstances in their schools.
- iii. The county education officials should conduct routine visits in public day secondary schools in Nakuru Municipality in order to establish the factors in school leadership that keep students away from school

5.5 Suggestions for Further Study

Given the findings and conclusions drawn from the undertaken research project, it is apparent that there are school based and home based factors and factors related to the manager influencing truancy among students in public day secondary schools in Nakuru Municipality.

- i. A study to be undertaken in the county in private secondary schools to
establish the factors influencing truancy
- ii. A study to be carried out in other counties, especially rural areas to
determine factors influencing truancy in public day secondary schools.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Letter of Introduction

University of Nairobi
Department of Educational Administration and Planning
P. O. Box 92
Kikuyu
18/02/2016

Dear Sir/Madam

REF: REQUEST TO COLLECT DATA

I am a post-graduate student at the College of Education and External Studies, University of Nairobi. I intend to carry out a study on **influence of principals' leadership styles on student truancy in public day secondary schools in Nakuru municipality**. Your school has been sampled to participate in the study.

I hereby request you to fill the attached questionnaire as honestly as possible. The information you will provide will only be used for the purpose of my academic research. Do not write your name or the name of your school anywhere in this questionnaire for confidentiality purposes. Thank you

Yours faithfully

Vincentia Wanyonyi

Appendix II: Interview Guide for Principals

This interview guide is designed to collect information about your school in the study of influence of principals' leadership styles on student truancy in public day secondary schools in Nakuru municipality. Please respond to the questions frankly and honestly. The responses given will be treated with confidentiality.

SECTION A: General information

1. What is your highest level of education?
2. For how long have you served in your current station as a principal?
3. In which category does your school fall?
4. Which is the gender of your school?

SECTION B: Influence of leadership styles on truancy

5. Do you experience cases of truancy in your school?
6. In your opinion, what do you think are the factors contributing to truancy?
7. There are various leadership styles used by principals in management.
Which one do you prefer?
What reasons do you have for your preference?
8. Do you think leadership styles used by principals influence truancy among learners? Please explain
9. What do you think should be done to curb truancy among learners, especially in day secondary schools in this region schools?

Appendix III: Teachers' Questionnaire

This questionnaire is designed to collect information about your school in the study of influence of principals' leadership styles on student truancy in public day secondary schools in Nakuru municipality. Please respond to the questions frankly and honestly. The responses given will be treated with confidentiality hence do not write your name or the name of your school anywhere in the questionnaire.

Section A: General information

1. Indicate your level of education. **(a)** Diploma [] **(b)** first degree [] **(c)** masters degree [] **(d)** PhD []
2. For how long have you served in your current station as a class teacher?
(a) Less than a year [] **(b)** 1-5 [] **(c)** 6-10 [] **(d)** Above 10 years []
3. How would you rate the attendance of students your class?
(a) Excellent [] **(b)** Good [] **(c)** Fair [] **(d)** Poor []
4. Are there times when your students fail to attend classes/school without legitimate reasons? **(a)** Yes [] **(b)** No []

Section B: Influence of democratic leadership style on truancy

5. Below are statements related to factors in democratic leadership style influencing truancy among students. To what extent do you agree? **Tick**

appropriately: Key 1-Strongly agree-SA, 2-agree-A, 3-Uncertain-U, 4-Disagree-D, 5-Strongly disagree-SD

No	Item	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	A leader who Listens to teachers and students opinions influence truancy					
2	Being close to teachers and students may influence truancy					
3	Making follow ups when necessary may influence truancy					
4	Allowing teachers and students to participate in decision making may influence truancy					

Section C: Influence of autocratic leadership style on truancy

6. These are statements related to factors in autocratic leadership style influencing truancy among students. To what extent do you agree? **Tick appropriately: Key 1-Strongly agree-SA, 2-agree-A, 3-Uncertain-U, 4-Disagree-D, 5-Strongly disagree-SD**

No	Item	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	A Harsh leader may bar regular attendance of learners					
2	A distant leader pushes students away from school					
3	A leader who doesn't show concern for students feelings may influence truancy					
4	A leader who make decisions without consulting teachers and students influence truancy					

Section D: Influence of laissez faire leadership style on truancy

7. These statements are related to factors in laissez faire leadership style influencing truancy among students. To what extent do you agree? **Tick appropriately: Key 1-Strongly agree-SA, 2-agree-A, 3-Uncertain-U, 4-Disagree-D, 5-Strongly disagree-SD**

NO	Item	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	An absentee leader may negatively influence learners' attendance					
2	A leader who delegates most of his work influences student truancy					
3	A leader who is very lenient with learners negatively attends their attendance to school					

Section E: Influence of charismatic leadership style on truancy

8. These are statements related to factors in charismatic leadership style influencing truancy among students. To what extent do you agree? **Tick appropriately: Key 1-Strongly agree-SA, 2-agree-A, 3-Uncertain-U, 4-Disagree-D, 5-Strongly disagree-SD**

NO	Item	SA	A	U	D	SD
12	An inspiring leader keeps students away from school					
13	Greatly motivating teachers and students may keep students away from school					
14	A leader who is a role model may influence student truancy					

Appendix IV: Questionnaire for Students

This questionnaire is designed to collect information about your school in the study of influence of principals' leadership styles on student truancy in public day secondary schools in Nakuru municipality. Please respond to the questions frankly and honestly. The responses given will be treated with confidentiality hence do not write your name or the name of your school anywhere in the questionnaire. Tick as appropriate or respond in the spaces provided

Section A: General information

1. In which class did you join this school? **(a)** Form 1 [] **(b)** Form 2 []
(c) Form 3 [] **(d)** Form 4 []
2. Are there times you have been absent from school without your parents' and teachers consent? **(a)** Yes [] **(b)** No []
3. How would you rate your illegitimate absences? **(a)** Very often []
(b) Often [] **(c)** Rarely []
4. What reasons would you give for being absent from school without legitimate reasons?

Section B: Influence of democratic leadership style on truancy

5. Below are statements related to factors in democratic leadership style influencing truancy among students. To what extent do you agree? **Tick appropriately: Key 1-Strongly agree-SA, 2-agree-A, 3-Uncertain-U, 4-Disagree-D, 5-Strongly disagree-SD**

No	Item	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	A leader who Listens to teachers and students opinions influence truancy					
2	Being close to teachers and students may influence truancy					
3	Making follow ups when necessary may influence truancy					
4	Allowing teachers and students to participate in decision making may influence truancy					

Section C: Influence of autocratic leadership style on truancy

6. These are statements related to factors in autocratic leadership style influencing truancy among students. To what extent do you agree? **Tick appropriately: Key 1-Strongly agree-SA, 2-agree-A, 3-Uncertain-U, 4-Disagree-D, 5-Strongly disagree-SD**

No	Item	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	A Harsh leader may bar regular attendance of learners					
2	A distant leader pushes students away from school					
3	A leader who doesn't show concern for students feelings may influence truancy					
4	A leader who make decisions without consulting teachers and students influence truancy					

Section D: Influence of laissez faire leadership style on truancy

7. These statements are related to factors in laissez faire leadership style influencing truancy among students. To what extent do you agree? **Tick appropriately: Key 1-Strongly agree-SA, 2-agree-A, 3-Uncertain-U, 4-Disagree-D, 5-Strongly disagree-SD**

NO	Item	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	An absentee leader may negatively influence learners' attendance					
2	A leader who delegates most of his work influences student truancy					
3	A leader who is very lenient with learners negatively attends their attendance to school					

Section E: Influence of charismatic leadership style on truancy

8. These are statements related to factors in charismatic leadership style influencing truancy among students. To what extent do you agree? **Tick appropriately: Key 1-Strongly agree-SA, 2-agree-A, 3-Uncertain-U, 4-Disagree-D, 5-Strongly disagree-SD**

NO	Item	SA	A	U	D	SD
12	An inspiring leader keeps students away from school					
13	Greatly motivating teachers and students may keep students away from school					
14	A leader who is a role model may influence student truancy					

Appendix V: Students' Suspension, Expulsion, Dropout and Attendance Rates for 2015 as a Result of Truancy

S/N	SCHOOL	SUSPENSION RATES	EXPULSION RATES	DROPOUT RATES	ATTENDANCE RATES (%)
1	Langalanga	30	5	8	72
2	Nakuru Day	35	6	12	75
3	Lanet Sec	56	7	5	70
4	Afraha High	24	5	13	68
5	Hillcrest	10	4	8	71
6	St Mary's Girls	5	2	4	65
7	Moi Sec	32	6	10	66
8	Flamingo Sec	21	5	19	70
9	Tumaini	12	5	5	69
10	Nairobi Road	54	9	17	60
11	Nakuru West	45	5	7	64
12	Upper Hill	44	4	16	60
13	Crater View	17	3	4	76
14	Mogoon	22	8	3	70
15	Kenyatta Sec	40	6	14	68
16	Uhuru High	33	7	13	64
17	Nakuru Central	23	3	7	67
18	K Elelwet	21	3	7	62
19	Ngala Sec	0	0	2	80
20	Mwariki Sec	9	0	7	66
21	Rhino	12	3	8	69
22.	Natewa	41	4	14	65

Appendix VI: Authorization Letter



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NACOSTI/P/16/53909/13758

29th August, 2016

Vincentia Nekesa Wanyonyi
University of Nairobi
P.O. Box 30197-00100
NAIROBI.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on *“Influence of principals leadership styles on student truancy in public day secondary schools in Nakuru Municipality Kenya,”* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Nakuru County** for the period ending **29th August, 2017.**

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

**GODFREY P. KALERWA MSc., MBA, MKIM
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO**

Copy to:


The County Commissioner
Nakuru County.

The County Director of Education
Nakuru County.

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

Appendix VII: Research Permit

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT: **Permit No : NACOSTI/P/16/53909/13758**
MISS. VINCENTIA NEKESA WANYONYI **Date Of Issue : 29th August,2016**
of THE UNIVERSITY OF **Fee Received :Ksh 1000**
NAIROBI-COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND
EXTERNAL STUDIES, 0-20100
nakuru,has been permitted to conduct
research in Nakuru County
on the topic: INFLUENCE OF
PRINCIPALS LEADERSHIP STYLES ON
STUDENT TRUANCY IN PUBLIC DAY
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NAKURU
MUNICIPALITY KENYA
for the period ending:
29th August,2017




.....
Applicant's
Signature


Chalema
Director General
National Commission for Science,
Technology & Innovation

CONDITIONS

1. You must report to the County Commissioner and the County Education Officer of the area before embarking on your research. Failure to do that may lead to the cancellation of your permit.
2. Government Officer will not be interviewed without prior appointment.
3. No questionnaire will be used unless it has been approved.
4. Excavation, filming and collection of biological specimens are subject to further permission from the relevant Government Ministries.
5. You are required to submit at least two(2) hard copies and one (1) soft copy of your final report.
6. The Government of Kenya reserves the right to modify the conditions of this permit including its cancellation without notice



REPUBLIC OF KENYA



**National Commission for Science
Technology and Innovation**

**RESEACH CLEARANCE
PERMIT**

Serial No. **11498**

CONDITIONS: see back page