INFLUENCE OF PRINCIPAL'S LEADERSHIP STYLE ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN IMENTI NORTH SUB-COUNTY, MERU COUNTY, KENYA

Nicholasia Kaari Muchiri

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DECLARATION

I declare that this document and the research it describes are my original work and that they have not been presented in any other university for academic work

Signed:  **Date: ___10/6/2022___**

NICHOLASIA KAARI MUCHIRI

12M02CMED015

This research has been conducted under our supervision and is submitted with our approval as University supervisors

Signed ____  **Date:** 12/06/2022

Dr. ENG. BONIFACE NJUGUNA MWANGI

Signed ___  **____** **Date __13/6/2022__**

Dr. LUCY KIRIMA

Africa Nazarene University

Nairobi, Kenya

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to God who has given me the strength, resilience and ressources throughout my study period. I also dedicate this work to my two children, Lesley Mukami and Evans Muthomi for their moral support. I further dedicate it to my late father who kept on encouraging me to further my studies before his demise and finally to my siblings who have played a major role in encouraging and walking with me every step in this journey.

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ABSTRACT

The current global upsurge towards the acquisition of quality education has created the impetus to search for the most appropriate leadership styles which school administrators/principals should adopt for effective and efficient implementation of national curriculum paving way for high educational output. The purpose of the study was to examine the influence of principal's leadership styles on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub-county in Meru County, Kenya. This was occasioned by the fact that despite the government effort of improving students' academic achievement and discipline through policies that promote studemts' participation in school management and resolution of conflicts through guidance and counselling, most of the public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub County have experienced persistent students' unrest and low academic performance. The study was anchored on the Fiedler contingency theory. The study employed descriptive survey research design. The study targeted 46 secondary school principals and 46 senior teachers. Census sampling method was used to select all the senior teachers from all the 46 secondary schools while 14 teachers were elected through simple random sampling. Data were collected through senior teachers' questionnaire and principals' interview schedule. Reliability of the questionnaire was determined through computation of chronbach alpha while content and face validity was ascertained through the two university supervisors scrutiny. Data were analysed through descriptive and inferential statistics. Qualitative data was put into themes for anaysis. However, some qualitative data were quoted verbatim in order to maintain the power of the participants' spoken words. Multiple regression analysis was used to test the three formulated hypotheses. The study found that principals' use of democratic leadership style had the greatest significant influence on students' KCSE mean score (β = 0.456, $t(45)$ = 1.972, $p < 0.05$) followed by autocratic style (β = 0.308, t = 1.308, $p < 0.05$). However, leissez-faire leadership style impacted the studnets KCSE results negatively (β = -0.106, t (45) = -0.305, p = 0.717). The study recommended that principals need to be proactive and device ways of managing students' emerging discipline and academic issues occasioned by the explosion of information technology.

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OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Academic Performance: It is defined as the outcome of education. It entails the extent to which students have achieved particular educational goals.

Autocratic style: It is a style that leaders communicate irregularly to teaching staff with limited involvement in decision-making and less delegation.

Democratic style: It is a style that leaders regularly communicate with teaching staff and to participate them in decision-making for more delegation of duties.

Leadership: It is viewed as a process whereby an individual (or group of individuals) influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. Thus, school leadership is viewed as a process whereby school leaders influence teachers, other professionals, and students to achieve the goals of the schools.

Leadership Style: This is a leader's means of providing direction, implementing plans, and motivating people.

Public Secondary School: These are secondary schools that are owned and maintained by the public in cooperation with the government and the local authority. Public secondary schools are built, financed and owned by the government and the public. In these schools, the

	government hires and pays the teachers. Participation in building and maintaining the infrastructures such as teacher's house, classrooms, Science Laboratories and Toilets are collaboratively by Public and Government.
Transformational Leadership:	It is leadership style that involves guidance through individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence. Thus, the study adopted this definition of transformational leadership.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACCRONYMS

BOM	Board of Mnagement
CEOs	Chief Executive Officers
KCSE	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
KCPE	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
MOE	Ministry of Education
NACOSTI	National Council of Science, Technology and Innovation
NERDC	National Education Research and Development Council
NGOs	Non Governmental Organization
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SPSS	Stsatistical Package of Social Sciences
TSC	Teachers Service Commission
USA	United States of America

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the general overview of the study. It covers the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, hypothesis, and significance of the study. It further provides the scope, delimitation, limitations and assumptions of the study. The chapter culminates with delineation of theoretical and conceptual framework.

1.2 Background of the Study

Worldwide there are increasing efforts to improve student learning outcomes at all levels in the education sector (Kamiti & Kathamba, 2016). This has been occasioned by the need to attain academic achievement at an individual level, family, and organization such as a school as well as at national level. For a school to perform well both in co-curricular activities and in academics, effective leadership is paramount (Igwe, Ndidiamaka & Chidi, 2017). This has led to restructuring of school governance, curriculum, teaching and learning approaches, and the roles of the school principals (Sergiovanni, 2013). Various studies posit that the students' academic performance has become an appropriate measure for an effective school management (Frederickson, 2008; Eren, 2014; Grisson, Kalogrides & Loeb, 2014). Thus, secondary school principals or head teachers struggle to improve the academic performance of the students through development of better communication with teachers, motivating students and teachers, building up students' confidence and providing them with required resources in order to meet the set academic goals (Hardman, 2018).

The principals can be effective leaders only when they are good at getting the best out of the teachers and students, and build their capacities so as to prepare them for the tough challenges against the academic performances (Andreas, 2012; Abdulmajid, Bukar & Abdullahi, 2020). According to Abdulmajid et al. (2020) the principals are directly involved in influencing the activities of the students and school towards setting goals and their attainment. In concurrence, Igiri, Effiong, Ekpo and Ogri (2019) in a study done in Nigeria, emphasize the need to provide effective leadership in all schools as a precursor to students' achievement. They further caution that effective leadership is highly dependent on the leadership style the principal employs in the school.

Leadership style is the manner and approach of providing direction, implementing plans and motivating people. Oluremi (2013) identifies three major leadership styles applied by school principals as democratic or participative, autocratic or authoritarian, and Laissez faire. Democratic leadership or shared leadership, is a type of leadership style in which members of the group take a more participative role in the decision making process. Laissez-faire leadership style also known as delegative leadership is a type of leadership style in which leaders are hands-off and allow group members to make the decisions. This style is preferred when employees are able to analyze the situation and determine what needs to be done and how to do it. Autocratic leadership style describes a situation whereby the administrator unilaterally determines all policies, functions and techniques of the school/organization. Kinyanjui and Orodho (2014) opine that an effective school leader is the one that strives to use all the three styles of leadership but where one of them is normally dominant depending on the prevailing situation. Conversely, use of

predominantly one leadership style may lead to poor leadership since each style has its inherent strengths and weaknesses.

Globally, different countries have been attempting to highlight and stress the concept of effective leadership styles in schools and other organizations. The search for the leadership style which can enhance teachers' job performance and learners' academic achievement has attracted many studies. A study carried out by Valesky (2013) in Memphis posited that a democratic leadership style produced higher test scores than an authoritarian or Laissez-faire did in secondary schools. According to Harllinger and Heck (2008), student activism in USA is associated with incompetence leadership in schools and change in the American educational management System.

In Africa, ineffective school leadership has been attributed to teachers' lack of motivation, students' unrests and low academic achievement. In Nigeria, Abdulmajid et al. (2020) found that most of the secondary school principals' exhibited autocratic style of leadership, thus, creating unconducive teaching and learning environment and resulting to dismal performance in senior school certificate examination (SSCE). In a similar study conducted by Igwe and Odike (2016) in Nigeria, most of the principals in public and missionary schools practiced autocratic, participative and paternalistic leadership styles. They however, recommended that principals should administer their schools by applying a mix of the leadership styles contingently. A study conducted by Nsubuga (2009) in Uganda asserted that the democratic or consultative form of leadership was widely used and was found to be effective in public schools in the country, as majority of the principals wanted to create ownership.

In Kenya, public secondary schools have been experiencing recurrent incidences of student unrests resulting into massive destruction of property and loss of learning time, all blamed on mainly inadequate student participation in management and high handedness by school administrations (Achieng, Kaberia & Sang, 2017; Murage, Mwaruvie & Njoka, 2017). In cognizance of the problem, the government has taken several measuressuch as banning the use of corporal punishment through the legal notice 56/2001 (Republic of Kenya, 2001) and directed teachers to use other corrective measures such as guidance and counselling and more students involvement in school management. Additionally, the Kenya Secondary Schools Students Council (KSSSC) was formed in 2009 with a view to making schools governance more participatory by including students in decision making structures in schools management (Kosgei, Sirmah & Tuei, 2017). However, despite these laudable measures, students' unrests have often recurred with very disastrous results such burning of school property and low academic performance. Subsequently, the principals' leadership styles have called attention.

Bundi (2020) observes that just like the rest of the country, Meru County has been experiencing students' unrests accompanied with wanton destruction of property through arson. Further, the Meru County schools census report of 2019 (MOE, 2019), shows that, although some schools were consistently performing well in KCSE, majority of schools and especially in Imenti North Sub County showed consistent dismal performance. For instance, KCSE result analysis (2016 to 2020) from the Meru County education Office ranked Imenti North Sub County among the worst performed Sub Counties with a mean of 4.42 against the Meru County mean of 5.0. Thus, the observed students' unrests and

dismal performance in KCSE, warranted investigation into the school leadership as provided by the principals.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Despite the government effort of improving students' academic achievement and discipline through policies that promote students' participation in school management and resolution of conflicts through guidance and counselling, most of the public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub County have experienced persistent students' unrest and low academic performance. According to Meru County schools census report of 2019 (MOE, 2019), secondary schools in Imenti North Sub-County have been experiencing incidences of unrest and declining academic performance. The schools census report further noted that the few relatively well performing schools (KCSE mean of 5.0 and above) were also experiencing violent students' grievances alleging high handedness among the school administrators. These conditions prompted the researcher to embark on the current study. Several researchers have attempted to investigate the aforementioned situation in Imenti North Sub County public secondary schools. Bundi (2020) established that peer pressure, mass media and drug abuse were some of the factors contributing to students' indiscipline and dismal academic achievement. Kilaku (2019), investigated the influence of Board of Management (BOM) practices on academic performance in public day secondary schools. Thus, although studies by Bundi (2020) and Kilaku (2019) touched on pertinent issues and which could impact on students' academic performance, they fell short of examining the role of a fundamental and overarching factor of the principals' leadership in influencing the students' academic performance. Since the principal has a key role in the school BOM as well as cultivation

of the school culture, investigation of the adopted leadership style and its influence on academic performance was considered crucial in the current study.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the influence of principals' leadership styles on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub-county in Meru County, Kenya.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

i. To find out the influence of principals' democratic leadership style on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub-County in Meru County;
ii. To examine the influence of principals' leissez faire leadership style on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub-County in Meru County;
iii. To establish the influence of principals' autocratic leadership style on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub-County in Meru County.

1.6 Hypotheses of the Study

The study was guided by the following null hypotheses

$H_{o}1$: Principals' use of democratic leadership style has no statistically significant influence on KCSE mean performance in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub-county in Meru County;

$H_{o}2$: Principals' use of laissez faire leadership style has no statistically significant influence on KCSE mean performance in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub-county in Meru County;

$H_{o}3$: Principals' use of autocratic leadership style has no statistically significant influence on KCSE mean performance in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub-county in Meru County.

1.7 Significance of the Study

The significance of the study should reflect on the extent of the contribution made by the study to improve our understanding, to change a concept or to promote a new hypothesis in a particular field of research (Maillard, 2013). Among other roles, teachers are employed to facilitate pupil's acquisition of skills, knowledge and attitude for the achievement of educational goals. Their productivity is dependent on how they are utilized. Education system in Kenya is examination oriented and the success of a teacher is determined on the performance. The study sought to demonstrate how public secondary school principals' leadership style influences the students' academic performance. The findings could therefore, assist the Ministry of Education and other policy makers to come up with policies in outlining their prefered leadership styles geared to improve student's academic performance in public secondary schools in Kenya.

The study findings could also be adopted by administrators and school managers as an assessment into their influence in the academic performance. Having this knowledge is very critical in adjusting their style of leadership to maximize the performance of the teachers, and ultimately improve the academic performance of students. Training programs are based on shortfalls in knowledge or performance identified through a needs

assessment. This study shall reveal gaps concerning the students' academic performance emanating from the principal's leadership styles. These findings could be used by the government, and development partners who have interest in improving academic performance of public secondary schools in designing training programmes relevant for school principals' leadership styles. The study findings can also be used by scholars with interest in this discipline for further studies.

1.8 Scope of the Study

The scope of the study is the geographical and methodological limits within which the study operates (Admin, 2014). The study was conducted in Imenti North Sub County, Meru County and in senior teachers and principals in public secondary schools. The study investigated the influence of principal's leadership styles on students' performance in KCSE. The study adopted descriptive survey research design as the researcher aimed at investigating how the principal dominant leadership style was associated and predicted the school KCSE mean grade.

The types of leadership styles that will be covered in this study includes democratic, intellectual stimulation style and autocratic. These variables were considered because of the researchers decision to narrow the scope due to time factor, capacity and purpose of the study. The study will also include students, teachers and school administrators only from public secondary schools in Imenti North sub-county in Meru County.

1.9 Delimitation of the Study

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) delimitation of the study refers to choices that the researcher makes for the study that are under the control of the researcher that may include: study variables and population traits. Despite the fact that there are other leadership styles this study investigated the influence of principal's use of democratic, leissez-faire and autocratic leadership styles on academic performance in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub-county. Further, despite that Meru County has nine sub-counties, this study will only cover the population of Imenti North sub-county because the area is among the poorly performing sub-counties in Meru (Muchui, 2013).

1.10 Limitations of the Study

According to Wanjohi (2014), a study limitation can be defined as anything beyond the ability of the researcher control that may affect the internal validity of the study. One of the limitation was that some of the respondents were at the rank of senior teachers in their schools and being in the school management team, might have hestated to divulge the undesirable traits of their principals while overating the positive traits and thus threatening the internal validity of this study. Likewise, the principals who took part in the study might have remained cagey to some extent due to the ongoing delocalisation of head teachers by the employing body (Teachers Service Commission) TSC. To mitigate against such tendencies, the researcher assured the respondents that there would no reprisals since the research was meant for academic purposes only and that the given information would be subject to utmost annonimity and confidentiality.

1.12 Assumptions of the Study

Simon (2011) explicates that assumptions are underlying ideologies that the researcher trusts or admits but are difficult to attest in any actual way. In other words, assumptions are realistic expectations believed to be true facts necessary for the relevance of the study as they provide the basis of the development and implementation of the research. This study was based on the assumption that though principals may be applying different leadership styles at different times and situations, the senior teachers' responses brought out the dominant leadership style that is applied in each school. It was also assumed that all the respondents had received ample training in leadership theories and practice and therefore, able to give factual information as per the questionnaire and interview schedule items.

1.13 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by the contingency theory of leadership by Fiedler (1967). Fiedler's contingency model argues that group performance or effectiveness is dependent upon the interaction of leadership style and the amount of control that the supervisor has over the situation. According to Fiedler, the situation in which a leader operates which is the first key variable can be characterized by factors such as leader-member relations which refers to the degree of confidence, trust and respect followers have for the leader; task structure whereby the degree to which the task assignments are clear to both the leader and subordinates; position power which refers to the amount of power attached to leaders position. The second variable is the leader where Fielder gives two basic leader orientations namely, relationship oriented which is more lenient and people oriented style and task oriented which is concerned with the accomplishment of tasks.

Fiedler discovered that relationship oriented leaders were more effective in facilitating group performance when the situation was moderately favorable or moderately unfavorable. On the other hand the task oriented leader was more effective in securing group performance when the situation is highly unfavorable or highly favorable.

Based on the theory by Fiedler it is evident that the choice of leadership style that can give optimum performance is contingent to the kind of environment and the situation in the work place. School principals as chief executive officers (CEOs) have the responsibility to choose leadership styles that suits the environment they are working in, one that maximizes the performance of their subordinates (teachers) and allows for proper utilization of school facilities and to give desirable results (academic performance of pupils).

The contingency theory of leadership was found appropriate for this study since principals were expected to be using the three leadership styles under study (democratic, laissez-faire and autocratic) to varied degrees depending on the prevaiving situation. However, there is always the dominant leadership style that the principal tend to adopt.

1.14 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a visual or written product, that explains either graphically or in narrative form, the key factors, concepts, or variables- and the presumed relationships among them (Miles & Huberman, 2012). Figure 1.1 shows the conceptualized relationship between the principal's leadership styles (independent variables) and students' academic performance (dependent variable).

Independent Variables

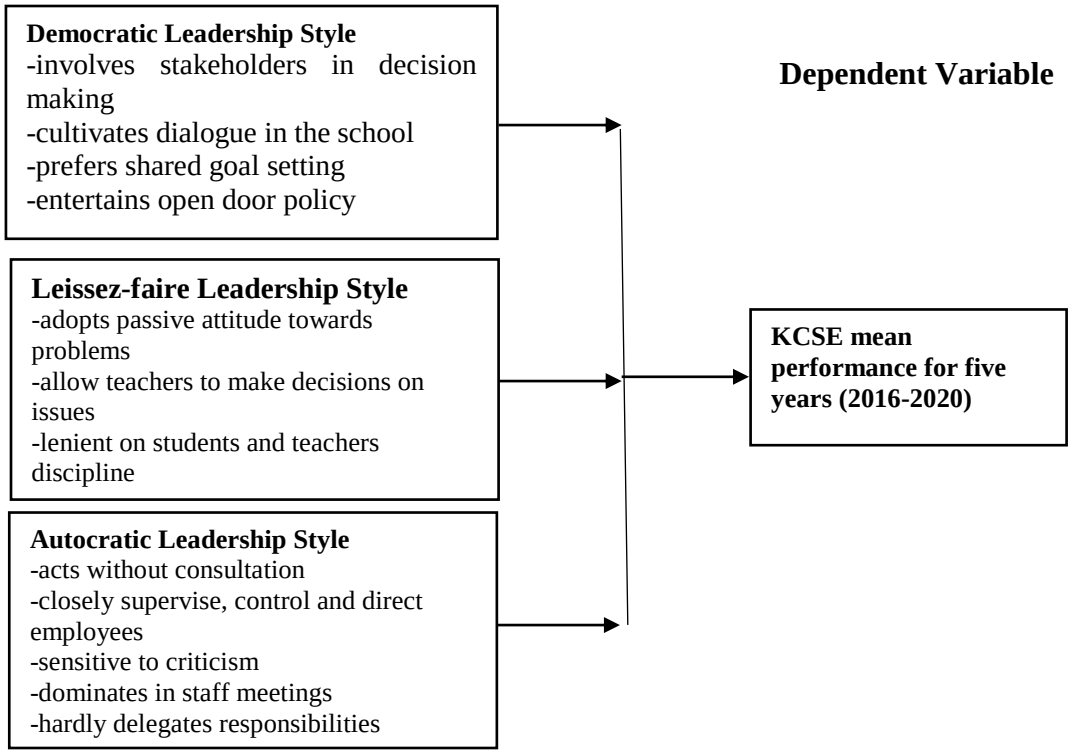


Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework showing the Interplay between Principals' Leadership Styles and Students' Academic Performance

The conceptual framework as shown in Figure 1.1 was informed by the Fiedler contingency theory. Thus, the school principals can apply any of the three leadership styles as dictated by the prevailing environment, one that maximizes the performance of their subordinates (teachers,support staff, students) and allows for proper utilization of school facilities and to give desirable results (academic performance of pupils). The appropriateness and frequency of how a principal applies a particular leadership style, finally defines the principal leadership style and which bring about the differentials in leadership success. In concurrence Oluremi (2013) explicit;y observes that effective leaders use all the three styles, with one of them normally dominant while uneffective leaders tend to stick with one style. The current study embarked on investigating the

influence of the principal's dominant leadership style on the learner's academic performance as well as how well the combination of democratic, leissez-faire and autocratic leadership styles can predict the students' mean performance in KCSE in Imenti North Sub County.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of literature on the influence of principal's leadership styles on academic performance in secondary schools. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), in literature review the researcher describes briefly, the systematic identification, location and analysis of documents containing information related to the research problem being investigated. The sources of literature included scholarly journal articles, both published and non-published reports, books and web articles. The review is organized based on research objectives.

2.2 Empirical Review of Literature

This section contains the review of empirical studies that are related to the current study. The sub sections are organized as per the study objectives and commences with a delineation of the characteristics of the leadership style. As the review of empirical studies is done, the research gaps have also been identified.

2.2.1 Principals' use of Democratic Leadership and Academic Performance

Anbazhagan and Kotur (2014) regards leadership style as a leader's characteristic behaviors when guiding, motivating, directing and managing groups of people. Great leaders motivate others to create, perform and innovate. Thus, leadership styles are classifications of how a person behave while leading a group. Lewyn's leadership styles are authoritarian (autocratic), participative (democratic), and delegative (laissez-faire) Leadership styles are classifications of how a person behaves while leading a group.

Lewyn's leadership styles are authoritarian (autocratic), participative (democratic), and delegative (laissez-faire) (Mostofi, 2019).

In democratic style of leadership, members of the group take a more participative role in the decision making process, ideas are exchanged freely and each members of a group is granted an opportunity to participate. Nevertheless, Munir and Iqbal (2018) note that while the democratic process focus is on group equality and the free flow of ideas, the person incharge of the group is often there to offer the much needed control and guidance.

Democratic leadership style is often associated with higher productivity, increased group morale and better contributions from group members. However, Anbazhagan and Kotur (2014) argue that though democratic leadership is credited as the most effective leadership style, it does have some potential downsides. Due to its nature of consultations and compromise, some important decisions may be delayed, poor decisions may be made when every one wishes is taken into account, and group members with weak self-motivation may tend to relax.

Many studies on leadership styles in schools have continuously advocated for the democratic style of leadership as it has been seen to improve students' academic performance of the schools (Nsubuga, 2009). So, it is through this style of leadership that students can be involved in the maintenance of good academic achievement through their involvement in the organizations' administration. The principal should therefore encourage and recognize the contribution of the members for the school to be successful. In support of this assertion, Dury and Levin (2015) observed that democratic leadership

style has a potential of improving the student performance. Thus, this study will seek to establish the influence of principal's democratic leadership style on academic performance in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub-county in Meru County.

Adeyemi and Boralinwa (2013) set ou to establish the association between principals' democratic leadership style and students' academic performance in Nigeria. The study found that there was a weak positive and significantly correlation (r= .342, P< .05) between principals' democratic leadership style and students' academic performance in secondary schools. Thus, the current study will establish the whether the is any relationship between principals' democratic leadership style and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub-county in Meru county.

A survey carried out by Oyegoke (2016) on principals' leadership style as a catalyst to effectiveness of secondary school education in Ondo state, Nigeria, used a sample of 1260 subjects including teachers and principals. The study revealed that that the majority (96%) of the respondents agreed that principals relate very well with the teachers and students thus providing an enabling environment for enhanced teaching and learning. Further, the study pointed out that the principals' use of democratic leadership style; where the principal allows teachers involvement in decision-making process motivate the teachers by making them feel important to put in their maximum productive capacity, thus good students' academic performance. A Pearson's correlation value (r= .364, P< .001) was obtained in the test hypothesis. However, the study did not explore the possible explanation of the weak correlation. On the contrary, the current study sought to get information on the various contextual dynamics that influence the learners' academic

performance apart from the leadership styles through the principals' interview schedule and open ended questions put across to senior teachers.

Nsubuga (2009) analyzed leadership styles and school performance of secondary schools in Uganda. The study found that democratic or consultative form leadership was widely used and was the most effective in public secondary schools. The findings of the study also showed that no one kind of leadership style was used in schools. Although the democratic style was the most preferred, it was found that depending on situations in schools, leaders tended to use the different leadership styles and at times used other styles of leadership. Further, it was established that in schools where the principals applied democratic style of leadership, the students were more likely to perform better than other schools. Thus, the current study sought to establish the influence that principals' democratic leadership style on academic performance in public secondary school in the Imenti North Sub-county in Meru County, Kenya.

A study conducted by Achuma (2015) in Tanzania on impact of school leadership styles on students' academic performance in context of Ilala District targeted district education officer, human resource officer, ward education officers, head of schools and teaching staff in selected public secondary schools. The study used a sample of 50 subjects. Document analysis, questionnaire and interview schedule were used for data collection. The study found that despite majority schools using mixed leadership style (democratic, dictatorship, or laissez faire), democratic leadership style was mostly used in many best performing schools that took part in the study.

Another study conducted by Gatabu (2013), indicates that principals' democratic leadership style has a direct influence on the environment within which a student survive as well as attainment of students' academic goals. The study further revealed that democratic leadership among school leaders play critical roles in identifying and supporting learning, structuring the social settings and mediating the external demands. The study identified three distinct roles of heads of schools that include: interpersonal, informational, and decisional. The interpersonal role is related to the human element of the school such as motivating, directing, coaching and assessing performances, liaison, and as a figurehead. In the informational role, the head of school is a monitor, disseminator and spokesperson. In the decisional role, the leader is an entrepreneur, resource allocator, disturbance handler and negotiator. Thus, the current study examined whether the school principals in Imenti North Sub-county apply democratic leadership style in the schools and the effect this style of leadership has on academic performance. This enabled the researcher to identify whether there were other underlying factors influencing student's academic performance among students in the study area.

It is also noteworthy that the principal's use of democratic style or even a combination of other styles may not always result to a positive influence on academic performance. For instance a study by Obama et al. (2016), examined the extent principals leadership styles influence students' academic performance in national examinations in HomaBay County Kenya. It was found that school principals used diverse leadership styles, ranging from democratic to leissez-faire. It was further established that use of diverse leadership behaviour notwithstanding, most principals were deficient of leadership behaviour that could motivate teachers and students towards improved academic achievement.

Kiptoo (2014) investigated the the effect of organizational leadership on academic performance in public secondary schools in Baringo Central Sub County. The study was particularly focussed on the effect of leadership styles, leadership skills and leadership ethics on students' academic performance. The study adopted descriptive research design and administered questionnaires to a sample of 28 school leaders and 91 teachers. A multiple linear regression analysis established that there was no significant relationship between leadership styles and the academic performance. Similarly, there was no significant relationship between leadership skills and academic performance. However, there was a significant relationship between ethical leadership practices and students' academic performance. Kiptoo (2014), however, made use of a structured questionnaire as the only research instruments and thus failed to gather sufficient information that could have shed more light on the study rather peculiar findings. The current study made use of both semi-structured questionnaire and interview schedule in order to gather more in depth information.

A study by Munyaka (2013) embarked on establishing the influence of headteachers' leadership styles on pupils KCPE performance in Kathiani District, Kenya. Among other findings, the study established that 41.7 % of principals in the sampled schools practiced autocratic leadership style, 25.0 leissez –faire leadership style, 16.6 % democratic style while 16.7showed transformative leadership style. The study further established that use of democratic leadership style showed a marginally better performance in KCPE while leissez –faire and autocratic leadership styles were associated with some of the schools that performed poorly. Surprisingly, transformative leadership style was also linked to poor performance. However, Munyaka (2013) study could not give a comprehensive

conclusion of the extent to which the head teachers' leadership styles influenced KCPE performance since the analysis stopped and descriptive level. Conersely, the current study employed robust inferential statistics to ascertain and predict the magnitude of the leadership styles influence on academic performance.

2.2.2 Principals' use of Leissez-Faire Leadership Style and Students' Academic Performance

Etymologically, leissez-faire is a French expression which literally means let people do what they wish. It follows that the leader allows members in the organization to act with their inborn sense of responsibility in an environment where rules and regulations are never enforced. Further, the leader adopts a passive attitude towards problems and issues in an organization. Thus, a school principal who practices laissez-faire leadership style, also known as delegative leadership, is normally hands-off and allows teachers and students to make the decisions (Igiri et al., 2019).

Mostofi (2019) argues that just like other leadership styles, leissez-faire has both benefits and possible pitfalls. Additionally, there are certain situations and settings where laissez-faire leadership might be the most appropriate. Amanchukwu, Stanley and Ololube (2015), observe that leaders that are inclined to leissez-faire are hands-off, comfortable with mistakes, leave all decisions to employess and accept accountability. Nonetheless, Barling and Frone (2017) reiterates that, while "laissez-faire" implies a completely hands-off approach, many leaders remain available and open to group members for consultation and feedback. In most instances, directions on how to go about the work is provided at the beginning of a project followed by gradual autonomy and minimal oversight.

Leissez-faire leadership is merited in that it encourages innovation, personal growth and facilitates faster decision-making due to absence of micromanagement. However, Mostofi (2019) cautions that, this kind of leadership works well with a group of highly-skilled, self motivated and experienced people, capable of working on their own with very minimal guidance. In contrast, schools are made up of students, teachers and support staff at different stages of capability and trusting that they can regulate and make decisions on their own would be rather absurd.

Munir and Iqbal (2018) investigated the relationship between principals' leadership styles and job satisfaction of teachers in women colleges in the province of Punjab, Pakistan. The study adopted a correlational research design and involved 905 college teachers. On the basis of their perceptions, 21.8% of teachers indicated that their principals were practicing autocratic leadership style, 74.0% democratic whereas only 4.2% agreed that their principals were practicing laissez faire leadership style. Further, it was found that autocratic leadership style had a very weak positive significant relationship with teachers' job satisfaction (r =.068, n=905, $p < 0.05$). Democratic leadership style had a weak positive significant correlation (r =.227, n=905, $p < 0.05$) while Laissez faire leadership style had negative correlation (r = -.043, n=905, p = 0.39). with job satisfaction of teachers. Thus, the study results showed that democratic leadership style was the most widely applied. However, both autocratic and democratic style had a weak but significant correlation with the job satisfaction showing that there were other factors that also contributed to job satisfaction.

Most importantly is the fact that although leissez-faire leadership had a negative relationship with job satisfaction, it was very weak and insignificant. This implies that

when well integrated and applied as situation demands, leissez-faire leadership may play some role in motivating workers. Although Munir and Iqbal (2018) study methodology and findings had significant similarity to the current study, the focus of the current study was on leadership styles and students' academic performance and not on teachers' job satisfaction. Furthermore, the people whose leadership was exercised on in the current study are young secondary school students as opposed to mature teachers who can manage their affairs with a measure of autonomy.

In USA, Hardman (2018) sought to find out how teachers' perceive their principals' leadership styles and the effects on student achievement in schools performing at different levels. The study examined teachers' perceptions of principals' transactional, transformational, or passive-avoidant leadership styles as correlates of student achievement in improving and non improving schools. The study targeted143 teachers in 16 schools in one school district. The research instruments included the Multi-factor Leadership Questionnaire that Leadership behaviors as perceived by the teachers while student achievement was measured with comprehensive assessment test results for each school using three years of results. Inferential statistical analysis involved independent *t*-test and multiple regressions. The study findings showed that teachers in improving and non-improving schools had minimal differences in how they perceived their principals' leadership styles. Student achievement was significantly predicted by all the three leadership styles. Further, passive-avoidant and transformational leadership style had a positive relationship with student achievement while Transactional leadership style had a negative relationship. The current study delved further and investigated the influence of

not only passive-avoidant but also passive leadership style and which has also been identified among some principals in Imenti North Sub County.

A study conducted by Igiri et al. (2019) examined the relationship between head teacher leadership style and mathematics student's academic performance in Abi local government area of Cross river state, Nigeria. The study involved 190 students and 10 head teachers and used two instruments for data collection- the mathematics achievement test (MAT) for students and the Head Teacher Leadership Style Questionnaire (HTLSQ) for the head teachers. Three null hypotheses in line with three leadership styles (democratic, autocratic and leissez-faire) were formulated and tested using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient analysis. The study results revealed that there was a moderately strong positive significant relationship between students performance in mathematics and both democratic and autocratic leadership. However, there was a negative insignificant relationship between leissez-faire leadership and performance in mathematics. Igiri et al. (2019) concluded that although students and teachers are motivated when accorded opportunity to make self initiated decisions, to excel in some subject such as mathematics, close monitoring and supervision is essential. While Igiri et al. (2019) study focus was on mathematics only, the current study embarked on establishing the influence of leadership styles on academic performance of all subjects at KCSE level.

In Kenya, the issue of head teachers leadership style in relation to students' academic performance, teachers' job performance and other variables has also attracted researchers (Kinyanjui & Orodho, 2014; Kiptoo, 2014; Obama et al., 2016; Ogalo, 2013). Most of these studies have been ocassioned by learners' dismal performance in national

examinations and rampant unrests in schools. Kinyanjui and Orodho (2014) examined the the influence of headteacher leadership skill on learners' mean performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) in primary schools in Dagoreti Sub County, Nairobi County, Kenya. Among other findings, the study found out that majority of the headteachers (62.0 %) applied democratic leadership style, while a few applied authoritarian and laissez fairer leadership styles. However, a weak and insignificant relationship was established between KCPE performance and the headteachers' leadership styles. Further, democratic leadership posted the best results in KCPE while Laissez-Faire posted the worst in KCPE. Based on the results, the study recommended that government should endevour to establish the cause of the perennial poor performance of schools in KCPE in Dagoretti District such as the level of pupils' preparedness for KCPE since leadership styles as the plausible cause of the poor performance was ruled out.

2.2.3 Principals' Autocratic Leadership and Students' Academic Performance

Autocratic or authoritarian leadership style is where the leader exercise control over all decisions allowing very little input from group members. The choices made by autocratic leaders are mostly based on their ideas and judgments and hardly entertain advice from followers (Kendra, 2020). Thus, it discourages group contribution, make group feel like they are not trusted with decisions or important tasks, members are closely supervised, controlled and directed, and Ignores or impairs creativity and expertise from subordinates. Nevertheless, Igiri et al. (2019) note that autocratic leadership has several benefits in that it allows for quick decision-making especially in stress-filled situations, offers a clear chain of command, and is found suitable for uncommitted workers.

A survey carried out by Adeyemi and Boralinwa (2013) on principals' leadership styles and student academic performance in secondary schools in Ekiti state, Nigeria, used a sample of 2,560 teachers. The study used a questionnaire as the only tool of data collection. Most of the teachers indicated that their principals used democratic leadership style (49.3%), followed by autoctratic leadership style (40.6%) while only 10.1 % of respondents felt that their principals used leissez-faire leadership style. The study findings also showed that autocratic leadership style had the strongest significant relationship with the students' academic performance ((*r*= .512, *p* < .05). Use of democratic leadership style showed a weak positive but significant correlation ((*r*= .342, *p* < .05) while leissez-faire leadership style had very weak positive and insignificant correlation with students academic performance ((*r*= .187, *p* > .05). The study results suggest that to achieve better academic performance principals of schools in Ekiti state, Nigeria, were better placed to be authoritative. It follows that students need to be coerced in order to make them perform effectively. Although the finding was found to be in consonance with the findings made by Adeyemi (2011) and Igwe et al. (2017), it was at variance with most of other studies where democratic leadership had higher correlation with academic performance (Abdulmajid et al., 2020; Kinyanjui & Orodho, 2014; Kiptoo, 2014; Igiri et al., 2019). Since the study used exclusively structured questionnare, it failed to capture other vital information in form of opinions, explanations and suggestions, it would therefore, be inappropriate to prescribe autocratic leadership style as the panacea to low academic performance in Ekiti state schools. In order to improve on the established gap in data collection, the current study employed a semi structured questionnaire in which repondents were given an opportunity to express their views,

opinions and suggestions for improvement. Additionally, an interview schedule was subjected to principals and was meant to capture first hand views verbatim from them as the practioners of the various leadership styles. It is through the interviews and open ended sections of questionnaire that invaluable details and nuances are captured giving deeper insight into leadership styles discourse and which statistics would never bring out.

Kariuki (2013) sought to examine the principals' leadership styles and their influence on leaners' achievement in secondary schools in Kinangop district. Using descriptive survey design the researcher gathered information regarding the various leadership styles and school performance from 75 teachers and 15 head teachers. It was found that there was a strong general relationship between leadership styles and students' performance in KCSE (R = 0.615). However, only 24.1% (adjusted Rsquare) of the students' academic variance could be attributed to the leadership styles and therefore 75.9 % variance was due to some other factors.

Kariuki (2013) also found that principals' use of autocratic leadership style had a strong negative and significant correlation with the students' academic performance (r = -0.65, $p < 0.05$). There is also a strong negative and significant correlation between the principals' laissez-faire leadership style and students' academic performance (r = -0.66, $p < 0.05$). Further, the study found a weak positive and significant relationship between the principals' transformational leadership and students academic performance (r = 0.34, $p < 0.05$) and that principals' democratic leadership style was had a moderately strong correlation with the students' academic performance (r = 0.48, $p < 0.05$).

According to a study carried out by Ngugi (2014), there was no significant association found between the autocratic leadership style and academic performance in public secondary schools in Murang'a District, Kenya. Further, the secondary school principals who used democratic leadership style posted high final exam results. In the same line, Oluremi (2013) pointed out that good academic performance in final examinations was exhibited by secondary schools whose principals were having a mixture of autocratic (task-oriented behaviour) and democratic (relationship-oriented behavior) leadership styles. Thus, from the previous studies, it is still not clear whether a particular leadership style resulted in the most effective form of institutional behaviour. Therefore, that current study sought to investigate the extent to which the principals' autocratic leadership style affects the students' academic performance in Imenti North Sub-county in Meru County.

A study carried out by Odhiambo (2016) on influence of principals' leadership styles on students' discipline in public secondary schools in Kikuyu district in Kenya used a sample of 28 principals and 230 teachers. The researcher used a questionnaire to collect data from the respondents. The study found that the use of autocratic leadership by the school principals had a negative influence on students discipline. This implies that the more autocratic leadership style is used, the poorer the student discipline. Since academic performance also go hand in hand with students' discipline, the result is relevant to the current study.

Apart from studies linking various leadership styles and academic, the link between leadership styles and teachers' job satisfaction was also investigated (Munir & Iqbal, 2018; Obi & Onyeike, 2018; Owenvbiugie & Ibadin, 2017). Saleem, Aslam, Yin and Rao (2020) contend that teachers' job satisfaction has a direct positive relationship with

students' academic performance. Therefore, the outcome findings from these studies have an important implications to the current study.

Munir and Iqbal (2018) investigated the relationship between principals' and teachers' job satisfaction in women colleges in the province of Punjab, Pakistan. Data were collected from1005 college teachers from 100 colleges all over the Punjab through questionnaires. Research instruments included the leadership style questionnaire and job satisfaction questionnaire. The study results showed that autocratic leadership style has the least positive correlation (r=.068, $p < 0.05$) with job satisfaction of teachers while, the democratic leadership style has weak positive correlation (r= 0.227, $p < 0.05$) with Job Satisfaction. However, on the other hand laissez faire leadership style has negative correlation (r = -0.043, $p > 0.05$) with job satisfaction of teachers.

In a study conducted in Nigeria, Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State, Owenvbiugie and Ibadin (2017) sought to establish the principals' leadership styles and teachers' job performance. The study employed survey research design and gathered information from 240 teachers. It was found that leissez-faire and autocratic principals' leadership styles had a low influence on teachers' job performance while democratic style had a high influence. However, Owenvbiugie and Ibadin (2017) study had two major limitations in that the data analysis was confined to descriptive statistics and thus could not generalize the study to the targeted population. Additionally, information was collected from ony one source, the teachers through a structured questionnaire. The current student aimed at collecting more comprehensive information from different sources and using both structured and semi structured questionnaire items.

In a similar study Obi and Onyeike (2018), investigated the extent principals' leadership styles predict job performance of teachers in public secondary schools in Imo State. It was found that transformational leadership style significantly contributed to teachers' job performance while leissez-faire and transactional leadership style did not significantly contribute to teachers' job performance in secondary schools in Imo State. Thus, the review of studies that examined the relationship between the various leadership styles and teachers' job performance had similar results to those that examined the relationship between leadership styles and students' academic performance. However, common in all these studies is the fact that the positive practices associated with leadership styles such as leissez-faire and autocratic remain obscure as these styles are dismissed as negative influencers of academic performance. Conversely, the current study was set out to examine not only the influence of a leadership style as a whole but also gathered views on particular practices in various leadership styles.

2.3 Summary of Review of Literature and Research Gaps

The study sought to investigate the influence of principals' leadership styles on academic performance in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub County, Meru County. The researcher has reviewed many studies that have researched on head teachers/principals' leadership styles and how they relate or influence learners' academic performance, discipline as well as teachers' job performance (Abdulmajid et al., 2020; Kinyanjui & Orodho, 2014; Kiptoo, 2014; Igiri et al., 2019). In most of these studies, robust statistical analysis have been used to establish the associations between the leadership styles and the other variables. Democratic leadership style has come out in most cases as the most appropriate in enhancing academic performance and motivating both teachers and

students in accomplishing their set objectives as well as the school mission and vision. However, use of autocratic leadership style has also featured strongly in enhancing discipline among students and teacher management resulting to improved students' achievement. In almost all the reviewed studies, leissez-faire, scored the least in terms of enhancing academic performance.

In course of the literature review, several knowledge gaps have emerged. First, most of thae reviewed studies (Adeyemi & Boralinwa, 2013; Ngugi, 2014; Oluremi, 2013; and Odhiambo, 2016) relied on teachers' perceptions on how the head teachers conducted their daily activities and failed to gather views of the head teachers. Furthermore, the analyzed data were most often derived from closed ended likert type of items where teachers additional explanations were thwarted. In so doing, these studies failed to gather pertinent information that come along with triangulation of data collection techniques. The current study employed an interview schedule for head teachers and encouraged teachers to give their opinions through the open ended sections of the questionnaire. Secondly, most of the reviewed studies failed to focus and analyse the repondents views on some specific issues in each leadership style. In so doing, the responses on the inherent strengths and weaknesses of each leadership style remained obscure. For instance, leissez faire leadership style came out as a very toxic style despite the fact that there some good aspects in it as established in some previous studies. The current study did focus and analyzed the respondents response of various aspects of each leadership style in order to get specific and objective views on what respondents experienced.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter gives description of the methods which the researcher applied in carrying out the study. The chapter is organized as follows: research design, study area, target population, sample size and sampling procedure, research instruments, data collection procedure, validity and reliability, data analysis, legal and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Design

The study employed descriptive survey research design. Kothari (2014), explicates that descriptive survey research design is best adapted to obtain personal and social facts, beliefs and attitudes. It involves measurement classification, analysis, comparison and interpretation of data that results in the formation of important principles of knowledge and solution to significant problems. Descriptive survey design involves asking a sample population questions about a particular issue in order to explore their opinions, attitudes and knowledge about the issue in question (Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun, 2012). The design was found appropriate since the study aimed at gathering views and opinion from school senior teachers and principals without any manipulation.

3.3 Research Site

The study was conducted in Imenti North Sub-County, a region located in the central region of Meru County. According to Meru County schools census report of 2019 (MOE, 2019), secondary schools in Imenti North Sub-County have been experiencing incidences of unrest and declining academic performance. Conversely, some schools experiences

relative calm and improving academic perormance. Further, it was also noted that some relatively well performing schools were also experiencing violent students' grievances alleging high handedness among the school administrators. These conditions prompted the researcher to embark on the current study.

3.4 Target Population

Population refers to all elements, individual or objects having similar observable characteristics (Creswell, 2014). According to the Meru County Education Office (2020), there are 46 secondary schools in Imenti North Sub-County. The study targeted 46 secondary schools principals and 46 senior teachers. The head teachers were targeted since they are entrusted with school leadership while senior teachers are expected to have ample information regarding the school administration and students' welfare.

3.5 Sample and Sampling Techniques

Babbie (2014) regards a sample as a subset of population. The study aims at gathering information concerning the head teachers' leadership styles through senior teachers' questionnaire and head teachers' interview schedule. Census sampling method was used to select all the senior teachers from all the 46 secondary schools in Imenti North Sub County. According to Gay, Mills and Airasian (2009), for sufficient and reliable findings, the sample size should be 10% to 30% of the population. Therefore, 14 principals constituting 30.0 % of 46 were selected through simple random sampling for the study. Table 3.1 shows the sample size distribution.

Table 3.1: Sample Size Distribution

Category of Respondents	Population	Sample	Percentage (%)	Sampling Technique
Head teachers	46	14	30.0	Simple random
Teachers	46	46	100.0	Simple random
Total	**92**	**60**	**65.2**	

3.6 Data collection Measures

The study employed senior teacher's questionnaire and principals' interview schedule to collect the data.

3.6.1 Senior Teacher's Questionnaire

The senior teacher's questionnaire is semi-structured and contains Likert type scale to gather quantitative data while the open-ended questions gathered qualitative type of information. The questionnaire comprises of sections A and B (refer to Appendix II). Section A sought the teacher's demographic information while section B gathered information in regard to teachers' opinion on their principal's leadership style. Section B also contained several open ended questions that gave the respondents opportunity to give more information on the predominant leadership style in their school, and how leadership in their school could be improved.

3.6.2 Principals' Interview Schedule

Use of interview schedule allows the researcher to pose probing questions to the interviewee and thus, generating more enriching data unlike the use of questionnaire

(Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun, 2012). Through the principals' interview schedule, the researcher aimed at gathering in depth information regarding their adopted leadership style and its influence on learners' academic performance. The interview schedule items are constructed according to the objectives of the study.

3.7 Pilot Testing of Research Instruments

To ensure validity and reliability of research instruments, it is important to conduct pilot testing (Creswell, 2014). Thus, pilot testing was conducted in order to ensure the clarity of the language, duration, layout of the tools. According to Sahu (2013), it is prudent to use 10% of the study's sample size when conducting a pilot test. Thus, the study involved five senior teachers from five public secondary school in the neighbouring Imenti South Sub County. The secondary schools were selected through simple random sampling. Similarly, through simple random sampling, one principal was selected to take part in the pilot testing. The participants were encouraged to comment and make suggestions geared to improve the various items in the research instruments.

3.8 Validity of the Data Collection Instruments

Validity refers to the correctness, meaningfulness of inferences and soundness of outcomes of conclusion, which are based on the research findings (Kothari, 2014; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012). The researcher sought the expert opinion on content and face validity. The senior teachers' questionnaire and the principals' interview schedule were availed to two Africa Nazarene university supervisors before and after piloting in order to review the items in the instruments. Comments solicited from supervisors were then used to enhance the research instruments before commencing data collection.

3.9 Reliability of Data Collection Instruments

Reliability is the degree to which a research tool gives consistent data or results after repeated trials (Babbie, 2014). When a research instrument meets the aforementioned criteria then it is said to be reliable. It can be used severally and give similar outcome irrespective of the environmental set up. Reliability of the senior teachers' questionnaire was ascertained by computation of Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient. A coefficient of 0.84 was obtained. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2012) reliability coefficient of 0.7 and above is considered sufficient for a research instrument in social sciences.

3.10 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher secured a letter of introduction from Africa Nazarene University. The introduction letter enabled the researcher secure research permit from from the National Council for Science and Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). The acquired permit was be presented to Imenti North Sub County Education Officer who then issued a clearance letter for data collection from the sampled schools. The researcher visited the sampled schools and after presenting the official permission letters to principals and striking rapport, data collection commenced. The researcher personally administered the questionnaire to the teachers. Face-to-face interviews were then conducted with the head teachers. The interviews were carried out in varied places as found convenient. Before each interview, the respondents were requested to read and respond to the contents of consent form (Appendix E). Interviews were audio recorded using a smart phone and later transcribed by the researcher.

3.11 Data Processing and Analysis

Kombo and Tromp (2006) regard data analysis as the process of organizing the collected raw data in order to establish meaning or certain trends. The process started by editing to identify omissions and errors. After coding, the data from questionnaire was fed into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22 software for analysis. The data collected were analyzed with respect of the study objectives using both descriptive and inferential techniques. Descriptive statistics such as percentages, means and standard deviation were used while the three formulated null hypotheses were tested by use of multiple regression analysis. The regression equation is in the form of $Y= \beta_0+ \beta_1X_1+\beta_2X_2+ \beta_3X_3+\varepsilon$, where Y = students' KCSE mean performance, X_1= mean responses on democratic leadership style, X_2= mean responses on laissez-faire leadership style, X_3 = mean response on autocratic leadership style while ε is the error term. Qualitative data was put into themes and where necessary converted into quantitative data for easier interpretation. Some of data generated from head teachers' interview schedule was reported verbatim and used to augment the quantitative data. To maintain anonymity, the research used pseudonyms such as ST and P to represent senior teacher and principal respectively.

3.12 Legal and Ethical Considerations

To ensure legal measures were observed, the researcher sought a research permit from National Council of Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). Subsequently, the acquired NACOSTI permit enabled the researcher to secure research clearance from County Commissioner and County Director of education. To ensure ethical considerations, the respondents were assured of anonymity and utmost confidentiality.

Interviewee were requested to fill a consent form. The consent form enabled the researcher to audio and visual record the interview proceedings. Respondents were assured of the right to withdraw from the data collection process at any stage without any consequences. They were also allowed to scrutinize the transcribed information and expunge any sections that might not reflect what they meant. To observe copy rights and avoid plagiarism, the researcher acknowledge all the sources of information collected from reviewed journals articles, textbooks, unpublished and published theses as well as other research materials.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and findings of the data collected in this study. The chapter contains the presentation of demographic data and analysis of teachers' response on in accordance to the research objectives. The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of principal's leadership styles on academic performance in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub-county in Meru County, Kenya. The study objectives were to find out the influence of the principals' democratic, to examine the influence of laissez-faire and to establish the influence of autocratic leadership styles on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub-County in Meru County. Data were collected through the senior teachers' questionnaire, and principals' interview schedule.

4.2 Characteristics of Respondents

This section contains the response rate and analysis of the respondents' demographic information. The analysed demographic information enhanced interpretation of the study findings. Additionally, the description of the demographics of the respondents ensured the trustworthiness and transferability of the research findings. Thus, the information generated makes it easier for individuals who read this report to decide whether the results of this study would be relevant or similar under different conditions or using different groups of participants. The demographic information sought was the gender, age, and teaching experience.

4.2.1 Response Rate

All the sampled 46 senior teachers and 14 principals took part in the study giving a response rate of 100.0%. This response was excellent as per Creswell and Creswell (2017) who recommend a response rate of 70% or more.

4.2.2 Gender of Respondents

The researcher sought to establish the gender distribution of the respondents. Table 4.1 shows the finding.

Table 4.1: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Category of respondent	Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Teachers	Male	33	71.7
	Female	13	28.3
	Total	**46**	**100.0**
Head teachers	Male	8	60.0
	Female	6	40.0
	Total	**14**	**100.0**

As evident from Table 4.1, the senior teacher position in most of the secondary schools in Imenti North Sub County was dominated by male teachers constituting 71.7 %. This reflected an obvious gender disparity in appointment of senior teachers. Nonetheless, there was fair gender proportion of principals who took part in the study since while 60.0 % were male, 40.0 % were female.

4.2.3 Age Bracket of Respondents

The researcher sought to establish the respondents' age bracket distribution. Table 4.2 depicts the findings.

Table 4.2: Respondents' Age Bracket Distribution

Age in years	Category			
	Senior Teachers		Principals	
	f	%	f	%
≤ 30	2	4.3	0	0.0
31-40	12	26.1	0	0.0
41-50	17	37.0	5	35.7
> 50	15	32.6	9	64.3
Total	**46**	**100.0**	**14**	**100.0**

Table 4.2 shows that only 4.3 % of senior teachers were in the age bracket of 30 years and below. Majority of teachers (63.1 %) were between 31 to 50 years of age. This implies that most of the senior teachers were middle aged. However, a considerable percentage of senior teachers (32.6 %) were above 50 years of age. Similarly, majority of principals (64.3 %) were above 50 years. This implies that most of the respondents were aware of different leadership styles and have witnessed the strengths and limitations of each of these styles.

4.2.4 Senior Teachers' Teaching Experience

The researcher also sought to establish the teachers teaching experience. The more the teaching experience, the more likely the senior teachers were able to discern the principal's leadership style. Table 4.3 shows the senior teachers' teaching experience.

Table 4.3: Senior Teachers' Teaching Experience

Duration in years	frequency	%
≤ 5	**2**	**4.3**
6-10	**3**	**6.5**
11-15	**13**	**28.3**
> 15	**28**	**60.9**
Total	**46**	**100.0**

As evident from Table 4.3, only 4.3 % of preschool teachers had an experience of up to five years, 34.8 % teachers had an experience of six to 15 years. Majority of senior teachers (28.0 %) had an experience of over 15 years. This implied that most of the senior teachers could appropriately respond to the questionnaire items and thus enhancing the study internal validity.

4.3 Presentation of Research Analysis and Findings

This section presents research analysis and findings of the study in line with the study objectives. The senior teachers' questionnaire had 35 items such that items number one to 15 were inclined to democratic leadership style, items 16 to 23 leissez-faire style while items 24 to 35 are inclined to autocratic leadership style. The mean score for each section for each respondent was computed such that the leadership style with the highest mean was taken as the dominant leadership style in the corresponding school. Figure 4.1 depicts the principals' leadership styles distribution from the analyzed data.

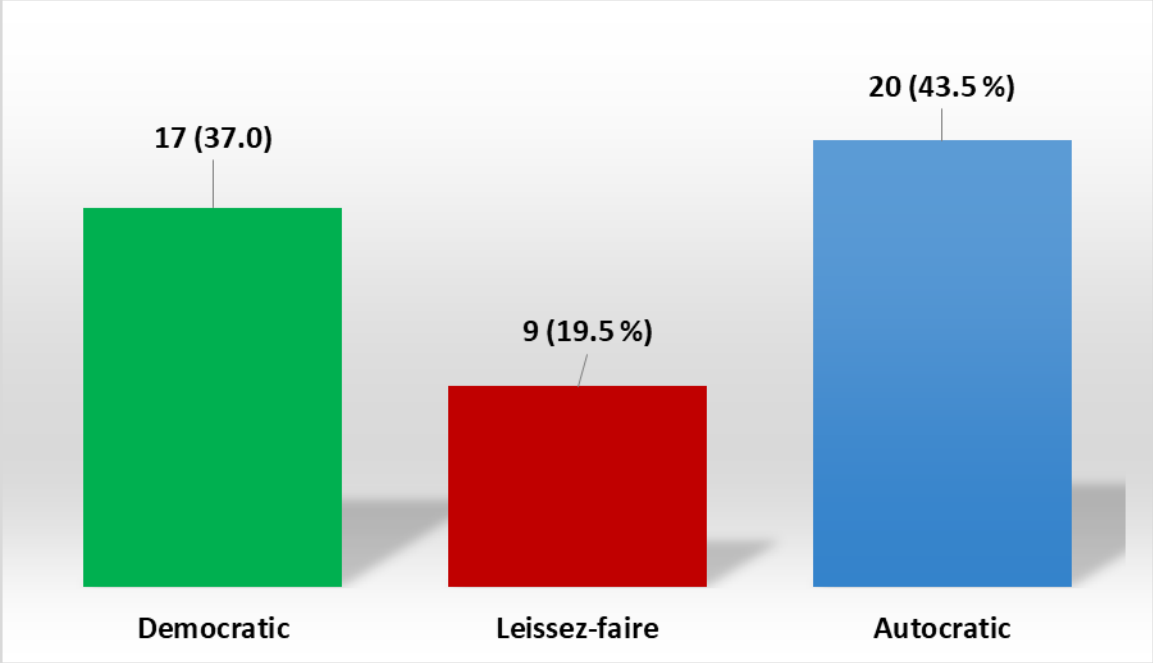


Figure 4.1: Principals' Leadership Styles Distribution

Figure 4.1 shows that 43.5 % of public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub County were governed under autocratic leadership style, 37.0 under democratic leadership style while 19.5 % were under leissez faire leadership. This implied that majority of principals ware either practicing participative or authoritative approach in their leadership. It is however, noteworthy that each style has its strengths and weaknesses and thus it is bound to influence day to day running of the schools differently. The following subsections covers into details the senior teachers and principals' responses on particular questions regarding leadership styles and students' academic performance.

4.3.1 Principals' Democratic Leadership style and Students' Academic Performance

The first objective of the study was to find out the influence of the principals' democratic leadership style on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub-County in Meru County. To achieve the objective, a set of statements in form

of five points Likert scale were posed to the senior teachers to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with them. The responses were coded such that strongly disagree (SD) was rated number 1 while strongly agree (SA) was rated number 5. Further the mean responses were computed such that: a mean response of above 3.0 was considered as agree while a mean of below 3.0 was considered as disagree. Table 4.4 shows the mean responses and standard deviations.

Table 4.4: Seniors Teachers' Response on Principals' use of Democratic Leadership Style

Statement	Mean	SD
The principal keeps the staff and students well informed	2.8	1.23
The principal involves key stakeholders in decision making	3.2	1.16
The principal listens to teachers and students grievance and act on them	2.8	1.40
The principal encourages and recognizes the contribution of the staff members	3.3	1.31
The principal relates very well with the teachers and students	2.8	1.33
The principal prefers shared goal-setting	3.4	1.33
The principal promotes open door policy	3.2	1.34
The principal handles criticism soberly	2.6	1.26
The principal encourages teachers to express their ideas and feelings, freely	3.8	1.33
The principal delegates some of his responsibilities appropriately	3.4	1.29
The principal grants head of departments some autonomy	3.3	1.33
The principal involves teachers in budgeting process	2.5	1.39
The principal involves all stake holders in formulating school policies	2.8	1.32
The principal involves the student council in formulating school rules	3.5	1.43

n = 46

Table 4.4 shows that on average senior teachers from both well performing and low performing schools agreed that their principals their principals involves key stakeholders

in decision making (*M*= 3.22, *SD* = 1.16). This was affirmed by all the interviewed principals. One of the principals stated:

> We as principals are now obligated to involve mostly stakeholders in most of the school major decisions starting from the school mission and vision. So, for my school, we held several staff meetings where we brain stormed and came up with the school mission and vision as well as the school motto. I also consulted my board of management for the final ratification. (P7).

Similarly, teachers indicated that their principals encourage and recognize the contribution of the staff members (*M*= 3.30, *SD* = 1.31). In regard to support and recognition of teachers, both teachers and principals cited that teachers are issue with official appreciation letters specifying the areas of excellence in both academic and co-curricular activities. One of the principals noted:

> Apart from verbal appreciation of teachers who excel in different ways, I always put in writing and send a copy to TSC. These letters serve well in motivating the teachers to continue perfecting the work as well as becoming a leverage when they apply for promotions and career growth. In writing such letters, I am always careful to remain as objective as possible and exercise equity and gender responsiveness to avoid ill fillings among teachers. One way of accomplishing fairness and justice is making the awarding criteria as clear as possible always involve teachers in its creation and occasional revisions. These letters are sometimes accompanied with monetary gain. (P14).

Additionally, some teachers and principals' felt that their low school performance was not due to leadership style but rather the students' entry behavior as one teacher observed:

> Concerning our students' low grades in KCSE, I cannot fault the principal and the school leadership in general in any way, teachers are well motivated and the principal takes every opportunity to assist teachers and students with materials and equipment they need for their academic work. The principal is approachable and friendly, I think our most undoing is that being a day school, we are bound to absorb all the students in the locality regardless of their score in KCPE. Most of our form ones enter with very low entry grades. However, I am happy that we always manage to add value (ST 27).

Most of the principals were also found to promote the open door policy (*M*= 3.2, *SD* = 1.34). Principal delegation of responsibilities was also considered appropriate by majority of teachers (*M*= 3.4, *SD* = 1.29). Most of the principals were also found to be granting head of departments some autonomy (*M*= 3.4, *SD* = 1.29). Further, teachers agreed that principals involved the student council in formulating school rules (*M*= 3.5, *SD* = 1.43). Therefore, it was evident that some principals were trying their best in practicing participative leadership in which all the stakeholders especially students and teachers were given the opportunity to take part in the school management. It was however, noted that the high standard deviation denoted a considerably large section of teachers whose opinion was in the contrary.

On the other hand teachers disagreed that principals keep the staff and students well informed of key happenings in the school (*M*= 2.8, *SD* = 1.23). Some teachers felt that, some school functions happenings were kind of an ambush that elicited some discontent and mistrust among members of the school community. One of the teachers lamented:

> This habit of ambushing teachers with school wide impromptu events where all teachers are expected suspend lessons, pisses me off. I usually lose my classes and my free time when such events arise and regardless of their importance, unplanned events cause numbing inconveniencies. To be honest, I get bored to recover some of the lost lessons, though they are captured in my schemes of work and book of records. I am certain this has contributed to low performance in KCSE. I have a right to be informed beforehand, otherwise the events should not be compulsory to all. (ST5).

A similar sentiment was made by another teacher:

> I believe teachers should be aware of matters to do with students' discipline and other issues that prevent students from attending classes regularly. Sometimes we just witness students packing their belongings and leaving school for home without any formal brief from the principal of what might have happened. The students might stay at home as long as two to three weeks. You might also find an empty class, only to be informed that the students were sent home for school fees. Such occurrences elicit a feeling of disregard, lack of team spirit, and insensitivity

> to teachers' feelings. When it happens that the absentees consist of mainly average and above average category of students, teachers slacken their content coverage, the end result being unfinished syllabus and dismal academic performance. (ST 16)

The senior teachers also disagreed that principals listen to teachers and students' grievance and act on them (*M*= 2.8, *SD* = 1.4) and that they relate very well with the teachers and students (*M*= 2.8, *SD* = 1.33). Principals' failure to listen and act on teachers and students' grievances is a serious breach of democratic principles and which can result to a lot of acrimony. This tendency may be one of causes of the rampant cases of students' unrests among learners in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub County as mentioned in the background of the current study. Further, teachers indicated that principals rarely involve teachers in budgeting process (*M*= 2.7, *SD* = 1.27), and that principals do not handle criticism soberly (*M*= 2.5, *SD* = 1.39). This marked a point of departure from most of the principals' views. Principals claimed that head of departments were quite often requested to give estimates as a part of the school budgeting. However, a teacher wrote:

> Each year, most of the delivered laboratory equipment are faulty and we are forced to return. Proper consultations are never done before ordering. The subject teachers should be the key people to specify what they need and what quantity, in my school this is rarely done. Furthermore, the items are normally of low quality but very expensive. Poor quality apparatus impact negatively on students' achievement in sciences. (ST 20).

Regarding capacity to handle criticism, teachers' indicted principals' of lack of sobriety. One of the teachers wrote:

> If you need peaceful stay in this school just avoid open criticisms of the school boss. He does not normally take it kindly and the repercussions can be punitive. Any form of criticism may land a teacher to a surprise transfer to remote places as well sabotaging any promotions. This has hindered any proactive measures to address the poor grades we post in KCSE every year. For instance, students have so much say regarding their time management over the weekend. Nowadays,

> there are no formal study time from Friday night to Sunday. For me, I just do my work and mind my own business. However, I have vowed not to become a yes person who supports anything, I would rather remain quiet. (ST 14).

Nonetheless, some teachers paid a glowing tribute to the way principals practiced democratic principles in their leadership while some principals narrated how democratic leadership has resulted to improved KCSE grades and harmonious relationship among the school fraternity. A principal from one of the best performing schools narrated:

> I can attest to the fact that participative leadership style has worked wonders in my school. I involve students' in formulating the rules and regulations that govern them as well as punishments for those who may break these rules. By so doing students own the rules and most abide by them. I also make sure that teachers are well informed and are part of all undertakings in the school. I accomplish this by conducting regular briefs in the morning before teaching starts. We have registered a steady improvement both in our KCSE and co-curricular activities (P 4).

Overall, all the interviewed principals termed their leadership style as democratic as opposed to only 37.0 % of teachers. Perhaps principals should be bold to act in accordance to Fiedler (1967) contingency theory of leadership where being the chief executive officers in their schools choose leadership styles that suits the environment they are working in, one that maximizes the performance of both teachers and students.

4.3.2 Principals' use of Leissez-fare Leadership Style and Students' Academic Performance

The second objective of the study was to examine the influence of principals' leissez faire leadership style on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub-County in Meru County. To achieve the objective, a set of statements in form of five points Likert scale were posed to the senior teachers to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with them. The responses were coded such that strongly disagree (SD) was rated number 1 while strongly agree (SA) was rated number 5. Further

the mean responses were computed such that: a mean response of above 3.0 was considered as agree while a mean of below 3.0 was considered as disagree. Table 4.5 shows the mean responses and standard deviations.

Table 4.5: Seniors Teachers' Response on Principals' use of Laissez faire Leadership Style

Statement	Mean	SD
The principal is never strict on set deadlines	3.2	1.26
The principal delegates most of his responsibilities	2.7	1.46
The principal allows head of departments great autonomy in management of their departments	2.7	1.51
The principal allows teachers to set some school policies as they deem appropriate	2.5	1.24
The principal hardly does class observation as teachers teach	3.4	1.30
The principal is not strict on teachers' absenteeism	3.2	1.37
The principal hardly checks on teachers' professional documents	2.7	1.40
The principal is lenient on students discipline	2.7	1.22

n = 46

As evident from Table 4.5, the senior teachers' mean response shows that principals are never strict on set deadlines (M = 2.8, SD = 1.34). This implies that Lack of strictness on deadlines is a major limitation affecting most of the public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub County. For a smooth running of an institution, members must work within certain timelines. Similarly, teachers agreed that principals hardly do class observation as teachers teach (M= 3.4, SD = 1.30). Principals' failure to monitor what goes on in classes seemed to have been happening in almost all the schools. One of the senior teacher observed:

> Though occasional class observation is one of the important tasks in instruction supervision entrusted to principals and deputy principals, it happens in very rare cases in our school. Teachers are trusted to adhere to their schemes of work and lesson plans. However, I normally get complains from students who feel they are so much behind the syllabus due to the habit of teachers digressing from the syllabus to unrelated stories for long. Other teachers report 20 minutes or so into the lesson and still appear unprepared. (ST 17).

Thus, according to the senior teacher's concern, the principal adopted the leissez faire leadership style and left teachers to plan and manage what and when to teach without any kind of monitoring and evaluation. Laxity in instructional supervision can result to teachers' laxity and students' dismal performance. Further, teachers agreed that principals are never strict on teachers' absenteeism (M= 3.2, SD = 1.37). Chronic teachers' absenteeism has been identified as one of the main reason why students fail to cover the planned subject content in time forcing teachers to adopt examination oriented drill. Such drills leave many students with superficial knowledge instead of in depth knowledge of the underlying concepts. This leaves many learners unable to answer questions that need application of knowledge.

Nevertheless, the senior teachers' mean response shows that they did not agree with most of the statements inclined to laissez-faire leadership style. Teachers' disagreed that that principals delegate most of his responsibilities (M= 2.7, SD = 1.46), that principals allow head of departments great autonomy in management of their departments (M= 2.7, SD = 1.51), that principals allow teachers to set some school policies as they deem appropriate (M= 2.5, SD = 1.24), that principals hardly check on teachers' professional documents (M= 2.7, SD = 1.40), and that principals are lenient on students discipline (M= 2.7, SD = 1.22). Thus, the number of schools where leissez-faire leadership style was used was relatively small. However, there were some teachers who argued that the rising cases of

indiscipline and dismal performance in KCSE was as a result of being too lenient on students' discipline. One of the teachers wrote:

> The main issue that is ailing our schools in this sub county is laxity in enforcing students' discipline resulting to numerous unrests and dismal academic performance. Principals have abandoned their responsibilities in maintaining law and order in schools. They have instead left the task to their deputies and teachers. For effective discipline, team work approach consisting of the head teacher, deputy head teacher, guidance and counseling teacher, class teacher and the teacher on duty is very important. (ST 40).

However, a principal in a kind of rebuttal, explicated the challenges encountered in enforcement of students discipline and the reason why it appears as if the administration has given up on enforcement. The principal said:

> We must realize that the students' behaviour is more or less a reflection of the societal behaviour. The increase in use of miraa, bhang and illicit brew has also affected mostly the day school students. The society has been expressing their anger and frustration through burning and destroying property. This has also been copied by our youngsters and on event of any provocation or incitement, the next thing is arson. We have also been restricted to use the guidance and counseling as a way of modifying students discipline since caning was banned. Expulsion of a student has also been recommdnded as the last resort and involves a complicated bureaucracy before it is done. So I need to go slow to preserve my job and at the same time ensure that the school is operating. (P 11).

Although, it was evident that leissez-faire leadership style was adopted by a relatively low number of principals, it was important to establish its influence on the students' academic performance with view of modifying its application and giving suggestions for improvement.

4.3.3 Principals' use of Autocratic Leadership Style and Students' Academic Performance

The third objective of the study was to establish the influence of autocratic eadership style on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub-County in Meru County. To achieve the objective, a set of statements in form of five

points Likert scale were posed to the senior teachers to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with them. The responses were coded such that strongly disagree (SD) was rated number 1 while strongly agree (SA) was rated number 5. Further the mean responses were computed such that: a mean response of above 3.0 was considered as agree while a mean of below 3.0 was considered as disagree. Table 4.6 shows the mean responses and standard deviations.

Table 4.6: Seniors Teachers' Response on Principals' use of Autocratic Leadership Style

Statement	Mean	SD
The principal is sensitive to criticism	3.9	1.43
The principal acts without consulting the staff team/students	2.8	1.30
The principal dominates in staff meetings	3.2	1.52
The principal hardly delegates any of his/her responsibilities	2.7	1.32
Though we may debate some issues in staff meetings, the principal is in most cases already decided	3.2	1.41
The principal relates with staff in a businesslike manner	2.9	1.33
The principal closely supervise, control and direct employees	3.4	1.43
The principal is prompt on reprimanding/punishing errant teachers and students	2.7	1.25
The principal practices mostly top to bottom communication	3.7	1.35
The principal prefers to work with certain section of teachers and students as confidants	3.8	1.22

n = 46

As evident from Table 4.6, the senior teachers on average agreed that principals are sensitive to criticism (*M*= 3.9, *SD* = 1.43). This implies that most of the principals had no room for dissenting views a quality that is common with dictators. In such a situation, the subordinates just follow the directions of the leader even in the knowledge that the results

might be disastrous as they consider the severity of backlash when they utter or act against their boss. Interestingly, when principals were asked how they deal with criticism towards their leadership, most of them talked of how they take it positively and even invite the critique to suggest of a better alternative. The following comments captures the teachers' views regarding criticisms towards their principals:

> My principals is a hands on leader, who participates and supports all activities in the school. He takes his few lessons with a lot of passion, recovers lessons lost and even does extra. However, his major undoing is that he does well with praises but very poorly with any slight criticism. So we end up praising him for any move he makes even in the wrong direction. If only he can accept that nobody is perfect, and accepts constructive criticisms, the school can experience a tremendous improvement in social interaction, co-curricular activities and academic performance. (ST 36).

> Our school is among the top performing in KCSE in this Sub County, but I think we are capable of performing even better. Both teachers and students are kind of feel caged…there are no channels of expressing grievances, suggestion box is no longer in operation, teachers are not involved in planning of extra tuition, and students study time is too crowded. We really need a dialogue. (ST 23).

These sentiments show the manifestation of autocracy in both high and low performing schools and though the use the leadership style may achieve results by ensuring conformity to rules and regulations at short run, it may result to students' unrests and teachers' general discontent at long run with serious ramifications.

Table 4.6 also shows that principals dominate in staff meetings (M= 3.2, SD = 1.52) and even where principals entertain a form of discussion, the conclusion happens to be already decided (M= 3.2, SD = 1.41). This is yet another characteristic of autocracy where teachers are expected to rubber stamp thoughts of one person disguised as staff deliberations. Meetings where one person dominates tend to stifle innovations and creativity among the staff members. The following comment from a teacher clearly shows the frustration:

> To me a staff meeting presents an opportunity to share opinions of issues at hand and find the best way possible to tackle them. Unfortunately most often, the principal's demeanor sends a signal that any form of lengthy discussion is not entertained after delivering a harangue, concludes the meeting expecting teachers to start implementing the directives immediately. The end result of such one sided deliberations is that teachers develop apathy and cease to get involved in students' discipline and any other kind of school development. (ST 23).

Most of senior teachers agreed that principal closely supervise, control and direct employees (*M*= 3.4, *SD* = 1.43), principals practice mostly top to bottom communication (*M*= 3.7, *SD* = 1.35), and that principals prefer to work with certain section of teachers and students as confidants (*M*= 3.8, *SD* = 1.22). Strict control and supervision of teachers and other school employees can produce positive results especially where most of the employees lack self motivation. Therefore, such tendencies cannot be condemed wholesale and in line with Fiedler (1967) contingency theory a leader can adopt a certain leadership style depending on the prevailing contextual dynamics. In support of firm supervision, control of human resource, and working closely with a certain section of teachers in a school, principals commented:

> I have now served in several schools as the principal and my view is that the school human resource which include teachers, support staff and students require firm supervision and control in order to have meaningful improvement in academic performance in KCSE and school development as a whole. Initially when you enforce the normal rules and regulations such as school reporting time is adhered to by both staff and students, ensuring teaching starts promptly at 8am or as per the time table, all lessons are taught, class assignments are issued and done, you meet a lot of opposition. However, when the measures result to improved results you become the darling of the locality and a transfer can be met with serious demonstrations. (P 8).

> To be honest, the much espoused democratic leadership cannot work in some school including mine. I found teachers who were attending to their work as just a mere after thought, most were more concerned with their private businesses. Other teachers and students were immersed in alcohol and to bring order and sanity, I had to be authorirtarian. Punitive measures were taken for individuals who could not conform to the rules and regulations and we can now boast to have resored some order with our grades on an upward trend. (P2).

Nevertheless, the senior teachers on average disagreed that principals act without consulting the staff team/students (M = 2.8, SD = 1.30), that principals hardly delegate any of his/her responsibilities (M = 2.7, SD = 1.32), that principal relates with staff in a business like manner (M = 2.9, SD = 1.33), and that principals are prompt on reprimanding/punishing errant teachers and students (M = 2.7, SD = 1.25). This implies that though some principals were reported to act without any form of consultation and prompt in reprimanding and punishing, majority were not. As earlier noted in Figure 4.1, according to the senior teachers, the largest percentage (43.5 %) of principals employed autocratic leadership style in their leadership followed by participative style (37.0 %) and the smallest being leissez-faire (19.5%). In order to get more varied information, the researcher requested the principals' to give their self perception regarding their leadership styles. Figure 4.2 shows the analyzed result.

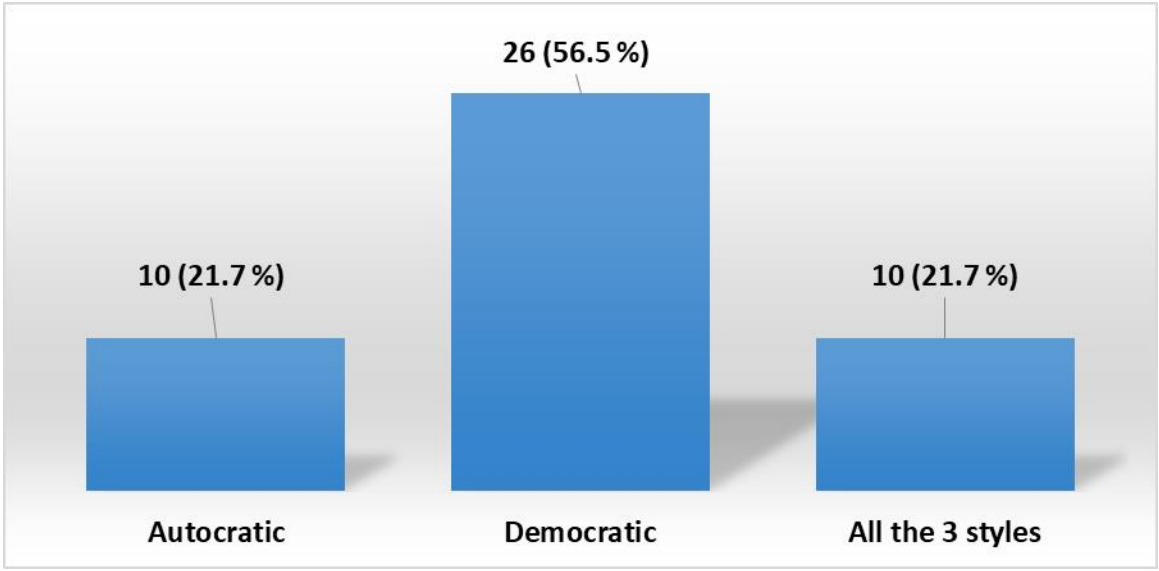


Figure 4.2: Principals Self-Perception of their Leadership Styles

As evident from Figure 4.2, majority of principals (56.5 %) regarded their leadership style as democratic while 21.7 % regarded their leadership as authoritarian. The other remainder constituting 21.7% perceived their leadership style as a combination of democratic, autocratic and leissez-faire. Thus, there was a notable difference between the way principals' perceived their leadership style and the senior teachers' perception. While senior teachers rated the leadership of nine (19.5 %) principals as leissez-faire, none of the principals ascribed their leadership as leissez-faire. Further, while teachers considered 20 (43.5 %) of principals as authoritative, only 10 (21.7 %) principals were bold enough to describe their leadership as authoritative. Most of the principals felt that they fit in democratic leadership style, the perceived ideal and widely acceptable for leadership style.

Principals expressed their frustrations and challenges they encountered as they tried to mobilize the school human resource in order to realize school development. Some related how they tried to apply democratic principles in both students and teacher management with little success hence resorted to autocracy.

According to some principals, the ubiquitous use of modern information technology has led to hitherto intricate students' discipline and academic issues whose remedies are yet to be well documented. As more schools adopt the day school mode, the number of students who engage in social media is on the rise. One of the principals observed on this issue:

> The ease of communication among students through the social media has brought a completely new dimension to realm of students' discipline and academics. When it comes to students' school walk outs and unrets, there are always ahead of us. We just see things happening without any crue or prior knowledge. They have very elaborate communication channels. One person can incite whole school

> within a second. We are never sure of students' mob psychology the next few minutes. I have tried to ensure no phones are brought to school with little success. Teachers are finding it difficult to establish the authenticity of the assignments done by our students. Students can just take a photo of the ssignment and send to any part of the world to be worked out. (P 2).

Thus, such technology based issues need a lot of ingenuity in resolving and no one particular leadership leadership style may provide an amicable solution.

4.3.4 Hypotheses Testing

Through multiple regression analysis, the study aimed at ascertaining the magnitude of influence of each predictor (principals' leadership styles) on students' academic performance. The regression model capturing the hypothesized relationship was given as: $Y= \beta_0+ \beta_1X_1+ \beta_2X_2+ \beta_3X_3 + \varepsilon$, where; Y = Academic Performance (KCSE), X_1= Democratic leadership style, X_2= Laissez faire leadership style, X_3 = Autocratic leadership style, and ε = the error term.

Tables 4.7, 4.8 and 4.9 depict the summary of multiple regression analysis.

Table 4.7: Multiple Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Standard error of the estimate
1	0.538	0.289	0.238	0.17136

Predictors: (constant), Laissez-faire, Democratic, Autocratic

It was evident from Table 4.7, that there was a moderately strong correlation between the observed values of dependent variable and the values of dependent variable predicted by the multiple regression model (R = 0.538). In other words, there was a moderately strong correlation between the predicted and observed values of the level of academic performance. It can also be deduced from the value of adjusted R^2 in Table 4.7, that 23.8

% of variance in academic performance could be explained by the principals' use of a combination of the three leadership styles. This also implies that 76.8 % of variance in academic performance was due to other variables not considered in this study. Table 4.8 shows the significance of the study multiple regression model.

Table 4.8: Multiple Regression Model Significance (ANOVA)

	Model	Sum of Squares	df*	Mean Square	*F*	Sig.
1	Regression	23.414	**3**	7.805	**5.688**	**0.002**
	Residual	57.627	**42**	1.372		
	Total	**81.041**	**45**			

df*- degrees of freedom.
Dependent Variable: Academic Performance

In reference to Table 4.8, the *F*-ratio in the ANOVA table, has a value of 5.688 and a *p* value of 0.002. Since *p* was less than 0.05, it was deduced that the overall regression model was a good fit for the data. That is, the model, overall, resulted in a significantly good degree of prediction of the outcome variable. In other words, the joint independent variables statistically significantly predicted the preschool learners' academic performance (F (3, 42) = 5.688, $p < 0.05$). Table 4.9 shows the multiple regression model coefficients.

Table 4.9: Summary of Multiple Regression Model Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients Beta	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig. value
1	(Constant)	1.612	1.889		0.854	0.398
	Democratic	0.456	0.231	0.382	1.972	0.016
	Autocratic	0.309	0.236	0.284	1.308	0.022
	Leissez faire	- 0.106	0.290	-0.092	-0.365	0.717

Dependent variable: KCSE Average score from 2016 to 2020

Table 4.9 reveals the relative contribution of the three independent variables to the dependent variable, expressed as beta weights. Assuming the error term ε to be zero and substituting the unstandardized coefficients β values, the estimated multiple regression equation becomes: $Y = 1.612 + 0.456X_1 + 0.309 X_2 - 0.106 X_3$

The β values indicate the individual contribution of each predictor to the model if the effects of all other predictors are held constant. Thus, when democratic leadership style increases positively by one unit, the academic performance would increase by 0.456 units ($\beta = 0.456$) while holding the other factors constant. Similarly, autocratic leadership is dominant, the KCSE mean performance would increase by 0.309 units ($\beta = 0.309$) while holding the other factors constant. Similarly, an increase of one unit in laissez faire leadership style, the KCSE mean performance would decrease by 0.106 units ($\beta = -0.106$)).

The four null hypotheses of the study, were tested by considering the *t* statistic (Table 4.9) that tests whether a β value is significantly different from zero (H_0: $\beta = 0$). The hypotheses were tested at 95% confidence level.

HO_1: *Principals' use of democratic leadership style has no statistically significant influence on KCSE mean score in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub County, Meru County.*

In reference to Table 4.9, the unstandardized beta value for democratic leadership style was found to be significantly greater than zero ($\beta = 0.456$, $t(45) = 1.972$, $p < 0.05$). Subsequently, the first null hypothesis was rejected. It was, therefore, deduced that principals' use of democratic leadership style had statistically significant influence on

students' KCSE mean score in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub County. This implies that most of the schools whose principal leadership style is democratic, are likely to perform well in KCSE.

HO_2: *Principals' use of laissez faire leadership style has no statistically significant influence on KCSE mean score in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub County, Meru County.*

Table 4.9 shows that the unstandardized beta value for the principals' use of laissez-faire teachers' was not significantly greater than zero (β = -0.106, t (45) = -0.305, p = 0.717). Subsequently, the second null hypothesis was retained. It was, therefore, deduced that principals' use of laissez faire leadership style had no statistically significant influence on KCSE mean score in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub County, Meru County. This implies that schools whose principals use laissez-faire leadership style are less likely to perform well in KCSE.

HO_3: *Principals' use of autocratic leadership style has no statistically significant influence on KCSE mean score in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub County, Meru County.*

In reference to Table 4.9, the unstandardized beta value for the principals' use of autocratic leadership style was significantly greater than zero (β = 0.308, t = 1.308, p < 0.05). Thus, **HO_3** was rejected, implying that the principals' use of autocratic leadership style had a statistically significant influence on students' KCSE mean performance in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub County. This implies that most of the schools whose principals' use autocratic leadership style are more likely to perform well in KCSE.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the discussion of the results as per research objectives, summary of the findings and conclusions derived from the findings and discussion, recommendations as per the objectives and suggestions of areas of further study. The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of principal's leadership styles on academic performance in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub-county in Meru County, Kenya. Data were collected through the senior teachers' questionnaire, and principals' interview schedule.

5.2 Discussion of the Findings

This section discusses the results and analysis of data (in chapter four) as per the three objectives.

5.2.1 Influence of Principals' Democratic Leadership Style on Students' Academic Performance

The first objective of the study was to find out the influence of the principals' democratic leadership style on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub-County in Meru County. The study found that principals' use of democratic leadership style had statistically significant influence on students' KCSE mean score in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub County (β = 0.456, $t(45)$ = 1.972, p < 0.05). The finding was similar to Adeyemi and Boralinwa (2013) who established that there was a weak positive association between principals' democratic leadership style and

students' academic performance in Nigeria (r= .342, P< .05). Also cognate to the study, Oyegoke (2016), obtained a weak correlation between democratic leadership style and learners academic performance (r= .364, P< .001). The current study finding was also in line was Nsubuga (2009) and Achuma (2015) whose studies in different countries extolled democratic leadership style as a good predictor of learners academic performance. The current study findings were also in conformity with other studies done in Kenya by Munyaka (2013), Kinyanjui and Orodho (2014), and Kariuki (2013). Most importantly is the finding that both local and regional studies show a weak to moderate correlation between use of democratic leadership style and academic performance. As argued by some principals and senior teachers, academic performance dependent on various factors such as the students entry level, the availability of educational resources and environment. This line of argument was further affirmed by the analyzed data where some of the low performing schools but with an impressive positive deviation in KCSE results, were found to have embraced participative style of leadership.

Contrary to the current study findings, Kiptoo (2014) found that there was no significant relationship between leadership styles and academic performance but rather a significant relationship between ethical leadership practices and the school's academic performance. Thus, the principal's use of democratic style or even a combination of other styles may not always result to a positive influence on academic performance. For instance Obama et al. (2016) found that though school principals used diverse leadership styles, ranging from democratic to leissez-faire most principals were still deficient of leadership behaviour that could motivate teachers and students towards improved academic achievement. The foregoing discussion brings out the fact that good academic

performance requires more than use of democratic leadership style. As teachers pointed out, they prefer a transformational leader who acts as a role model by teaching and excelling in a certain subjects, who stimulate and inspire others by being an active member of the team. Such a leader should be proactive and not only challenge the status quo but also encourage creativity members of the school community. Additionally, transformational leadership involves offering support and encouragement to individual followers such as pursuing higher education and seeking leadership positions.

5.2.2 Influence of Principals' Leissez-faire Leadership Style on Students' Academic Performance

The second objective of the study was to examine the influence of principals' leissez faire leadership style on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub-County in Meru County. The study found that principals' use of leissez faire leadership sttyle had no statistically significant influence on KCSE mean score in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub County, Meru County (β = -0.106, t (45) = -0.305, p = 0.717). This implies that schools whose principals use leissez-faire leadership style are less likely to perform well in KCSE. The findings is consistent with the results of several studies done in Kenya and in other countries. For instance, Munir and Iqbal (2018) found that Laissez faire leadership style had negative correlation (r = -.043, n=905, p = 0.39) with teachers' job satisfaction while Igiri et al. (2019) found a negative insignificant relationship between leissez-faire leadership and performance in mathematics student's academic performance in Abi local government area of Cross river state, Nigeria.

The current study finding also in line with Kinyanjui and Orodho (2018) study that established that the use of laissez-faire leadership style resulted to the worst in KCPE performance in Dagoretti Sub County, Nairobi County. Similarly, Munyaka (2013), found that very few principals applied the Laisez-faire type of leadership and that Schools that had laissez-faire performed poorly in the KCPE.

According to senior teachers mean response, only nine schools constituting 19.5 % were under leissez-faire leadership while principals' self assessment indicated that there was no principal who practiced leissez-faire leadership style. However, further analysis of teachers response showed that most of the principals were never strict on set deadlines, hardly did class observation and were not strict on teachers' absenteeism. All these are characteristics inclined to leissez-faire leadership style and according to Bundi (2020) and Kilaku (2019), these were some of the leadership flaws that were responsible for numrous students' unrests and poor performance in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub County.

Mostofi (2019) argues that just like other leadership styles, leissez-faire has both benefits and possible pitfalls. Additionally, there are certain situations and settings where laissez-faire leadership might be the most appropriate. Leissez-faire leadership is merited in that it encourages innovation, personal growth and facilitates faster decision-making due to absence of micromanagement. However, Mostofi (2019) cautions that, this kind of leadership works well with a group of highly-skilled, self-motivated and experienced people, capable of working on their own with very minimal guidance. Most of the principals who advocated the use the three leadership styles considered in this study, supported their use of leissez-faire style basing their facts on the need to promote

personal initiative, leadership and growth among teachers and students. In support, Obama et al. (2016) reiterates the need for a prudent leader to use all leadership styles as the case dictates.

5.2.3 Influence of Principals' Autocratic Leadership Style on Students' Academic Performance

The third objective of the study was to examine the influence of principals' autocratic leadership style on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub-County in Meru County. In reference to Table 4.7, leadership styles had a moderately strong correlation with the students' academic performance (R = 0.538). However, only 23.8 % (adjusted R square) of variance in academic performance could be explained by the principals' use of leadership styles implying that 76.8 % of variance in academic performance was due to other variables not considered in this study. Cognate to this finding, Kariuki (2013) found a strong general relationship between leadership styles and students' performance in KCSE (R = 0.615) while only 24.1% (adjusted Rsquare) of the students' academic variance could be attributed to the leadership styles. This implies that students academic performance depends on many other factors and which should be considere alongside the leadership style.

The current study found that principals' use of autocratic leadership style had a statistically significant influence on students' KCSE mean performance in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub County (β = 0.308, t = 1.308, $p < 0.05$). This implies that most of the schools whose principals' use autocratic leadership style were likely to register some improvement in KCSE. This finding was consistent with Adeyemi and Boralinwa (2013) who showed that autocratic leadership style had the strongest

significant relationship with the students' academic performance (r= .512, p < .05). In concurrence, Waweru and Orodho (2014) established that autocratic leadership style had a significant effect on students' academic achievement as compared to democratic style in public schools in Murang'a County, Kenya.

Several studies have however, found insignificant as well as negative association between autocratic leadership and academic achievement as well as other factors such as the students' discipline and teachers' job satisfaction. For instance, Ngugi (2014) found that principals'autocratic leadership style no significant association with academic performance in public secondary schools in Murang'a District, Kenya. Similarly, Odhiambo (2016) found that the use of autocratic leadership by the school principals had a negative influence on students' discipline. This implied that the more autocratic leadership style is used, the poorer the students' discipline and academic performance. Further, Kariuki (2013) found a significant strong negative relationship between principals autocratic leadership and learners academic performance (r= -0.65, p < .05) implying that the use of autocratic style was wreaking havoc to the students' performance.

The findings of the current study that autocratic leadership style had a statistically significant influence on students' KCSE mean performance in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub County was consistent with several studies that found a positve relationship between autocratic leadership style and teachers' job satisfaction (Munir & Iqbal, 2018; Obi & Onyeike, 2018; Owenvbiugie & Ibadin, 2017; Saleem et al. 2020).

It is evident from the foregoing discussion that use autocratic leadership style has had positive and negative influence on students' academic performance as well as influence

or relationship with other key dependent variables in the school setting. Thus in order to enhance the benefits accrued from being authoritative, principals may to strive to lessen the use of most the unpopular practices such as being unreasonably sensitive to criticism, domination in staff and parents' meetings and desist from practicing strictly top down communication.

5.3 Summary of the Findings

This section presents the summary of the study findings in accordance to the objectives of the study.

The study found that principals' use of democratic leadership style had statistically significant influence on students' KCSE mean score in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub County (β = 0.456, $t(45)$ = 1.972, $p < 0.05$). Use of democratic style had the greatest influence on academic performance. Among the positive democratic practices that were associated with most of the principals in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub County includes, promotion of open door policy, involving key stakeholders in decision making, delegation of some of the responsibilities appropriately and involving the student council in formulating school rules. However, principals scored poorly in not able to handle criticisms and grievances soberly, failure to keep staff and students well informed and failure to involve teachers in the school budgeting process.

The study also found that principals' use of leissez faire leadership sttyle had no statistically significant influence on KCSE mean score in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub County, Meru County (β = -0.106, t (45) = -0.305, p = 0.717). Thus, use of leissez-faire leadership style impacted on academic performance negatively.

However, some principals indicated to have applied the style selectively to self-motivated staff members with great success. For instance, the management of funds that motivated teachers who did extra tuition of students was done well when left to the concerned teachers with an occasional oversight by the principal.

The study further found that principals' use of autocratic leadership style had a statistically significant influence on students' KCSE mean performance in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub County ($\beta = 0.308$, $t = 1.308$, $p < 0.05$). Use of autocratic leadership style influence was second to democratic style. The largest proportion (43.5 %) of principals were found to be practicing autoctic leadership style in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub County. Some of them defended the use of autocratic style citing the increasing negative perception of education economic returns as the number unemployment of young and educated surges. Thus, in the prevailing harsh economic conditions, both teachers and students tend to get engaged in 'Miraa' industry and hence a need to exercise close control and supervision. Additionally, principals decried the negative effects of the fast growing use of technology. Sudents are finding it easy to spread falsehoods, organize strikes dicreetly and catch the administration by surprise. Since the methods and approaches to deal with these emerging challenges are yet to be well document, some principles are resulting to use of very brutal measures to surpress the perpetrators.

5.4 Conclusion

From the study findings and foregoing discussions, several conclusions were made:

Although most of principals (43.5 %) in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub County, Meru County, perceived their leadership style as democratic, the analysed data show that majority (56.5 %) are inclined to autocratic leadership style. Both democratic and autocratic leadership style had a positive and significant influence on students' academic performance with democratic having the greatest influence. However, some of the principals from the best performing secondary schools, indicated that they do sample all the three leadership styles as they find appropriate. This was in accordance to Fieldler's contingency theory.

The rampant use of autocratic leadership was found to have assisted in providing motivation and some direction to the school human resource in the midst of growing negative perception of low economic returns from formal education. However, it has also elicited a lot of discontent among teachers and students. The frequent students unrests and low academic performance in many schools have been partly attributed to the principals' high handedness and lack of dialogue.

Although none of the principals perceived themselves as practicing leissez-faire leadership style, the analyzed data showed that 19.5 % of them were inclined to it. This implied that they were hands off and left the school personnel to make their own decisions. Taking into account that most of the schools are in the day school category, lack of close supervision and general direction may entertain to break down of law and order resulting to dismal academic performance.

5.5 Recommendations of the Study

The following recommendations were made based on the findings and conclusions made.

In order to enhance students' academic performance, reduce students' unrests and motivate teachers in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub County, principals should use mostly democratic leadership style but also apply autocratic and leissez faire as the situation dictates. This may not be very easy for many principals and so the government should embark on continuous empowerment of principals and their deputies on how to blend the three leadership styles and even scale it up to the more pragmatic transformative leadership. In so doing, principals will become the real players and role models who report to school in time, and be hands on and keep abreast of what is happening in the school on daily basis either directly or through proxy.

Taking into cognizance that the leadership styles account for only 23.8 % of variance in students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Imenti North Sub County, It of great importance for teachers, students and head teachers to work as a team to ensure most of the other factors in play are also positive. This calls for all the stakeholders such as MOE, TSC, NGOs to combine synergies and ensure sustained guidance and counselling, character education, leadership and governance education, and other motivational education for both students and teachers.

Principals and other leaders in a school setting need to be proactive and device ways of managing students' ever emerging discipline and in extension academic issues occasioned by the explosion of information technology.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Research

Based on the study findings the following areas have been suggested for further research:

(i) A study to establish the principals' training needs in leadership styles as necessitated by explosion in information technology

(ii) Since the principals' leadership styles was found to contribute only 24.8 of variance in students' KCSE performance, a study should be conducted to identify factors responsible the remaining 75.2 % variance.

(iii) A similar study can be replicated at County level in order to explore on possibilities of setting aside resources to improve the prevailing situation.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

Dear Respondent,

I am a Post-Graduate Student in the Africa Nazarene University, pursuing a master's degree in Education. I am currently carrying out a research on: **INFLUENCE OF PRINCIPAL'S LEADERSHIP STYLE ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN IMENTI NORTH SUB-COUNTY IN MERU COUNTY, KENYA,** as part of the course requirement. For this reason, therefore, your school has been sampled for the study and you have been selected as a respondent. Kindly answer the questions as candidly as possible. There is no right or wrong answer. Do not write your name on the questionnaire. The results of this study will be used for academic purposes only.

If you consent to participate in this research study, please sign and indicate the date below. Thank you for your assistance in this study. The contribution of your time and expertise is greatly appreciated. Thanks

Participant Signature…….. Date…….

Investigator Signature …….. Date…….

Yours Faithfully,

NICHOLASIA KAARI MUCHIRI
CELL PHONE: 0728622645
EMAIL ADDRESS: careymuundi@gmail.com

APPENDIX II: SENIOR TEACHER'S QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer all the questions by putting a tick (√) against the appropriate response and filling in the blank spaces where appropriate.

Thank you in advance.

Section I: Demographic Data (Please tick (√) where applicable)

1. What is your gender?

Male [ ] Female[ ]

2. What is your age bracket?

Below 30 years [ ] 31-40 years [ ] 41-50 years [ ] 51 to 60 years [ ]

3. What is your teaching experience?

Below 5 years [ ] 6-10 years [ ] 11-15 years [ ] Over 16 years [ ]

Section II: Principals' Leadership Style (Please tick (√) where applicable)

4. Please indicate the level of agreement that you have with the following statements on how your principal leads/manages the school. *Key: 5-Strongly Agree; 4-Agree; 3-Undecided; 2-Disagree; 1-Strongly Disagree.*

	Statement	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
1	The principal keeps the staff and students informed					
2	The principal involves key stakeholders in decision making					
3	The principal listens to teachers and students grievance and act on them					
4	The principal encourage and recognize the contribution of the staff members					
5	The principal relates very well with the teachers and students					
6	The principle encourages joint decision-making					
7	The principal prefers shared goal-setting					
8	The principal promotes open door policy					
9	The principal handles criticism soberly					
10	The principal encourages teachers to express their ideas and feelings, freely					
11	The principal delegates some of his responsibilities appropriately					
12	The principal grants head of departments some autonomy					
13	The principal involves teachers in budgeting process					
14	The principal involves all stake holders in formulating school policies					
15	The principal involves the student council in formulating school rules					
16	**The principal is never strict on set deadlines**					
17	The principal delegates most of his responsibilities					

18	The principal allows head of departments great autonomy in management of their departments					
19	The principal allows teachers to set some school policies as they deem appropriate					
20	The principal hardly does class observation as teachers teach					
21	The principal is not strict on teachers' absenteeism					
22	The principle hardly checks on teachers' professional documents					
23	The principal is lenient on students discipline					
24	**The principal dominates in parents/teachers meetings**					
25	The principal is sensitive to criticism					
26	The principal acts without consulting the staff team/ students					
27	The principal dominates in staff meetings					
28	The principal hardly involves teachers in school budgeting					
29	The principal hardly delegates his/her responsibilities					
30	Though we may debate some issues in staff meetings, the principal is in most cases already decided					
31	The principal relates with staff in a business like manner					
32	The principal closely supervise, control and direct employees					
33	The principal is prompt on reprimanding/punishing errant teachers and students					
34	The principal practices mostly top to bottom communication					
35	The principal prefers to work with certain section of teachers and students as confidants					

5. In your opinion, which leadership style does your principal use;
Autocratic [ ]
Leissez-Faire [ ]
Democratic [ ]
All [ ]
Other-specify_____

Give a brief explanation to support your answer:
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

6. In your opinion, what how do you think your principal leadership style influences the students' academic performance and especially KCSE
_____
_____
_____
_____

_____
_____

7. Suggest how principal leadership can be improved in order to enhance the school development.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

-THE END-

APPENDIX III: INTERVIEW RECORDING CONSENT FORM

I appreciate your participation in this research study, however, in order to protect your interests as one of the participants, kindly read through the interview recording consent form and confirm your consent by signing accordingly.

The researcher aims at gathering data through teachers' questionnaires and head teachers' interview schedules. All data will be confidential and transcripts, observational notes and electronic files will be stored securely and will be destroyed five years after completion of this study.

You have the right to consent to digital audio recordings for the desired purpose of the study. You also have the right not to answer all the questions if you so wish. The audio-recorded information will be transcribed and analyzed to discover major themes that were discussed. You will be presented with a "smoothed narrative" version of the transcription - where false starts, repetitions, and paralinguistic utterances are removed to improve readability. You will be asked to check the transcription to clarify and add information, so as to construct the meanings and interpretations that become "data" for later interpretation by the researcher. You may delete anything you do not wish to be quoted within the study.

Participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw from this study at any time without fear of penalty or reprisal. If you choose to withdraw, the audio tape recordings, transcripts and interview data will be destroyed.

The results of the study will be disseminated in the researcher's Master of Education Thesis. Later, the study may be published as an article in a scholarly journal or presented at a conference. Your confidentiality and anonymity will be protected through the use of pseudonyms. If you have any questions about your participation or your rights as a participant within this study, you may contact the researcher at careymuundi@gmail.com or Cell phone: **0728622645**. Thanks

I, _____, understand the guidelines above, agree to participate in the study and have received a copy of the consent form for my records.

Date: _____

Participant's signature: _____

Researcher's signature: _____

APPENDIX IV: PRINCIPALS' INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. In your opinion which leadership style do you use management of your school?

   Autocratic [ ]
   Leissez-Faire [ ]
   Democratic [ ]
   All [ ]
   Other specify_____

   Give a brief explanation to support your answer:
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

2. How do think your leadership style influences students' academic performance especially in KCSE?
3. How do the teachers, support staff and students react towards your leadership style?
4. What are the major challenges to your leadership in the school?
5. How do you deal with criticism towards your leadership?

APPENDIX V: IMENTI NORTH SUB COUNTY PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS KCSE MEAN PERFORMANCE FROM 2016 TO 2020

S/N	Secondary School	KCSE mean mark	S/N	Secondary School	KCSE mean mark
1	Meru School	7.9564	**24**	Chungari day	2.9687
2	Kaaga Girls	7.6224	**25**	Mwithumwiru	3.3933
3	Kaaga Boys	6.6218	**26**	Thuura Mixed Day	3.136
4	Gikumene Girls	5.161	**27**	Rwanyange Mixed Day	3.1713
5	Mulathankari Girls	4.4674	**28**	Munithu Mixed	2.9657
6	Imenti North Girls Muslim	5.805	**29**	Kiburine Mixed Day	2.8285
7	Chugu Boys	4.8782	**30**	Meru Muslim	3.3129
8	Bishop Lawi Imathiu Day	3.6673	**31**	Ngiine	2.739
9	Kirige High SChool	3.5117	**32**	Mbirikene Mixed	2.8167
10	Mulathankari Day	3.7963	**33**	Irinda Day	3.510
11	CCM Meru Township	3.734	**34**	Kiamiriru Mixed Day	2.4543
12	Nkambune Girls	3.5664	**35**	Kinoru Day	2.6883
13	Kainginyo Mixed	3.491	**36**	Mpuri Mixed Day	2.3433
14	Thuura Secondary	3.5598	**37**	Ntakira Girls Day	2.540
15	Nthimbiri	2.990	**38**	Kambiti Mixed Day	2.382
16	Kathirune	3.0976	**39**	Consolata	2.369
17	Kirige Day	3.4693	**40**	MCK Nthamiri Day	1.9623
18	Gachanka Mixed Day	3.311	**41**	ST. Angelic Girls	2.3242
19	ST. Stephano	4.3767	**42**	Runogone Mixed Day	2.350
20	Giaki Girls	4.0014	**43**	Meru Girls Commercial	2.2938
21	Ngonyi Boys	3.3842	**44**	Mwirine Day	2.1605
22	Mwiteria Mixed Day	3.606	**45**	Rurine Day	2.0351
23	Munithu Secondary	3.3495	**46**	Nkabune Day	1.9216

APPENDIX VI: INTRODUCTION LETTER FROM ANU

AFRICA NAZARENE
UNIVERSITY

25th September, 2018

RE: TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Nicholasia Kaari Muchiri (12M02CMED015) is a bonafide student at Africa Nazarene University. He/She has finished his/her course work and has defended his/her thesis proposal ***entitled "Influence of Principal's leadership style on academic performance in public schools in Imenti North Sub-County, Meru County Kenya***

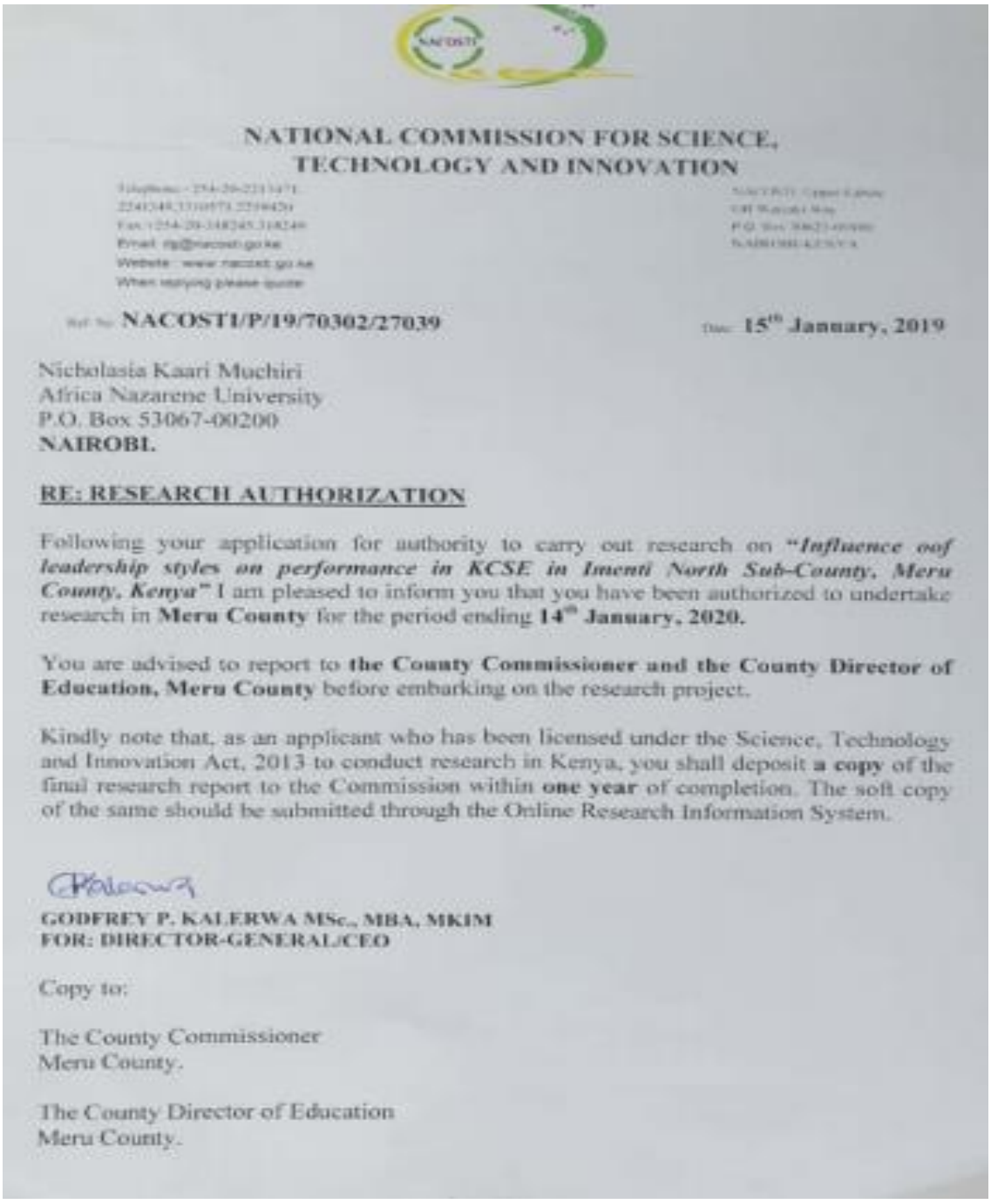
Any assistance accorded to him/her to facilitate data collection and finish his/her thesis is highly welcomed.

Rodney Reed

Prof. Rodney Reed
Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs

PO Box 53667 - 00200 Nairobi, Kenya ● Tel: 020 252 7170/1 - 5 ● Fax: 020 201 2253 ● Cell: 0733 074 111 ● Email: registrar@anu.ac.ke ● www.anu.a

APPENDIX VII: AUTHORIZATION LETTER FROM NACOSTI



NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Website : www.nacosti.go.ke
When replying please quote

Ref No: **NACOSTI/P/19/70302/27039**

Date: **15th January, 2019**

Nicholasia Kaari Muchiri
Africa Nazarene University
P.O. Box 53067-00200
NAIROBI.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on ***"Influence oof leadership styles on performance in KCSE in Imenti North Sub-County, Meru County, Kenya"*** I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Meru County** for the period ending **14th January, 2020.**

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Meru County** before embarking on the research project.

Kindly note that, as an applicant who has been licensed under the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 to conduct research in Kenya, you shall deposit **a copy** of the final research report to the Commission within **one year** of completion. The soft copy of the same should be submitted through the Online Research Information System.

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

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
Meru County.

The County Director of Education
Meru County.

APPENDIX VIII: RESEARCH PERMIT FROM NACOSTI

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
MS. NICHOLASIA KAARI MUCHIRI
of AFRICA NAZARENE UNIVERSITY,
0-10300 Kerugoya,has been permitted
to conduct research in *Meru County*

on the topic: *INFLUENCE OOF LEADERSHIP STYLES ON PERFORMANCE IN KCSE IN IMENTI NORTH SUB-COUNTY, MERU COUNTY, KENYA*

for the period ending:
14th January,2020

Permit No : NACOSTI/P/19/70302/27039
Date Of Issue : 15th January,2019
Fee Recieved :Ksh 1000



.....
Applicant's Signature

.....
Director General
National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation

THE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION ACT, 2013

The Grant of Research Licenses is guided by the Science, Technology and Innovation (Research Licensing) Regulations, 2014.

CONDITIONS

1. The License is valid for the proposed research, location and specified period.
2. The License and any rights thereunder are non-transferable.
3. The Licensee shall inform the County Governor before commencement of the research.
4. Excavation, filming and collection of specimens are subject to further necessary clearance from relevant Government Agencies.
5. The License does not give authority to transfer research materials.
6. NACOSTI may monitor and evaluate the licensed research project.
7. The Licensee shall submit one hard copy and upload a soft copy of their final report within one year of completion of the research.
8. NACOSTI reserves the right to modify the conditions of the License including cancellation without prior notice.

National Commission for Science, Technology and innovation
P.O. Box 30623 - 00100, Nairobi, Kenya
TEL: 020 400 7000, 0713 788787, 0735 404245
Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke, registry@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NACOSTI

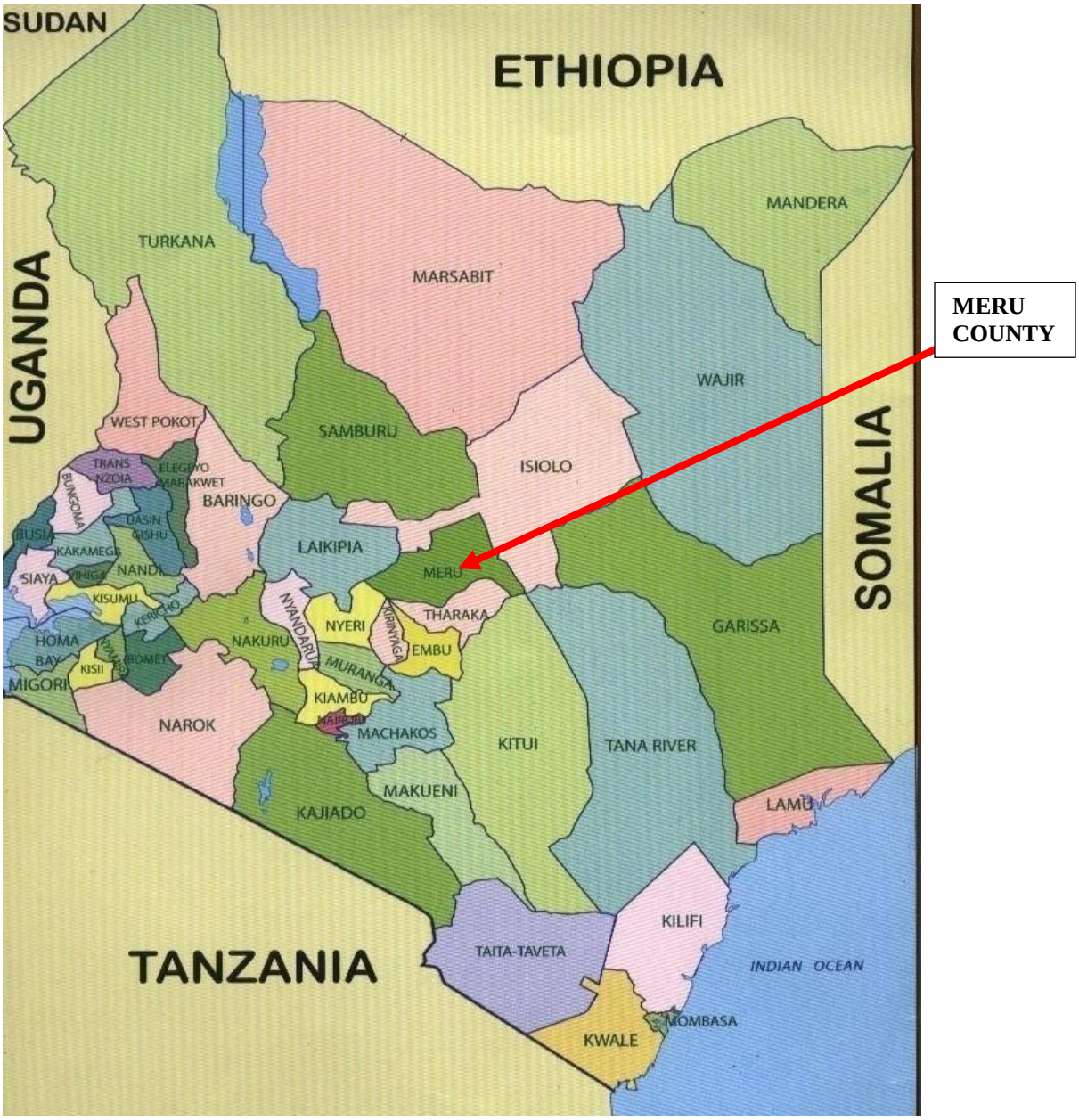
National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation

RESEARCH LICENSE

Serial No.A 22625

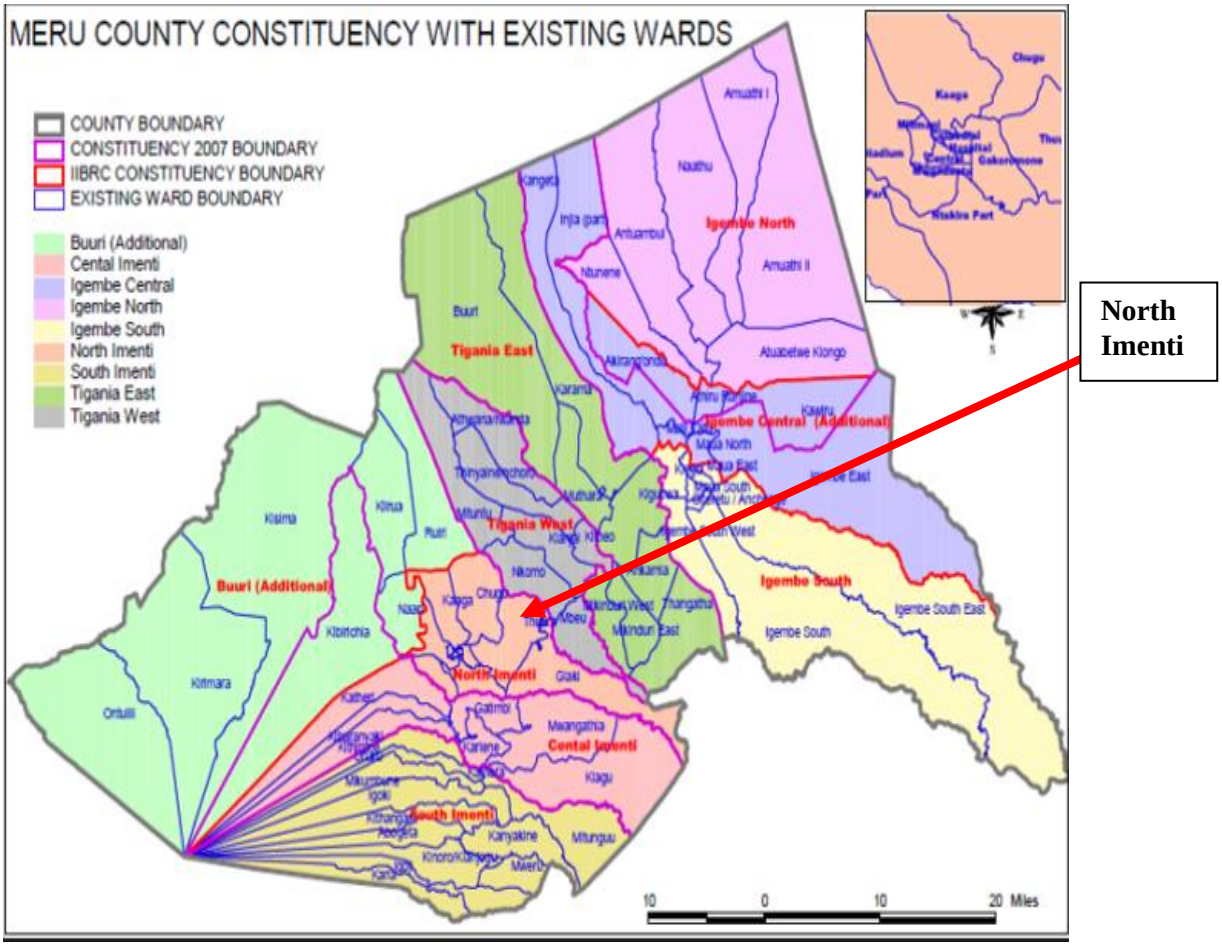
CONDITIONS: see back page

APPENDIX IX: MAP OF KENYA SHOWING MERU COUNTY



Source: *https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Counties_of_Kenya*

APPENDIX X: MAP OF MERU COUNTY SHOWING IMENTI NORTH SUB COUNTY



Source: *https://images.app.goo.gl/rNUEg37CYzaroUpx9*

APPENDIX XI: MAP OF IMENTI NORTH SUB COUNTY

