Contribution of Leadership as a Determinant of Holistic Education of Students in Secondary Schools in Kiambu and Samburu Counties, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to determine the contribution of leadership as a determinant of holistic education of students in secondary schools in Kiambu and Samburu Counties, Kenya. An explanatory mixed methods research design that involves both quantitative and qualitative strands was adopted for the study. The actual sample reached was 624 participants. The research instruments used during the first quantitative strand of the study were questionnaires for principals, students and senior teachers. The qualitative data in the second phase was collected using observation checklists and interview guidelines for principals, senior teachers, members of BoM as well as Quality Assurance and Standards Officers. Quantitative data from questionnaires was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The major finding was that majority of respondents in Kiambu County compared to their counterparts in Samburu County considered effective leadership as one of the determinants of holistic education. The results especially based on regression analysis and corroborated by qualitative data from interviews and observations led to the conclusion that the use of a combination of effective leadership dynamics was one of the determinants of holistic education. It was thus recommended that School managers should adopt well-balanced combinations of effective leadership techniques in order to achieve holistic education in terms of academic excellence.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

The interest and justification for delving in to a study on the contribution of leadership on holistic education can be traced historically as far back as the early part of the 21st century. The interest seems to have been as a result of the widespread belief that the quality of leadership makes a significant difference to school and student outcomes (Orodho, 2014). In many parts of the world, including South Africa, there is recognition that schools require effective leaders and managers if they are to provide the best possible education for their learners. However, it is arguable that this requires trained and committed teachers who in turn; need the leadership of highly effective principals and the support of other senior and middle level managers (Marais, 2011; World Bank, 2010). Nonetheless, this field of educational leadership and management is pluralist, with many competing perspectives and an inevitable lack of agreement on the exact nature of the discipline (Marais, 2011). The aspect of school leadership that seems to be least comprehended is how effective school leadership individually and/or in combination with other dynamics contributes to holistic education of learners.

1.2 State of the Art Review

At the regional level, the role of leadership as a dynamic of holistic education has been shown to have positive impact on students learning and other non-academic outcomes (Mike, Dowd et.al., Carron & Chau, 1996; Pereira, 1997). Studies conducted in Malawi, for example, supervisors in the schools that showed greater learning gains regularly evaluated teachers, contributing to professional development and improved teaching practice (Mike, Dowd et.al., 1998). Unfortunately, however, few head teachers and administrators in developing countries did not have any formal training in leadership functions of schools, and promotions were not based on leadership and management skills. Further, many heads of schools continue to have extensive pedagogical responsibilities in addition to administrative ones. This leaves little time for supervision and support of staff (Carron & Chau, 1996). Despite these practical constraints, programmes designed to increase professionalism in schools through management training, such as one sponsored by SIDA and conducted in disadvantaged district in Sri Lanka, show that interventions in this area can have a real positive impact on both academic and non-academic outcomes (Pereira, 1997).

A study by Biruk (2015) in Ethiopia on planning quality education in Ethiopian public universities indicated that there was a strong positive relationship between performance improvement arising from good institutional leadership and the four independent variables, namely;

considering customer needs, performance tracking, teaching methodologies and taking action in Ethiopian public universities. The main recommendation was that in order to sustain learner educational aspirations, there was necessity to carefully improve education quality management practices of Ethiopian public universities.

In the Kenyan context, Kibet (2012) investigated teachers (n=23) perceptions of leadership behaviour of women principals in Kiambu County, Kenya. Data was collected by means of questionnaire and subsequently analyzed using percentages. Results revealed that there were two aspects of principals' leadership behaviour that de-motivated teachers. There was the tendency to ignore ideas proposed by teachers on school related matters as reported by 40% of the teachers. The finding seemed to suggest that a principal's leadership behaviour was a stumbling block to leaders input on their task areas. The other aspect of school leadership is one that motivated teachers as they worked towards academic and nonacademic excellence (Kibet, 2012).

Wasonga (2015) carried out a study on the relationship between headteachers leadership styles and the development of students' discipline, and by extension, holistic education of students in public secondary schools in Rongo District (rural area) and Kisumu City (urban setting) in Kenya. The sample comprised 59 head teachers, 56 teacher counselors, 48 members of Parents Teachers Association (PTAs) and 400 students yielding a total sample size of 563 drawn from 59 schools.

The study established that school leadership was a significant determinant of school outcomes in terms of the non-academic measures of students discipline and academic measures of performance in national examinations. However, the analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistical test revealed that there was no statistically significant relationship between leadership styles used by principals and type of schools. These findings are in line with those of Orodho (2014) and Kibet 2012 which revealed that principals whose leadership styles was more participatory tended to yield higher school outcomes in terms of academic and non-academic measures. However, statistical ANOVA yielded values of F (3.42; 3.35) which were greater than F-values of 1.29 and .931 suggesting no significant correlation between type of school and headteachers management or leadership styles on students' non-academic measures of discipline and academic measures of student's achievement in national examinations.

2. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

2.1. The Design

The study adopted the mixed methods research and specifically use the explanatory sequential mixed methods research design (Creswell, 2012). A mixed methods research design is a procedure for collecting, analyzing, and "mixing" both quantitative and qualitative methods in a single study or a series of studies to understand a research problem (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The basic assumption is that the uses of both quantitative and qualitative methods, in combination, provide a better understanding of the research problem and question than either method by itself. The justification for the choice of this design was hinged on the fact that the design will enable the researcher use a qualitative strand to explain initial quantitative results (Creswell, Plano, Clark, et.al. 2003; Creswell, 2012).

2.2. Population and Sample selection

Combinations of stratified random sampling and purposive sampling procedures were used to select the required samples from the target population. The combinations of sampling methods were justified due to its ability to provide an opportunity for random selection of subjects and ability to strategically chose subjects for the study who have the required knowledge and experience on issues being investigated (Cohen & Manion, 2011; Cresswell, 2012, Orodho, 2009, 2012). Combinations of random and purposive sampling techniques yielded a sample size of 390 for Kiambu and 317 for Samburu Counties, making a combined sample size of 707.

2.3. Research Instruments and Data Collection

The questionnaire for School Principals and teachers contained both structured and unstructured questions. Section A had questions that collect general and demographic information on the respondents. Questions in this section focused on type of school, years of teaching experience in the school and enrollment as well as performance in national examinations the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) Examinations for the past three years.

The students' questionnaire contained both structured and unstructured questions. The section therefore contained a Likert scale types of questions where the respondents were required to indicate their level of agreement with statements that express a strong or weak indication of the extent to which they consider the non-academic curriculum as determinants of students' holistic education. The main structures put in place to promote various aspects of non-academic curriculum and the achievements in holistic education indicators will be assessed.

The content of the interview protocol was grounded in the quantitative results from the first phase of the study (Creswell, 2003). The interview Guide for the members

of the Board of Management contained focused questions regarding their rating of academic and non-academics as determinants of holistic education of students. The questions were tailored to attempt to explain any significant or non-significant as well as outline findings from the quantitative statistical data analysis as is expected in an explanatory variant of mixed methods research design.

An observation checklist was designed to contain most of the indicators of academic and non-academic dynamics that enhance students' holistic education. The investigator appropriately checked the extent to which rating of level of management of academic and non-academic variables by school principals. During the observation, an attempt was made to ascertain the extent to which what was reported in the first phase of the study are consistent with what was observed on the ground in the selected schools visited during the study. As counseled by Creswell et.al (2011), explanatory designs should have a qualitative strand that complement and corroborate results obtained from the quantitative strand of the design structure.

Piloting was done in one school in Kiambu County and one in Samburu County. These two schools were excluded from participating in the main study. The purpose of the pre-test was to determine the validity and reliability of the research instruments, especially the questionnaires, to be used for data collection. The content validity of the instruments was assessed by a panel of experts comprising of the supervisors and the lecturers at Mount Kenya University who are well versed in research methods at postgraduate level of scholarship. This study employed the split half method which does not require the researcher to get back to the respondents. This method, which involves splitting the questionnaire items into odd and even components and analyzing their reliability by comparing the totals of the two dichotomies and conducting a Pearson's Product Moment correlation followed by a modified Brown Prophecy estimate formula. A value greater than .75 for the correlation coefficient of each of the questionnaires designed for School Principals, and senior teachers was separately deemed adequate to declare the questionnaires as reliable (Brook, 2013; Orodho, 2009; 2017).

The data were collected from multiple sources to provide the richness and the depth of data in line with the explanatory design procedure which is a variant of mixed methods research was carried out in two phases (Creswell, et.al, 2011). The data collection strategies were implemented in two phases, starting with the implementation of the quantitative strand. During the first phase, the researcher visited the field for the first time to create rapport with the respondents and provide information about the study. This strategy helped to pave way for distribution of the questionnaires which will be

done during the second visit. Phase one therefore involved the implementation of the quantitative strand and through administration of questionnaires to school Managers and teachers. The questionnaires were hand delivered to the respondents, with a copy of the research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI).

The itinerary for this phase of data collection was organized in consultation with the school principal of the respective schools selected for the study. The respondents were requested to complete the questionnaires, and when through alerted the researcher to pick them later and within a period of one week. The data was analyzed as described fully in the next section and the significant findings emanating from the quantitative data noted. These findings were used to construct the qualitative interview protocol for the second phase of the study.

The second phase of the study was implemented on completion of analyzing the results from the first quantitative phase of the study. Using the quantitative results, the researcher identified the senior teachers and members of the Board of Management (BOM) who had displayed sound knowledge of non-academic dynamics as determinants of holistic education of learners for further scrutiny. A qualitative evaluation research was undertaken to investigate the extent to which some of the non-academic indicators were being implemented in schools.

2.4. Data Analysis Techniques and Procedures

The quantitative data from questionnaires were coded, entered and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Computer programme version 20. Descriptive statistics (frequencies, means, standard deviations and percentages) were computed by the SPSS Computer programme to determine the respondents' perceptions and rankings of the role of academic and non-academic dynamics on holistic education in the study locales.

Descriptive statistics were generated from analyzing Likert scale items which were created by calculating a

composite score (sum or mean) from five Likert type items (Orodho, Ampofo, Bizimana & Ndayambaje, 2015). For this reason, the composite score for Likert scales used in this study were analyzed at interval measurement scale. The study then used the recommended descriptive statistics for interval scale items which included the mean for central tendency and standard deviation for variability (Ary, Jacobs & Steven, 2010).

The following null hypothesis was tested at a significance level of .05.

1. HO: There is no significant relationship between school leadership and holistic education of students in public secondary schools in Kiambu and Samburu Counties. Independent sample t-test and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to determine the level of significance.

3.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSION

3.1. Leadership practices that contribute to holistic education

The first objective of this study was to determine school leadership styles in terms of democratic, autocratic, transactional or Laissez-Faire as a determinant of holistic education of students in public secondary schools in Kiambu and Samburu Counties. To achieve this objective, a questionnaire with items based on leadership styles commonly used and respondents ranking regarding their level of contribution to holistic education were employed. The items in the questionnaires for principals, teachers and students were structured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1= Never, 2= Rarely 3= Occasionally 4= frequently and 5= Very frequently were used. For data analysis, means and standard deviations were used to summarize the respondents' level of rating regarding the contribution of school leadership on holistic education. The greater the mean score, the closer the dynamic become a determinant of holistic education. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 : Leadership practices that contribute to holistic education

Leadership Style	Mean	SD	Rank
Communicates school mission effectively to staff and students	3.6117	.97650	1
Meets individually with students to discuss progress	2.3352	1.19300	6
Effective leadership leads to enhanced co-curricular activities	2.9084	.93985	3
Effective leadership results into enhanced physical facilities	2.8571	1.06733	4
Obtains concerted effort of all in school activities	2.4066	1.06119	5
Well balanced leadership contributes to holistic education	3.5604	1.13696	2

Table 1 shows that the mean for the seven items ranged from 2.3352 (SD= 1.1930 to 3.6117 (SD= .97650) . The most highly ranked aspect of school leadership that was considered to contribute positively to holistic education was the act of communicating school missions

effectively to staff and students which posted a mean of 3.6117 and standard deviation of .97650 Well balanced leadership attribute was at second position with a mean of 3.5804 and standard deviation of 1.13696, and effective leadership leads to enhanced co-curricular

activities at position two and three, respectively. Obtains concerted effort of all in school activities and meeting individually with students and staff to discuss progress of students were placed at position five and six respectively.

3.2. Leadership and holistic education by type of respondent and study Locale

A follow up of the findings was made in an attempt to find out the extent to which the views of the respondents regarding school leadership and holistic education

differed across the study locales of Kiambu and Samburu counties. Cross-tabulations of type of respondents by locale yielded results presented in Table 2. The results in table 2 indicate that while 70 % of the principals in Kiambu considered the contribution of school leadership to holistic education to be either important or very important, all their counterparts in Samburu County held similar view. This suggests that to a large extent, principals in the two locales considered school leadership to be a critical determinant of holistic education, with a larger percentage from Samburu attaching a stronger premium to school leadership.

Table 2 : Leadership used and Holistic Education by Respondent and Study Locale

Respondent	Response	Kiambu County		Samburu County		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Principal	Little Important	3	25.0	0	0.0	3	15.0
	Important	8	66.7	8	100.0	16	80.0
	Very Important	1	3.3	0	0.0	1	5.0
	Total	12	100.0	8	100.0	20	100.0
Senior Teacher	Little Important	6	12.5	4	14.3	10	13.2
	Important	37	77.1	19	67.9	56	73.7
	Very Important	5	10.4	5	17.9	10	13.2
	Total	48	100.0	28	100.0	76	100.0
Student	Never	0	0.0	25	13.2	25	5.6
	Very Little Important	53	16.6	39	20.5	92	20.4
	Little Important	62	19.4	28	14.7	81	18.0
	Important	159	49.7	66	34.7	180	40.0
	Very Important	46	14.4	32	16.8	72	16.0
	Total	260	100.0	190	100.0	450	100.0
Total	Never	0	0.0	25	11.1	25	4.6
	Very Little Important	53	16.6	39	17.3	92	16.9
	Little Important	62	19.4	32	14.2	94	17.2
	Important	159	49.7	93	41.2	252	46.2
	Very Important	46	14.4	37	16.4	83	15.2
	Total	320	100.0	226	100.0	546	100.0

The results in table 2 further indicate that a large percentage of senior teachers, constituting 87.5% from Kiambu County and 85.0 % from Samburu County strongly considered school leadership to be a contributing factor to students' holistic education. Thus, it was evident from the results of this study that to a large extent, senior teachers in the two locales considered school leadership to be a critical determinant of holistic education, with a larger percentage of senior teachers in Kiambu County holding such an opinion.

The results displayed in Table 2 indicate that that while just below two thirds of students (64.1%) in Kiambu County considered school leadership to be a contributing factor to holistic education, slightly over half (56.0%) of students in Samburu County held similar opinions. This proportion was less than the proportion of principals and teachers who considered school leadership to be a

contributory factor to students' holistic education. On the overall, the results in Table 2 reveals that an almost identical percentage of all categories of respondents comprising 64.1 % of students in Kiambu County and 61.4 % from Samburu County were of the opinion that school leadership contributed positively to holistic education.

3.3. Leadership and holistic education by school classification

An attempt was made to investigate the extent the perceptions of respondents regarding the contribution of effective leadership on holistic education varied across various types of school classifications. A cross-tabulation of responses by type of schools was performed and results depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Leadership and holistic education by type of school classification

The results in Figure 1 indicate that a larger percentage of respondents, constituting from National schools considered effective leadership to positively contribute to holistic education. The respondents from county schools also rated the contribution of effective leadership to holistic education more than their counterparts from sub-county schools. The implication here is that although the respondents generally attached high premium on the contribution of effective leadership to holistic education, respondents in national and county schools rated higher than their colleagues from sub county schools.

3.4. Testing the null hypothesis on leadership and holistic education

H_{01} : There is no significant relationship between school leadership and holistic education of students in public secondary schools in Kiambu and Samburu Counties.

The chi-square test of homogeneity of association was used to test the relationship between school leadership and holistic education. Table 3 shows the results of the chi-square test. The results in Table 3 indicates that principals ($\chi^2 = 3.333$, $df=2$, $p=.189$) $p = .189$ value generated by SPSS was more or greater than the critical value of $\alpha = .05$, and this led to the retention of the null hypothesis that there was no significant relationship between school leadership and holistic education of students in public secondary schools in Kiambu and Samburu Counties.

Table 3 : Chi-Square Tests : Leadership and holistic education by type of respondents in study Locale

Respondent		Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Principal	Pearson Chi-Square	3.333 ^b	2	.189
	Likelihood Ratio	4.740	2	.093
	Linear-by-Linear Association	.667	1	.414
	N of Valid Cases	20		
Senior Teacher	Pearson Chi-Square	.991 ^c	2	.609
	Likelihood Ratio	.967	2	.617
	Linear-by-Linear Association	.212	1	.645
	N of Valid Cases	76		
Student	Pearson Chi-Square	38.580 ^d	4	.000
	Likelihood Ratio	47.553	4	.000
	Linear-by-Linear Association	8.962	1	.003
	N of Valid Cases	450		
Total	Pearson Chi-Square	39.968 ^a	4	.000
	Likelihood Ratio	48.743	4	.000
	Linear-by-Linear Association	8.491	1	.004
	N of Valid Cases	546		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 10.35.

b. 4 cells (66.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .40.

c. 2 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.68.

d. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 10.56.

The results suggested that there were no significant differences between the rating of principals regarding the contribution of school leadership to holistic education in Kiambu and Samburu Counties. The results for Senior teachers ($\chi^2 = 38.580$, $df=2$, $p=.000$) revealed that the $p=.000$ value generated by SPSS was less than the critical alpha value = .05 and this led to the rejection of the null hypothesis at level of significance $\alpha=.05$. The finding indicates that there was a significant relationship or difference between the ratings of senior teachers regarding the contribution of school leadership to holistic education. This suggested that the senior teachers held the position that school leadership significantly contributed to holistic education and the views significantly differed across the study locales of Kiambu and Samburu Counties.

The results for students ($\chi^2 = 39.968$, $df=4$, $p=.004$) revealed that the $p=.004$ value generated by SPSS was less than the critical alpha = .05 and this resulted in to the rejection of the null hypothesis at significance alpha level of .05. The rejection of the null hypothesis led to the adoption of the alternative hypothesis that there was a significant relationship between school leadership and holistic education of students in public secondary schools in Kiambu and Samburu Counties. Contrary to the views of principals, the senior teachers and students portrayed a strong perception that effective school leadership contributed significantly to holistic education.

3.5. Triangulating and Interpreting Quantitative and Qualitative Data on Leadership

The second phase of the study generated qualitative data from interviews and observation checklists to explain some of the quantitative data generated in first phase. The Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (QUASO) in the locales averred:

The policy of the Ministry of Education, through the Kenya Education Staff Institute (KEMI) is to train school head teachers on effective leadership. Based on this evolving trajectory of reports from training sessions the effects of good leadership and governance on schools' outcomes is yielding positive results. However, it is not very clear how these skills are transforming educational outcomes especially holistic education, although the concept of holistic education is still emerging...The ranking of school outcomes should not only be based on academic excellence. School leadership should surely be another component (QUASO 1, Kiambu County & QUASO 2, and Samburu County).

The sentiments of one members of Board of Management were categorical that school leadership contributes to a great extent to holistic education.

It has been observed that the school outcomes depend on the type of principal in schools. When a school has a principal who is actively involved in school processes and keeps the parents informed through functional parents and teachers associations (PTA), such schools have been seen to post positive and high results both in academics and school discipline than those managed by irresponsible and absentee principals (BoM, 03, 17, 34, 48 in Kiambu County & BoM 12, 19, 26 in Samburu County).

The sentiments captured from the foregoing voices of the QUASOs and members of BoM in Kiambu and Samburu Counties are consistent with the results of earlier scholars such as Ndayambaje and Orodho (2014) in the context of Rwanda that there is widespread belief that the quality of leadership makes a significant difference to school and student outcomes. In many parts of the world, including South Africa, and some parts of Kenya such as Kisii, results have shown that there is recognition of the fact that schools require effective leaders and managers if they are to provide the best possible education for their learners (Mwinyipembe & Orodho, 2015, Nyambeche & Orodho, 2014).

The foregoing notwithstanding, several principals from Kiambu County and one from Samburu County seemed to have different opinions regarding the contribution of school leadership to holistic education when they lamented that:

School leadership is a very complicated task that covers various aims of school that affect both students and staff. School aims are strongly influenced by pressures from the external environment, and particularly from the expectations of government, often expressed through legislation or formal policy statements. Schools may be left with the residual task of interpreting external imperatives rather than determining aims on the basis of their own assessment of learner needs (Principal 05, 08, 12 in Kiambu County and Principals 03 & 07 in Samburu County).

The foregoing sentiments by school principals seem to be in tandem with findings from other developing and developed countries. These studies show that many principals in schools in most of these countries continue to have extensive pedagogical responsibilities in addition to administrative ones. This leaves little time for supervision and support of staff (Carron & Chau, 1996).

The key issues that seem to emerge from the principals' sentiments are that school managers are faced with myriads of tasks to be achieved including modifying

government policy and developing alternative approaches based on school-level values and vision. These duties when conducted well to involve the learner should be able to impact positively on the holistic education of the students.

The QASO in one of the study locales had the following to say:

First, principals of high performing schools reported a higher level of inspiring and encouraging members to accomplish their goals ranging from academic and non-academic in nature. Secondly, it was noted between two categories of principals with regard to the extent to which they encouraged the active participation of members of community in school affairs (QUASO, Samburu County).

The qualitative data from interview seem to point to the fact that the effectiveness of school management process was dependent on the leadership skills of the principals and impacted positively on both academic and non-academic school outcomes (Aubrey, 1992).

The members of the BOM in Kiambu County and Samburu County categorically stated that:

Schools principals, those leading national and county schools produced greater use of leadership practices of inspiring members and creating an enabling working environment through the redistribution of power and authority within the school. These principals demonstrating effective leadership skills produced more positive features of high academic and non-academic outcomes compared with developing schools (The BoM 05, 17, 45 from Kiambu County and 11, 23, 25 from Samburu County).

There was consensus that effective management by school principals translated into a high-level students' discipline and overall excellent school outcomes.

The foregoing citations are in line with those of James and Connolly (2008) who had earlier established that the changes that contributed to improvements in school practices leading to high academic and non-academic output in Southern Wales, United Kingdom was leadership.

The sentiments were rather contrary to the interview results with BOM who noted:

Most of the principals were reported to have been newly posted. Consequently, the schools had benefited from the new ideas and practices recently acquired during

training that, to a considerable extent, triggered the new changes. Some of the changes introduced by the principals, who in the opinion of teachers and parents enhanced their input included improvement of school infrastructure, involvement to members of school community (teachers, students and parents) in school matters, and constant articulation of school vision to the members of the school community by principals (BoM, 10, 22 in Kiambu & 05 in Samburu County).

These findings were in tandem with those of Kilpatrick, John, Mulford, Falk and Prescod (2002) who conducted a study in Australia that sought to investigate ways in which the modes of leadership of school and community leaders influenced the extent and nature of the schools contribution to the community. The study revealed that the major in-school factor that enhanced school-community partnership was the principals' open-state leadership, which, *inter alia*, accommodated opportunities and ideas put forward by others. The finding is also in tandem with a study by Wasonga (2015) who established that there was a positive relationship between headteachers leadership styles and the development of students' discipline, and by extension, holistic development of students in public secondary schools in Rongo District (rural area) and Kisumu City (urban setting) in Kenya. The study specifically established that school leadership was a significant determinant of school outcomes in terms of the non-academic measures of students discipline and academic measures of performance in national examinations. However, the analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistical test revealed that there was no statistically significant relationship between leadership styles used by principals and type of schools.

4.0. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. Study Conclusions

With respect to the first objective that examined contribution of school leadership to holistic education, the results from both quantitative results from the first phase and qualitative results from in-depth interviews and observations in the second phase of the study led to the main conclusion that majority of principals, senior teachers and students in Samburu County considered the use of effective school leadership for holistic education compared to their counterparts in Kiambu County. The specific conclusions per objective are:

1. There are several aspects of school leadership that could positively foster inculcation of holistic education. Some of these school leadership attributes include: the act of effectively communicating school vision and mission to students and staff, use of well-balanced leadership styles especially the democratic and transactional approaches, soliciting and fostering concerted effort amongst all education stake holders and forging close relationships among students, staff and members of the Board of Management while discussing student progress specifically and school generally.
2. Since a majority of principals in Samburu County compared to their counterparts in Kiambu County considered the use of school leadership to be a critical determinant of holistic education, it can be concluded that principals in Samburu County were applying more appropriate and conducive school leadership traits that could lead to holistic education. This difference notwithstanding, it can be concluded from the results of this study that to a large extent, senior teachers in the two locales considered school leadership to be a critical determinant of holistic education. On the overall, the results lead to the conclusion that an almost identical percentage of all categories of respondents in Kiambu County and Samburu County were unanimous that school leadership contributed positively to holistic education.
3. It was established respondents from national schools and county schools rated the contribution of effective leadership to holistic education more than their counterparts from sub-county schools. This led to the conclusion that principals in national and county schools exercised more appropriate leadership styles that combined democratic and transactional approaches that could lead to holistic education compared to their counterparts in sub-county schools.
4. The test of null hypothesis led to the conclusion that there was no significant relationship between school leadership and holistic education of students in public secondary schools in Kiambu and Samburu Counties. The implication of the results was that principals regarding concurred regarding the contribution of school leadership to holistic education in Kiambu and Samburu Counties.
5. However, results for senior teachers and students indicated that there were significant differences between the perceptions of the two groups of respondents across the two study locales of Kiambu and Samburu Counties, hence contradicted those of principals. This finding led to the conclusion that the senior teachers and students held the position that school leadership significantly contribute to holistic development and the views significantly differed across the study locales of Kiambu and Samburu Counties.

6. The results from the qualitative phase of the study from the interviews with Quality Assurance and Standards Officers made an attempt to explain the quantitative results from a policy perspective. They contended that the Ministry of Education, through the Kenya Education Staff Institute trains school teachers in effective school leadership that can transform the overall development of the staff and students through holistic education.
7. The sentiments of several members of Board of Management in both Kiambu County and Samburu County were categorical that school leadership contributes to a great extent to holistic education. They concurred with the results of earlier scholars who contended that there was widespread belief that the quality of leadership makes a significant difference to school and student outcomes.

4.2. Recommendations for Policy

The fact that the study established the rating of school leadership as one of the determinants of holistic education to be high but differed across counties and types of schools, it is recommended that principals, especially those from areas that recorded low rating for school leadership should be sensitized on the need to apply well-balanced democratic and transactional leadership styles that can easily bring about holistic education.

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