

ABSTRACT

Principals of schools are charged with responsibility of promoting student academic achievement through organization and management of curriculum in schools. There are circumstances which hinder principals from fulfilling this responsibility. This implies that principals are facing challenges in their endeavour to promote student academic achievement. In Kisumu East Sub-county, the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education mean scores in the recent past were low that is; 5.83, 5.36, 5.77, 5.60, 5.40, 5.67, 5.89 and 5.66 for the years 2005 to 2012. The purpose of this study was to establish the perceptions on challenges faced by principals in enhancing student academic achievement in Kisumu East sub-county. The objectives of the study were to; establish perceptions on physical facilities, teaching/learning resources, student discipline and financial resource management challenges faced by principals in enhancing student academic achievement in Kisumu East Sub-county. Conceptual framework showing perceptions on challenges faced by principals in enhancement of student academic achievement was used to focus on the variables of the study. Descriptive survey research design was used. The study population was 33 principals, 33 deputy principals, 33 senior teachers and one Sub-County Quality Assurance and Standards Officer (SCQUASO). Saturated sampling was used to select 30 principals, 30 deputy principals, 30 senior teachers and one SCQUASO. Data were collected using questionnaires, in-depth interview schedules and observation guides. Experts in Education administration validated the instruments. Reliability coefficients of principal's questionnaire was 0.8, deputy principal's 0.75 and senior teacher's 0.83 at a p- value of 0.05. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics in form of frequency counts, means and percentages. Qualitative data from in-depth interviews were transcribed and organized into emergent themes and sub themes. The study established that principals were viewed to be facing physical facilities based challenges rated at 4 by a majority 388(53.6%) respondents denoting it was often a challenge and confirmed by inter quartile range of 2.10 with the median above half the range. Teaching/Learning resources based challenges rated at 4 by 278(52.1%) respondents denoting it was often a challenge as confirmed from an inter quartile range of 0.40 with the median above half the range. Student discipline was rated at 4 by majority 455(71.8%) respondents denoting it was sometimes a challenge confirmed by an interquartile range of 2.20 with the median below half the range. Financial resource management was rated at 5 by majority 244(46.8%) respondents as confirmed by an interquartile range 1.10 with the median above half the range denoting it was always a challenge. This study concluded that principals, deputy principals and senior teachers were of the view that principals face many challenges in their endeavors to enhance student academic achievement. The study recommended that stakeholders facilitate the principals to address the challenges faced. The findings of the study are important in giving educators direction on challenges faced by Principals as quality agents in enhancement of student academic achievement in educational institutions.