



RESEARCH ARTICLE

GOVERNMENT POLICY BASED CHALLENGES FACED BY PRINCIPALS IN ENHANCING STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KENYA: A STUDY ACROSS PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NDHIWA SUB COUNTY

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ABSTRACT

Globally, principals of schools play a very important role in enhancing students' academic achievement. However, in the process of doing this, studies have shown that, principals are faced with a number of challenges resulting in poor performance of students. For instance public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County had not been performing well academically as shown by Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examination results between the years 2013 and 2018, compared to the neighboring Sub Counties within Homa Bay County. Average Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examination mean scores was 4.7 when compared to other Sub-counties, which were higher; Homa-Bay: 6.0; Suba: 5.0 Rachuonyo North: 5.1; Rachuonyo South: 5.2; Mbita: 5.3. Hitherto the government policy based challenges principals faced relating to their areas of operations were unknown in Ndhiwa Sub County. The objective of the study was therefore to establish government policy based challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County. Grounded theory was used to guide the study. A conceptual framework based on concept that challenges faced by principals (Independent Variables), must be overcome in order to enhance student academic achievement (Dependent Variables) was used. The study established that Government policy posed a big challenge with an overall mean rating of 3.21. The study recommended that government policy based challenges should be dealt with effectively by the principals and other stakeholders mainly the government in order to enhance student's academic achievement in schools.

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INTRODUCTION

School principals play a very important role in enhancing students' academic performance both internationally and locally. Bakhda (2010) indicates that head teachers play a very important role in maintaining appropriate and detailed records of the students' academic progress and their social growth. Hompashe (2018) established the association between measures of instructional leadership (e.g. teachers' understanding of curricular goals and teachers' degree of success in implementing curricular goals) and student scores for mathematics and science using linear probability models. Findings confirm the existence of the principal-agent problem in education, since many school respondents indicated that curriculum delivery monitoring was not conducted as expected. From the multivariate analysis, instructional leadership variables, such as teachers' understanding of curricular goals and teachers' degree of success in implementing the curriculum appear as important correlates of student achievement, though significance differs according to level of schooling and whether the questions were answered by principals or teachers. In a conference paper presented by Dina (2012) on challenges faced by educational leadership on

influencing student learning, it was established that major challenges having a significant impact on students' learning are school conditions, teachers as well as student background and the government policies and school approaches. A study on the roles of school heads in enhancing students' academic performance was carried out in Mbeya Urban, Tanzania. Ndyali (2013) established that school heads are surrounded by many challenges which make the school management to be unbearable and that their roles had been hampered by unfriendly working situations in which schools operate under shortage of teachers, facilities, funds and lack of commitment among stakeholders. The study concluded that the students' poor academic performance in the context of the roles of school heads prevailing in community secondary schools is a result of an educational system that produces predetermined poor results. Indeed, Abdurashheed and Bello (2015) confirmed this study in their research, on the challenges to secondary school principals' leadership in Northern Region of Nigeria. They established that poor funding of schools is a major problem and that secondary school education board did not have a system of organizing seminars for capacity building to re-train and improve leadership effectiveness of principals in the region. Ndotu (2015) also established that principals face financial challenges, inadequate facilities and shortage of teaching staff. It is thus clear from the above studies that principals influence students'

academic achievement and those principals face challenges in enhancing students' academic achievement. Mugambi (2015) in a study to establish the role of principals in promoting student academic performance in secondary schools in Tigania West Sub-county, Meru County, established that there was an association between the school's performance and its principal's instructional management practices. Other findings were that, some minor approaches like use of students to monitor teacher lesson attendance and visiting class to observe a teacher were rarely used. Mugambi (2015) further established that schools faced challenges that include inadequate trained teachers, learning/ teaching materials, irregular fee payment, inadequate science laboratories and lack of time to check on the teachers' and students' work by principals. The principals also face student-based challenges as observed by studies conducted without and within the country. For instance, Waseka and Simatwa (2016), carried out a study on student factors influencing academic performance of students in secondary education in Kakamega County, Kenya. The study established that performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education, age, participation in co-curricular activities and exclusion from school were student factors. This study however, did not establish which one of these are a challenge to the principals, the knowledge gap this study sought to fill in public secondary schools in Ndhwa Sub - County. The Kenyan Government allocates more than 50% of its total recurrent expenditure on education. The problem of poor performance in national examinations is costly for any country since education is a major contributor to economic growth (Atkinson, 2012). The poor performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examinations in Ndhwa Sub- County for the last six years is depicted in Table 1.

Table 1. Trends in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education Performance for Homa Bay County 2013 -2018

Sub- County	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Av
Ndhiwa	4.3	4.8	5.1	4.9	5.2	4.1	4.7
Homa Bay	5.7	5.8	6.0	6.3	6.4	6.3	6.1
Suba	4.5	4.8	5.4	5.6	5.0	5.2	5.1
Rachuonyo North	4.8	5.0	5.2	5.1	5.4	5.4	5.2
Rachuonyo South	4.5	4.1	5.1	6.1	5.4	5.6	5.1
Mbita	4.6	4.8	5.1	5.7	5.8	5.5	5.3

Source: County Quality Assurance and Standards Office, Homa Bay County, 2018

From Table 1, Ndhwa Sub - County had the lowest mean score of 4.1 in 2013 and the highest mean score was 5.2 in 2017, compared to the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education performance in Homa Bay Sub - County where the highest was 6.4 in 2017 and the lowest was 6.0 in 2015. In Suba Sub - County, the highest mean score was 5.6 in 2016 while it registered 4.5 mean score in 2013 as the lowest, which was still higher than the lowest in Ndhwa Sub-County. Rachuonyo North had Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education performance of 4.8 as the lowest in 2013 and the highest as 5.4 in 2017 and 2018. This was still higher than what Ndhwa Scored as its highest mean score of 5.2 in 2017. In Rachuonyo South, Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examinations performance in 2016 was the highest with a mean score of 6.1 while the lowest was 4.1 in 2014, same to the lowest in Ndhwa Sub - County in 2018. Mbita Sub - County Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education performance mean score lowest stood at 4.6 in 2013 and highest at 5.8 in 2017 which was higher than Ndhwa Sub - County. The average mean score for the six years in Homa bay County, Ndhwa Sub - County ranked lowest with an average mean score of 4.7 in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education performance, compared to 6.1 (Homa Bay), 5.1 (Suba), 5.2 (Rachuonyo North), 5.1 (Rachuonyo South), and 5.3 (Mbita). Ndhwa Sub-county has experienced poor academic performance from time to time, which has witnessed standoffs, protests and principals have been the point of focus, the Board of Management and other stakeholders. The fact that the poor performance sparked potential riots and rejection of principals suggested that perhaps there are challenges, issues which principals face which was worth a research. It is against this backdrop that a research on the challenges faced by principals in

enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhwa Sub- County was conducted.

Research Objective: The objective of the study was to: establish government policy based challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhwa Sub County.

Synthesis of literature on government policy based challenges faced by principals in enhancing student's academic achievement: Acknowledging that quality teaching is imperative for student achievement, governments and educational accrediting bodies enact policies designed to improve teacher quality (Dinham, 2013; Witte & Jansen, 2015). Molokomphale and Mhlauli (2014) are of the view that education is a promoter of human development and a centre of any society's life and concern. It is a social artifact embodying aspirations of the welfare and development a society deems to have. In Botswana, education is expected to contribute towards the social, cultural, political, and economic welfare and development of citizens; and this calls for a critical role in education arena. According to Botswana educational goals, children who complete secondary education are expected to have acquired lifelong skills and be competitive in the global village when it comes to their employability (Nichols & Sutton, 2013). This therefore, calls for students to excel academically and perform to the satisfaction of the nation. At primary level, basic education is free to all children in Botswana and the government is the sole sponsor for the education of the students from primary to secondary school levels.

A number of studies have been done in relation to government policy based challenges both internationally and locally. Usman and Abdullahi (2015) conducted a study on Socio – economic challenges and political challenges affecting students' performance in selected secondary schools in Gusan Metropolis and established that majority of the respondents (100%) were of the opinion that the government had never provided writing materials either weekly, monthly, termly or annually. Higher percentage of the respondents (56.7%) were of the opinion that the government was only able to provide one laboratory. 70% of the respondents indicated that the classrooms the government provided were inadequate and that the teachers were not receiving their salaries and promotions at the appropriate time. There were also rare supervisions by the government, which was once per term from the study. This means that if it were the government's policy to provide such things as the writing materials and providing classrooms and laboratories, then the performance of the students would be greatly hampered with as the government had failed to it to the standard. This would in turn be a challenge to the principal as he/she will be the one questioned over poor performance. Moreover, if salaries and promotions are not received at the appropriate time by the teachers, they become demoralized and fail to perform their noble duty, hence poor academic performance. The government equally has a responsibility to ensure that the policies are implemented by thorough supervision. If the supervision is not thorough, then many of the policies may not be implemented resulting in poor performance of the school. All these become a challenge to principals who have very little to do on policies which the government have to implement, more particularly, when they are not facilitated. In Ghana some schools introduced indirect fees despite free education to compensate for the lost revenue. Similarly, in Nigeria provided tuition free secondary education, yet different forms of fees were imposed on parents to cover the cost to meet cost of running the system (UNESCO, 2007). The possibility for this is that the governments (Ghana and Nigeria) could not have been remitting the monies in good time as reflected by Nyaega (2011) or it was inadequate. Ford (2013) in a study on the impact of the school board governors on academic achievements in Diverse States revealed that the way in which school boards govern does affect district level performance. Specifically, the school boards that engage in strategic planning view their superintendent as a collaborator and mitigate conflict, perform better on academic outcome indicators. Since it is the role of the government to constitute the board of management, it has the sole responsibility to ensure that

the Board of Management constituted performs its role effectively to enhance academic achievement, failure to which, the principal faces the challenge as reflected in the students' academic achievement. This study, however, did not reveal the Board of Management was a challenge to the principals, the knowledge gap that this study sought to fill. Nurudeen, Wan, Abdul and Latif (2018) carried out a study on the impact of government funding on students' academic performance in Ghana and the findings indicated that government funding (Progressive Fee Policy) has a greater impact on students' academic performance. Badugela (2012) equally conducted a study on problems facing educators in implementing the National Curriculum Statement at Tshifhena Secondary school, Vhembe District, Limpopo Province, South Africa, established that the implementation of the National Curriculum Statement was problematic and far from satisfactory. The respondents posted a gloomy picture about the previous conditions in the schools with 67% of the respondents indicating lack of support from the education department and 75% of respondents indicated a shortage of learning and teaching resources.

However, did not reveal which aspect was a challenge to the principals, the knowledge gap that this study sought to fill. Ndeto (2013) also carried out a study on effectiveness of school rules and regulations in enhancing discipline in public secondary schools in Kagundo division, Machakos County, where the findings established that the students were not adequately involved in the formation of school rules and regulations though they were highly involved in implementation of the same. It was also revealed that the students were positive about school rules and regulations. They were willing to embrace them and seemed to recognize their intrinsic value in day-to-day life and discipline enhancement. Discipline is key for good performance as reflected by a study conducted by Karanja and Bowen (2012) who established that strikes negatively affected the academic performance of the students and a correlation carried out confirmed the negative relationship between students' unrests and academic performance. Further, schools where students went on strike showed higher variation in the mean grade when compared to schools where students did not go on strike. Its thus imperative that when the government comes with a policy in enhancing discipline among the students, then the students ought to be involve fully in its development to improve their owning of the same. Without this done, then the principal who is directly involved in this faces a very big challenge being an implementer. In another related study, King'oina, Ngaruiya and Mobegi (2017) on the role of board of management as a determinant of pupils' academic performance in public primary schools in Marani Sub County, established that majority of the schools' Board of Management did not participate in matters of discipline, promote a culture of dialogue and democratic governance, undertake guidance and counselling. The study as well found out that inadequate executive of Board of Management role by the members negatively influenced pupils' academic performance.

In its efforts to achieve education for all, Kenya has enacted various educational policies in pursuit of this important international convention. One such policy is the educational re-entry policy for girls after teenage pregnancy. This policy was meant to promote the education of girls and help the country towards the attainment of education for all Kenyans. This policy was introduced in Kenya in 1994 and supported young mothers to continue schooling after delivery (Republic of Kenya, 2005). Despite the introduction of the re-entry policy there has not been a major increase in enrolment of girls in schools. This scenario is confirmed by the research carried out by the Forum for African Women Educationalists, which indicates the persistently low levels of girls' participation in education as compared to boys (Forum for Africa Women Education, 2001). However, an earlier study carried out by Forum for Africa Women Education (2001) Kenya found that though the readmission strategy has been pronounced, it has been left to the discretion of the head teachers and school boards to decide whether to readmit the girls or not. The Forum then concluded that in the event that the head teachers or school boards do not value girls' education, then the girls seeking re-admission suffer. Many schools prefer to expel pregnant girls as they

are seen as a bad influence on other girls in the school. The Kenya Children Act (Republic of Kenya, 2001) unequivocally stipulates every child's entitlement to education, thus ensuring full inclusion of girls in basic education. Chabari (2010) conducted a study on challenges facing effective implementation of free secondary education in public secondary education in Kangundo District. All the respondents indicated that the allocation to various schools were not adequate to meet the needs of the school. Conclusively, the above studies have identified government policy based challenges, which involve the implementation of free day secondary school, discipline among the students and curriculum changes. However, it was not clear from the studies, which government – based challenges principals faced in their endeavors to enhance students' academic achievement in Ndiwa Sub County, Kenya, the knowledge gap this study sought to fill in public secondary schools in Ndiwa Sub County, Kenya.

Conceptual framework: The study was conceptualized on the basis of variables that were used in the study (Figure 1). In this case, the study assumed that students' academic achievement was affected by a combination of various variables namely government policy based challenges. The conceptual framework postulates that independent variable (government policy based challenges) affect the dependent variable (students' academic achievement). The Government policy based challenges are: Free Day Secondary School Policy, Re-entry policy, Board of Management policy, school sponsorship policy, standards and safety policy and student discipline management policy. However, there are other factors like teachers' attitude and parental support which may intervene resulting in better or poor performance of the students. Studies have shown that there is a significant relationship between government policy based factors and students' academic performance (Abdulrasheed & Bello, 2015), Waseka & Simatwa, 2016), Badugela, 2012, Wanyama & Simatwa, 2011 and Ndereba, 2011). Similarly, studies have shown that Government policy based challenges and economic based challenges surround the school principals and this impact negatively on the results (Ndyali, 2013 & Ndotu, 2015). In this study, the extent to which these challenges influence students' academic achievement was measured.

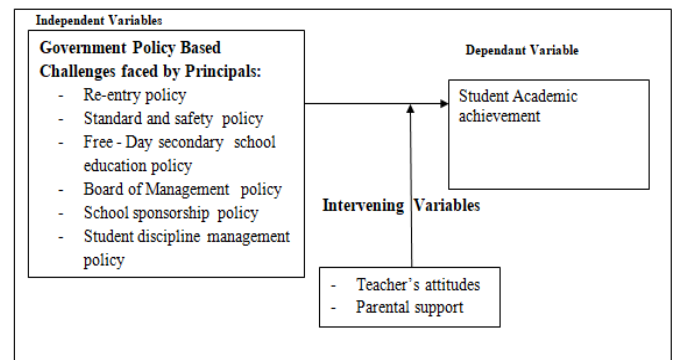


Figure1: Government policy based challenges principals' face in enhancing Students' Academic Achievement

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employed descriptive survey research design. The study population comprised 45 principals, 203 teachers, 2,469 Form three students and 1 Sub-County Quality Assurance and Standards Officer. Saturated sampling was used to select 26 principals, and 1 Sub County Quality Assurance and Standards Officer. Simple random sampling was used to select 133 teachers and 332 students. Data was collected using questionnaire, interviews and focus group discussion. Face and content validity of the instruments was established by experts in educational administration. The reliability of these instruments was established through test-re-test method in 3 schools and Cronbach Alpha. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, means and percentages. Qualitative data was transcribed and analyzed in emergent themes and sub themes.

RESULTS

Demographic Data of Respondents: The respondents involved in the study were: Principals, Teachers, Students and the Sub County Quality Assurance and Standards Officer. The principals were asked to indicate the category of school, gender, age range and the 2014 Kenya Mean Score for their schools in addition to their gender and range. Teachers were also asked to indicate their gender and age range. The findings were as shown in Tables 2, 3, 4 and 5.

Table 2: Category of Schools

Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
National	0	0
Extra County	0	0
County	5	19.2
Sub County	21	80.8
Total	26	100

Table 3: Distribution of Principals and Teachers by their Age

Age	Principals		Teachers	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
25 – 30	0	0	10	7.5
31 – 40	0	0	98	73.7
41 – 50	21	80.8	15	11.3
51 – 60	5	19.2	10	7.5
Total	26	100	133	100

Table 4: Distribution of Principals and Teachers by Gender

Gender	Principals		Teachers	
	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Male	21	80.8	90	67.7
Female	5	19.2	43	32.3
Total	26	100	133	100

Table 5. 2018 Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examination Performance by Schools in Ndihiwa Sub County

Mean Score	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1.00 - 3.44	6	23.2
3.45 - 5.44	14	53.8
5.45 - 7.44	5	19.2
7.45 - 8.44	1	3.8
Total	26	100

From Table 2, it was observed that there were only five (5) County schools and a higher number of schools (21) being Sub County Schools with no National or Extra County schools. From Table 3, it was revealed that majority of the principals 21 were in the age bracket of 41-50 (80.8%). This meant that the majority of the principals had gained reasonable experience and hence were appropriate to respond to aspects of challenges they face in enhancing students' academic achievements. Moreover, 5(19.2%) principals were aged between 51 and 60, meaning even more experienced. It was also noted that majority of teachers were aged between 31 and 40(73.7%). This was attributed to the fact that from the year 2009 there had been a number of new schools established through Constituency Development Fund that required newly employed teachers. At the same time, they have gained experience and can easily observe the challenges that principals face in enhancing students' academic achievement. Twenty 25(33.3%) teachers were found to be aged above 40 meaning that they were satisfactorily experienced and were in a position to respond to challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement. Only 10(13.3%) teachers were aged between 25 and 30. From Table 4, it can be noted that 21(80.8%) principals were males while 5(19.2%) principals were females. At the same time, 90(67.7%) teachers were males and 43(32.3%) were females. This indicated that there is still gender disparity in distribution of teachers in Ndihiwa Sub County. From Table 5, it was observed that 6(23.2%) schools had very low performance in 2018 Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examinations with a mean score between 1.00 and 3.44; 14 (53.8%) schools had performance of mean score ranging from 3.45 to 5.44;

five (19.2%) schools had average performance between 5.45 and 7.44 and only 1(3.8%) school had high performance between 7.45 and 8.44. This performance indicated that most schools in Ndihiwa Sub County performed below average of a score of 6.00 out of 12.00.

Research Question: The research question responded to was what are the government policy based challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndihiwa Sub- County? To achieve this objective, principals and teachers in public secondary schools were asked to respond to aspects of government policy based challenges that the principals faced in their endeavor to enhance students' academic achievement as shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Government Policy Based Challenges faced by Principals in enhancing Students' Academic Achievement as reported by Principals (n=26) and Teachers (n=133)

Aspects of Government Policy based challenges	Respondents	Ratings					Total Score	MR	OMR
		1	2	3	4	5			
Free Day Secondary School Education Policy	P	0	0	3	14	9	110	4.23	3.11
	T	8	44	45	27	9	384	2.89	
Re – Entry Policy	P	0	0	6	16	4	102	3.92	3.82
	T	1	11	32	58	31	505	3.80	
School Sponsorship Policy	P	4	15	7	0	0	55	2.12	2.74
	T	10	45	42	26	10	380	2.86	
Board of Management Policy	P	1	7	12	6	0	75	2.88	3.03
	T	3	31	56	41	2	407	3.06	
Standards and Safety Policy	P	3	15	7	1	0	58	2.23	2.64
	T	8	57	41	20	7	360	2.71	
Student Discipline Management Policy	P	0	0	6	12	8	106	4.08	3.90
	T	0	2	40	65	26	513	3.86	
Overall Mean									3.21

Key: P: Principal T: Teacher MR: Mean Rating OMR: Overall Mean Rating

Interpretation of Mean Ratings

- 1.00-1.44 = Least Challenge;
- 1.45-2.44 = Less Challenge;
- 2.45-3.44 = Big Challenge;
- 3.45-4.44 = Bigger Challenge;
- 4.44-5.0 = Biggest Challenge

From Table 6, it can be observed that students discipline management policy was highly rated as a bigger challenge at 4.08 and 3.86 by principals and teachers respectively. Re-entry policy was rated at 3.92 by principals and at 3.80 by teachers. Free Day Secondary School Policy which was rated by the principals at 4.23 and 2.89 by teachers. School sponsorship policy was lowly rated at 2.12 and 2.86 by principals and teachers respectively. Finally, Standards and safety policy was rated at 2.23 by principals and 2.71 by teachers. Free Day Secondary School Policy (3.11), Board of Management policy (3.03), Sponsorship Policy (2.74) and Standards and Safety Policy (2.64) were all rated as big challenges. The rating of student discipline management policy highest at 3.90 overall, meant that it was a bigger challenge faced by the principals in enhancing students' academic achievement. Re -entry policy was also found to be a bigger challenge rated overall at 3.82.

DISCUSSION

With regard to student discipline Sub County Quality Assurance and Standards Officer noted "more often students defy school administration orders and instructions. This results in school unrests and in some cases students strike destroying school property and even cause injury to fellow students and teachers. This is a matter that rests squarely with the principals he is required by the parents and Ministry of Education to explain. As such, this is a big challenge because it impacts negatively on students' academic achievement." Indeed it is true that indiscipline students cannot perform better in their academics

because they lose focus and concentrate on issues that do not help them in their academic work. During student focus group discussion, the students expressed the fact that they were aware of the negative effect of school unrests. They explained that school unrests lead to loss of time, disruptions of learning, demotivation of teachers and even parents. This poses a challenge to principals because principals status is rated on their performance in terms of student's performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education. Therefore, principals have student discipline as a bigger challenge. Students' leadership plays an important role in linking the teachers, school administration and the students. In the event that with the policy put in place, wrong leaders are chosen, student management becomes difficult and this would negatively impact on students' academic achievement. Wekesa (2014) established that mother students perform poorly in schools and this impacted on their final Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education performance. However, Nsalamba and Simpande (2019) concluded in their study on Re - Entry policy that perceived poor performance in Mathematics by reentered girls is a "social construct" and not solely due to re - entry policy. In Ndhiwa sub County, re-entry policy posed a bigger challenge to the principals as reported by the principals and teachers meaning that the argument of Wekesa (2014) were confirmed but does not rule out the findings of Nsalamba and Simpande (2019). Public secondary school principals in Ndhiwa Sub County faced both student discipline management policy and re - entry policy as bigger challenges. On cost sharing, Wanjiru (2012) found out that there was an escalation of school fees at secondary school level. On Free Day Secondary Education Policy, a study by Omondi (2011) revealed that increased enrolment has not compromised the standards of teaching and learning in public secondary schools. According to this study, it was not expected to be a big challenge to the principals who reported otherwise in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County. The finding of the Board of Management Policy as big challenge to the Principals concurs with the study of Ibrahim and Orodho (2014) which revealed that most of the members of Board of Management lacked requisite knowledge and skills to manage these institutions as a result of their low level of education. As a result, there were challenges including: lack of monitoring of most decisions made by the Board; frequent political interference especially from powerful politicians and members of the provincial administration; general school management among others. These challenges impacted negatively on students' academic performance in the study locale. Free Day Secondary School Policy, Board of Management policy, sponsorship policy and standards and safety policy were a big challenge to the principals in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County. Overall, students discipline management policy posed as a bigger challenge to the principals amongst the government based challenges. Re -entry policy was also a bigger challenge to the principals. This meant that students discipline management policy and re- entry policy hindered the principals' effort to a great extent. Finally, free day secondary school policy, Board of Management policy, sponsorship policy and standards and safety policy rated as big challenges, meaning that they posed challenges just to a small extent to the principals. Government based challenges which the principals faced in enhancing students' academic achievement rated overall at 3.21 in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County, meaning that they were big challenge and only hindered their performance to a small extent.

CONCLUSION

Overallly government policy based challenges were established to be a big challenge to principal's effort in enhancing students' academic achievement. This is because they are paradoxical in nature thus whereas they are meant to enhance the quality of education in school, in some cases they hinder provision of quality education thereby inhibiting students academic achievement. Students discipline management policy greatly compromises students achievement followed by Free Day Secondary School Education policy, Re-entry policy, Board of Management policy, school sponsorship policy and school standard and safety policy. This is majorly due to inbuilt weaknesses in the policy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. Free Day Secondary School Education policy should be implemented to the letter by providing financial resources adequately and timely to schools.
- ii. Students who benefit from re-entry policy should be effectively guided and counselled so that they are well rehabilitated to continue with their secondary school education.
- iii. Schools sponsors should be discouraged from unnecessarily interfering with school governance and management.
- iv. Board of Management should consist of competent persons so that their service delivery to the schools are effective.
- v. School standards and safety practices should be implemented in such a way that the students are the main beneficiaries.
- vi. Student discipline should be considered as a precursor of student academic achievement.

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