INFLUENCE OF SELECTED SCHOOL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON DROP OUT RATES IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN EMGWEN DIVISION, NANDI COUNTY, KENYA

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DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION

Declaration by the candidate

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented in part or as a whole for the award of a degree or any other academic award in this or any other university.

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DEDICATION

This work is special dedication to my wife Janeth Bungei and my children Glasgow Jepchumba and Grandon Kipchirchir for their continued encouragement during my Masters studies at Egerton University.

I am also grateful to my parents and the entire family for their moral and financial support.

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ABSTRACT

Students are important in any education system. Despite the efforts that have been made by the national and county governments to improve literacy and retention of learners in schools .student dropout rates is still a great challenge. The study therefore sought to establish the influence of leadership style on dropout rates in Emgwen Division, Nandi County. The objectives of the study were to estimate the independent and dependent variables influencing students drop out rates. The study was predicated on the assumptions that the school management practices influence dropout rates and the respondents would give honest responses which are a true reflection of the situation in the study area. The study was guided by Social Systems Theory which postulates that the interaction of any interrelated and interdependent parts affect the whole system. The study employed both quantitative and qualitative research method (mixed methodology).The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The targeted population comprised of 45 Head teachers and 353 teachers. A sample of 106 teachers and 14 head teachers formed the respondents of the study. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the Headteachers. A questionnaire and interview schedule was used to obtain data from teachers and head teachers. The validity of instruments was achieved by ensuring that they are based on stated objectives and critical review by the supervisors and examiners in department of examinations. Cronbach alpha was used to estimate the reliability. Research permit was sought from National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation and also the introduction letters from the County Education Officer and the County Commissioner to carry out the study .Data analysis was done using descriptive statistics. The study established 68.8% of the respondents agreed that the head teachers adopted the democratic leadership style and about 50% of them indicated that Head teachers demonstrated exemplary leadership characteristics. In addition, 52.7% of the respondents noted that students were never rewarded when they perform well. In conclusion the study findings revealed that school management practices specifically leadership styles, leadership characteristics and motivation approaches have influence students' dropout rates in schools. The study recommends the enhancing of capacity building for head teachers and teachers and establishing the means of ensuring motivation of students and teachers is done regularly. The implementation of the stakeholders will enhance retention and thus minimizing students drop out rates in schools

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DEO: District Education Officer

EFA: Education for All

FPE: Free Primary Education

KIPPRA: Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis

MOEST: Ministry Of Education Science and Technology

NACOSTI   National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation

PTE: Primary Teacher Examination

SBM: School-based management

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Science

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UPE;   Universal primary school

USA: United States of America

CSO: Curriculum support Officer

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The chapter examined the following: Background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, assumptions of the study, limitations of the study and the operational definition of terms.

1.1 Background to the study

Policies to improve school progression and reduce the numbers of children dropping out of school are critical if Universal Primary Education (UPE) is to be achieved. Children are starting primary school in greater numbers than ever before but dropout rates are significant and lead to low levels of primary school completion in many countries. In Benin, for example, the primary school dropout rate in 2005 was 28 percent, although it reduced drastically from 42 percent in 2000. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, the primary school dropout rate in 2007 was 31 percent, which was almost the same dropout rate for the country in the early 1990s. In Bangladesh, the primary school dropout rate has remained around 30 percent since 2001 (Education Policy and Data center, 2009).

As a result of substantial rates of drop out and non-completion of primary school, many children are leaving schooling without acquiring the most basic skills. Their brief schooling experience consists frequently of limited learning opportunities occasioned by poor leadership and lack of well-designed motivation approaches for the student (Alexander, 2008). Children of different ages and abilities are mixed together in single classrooms without proper adaptation of motivation approaches to improve learning and to induce school engagement (Little, 2008). Such schooling circumstances, together with personal and family level factors such as ill-health, malnutrition and poverty, jeopardize meaningful access to education for many children. As a result, many children are registered in schools but fail to attend, participate but fail to learn, are enrolled for several years but fail to progress and drop out from school (Kennely, 2007).

Failure to complete a basic cycle of primary school not only limits future opportunities for children but also represents a significant drain on the limited resources that countries have for the provision of primary education. According to the World Bank, the Government of Malawi for example allocated 4.2 percent of Gross Domestic Product towards public educational expenditure in 2007, which represented around 195 million dollars. Of this, 55percent was allocated towards primary school. With a primary school dropout rate of 25 percent in 2007, it is estimated that nearly half a million school places were taken up by children who fail to complete primary school. In monetary terms, this broadly represented an annual expenditure of 60 million dollars, 1.3 percent of GDP in 2007, on the education of children who probably left schooling without any basic skills (Cameron, 2005).

Despite its importance, strategies designed to reduce student dropout rate and improve primary school retention as well as progression have received relatively little attention. Typically, national education plans assume that primary school progression will improve automatically as a result of interventions designed to improve initial access and educational quality. Nevertheless, improving progression in primary school may not necessarily be about improving the quality of education alone but also understanding student dropout trends. Education systems in countries such as Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Senegal and Haiti have been well designed strategically to deal with unreached children as well as improving efficiency to reduce student dropout rates (UNESCO, 2010).

In Malawi, Rwanda and Uganda student dropout rates in primary schools is also a problem, perhaps not as high as Kenya, but non-completion of primary school remain very high. Kenya has a relatively big problem, but a relatively small problem with respect to access to school and relatively sustained enrolment rates (UNESCO, 2006).

Students drop out, from school is a great concern for any government or society. Despite many policies and strategies developed to enhance a smooth transition rate in school there are still some students who withdraw from school prematurely. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 26, for instance states categorically that everyone has the right to education (UNESCO, 1998). To achieve this, the Kenya government laid

down policies and allocated money in the National budget to provision of education to her people (MOEST, 2005).

One persistent constraint in attaining the goals of education for all (EFA) is the rate of drop out from education systems (Wamahiu, 1997). According to MOE (2007), the proportion of children who dropped out in 2003 was estimated at 16.1% whereas the dropout rate in 2004 in primary schools was 18.5%. In spite of the government policies to enhance enrolments in primary sub sector, the student's participation, retention, transition and completion at primary school education level are lower than expected. In addition, according to the 2012 taskforce report on the re- alignment of education sector to the Kenyan constitution, a research carried out by Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA) showed that the student dropout rate is above 20% (Elliot, 2003).

In Nandi Central Sub – County dropout cases are so prevalent. Statistics indicate rising dropout rates trends registered for the past five years (2008 to 2012) in Emgwen Division. Table 1 shows the student dropout rates (for both girls and boys) in Emgwen Division, Nandi central sub-county for the period.

Table 1

Student dropout rates in Emgwen Division, Nandi Central Sub-County for the period (2008-2012)

Year	Dropout rate (Boys)	Dropout rate (Girls)
2008	6.70%	7.20%
2009	6.90%	7.50%
2010	7.30%	8.10%
2011	8.80%	9.40%
2012	9.70%	10.30%
Average dropout rate	**7.70%**	**8.30%**

Source: DEO's Office Nandi Central Sub-county

Table 1 shows that there is an increase per year in the dropout rates in both gender for the years 2008 to 2012 (DEO- Nandi central report, 2013). The problem of student dropout is evident in the three zones. According to the Curriculum Support Officer (CSO) in one of the zones, Kaptel zone, the dropout rate is about 13.8%. The report indicated that there is need to study the problem more critically.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The government of Kenya through the Ministry of Education initiated Free Primary Education in the year 2003 with the major aim of improving literacy and retention rates of learners in schools. Despite all these efforts student dropout rates in Emgwen Division is on the rise. Education officials in the Nandi County lay blame on the management practices in schools. In addition, school leaders' competencies are not the same; they usually impact either positively or negatively in the overall retention of students in schools. Competencies of school leaders determine management practices in place. They range from leadership styles, leadership characteristics to motivation approaches. It is against this background that the study sought to examine the influence of school management practices on dropout rates in public primary schools in Emgwen Division, Nandi County.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of study was to establish the influence of leadership styles on dropout rates in public primary schools in Emgwen Division, Nandi County, Kenya.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The study was guided by the following objectives;

i. To establish the influence of leadership styles on dropout rates in public primary schools in Emgwen Division, Nandi County.
ii. To determine the influence of leadership characteristics on dropout rates in public primary schools in Emgwen Division, Nandi County.
iii. To determine the influence of motivation approaches on dropout rates in public primary schools in Emgwen Division, Nandi County.

1.5 Research questions

The study sought to answer the following research questions:

i.   What is the influence of leadership styles on dropout rates in public primary schools in Emgwen Division, Nandi County?

ii. What is the influence of leadership characteristics influence dropout rates in public primary schools in Emgwen Division, Nandi County?

iii. How do motivation approaches influence dropout rates in public primary schools in Emgwen Division, Nandi County?

1.6 Significance of the study

The findings of this study are expected to provide an insight to school administrators, teachers, parent and Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MOEST) officials on the influence of school management practices on dropout rates in order to provide appropriate solutions, provide useful information to educational planners and policy makers on ways of reducing or minimizing school dropout rates. It is expected that MOEST would use the findings of the study in reviewing policies so as to curb on the problem of student dropout in schools.

1.7   Scope of the study

The study specifically focused on the influence of school management practices on dropout rates in public primary schools in Emgwen Division, Nandi County. The aspects of management practices that the study examined include: democratic, Autocratic, situational leadership styles, interpersonal and communication skills, rewards and privileges on student dropout rates in public primary school in Emgwen Division, Nandi County

1.8   Assumptions

The study was based on the following assumptions; teachers from the various primary schools co-operated in filling questionnaires and answering oral interview questions, teachers provided reliable information to enhance the study and gave accurate information for final analysis The portion of the population in which the research was

carried out was a representative of the target population and the research instruments yielded good results.

1.9   Limitations

Some of the limitations included:-

i.   The reliability of the information obtained largely depends on the attitudes of the respondents which limited the accuracy of the findings. The researcher humbly requested them to be positive about the questionnaires as the information they gave was confidentially handled.

ii.   In some schools the teachers were not open enough to fill in the questionnaire and others claimed to be too busy. They had negative perceptions about the information they gave, as they feared victimization. The researcher took time to persuade them and clarify that the exercise was mainly for academic purposes. During the interview, some of the head teachers and teacher were not at ease while giving out the information about their respective schools; however, the researcher assured them of confidentiality.

iii.   Apart from these, it also involved only schools in Emgwen Division, Nandi County. The results of the study were meant to be generalized to include all head teachers of public primary schools in Kenya. This did not happen because the schools, classrooms, learners and their environment throughout the country were unique. Therefore the findings were applied with caution.

1.10   Operational Definition of Terms

Dropout rate: The percentage of students who withdraws from school eminently before completing the primary school cycle against those who are enrolled in class on.

Leadership Characteristics: In this study it refers to the qualities of one who is organizing a group of people to achieve a common goal. These include interpersonal skills and communication skills.

Leadership Styles: This is the manner and approach of providing direction, implementing and motivating people. In this study, it includes: autocratic, democratic, and situational leadership styles.

Public primary school: In this study it refers to an institution established by the Government and managed by stakeholders and follows the government national curriculum guidelines

Retention: In this study it refers to the act of keeping learners in the education system

School management practices: This refers to the act of running and controlling the activities of an institution in order to realize the set goals. In this study, it includes: leadership styles, leadership characteristics and motivation approaches.

Motivation approaches: In this study it refers to the aspect of recognizing and appreciating students' efforts in their academic work. This include: rewards, how students are handled and other privileges available.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Introduction

This chapter reviews literature that has been done on the study topic in order to establish the gap in literature to be filled. Specifically, the chapter deals with the following: leadership styles, leadership characteristics and motivation approaches and how they influence student dropout rates in schools.

2.2   Leadership Styles and Dropout rates in schools

According to Robinson, Lloyd and Rowe (2008) these educational institutions basically have instructional leadership which serves to achieve educational objectives and high teacher expectations for learners. Robinson, Lloyd and Rowe (2008) further performed an analysis in which examined 22 of the 27 studies which was involved in the comparison of transformational and instructional leadership on learners' academic achievement. Robinson, Lloyd and Rowe (2008) found out that on average, instructional leadership on learners' academic achievement was three to four times that of transformational leadership. The above reviewed study fetched data from 22 out of 27 published studies in New Zealand whereas the current study was conducted among 174 out of 1536 teachers and 58 out of 193 headteachers from public primary schools in Nandi Central Sub-County, Kenya. The above study dwelt on leadership style against student academic outcomes while the current study investigated leadership styles against student dropout rates in schools.

According to Messick and Kramer (2004) the level or amount of leadership qualities that a person is able to show greatly relies on his personal traits and the existing situation within which he is supposed to exercise his leadership qualities. Because humankind have the potential to join certain organizations so as to attain certain goal, the ability of them to get more involved and committed depends on how they are able to see their usefulness in being in the particular organization or firm. Hence a person is more likely to

favor an organization that meets his/her goals or objective. The type of leadership exhibited by leaders in an organization is the most important factor in determining how successful the organization will be.

In addition, a study by Don (2010) asserts that learning institutions are held responsible for the outcomes of their performance thus a lot of them see it fit to widen the leadership structure so as to provide more room for better management and improved performance. Don (2010) argued that many leaders working in conjunction with each other will do great things for the schools hence improve the academic performance. The above reviewed study was done in Colombia among 195 high school principals and superintendents whereas the current study is done among 58 primary head teachers and 174 primary school teachers in Nandi Central Sub County Kenya. The above study employed the use of questionnaires as data collecting tools where emerging themes were gathered and analyzed. Data was analyzed using mean subscale scores, Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients, independent sample t-tests, Pearson correlations, percentages and frequencies. The current study used percentages and mean in data analysis.

According to Lee and Chuang (2009) a good leader not only promotes those below him to bring about efficiency but goes ahead to provide what is needed to attain the targets for the organization that have been set up. Fry (2003) argues that the kind of leadership applied has the potential to influence the behavior of employee and thus their level of motivation. The type of leadership put in place should be directly related to the level of performance seen in a firm. Current changing markets put in place new forms of competition thus creating forms of diversification that would greatly affect performance of firms (Santora et al., 1999). The impact of leadership should be well understood because research has termed leadership style to be the main contributor of organization performance in the current market. Transactional leadership enables firms to attain their put in place goals better by making sure that the employee are able to work with the existing resources thus improving firm performance (Zhu, Chew and Spengler, 2005).

Visionary leaders come up with a specific vision for the company and outline it to those involved. They then strategize on how to make the vision a reality (McShane and Von

Glinow, 2000). This kind of leadership promotes greater amounts of cohesion, commitment, trust, motivation, and hence performance in the new organizational environments.

The kind of leadership exhibited in a firm has the ability to strongly customer satisfaction, staff satisfaction together with improved performance. A lot of comprehensive research has not been to analyze how the different leadership styles are practiced within the organizations and how they help achieve improved organization performance. Critiques have challenged the leadership concepts created and argued that some of them do not significantly influence organization performance. House and Aditya (1997) differentiated the micro-level research which deals with the leader by relating them to the subordinates and immediate superiors while the macro-level research deal with the firm and the complete environment by which it is held. Different researchers have also argued that leaders and the type of leadership style they exhibit significantly influences those working below them and the level of financial and organizational performance (Solomon, Fernald and Tarabishy, 2005).

Hitt et al., (2001) asserts that strategic leadership is how a leader is able to expect change and make profound decision that will affect how the organization performs in the current global faced with a lot of competition. The term strategic leadership came from studies that had been done on strategic management and entailed coming up with the most strategic direction; ensuring that unique core competencies are kept within the organization; coming up with human capital; maintaining an efficient organizational culture; maintaining ethical practices; and putting in place well controlled organizational controls (Jooste & Fourie, 2009).

Sosik et al. (2010) asserts that strategic leaders who are exemplary are those who give key actions that the organization is supposed to copy. They are leaders who have a lot of strategies to better the organizations. Getting to comprehend the workings of strategic leadership entails highlighting what these leaders are supposed to do to enhance organization commitment and satisfaction. (Sosik et al., 2010).

According to Abwalla (2014), the study revealed that the type of leadership style that the principle had in secondary schools in Gambella region affected the ability of the teachers to make decisions and how the performance of the school was achieved. The above reviewed study was conducted among 170 teacher and 20 general secondary school principals in Ethiopia whereas the current study used 174 selected primary school teachers and 58 headteachers of primary schools in Nandi Central Sub County, Kenya. The above study employed the used of Questionnaire and interviews as the main instruments of data collection which is similar to the current study..

The literature on school leadership heavily emphasizes the head teacher`s role in establishing and maintaining a positive school culture that promotes learning and engagement tor students and adults (Goldring et al., 2006; Habegger, 2008). A positive culture is aligned to goals and objectives consistent with the mission and vision of the school (Zepeda, 2007). Indeed, according to Hall (2002), effective head teachers are those who have high expectations for students, as this belief about students' ability to learn is critical to school improvement. High achieving schools are marked by a culture that empower and instill confidence in teaching, valued their students' and teachers, and sought the help of parents and community members to enhance the schools effectiveness, this creates a sense of belonging and providing a clear direction for all involved (Habegger, 2008). The following are some of the leadership styles in relation to dropout rate.

Kitavi (2014) research found out that there was a strong relationship between leadership styles and pupils performance. In other words, academic performance in Primary schools was explained by the prevailing style of leadership. It is apparent that leadership plays a very critical role in galvanizing all the other factors in the school together. Nsubuga (2010) research in Uganda established that there was a strong relationship between leadership styles and school performance in secondary schools in Uganda. In other words, academic performance in secondary schools was explained by the prevailing style of leadership. Based on the above studies, it is clear that academic performance of public primary schools depends on the leadership styles in secondary schools

2.2.1   Autocratic or authoritarian leadership and Dropout rates in schools

Nzomo (2001) describes the autocratic leadership style as a style where the manager retains most authority for him/herself and makes decisions with a view to ensuring that the staff implements it. He/she is not bothered about attitudes of the staff towards a decision. He/she is rather concerned about getting the task done. He/she tells the staff what to do and how to do it asserts him/herself and serves as an example for the staff. This style is viewed as task- oriented.

Autocratic leaders are generally disliked, as there is no scope for initiative, consideration, and self-development on the part of the followers. Teachers and students, for example, whose school managers employ the autocratic leadership style, remain insecure and afraid of the leadership authority. This eventually reduces their ability to explore their potential. This style is typical of a leader who tells his employees what he wants done and how he wants it done, without requesting the input/advice of his subordinates (Hammond, 2001). Some people tend to perceive this style as a vehicle for yelling, using demeaning language, and leading by threats and abusing their power. However, under certain conditions the autocratic leadership style is appropriate, especially when one has all the information to solve the problem, when one has little time, and when employees are well motivated. The influence has always been dissatisfaction with work on the part of the employees. Balunywa (2000) argues that autocratic leaders in schools are more concerned with despotic influence in order to get the job accomplished rather than with the development and growth of subordinates. As far as they are concerned, the work and the accomplishment of the goals of academic success matter more than their concern for those being led.

According to Mullins (2002), autocratic leaders create a situation where subordinates who do not want to realize the importance of work are forcefully led to work. Autocratic leaders supervise subordinates very closely to ensure compliance and the completion of work in the designated time. Leadership is meant to be effective even where the situation seems harsh so as to drive organizational intentions towards goal achievement. Research findings by Kasule (2003), on the influence of leadership styles on student dropout rate in

private primary schools in the Wakiso district indicate that autocratic leaders usually emphasize 'authority' as a means of having the work done. School managers generally emphasize it, since it reaps results very quickly, as subordinates work under pressure to meet deadlines. A study by Miller (2000), however, noted that school managers, who use authority to get things done, are too strict in the formality by which things are done. This hinders teacher creativity especially in instances where creativity and planning are imperative to anchor the student retention in schools.

In conclusion, autocratic leadership is likely to bring about increased student dropout rates in schools.

2.2.2   Democratic Leadership and Dropout rates in schools

Okumbe (2005) decentralization of authority participatory planning and mutual communication are some of the main features of democratic leadership. However, as Oyetunyi (2006) points out, the major point of focus is sharing; the manager shares decision-making with the subordinates. Even though he/she invites contributions from the subordinates before making a decision, he/she retains the final authority to make decisions (consultative). The manager may also seek discussion and agreement with teachers over an issue before a decision is taken (consensus). He/she may allow the subordinates to take a vote on an issue before a decision is taken (democratic). He/she coaches subordinates and negotiates their demands (Burns, 2008). This type of leadership is viewed as an important aspect of empowerment, teamwork and collaboration. It has been observed that a school is more effective when those who are affected by the organization's decisions are fully involved in the decision-making process. The concern expressed by Burns is that the participative style of leadership wastes time due to endless meetings and may lead to confusion and lack of direction. By implication, it is not appropriate for use in times of crisis when the situation demands on-the-spot decision (Ackers, 2009). However, unlike the laissez-faire style, the leader adopting this style maintains the final decision making authority. Using this style is not a sign of weakness; rather it is a sign of strength that one respects the employees' ways of doing things. Using

this style is of mutual benefit as it allows staff to become part of the team and allows one to make better decisions.

Kennelly (2007) argues that effective democratic and participatory school administration; leadership and management affect the trust levels of stakeholders. The study focuses on a survey of the effectiveness of democratic and participatory school administration and management in one school division in the Philippines. Indicators of participatory school administration, leadership and management effectiveness are correlated with the stakeholders' level of trust. The study suggested that school leaders wishing to enhance the levels of trust among the stakeholders in their schools should consider these indicators, pertaining to the participatory or democratic leadership approach, in carrying out their leadership duties and responsibilities. The implication of this study is that just like in the Philippines; school managers in Uganda who favour the use of the democratic style of leadership, attach the same level of trust to their stakeholders in the management of schools. They engage subordinates, parents, students and the community in the decision making process (Nsubuga, 2003).

As pointed out by Kouznes and Posner (2003), school managers know that no one does his/her best when feeling weak, incompetent or alienated; they know that those who are expected to produce the results must feel a sense of ownership. In order for a school to provide quality education, those who have been empowered to lead the transformation of the schools to address the challenges of the new millennium should carefully nurture democratic leadership. Democratic leadership can be effectively utilized to extract the best from people and the most effective and efficient educational climate can be created in a school when democracy is employed (Ndani, 2004).

The democratic leadership practices in primary schools outline procedures to develop and use the potential of all the stakeholders of a school in order to create and foster quality education. The principles of democratic leadership are flexibly applied in order to create a climate in which all stakeholders are able to express themselves freely and hence feel that they are part of the democratic decision-making process. Stakeholders need to feel that they are able to have an influence over what should happen and not happen at the

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school rather than to be subjected to the decisions of those placed in positions of hierarchical power (Mukundi, 2004). This type of leadership may influence student retention positively hence reducing student dropout rates in schools.

2.2.3 Laissez-faire / free-rein leadership style and Dropout rates in schools

This is the type of leadership whereby the manager delegates almost all authority and control to subordinates. There is no person of authority in the organization. The manager leads the organization indirectly, he/she does not make decisions; rather he/she abides by popular decisions. There is no setting of goals and objectives by the manager. Tasks are done the way the manager thinks it should be done, but he/she gets involved on request and this may lead to the digression from broad organizational policy. Thus, this style of leadership may be effective with well-motivated and experienced employees (Dubrin, 1998), but could lead to failure when subordinates are deceptive, unreliable and untrustworthy. In the school situation it may lead to poor syllabus coverage, poor performance by the children and poor results because the teachers will deliver the lessons as they wish irrespective of the proper professional conduct of academic delivery. Thus, in relation to dropout rates, free rein leadership is unsuitable because school subordinates are the ones in control with no clear policies, goals and objectives which negatively influence student retention thus increasing dropout rates.

2.2.4 Situational Leadership and Student Dropout rates in Schools

The situational theory of leadership by Chandan (2004) presupposes that an analysis of leadership not only involves the individual traits and behavioral approaches to leadership, but also focuses on the situation. The focus is often on the situation and not the leader. According to Mazzarelia and Smith (1999), different kinds of situations demand different characteristics and behaviors, because each type of leader faces different situations. The school manager is required to size up the situation and choose the appropriate leadership style that will be effective for a situation, rather than try to manipulate situations to fit a particular leadership style. According to Oyetunyi (2006) leadership in schools is a situational phenomenon as it is based on the collective perception of people working in

the schools, linked to the norms and is affected by the rate of interaction among members of the school, A successful school manager under one set of circumstances may be unsuccessful and/or a failure in another. Colclough (2000) asserts that leadership is the leader's ability to handle a given situation and is based upon the leader's skill in that particular area that is pertinent to the situation. The person most likely to act as a leader is the one who is most competent for the situation of a given group as the case may be, the nature of the situation dictates the style of leadership, because leadership success is dependent on the ability of a leader to fit in the prevailing situation.

Blasé (2000) sets forth two primary propositions of situational leaders in primary schools. Firstly the leadership employed by an individual is relative to the situation and secondly different situations warrant different kinds of behaviors from the school leaders/school managers. Therefore, several school managers of schools posted from first class schools to third class ones may fail to make the latter school successful, not because they are incompetent, but because the situations are different and require different approaches. It requires a complete change in leadership style in order to lead the new group, people, resources and processes. Leadership effectiveness cannot be determined without understanding the total situation including the follower's traits such as abilities and education, structural configuration of the school, role definitions, and internal and external environmental conditions. Mullins (2002) points out that, two fundamental generalizations emerge from the above set of characteristics. Firstly, the properties of the situation combined with the traits of the leader to produce behavior on the part of the leader are related to leadership effectiveness. Secondly, the characteristics of the situation have a direct impact on performance. The situation, for example, combines the teacher's attitudes, education, knowledge, experience, responsibility and power. It is also important to know the nature of the teacher, if effectiveness is to be accomplished. This is because, as Stegelin(2001) observes, different situations breed different staff personalities and traits. The gimmicks of the situational leader require that a particular situation may require an authoritarian leader whilst another may require a totally democratic leader.

Further still, the study by Okumbe notes that the kind of situation needed to define the leader may depend on the school culture in terms of the vision, mission, openness,

participation, group atmosphere, values and norms. It is imperative to note that school managers need to understand the values and norms of the schools which they are leading and the level of participation of members. Therefore, to exercise effective leadership the school manager need to influence the teachers, parents, students and the community positively in order manage student dropout rates in schools(Okumbe, 2005)

2.3   Leadership Characteristics and Dropout rates in schools

Haydon (2007) argues that school leadership behaviour is critical in determining the quality of education. Further, on the basis of his research on instructionally effective schools in Detroit and a review of previous studies involving effective schools, and Michigan, he has concluded that school factors have predominantly contributed towards the creation of instructionally effective schools. These factors are: strong administrative leadership; high levels of expectations in student achievements; an orderly but not oppressive school climate; a focus on pupil acquisition of basic school skills. Conducive atmosphere to the instructional process means of student progress monitoring; and resources that can be focused on the fundamental learning objectives of the school. In line with these findings, Willstatter (2003) suggests that an effective school which can promote student outcomes need to provide a climate that stimulates ideas and facilitates the exchange of ideas with colleagues and hence reduce school dropout rates.

Though an indirect influence, Leithwood & Riehl (2003) conclude that school leadership has significant effects on student learning: about a quarter of a school's effect on learning is attributable to the quality of leadership. Specific instructional leadership behaviors that encourage improvement include: making suggestions, giving feedback, modeling effective instruction, soliciting opinions, supporting collaboration, providing professional development opportunities, giving praise for effective teaching, and the distribution of needed instructional resources for teachers.

Teachers participating in a research survey on school leadership reported that school leaders who practiced effective instructional leadership created cultures of collaboration,

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inquiry, lifelong learning, experimentation, and reflection consistent with positive visions and missions for learning (Blase & Blase, 2002).

2.3.1 Interpersonal skills and Dropout rates in schools

School managers are now required to promote and implement change in education and this requires certain skills (Mendez-Morse, 2003). Knowledge of these qualities is minimal, considering the importance they play in the lives of school managers and the creation of effective schools. Nevertheless, research on effective school managers has changed organizations effectively and has been significant in setting standards for, and giving other organizations a place to start. After much research, the vision for the future was based on the following question: what kind of leaders will our schools need in the 21st century? This question and past research has raised issues that required further examination in order to fulfill the future expectations of the school manager's role in school management practices on dropout rates (Whitaker, 2007).

The research literature also indicates that interpersonal skills are intertwined with impactful leadership. According to Ramsey (2005), interpersonal relationships are the heart of an organization's culture that shapes everyone expectations and behaviors. School leaders who successfully promote leadership build and maintain trust, communicate more openly, build commitment and support for change (Short & Greer, 1997; Brewer, 2001)

Interpersonal skills are about working with and supporting others. This can be through encouragement, receiving and giving constructive criticism. It is concerned with listening to and valuing others opinions, and being able to convey a point clearly to a group. Spoken communication skills can overlap with interpersonal skills due to the part it plays in good interpersonal skills. Guiding and supporting is also in the recognizing and developing of leaders. By creating opportunities for leadership skills, staff, students and other members of the school community help to strengthen school wide commitment. This is not only important for the growth within the school, but also in sustaining school

leadership capacity. The other aspect is support for teaching and learning by allocating resources in alignment with the school goals and expectations (Deal & Peterson, 2002).

Earley (2004) notes that the leadership characteristics are portrayed by the school managers' inter personal skills. This is supported by a study funded by the Department for Education and Skills (Australia) which made an extensive examination of characteristics portrayed by highly effective school manager. The schools chosen for the study were those recognized by the Office of Standards. The Education inspection report indicated how school managers' interpersonal skills were highly rated.

Characteristics of School Managers' interpersonal Skills Problem solvers and solution drivers where they try to solve problems themselves or encourage, staff to work towards solutions, Consulting , Respectful, Good listeners, Assertive leader , Accessible enough to staff and students knowing that the school still wants to be led, Supportive , Drives high expectations, but with a no blame culture, Always in a continual dialogue with staff, They showed courage in dealing with problems and staff, High visibility and Collaborated and set up a strong and effective leadership team.

This study found that many of the school managers saw themselves as problem solvers or were solution driven. It was noticeable that many commented on being visible to staff. Many were consulting, respectful and listening and seemed to be accessible, enough to staff and students bowing that the school needed to be led. The school managers seemed to hold high expectations of performance with a no blame culture. Continual dialogue of school aims and processes was common. The school managers showed courage in tackling staff and students who underperformed and had the vision to offer opportunities for improvement (Earley, 2004). A study by Moos, Krejsler, Kofod& Jensen (2005) showed strong similarities to other schools that are known to have the SBM system in their schools. The exception in this study was that Moos et al, (2005) had preconceived ideas that interpersonal skills depended on such characteristics as communication, decision making and community building. Superintendents recommended the choice of schools for this research from local school districts based on school managers they deemed successful. These recommendations were dependent on marks achieved and peer

acknowledgement. In conclusion, adopting these interpersonal skills are likely to positively influence student dropout rates in schools.

2.3.2 Communication Skills and Dropout rates in schools

Wekesa (2005) notes that to improve students' retention school managers are required first to improve the management of the schools through effective communication strategies. This can be done by setting a clear vision for the schools and communicate this vision to students, support its achievement by giving instructional leadership, provision of resources and being visible in every part of the institution. Lack of vision in the management of schools often leads to imbalance in the allocation and use of resources. That is why Ayot and Briggs (2002) point out that, poor results in education are related to the poor communication and poor leadership. If these parameters are not recognized, it becomes very difficult to understand why a school continues to perform poorly in national examinations.

In order to manifest a positive school culture, head teachers need to be able to communicate his/her and the school's vision to others so as to engage them in the process of reshaping the organization and articulating essential beliefs regarding learning (Davies et al., 2005; Jenkins, 2009). Good communication skills help build consensus and buy in among staff and faculty for the policies, practices, and supporting systems designed to achieve goals (Leithwood et al., 2004). Effective head teachers recognize that collaborative networks among educators were essential for successful teaching and learning: they modeled teamwork, provided time for collaborative work, and actively advocated sharing and peer observation (Blase & Blase, 2000). Additionally, leading a school with high expectations and academic achievement for all students requires robust connections to family and/or other people and institutions in the community that advance academic and social learning (Henderson & Mapp, 2002)

Foster (2004), discussion of leadership stresses the importance of communication; he states that 'leadership is conditioned on language' (Mazzarella & Grundy, 1999). Balunywa (2000) noted that "effective school leaders in particular, are good at

communicating" and have the aptitude and skills they need to interacted well with others; they know how to communicate"

The ability to communicate and listen is a characteristic commonly used to describe effective school manager (Crowson & Morris, 2000 and Mahoney, 2000). According to Pitner and Ogawa (2003), the school manager should ensure that there are regular staff meetings. These are important for the well-being of the school. Staff meetings should be held at the beginning of every term, end of term, or before a special occasion and whenever there is an official issue which has arisen. The school manager chairs all the meetings. In such meetings teachers get to be involved in decision making to own these same decisions. They also get informed about new policies from the Ministry of Education and they plan for future programmes such as parents' days, academics days, exams etc. the school manager should avoid ambushing teachers, Pupils also ought to be involved in day to day school progress through effective communication. In addition to being able to communicate, school managers should be good listeners (Mahoney, 2000).

Researchers also describe the ability to communicate as a characteristic of effective school managers (Niece, 1999). Blumberg and Greenfield (2001) found in their in-depth study of eight outstanding school managers that, among the five characteristics they held in common, one was "extremely well-developed expressive abilities" (Mazzarella & Grundy, 1999).

School managers' communication characteristic includes their listening skills (Dweck, 2010).The communicating and listening skills of school managers are an important characteristic of leaders who facilitate school change. It is the basis for their ability to articulate a vision, develop a shared vision, express their belief that schools are for the students learning, and demonstrate that they value the human resources of their peers and subordinates. In conclusion, being an effective communicator and listener are key ingredient of minimizing student dropout rates in schools (Nsubuga, 2003).

2.4   Motivation approaches and Dropout rates in schools

According to a research by Center on Education Policy (2012), student motivation is not a fixed quality but something that can be influenced in positive or negative ways by school, parents and communities and by individuals own experiences. The study offers lessons on how and why students should be motivated and what type of policies and management practices hold promise for improving motivation in order to minimize student dropout rate in schools (National Research Council, 2004).

Higher motivation to learn has been linked not only greater conceptual understanding, satisfaction with school self-esteem, social adjustment and drastic reduction of school dropout rates (Raymond, 2008). However, according to the analysis by National Research Council, the lack of motivation has serious consequences, for instance, in a 2006 survey exploring why students dropped out of school, 70% school dropouts said they were unmotivated. Bridgeland *et al*. asserts that if students are not motivated. It is difficult to improve student retention in schools. Moreover, unmotivated students can disengage other students from academics, which can affect the environment of the entire school or classroom (Bridgeland, Dilulio & Morison, 2006).

According to the study carried out in Baltimore City Public schools in U.S.A, it was observed that chronically absent students were missing school and responded with individualization interventions such as mentors, home visits, meeting with parents and involvement with service providers if necessary. It was also noted that the percentage of chronically absent students gradually declined, dropout rates decreased and the graduation rate increased (Sundius and Fothergill, 2010).

A number of studies have explored how students' motivations can be embraced to minimize school dropout rate for example some researchers assert that experiences with or perceptions of discrimination can damage the confidence of students and contribute to student dropping out of school (Graham & Hudley, 2005). Some studies have suggested that differences in parenting practices and social context have contributed to increased student dropout rate. Children born into socio-economically disadvantage circumstances,

particularly single-parent homes are less likely to have the opportunity to benefit from the kinds of parental attention, activities, and resources that stimulate them to continue with the studies and these make them to drop out of school (Mclanaham, 2004).

As summarized by Heckman, disadvantaged mothers, as a group usually talk to their children less and are less likely to read to them daily and this adopt harsher parenting styles and be less engaged with their children's school work hence increasing the student dropout rate (Heckman, 2011, p. 80).

According to a study by Akunga, teachers who are most effective at diagnosing and improving student retention in schools, linking education with things students value, and encourage autonomy more than control in their classrooms. In addition, teachers can also help to reduce student dropout rate by increasing motivation through encouraging students to do best, setting high expectations, allowing students some choice where possible and using lessons that involve higher order thinking, collaboration and student participation strategies (Akunga, 2009).

Motivating students using rewards help to bring balance to an education styles that expects students to exert effort up front for the promise of rewards and thus this helps to minimize student dropout rate in schools. Moreover, rewards have long been a part of education and can help level the playing field for low-income students whose parents lack the means to offer than incentives for academic success and a positive behavior change towards schooling hence reducing student dropout rate (Seifert, 2004).

In conclusion, no single strategy can work to motivate all students. Motivation not only among students but also within the same student depends on the task and context. Motivating students requires the specific reasons why a student has become disengaged from the school.

2.5   Theoretical Framework

The study was based on Social Systems Theory advanced by Simmons (2000). Social system theory can be defined as the orderly combination of two or more individuals whose interaction is intended to produce a desired outcome (Mulnar, 2009).

Social Systems theory looks at different systems, subsystems and supra systems together with their characteristics and interrelations with one another. The theory is not restricted to one discipline, but takes into account the relationships between various specialized disciplines and their contributions to one another. It does not seek to replace other specialized theories of particular discipline but makes an attempt to establish interfaces between them. It therefore, relates to the structure, operation or functions of an entity as a whole. All the elements of a system work towards achieving a common goal. For instance, a school aims at providing universal literacy and maximum retention of the students who are pursuing their studies in it. It also provides education for self-reliance to the students enrolled in the school (Mukwa & Too, 2002).

The purpose of the systems approach is to ascertain that the behavior of an individual may be controlled in a way which is consistent with the total demands of the environment and not by the skilled manipulations of one or a few individuals acting independently or in concert. As applied to this study, the theory should assist the researcher to establish the difference in the way head teachers and teachers work to solve problems and to ensure retention of learners in the school. This view is supported by Mulnar (2009) who describes Social Systems Theory has been used for several decades as a framework for analyzing and solving problems in schools.

Social systems theory maintains that a school does not exist alone. It does not only depend on its environment but also a part of the larger system such as the society or the economic system of the country to which it belongs. The theory lays emphasis on unity and integrity of the organization and focuses on the interaction between the component parts and the interaction and the environment (Simiyu, 2001). As applied to this study, the theory assisted the researcher to establish the influence of school management

practices on student dropout rates in public primary schools. The theory holds that the component parts of a system interact with each other and the environment thus will help the researcher to determine the leadership styles, leadership characteristics and motivation approaches, which are the variables in this study. Schools are open systems, hence they respond to external influence as they attempt to achieve their objectives. The introduction of free primary education in 2003 is an example of a change from the outer environment.

According to Lunenburg (2010), an open systems model is illustrated in figure 1. An open system consists of five basic elements: Inputs, transformational process, outputs, feedback and the environment. Inputs are resources from the environment for example, human resources, financial resources, physical resources and information resources. Transformation process includes the internal operation of the organization and its system of operational management. The outputs are the attainment of goals or objectives of the school while feedback serves as a control mechanism. Negative feedback for example, can be used to correct deficiencies in the transformation process or inputs or both. The environment surrounding the school includes the social, political and economic forces that impinge on the organization (Lunenburg, 2010). As applied to this study the variables; leadership styles, leadership characteristics and motivation approaches form the inputs into the school, while school management practices form the transformational process and dropout rates is the feedback which indicates the effectiveness of the school as a system.
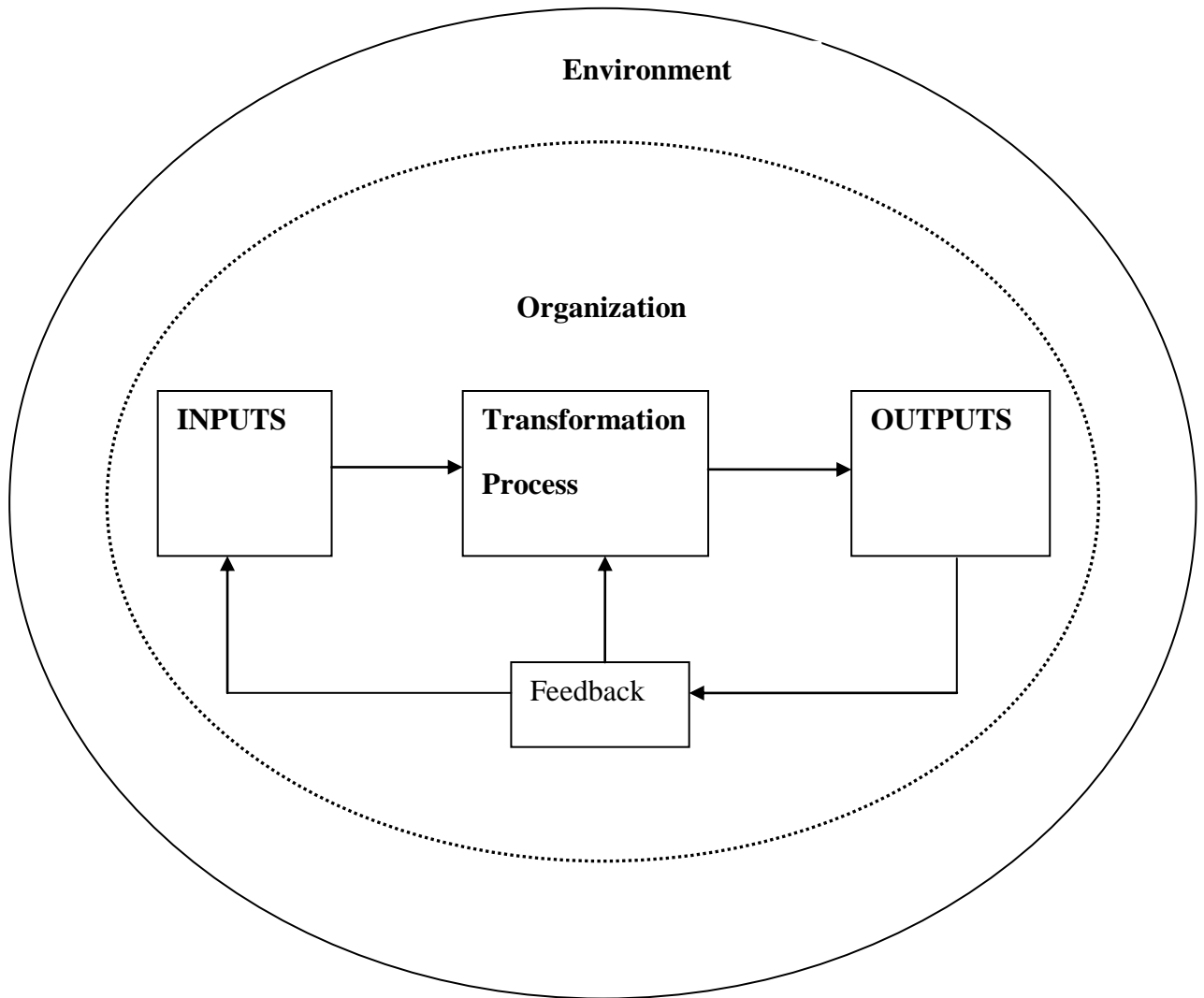
Figure 1: **Open System Model**

Source: Lunenburg, (2010)

2.6   Conceptual framework

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) describe a conceptual framework is a graphical or diagrammatic interaction among variables in a study. In addition, conceptual framework represents the relationship among the independent variable, intervening variables and the dependent variable. Conceptual framework was developed from the literature review and related theories. The study identifies the independent variable as school management practices while the dependent variable is the dropout rates.

| LEADERSHIP STYLES
• Autocratic Leadership
• Democratic Leadership
• Laissez-faire
• Situational Leadership |
| LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS
• Interpersonal Skills
• Communication Skills |
| MOTIVATION APPROACHES
• Rewards
• Privileges |

Intervening Variables
• Government Policy
• Community Support
• Type of School

DROPOUT RATES
• High
• Moderate
• Low

Independent variable   **Intervening Variables**   **Dependent Variable**

Figure 2: Interaction between School management practices and student dropout rates in schools

Source: (Own conceptualization)

As applied to the study, the variables presented in the research paradigm assisted the researcher to realize the set objectives that is to examine the influence of leadership styles, leadership characteristics and motivation approaches on student dropout rates in public primary school in Emgwen Division, Nandi County.

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Critique of the Literature

From the above reviewed literature, it is evident that a lot research has been done on Head teacher's leadership styles and academic performance. However, these studies did not concentrate on other variables of school management practices that may influence dropout rates in schools hence their results were inconclusive. Furthermore, most studies have linked leadership of head teachers with job satisfaction, job performance but failed to link with dropout rates in schools. In conclusion, most studies were noted to have been conducted mainly in diaspora. In Kenya, a number of studies were carried out in other Sub counties but not in Emgwen Division, Nandi County in particular.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1   Introduction

This chapter covers the methodology that was followed when carrying out the study. Specifically the areas examined include: research method, research design, location of the study, the study population, sampling procedures and sample size, instrumentation, data collection procedures, Data analysis and methods of data analysis.

3.2   Research Design

The study adopted both quantitative and qualitative research method (mixed methodology). Descriptive Survey research design was employed in this study. According to Lovell and Lawson (1971) descriptive survey research is concerned with conditions that already exist, practices that are held, processes that are ongoing and trends that are developing. In addition, it involves gathering data at a single point in time with the intention of describing the nature of the existing conditions, identifying the standards against which existing conditions can be compared and determining the relationship that exists between specific events (Orodho, 2005). Descriptive survey research design is most appropriate when the purpose of the study is to establish a detail description of an issue (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). As applied to this study, the influence of school management practices on dropout rates is an issue, and the conditions that already exist, making the design appropriate for the study.

3.3   Location of the study

This study was carried out in Emgwen Division, Nandi County. The study area is sub-divided into three zones namely: Kaptel, Kapsisiywa and Kamoiywo. T he surface area of Nandi central is estimated to be 1320 square Kilometres. The sub-county is divided into three administrative divisions: Kosirai, Kilibwoni and Kapsabet.It is bordered by Kosirai North, Kilibwoni to the East and Kapsabet Division to the West. The main occupation of

the residents is crop and dairy farming. Currently there are 45 public primary schools in the division.

3.4   Population of the study

Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) define a population as a complete set of individuals, cases or objects with some common observable characteristics to which a researcher wants to generalize the results of a study. The target population was 45 public primary schools, 45 head teachers and 353 teachers. This population was chosen because they are involved in management of schools on daily basis. They are also involved in disseminating and receiving information and therefore were in good position to give realistic information that can meet the objectives of the study. Apart from this, the population directly influences the future life of students and therefore was an essential population for the study.

Table 2

Sampling frame showing the target population for the study

Zones	Schools	Head teachers	Teachers
Kaptel	18	18	353
Kapsisiywa	11	11	80
Kamoiywo	16	16	120
TOTAL	**45**	**45**	**153**

Source: Education office, Emgwen Division

From table 2, there are more schools in Kaptel zone compared to Kamoiywo. The total number of teachers per school in Emgwen division is less than eight. Kapsisiywa zone has the least number of schools.

3. 5   Sampling procedures and sample size

According to Orodho (2005) the sample should be selected in a way that one is assured that certain sub groups in the population are presented in the sample in the proportion to their number in the population itself. The study employed purposive, stratified and

random sampling techniques. The study first adopted stratified sampling technique because in Emgwen Division, there are three zones according to which public primary schools are categorized. Schools were first stratified based on their zones and this yielded boarding and day public primary schools, after which simple random sampling was used to select schools and teachers that were used in the study.

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) 30% of the sample is representative of the target population. In addition, Kerlinger (1983) concurs with the same and recommends a sample of 30% of the study population. The researcher therefore applies 30% of the target population in the study. The study used 14 schools from Emgwen Division. All the 14head teachers from the selected schools were interviewed with the help of the interview schedule (refer to appendix ii). Furthermore, 106 teachers were randomly sampled from the 14 selected schools (see table 3)

Table 3

Sampling frame showing the sample size for the study

Zones	Schools	Head teachers	Teachers
Kaptel	6	6	46
Kapsisiywa	3	3	24
Kamoiywo	5	5	36
Total	**14**	**14**	**106**

From table 3, the total sample size of schools, the Headteachers and teachers was arrived at by calculating 30% of the target population. The sample size for the study was 120 respondents.

3.6   Instrumentation

The researcher used 106 copies of questionnaires to solicit information from the teachers. Questionnaires were used because they are easy to administer. The questionnaires used had open ended and semi-structured questions. The questionnaires were administered in Emgwen Division, Nandi County and picked on the same day with help of two research assistants.

Interview schedule was used to gather information from the headteachers. Semi-structured interview schedule was used in order to obtain in-depth or reliable information. A total of 14 interview schedules were administered. The main sources of data that was used to collect information include: reading relevant books, journals, magazines, and internet and past research materials.

3.7   Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are critical features of effective research.

3.7.1   Validity

Kothari (2011), states that validity is the most critical criterion and indicates the degree to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure. Validity refers to the extent to which an instrument measures what is actually wished to measure. To determine validity, the instruments were reviewed before administration by supervisors and peers in the Department of Curriculum, instruction and Education Management of Egerton University to improve content and face validity. They evaluated the relevance of each item in the instrument to the objectives and to inspect suitability and complexity of questions.

3.7.2   Reliability

The instruments were piloted to ensure internal consistency. Three public primary schools were selected randomly for pilot test. Piloting was done in Kapsabet Division which has similar characteristic and conditions as the location of study. Piloting the instruments assisted to determine appropriateness of the instruments and improvement based on its reliability co-efficient. Cronbach alpha was used to test reliability and reliability co-efficient of 0.7 and above was accepted as this will meet the reliability coefficient threshold (Bryman, 2004). Data from open ended questionnaires was grouped and converted into frequency counts. All data was analyzed at level of significance of 0.05. The significant level of $\alpha = 0.05$ has been chosen because of 95% level of confidence.

3.8 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher obtained an introductory letter from the board of post graduate studies of Egerton University that was presented to the National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) to obtain a research permit. On obtaining authority, the County Commissioner, Nandi and sub county Education Officers, Nandi central were informed of the intended study in Emgwen Division. The researcher conducted reconnaissance visit to the schools which took part in the study for introduction and making arrangements for data collection. Following formal introduction by the head teacher, the researcher explained the purpose of the study to the teachers as well as head teacher who took part in the study. The questionnaires and the interview schedule were administered and collected upon completion.

3.9 Data Analysis

Data from questionnaires were organized, and coded according to study objectives and variables. Summarized data was entered into the computer for analysis using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages was used. The results were presented in form of Frequency tables, graphs and charts.

Data collected from the field was coded and cleaned to remove outliers or missing values and categorized manually according to the questionnaire items using frequency tables and percentages. Simple descriptive statistics such as percentages have an advantage over more complex statistics since they can easily be understood especially when making results known by a variety of readers. Martin and Acuna (2002) observe that SPSS is able to handle large amount of data; it is time saving and also quite efficient. Frequency tables, bar graphs and pie charts were used to analyze data. The responses to open ended items (qualitative data) were organized followed by creating categories, themes and patterns related to research questions. Table 4 below shows method of analysis that was used for each objective

The data obtained from the interviews comprised of qualitative data. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010) and Anderson *et al.,* (2007) qualitative data analysis is an inductive process of organising data into categories and identifying patterns and relationships among the categories. Interviews were basically transcribed and qualitatively analysed through themes. This involved discovering themes in the interview transcripts and attempting to verify, confirm and qualify them by searching through data. The procedure is then repeated to identify further themes, which are then categorized and reported in verbatim transcription to supplement explanation of quantitative information in frequency tables and charts

Table 4

Methods of Data Analysis

Research Objectives	Independent variable	Dependent variable	Statistical tools
To establish the influence of leadership styles on dropout rates in public primary schools in Emgwen Division, Nandi County.	Leadership Styles	Dropout Rates	Frequency Tables Percentages Charts
To determine the influence of leadership characteristics on dropout rates in public primary schools in Emgwen Division, Nandi County.	Leadership Characteristics	Dropout Rates	Percentages Frequency Tables
To determine the influence of motivation approaches on dropout rates in public primary schools in Emgwen Division, Nandi County.	Motivation approaches	Dropout Rates	Percentages Frequency Tables

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1   Introduction

This chapter covers the findings and discussions, presentations and discussions of the study carried out in Emgwen Division, Nandi County on the influence of school management practices on dropout rates in public primary schools. This analysis includes: demographic characteristics of the respondents on gender, education level, teaching and work experiences. It also includes the analysis as per the study objectives which were:

i.   To establish the influence of leadership styles on dropout rates in public primary schools in Emgwen Division, Nandi County.

ii.   To determine the influence of leadership characteristics on dropout rates in public primary schools in Emgwen Division, Nandi County.

iii.   To determine the influence of motivation approaches on dropout rates in public primary schools in Emgwen Division, Nandi County.

The results are presented in this section using descriptive statistics. Furthermore, brief discussions of the findings are presented.

4.1.1   Response Rate

One hundred and six teachers were initially sampled only 93 of them were able to answer the set questionnaires. The unusable 13 questionnaires were either blank the respondent created and revised categories such that the data could not be entered without serious interpretation and alteration. All the selected teachers were able to answer the questions therefore the response rate for teachers was 88% while that of the Headteachers was 100%. According to Evans (1991) getting a high response rate (>80%) from a small, random sample is considered preferable to a low response rate from a large sample. Table 5 shows the response rates of the actual and accessible population for head teachers, teacher and the public primary schools that participated in the study.

Table 5

Response rate for Head Teachers, Teacher and the Public Primary Schools

Respondents	Actual number	Actual accessed	Percentage
Head teachers	14	14	100
Teachers	106	93	88
Public Primary Schools	14	14	100

4.2   Demographic Characteristics of the respondents

This section provides information on gender, education level, teaching and work experiences of the respondents. A total of 93 teachers and 14 Headteachers participated in the study. This was 30% of the target population. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) 30% of the sample is a representative of the target population. In addition; Kerlinger (1983) concurs with the same and recommends a sample of 30% of the study population. Details are presented in figures 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and tables 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9.

4.2.1   Teachers by Gender

The information collected was from 93 teachers. An item was included in the questionnaire which sought information on the gender of the teachers. Figure 3 presents the distribution of teachers by gender.

Teachers by Gender
■ Male   ■ Female
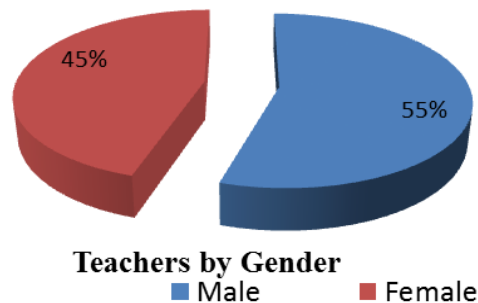
Figure 3:   Distribution of Teachers by Gender

Out of the 93 teachers (54.8%) were male while 42(45.2%) were female. This shows that majority of the respondents were male and this indicates that teaching in Emgwen Division is male dominated. This situation may be attributed to the fact that most of the selected schools have met the one third gender rule as guided by the constitution Cap 7 Article 81 (b) which states that not more than two-thirds of the members of any given public institution should be of the same gender. This is in line with the observation by Mzalendo (2012) which states that every public institution one-third of the employees should be female.

4.2.2 Head Teachers by Gender

The data collected was for 14 head teachers. An item was included in the interview schedule which sought information on their gender. Figure 4 presents the distribution of head teachers by gender.
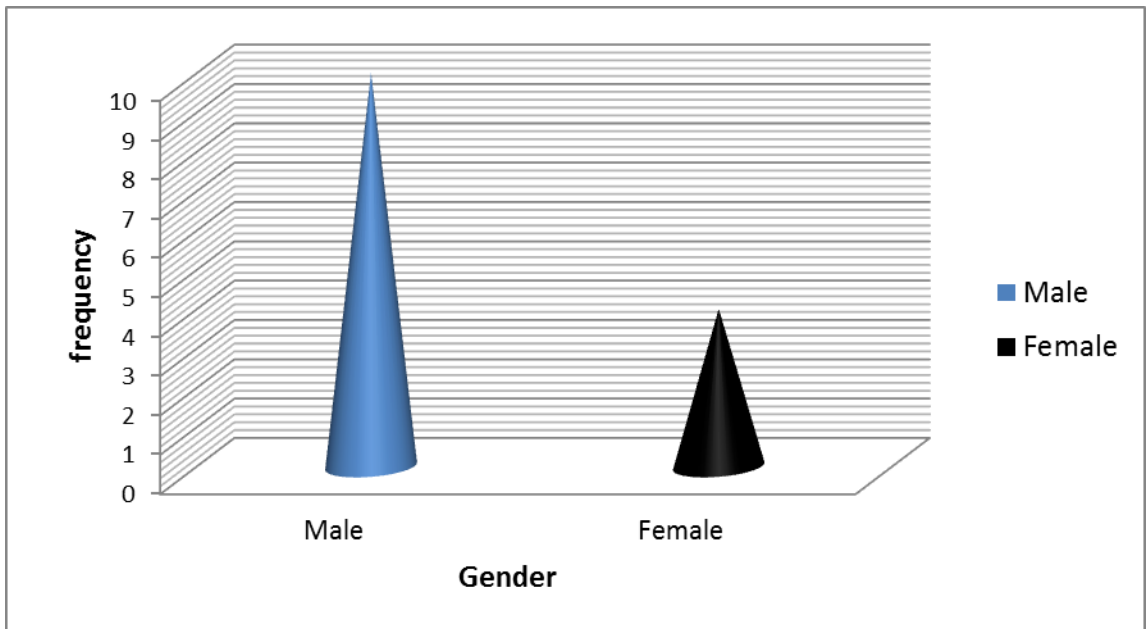
Figure 4:   Distribution of Head Teachers by Gender

The findings show that 71.55% of the Head teachers in the sample were males while 28.5% were females. This shows that there are more male Head teachers who participated in the study compared to their female counterparts.

4.2.3 Teachers Highest education level

The study sought to establish the highest education level of the selected teachers. Level of education indicates how well they were answer the set questions on the influence of school management practices on dropout rates in primary schools in Emgwen division, Kenya. An item was included in the questionnaire which sought information on the highest level of education. Figure 5 presents information on the teacher's highest education level.

Teachers Highest Qualification Attained

	Certificate	Diploma	Degree	Post Graduate
■ Series1	31.2	35.5	25.8	7.5
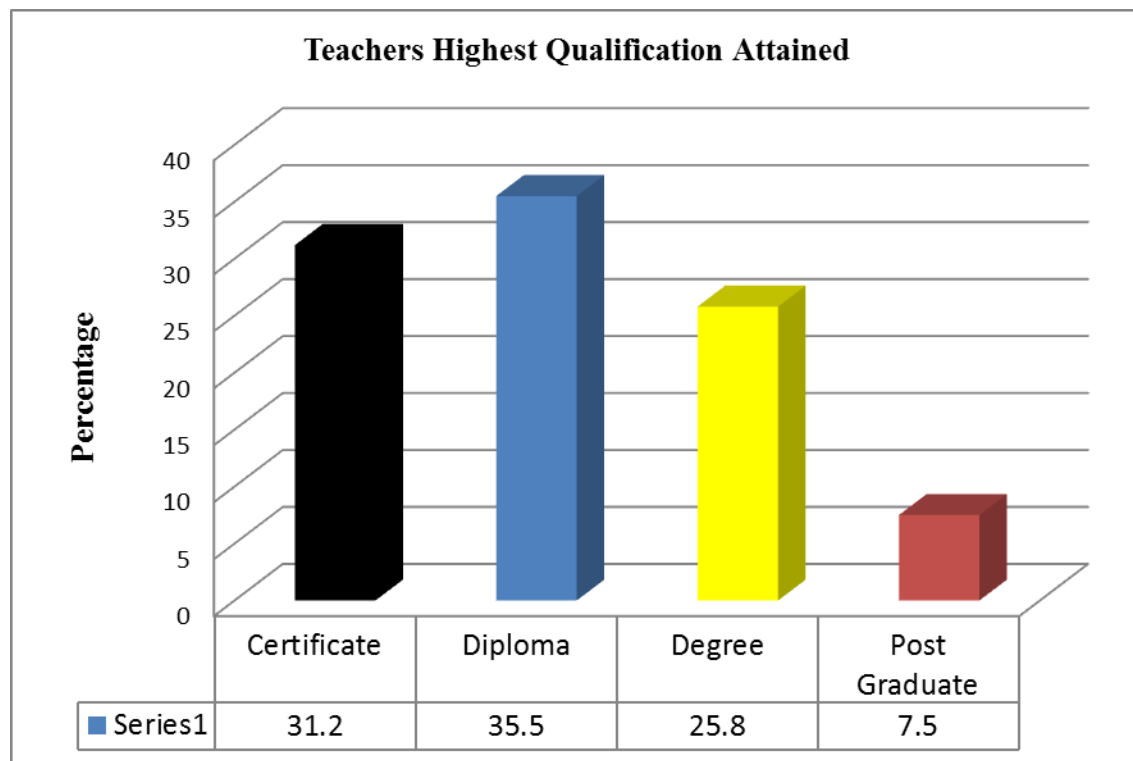
Figure 5:   **Distribution of Teachers according to Highest Education level**

From the findings 33(35.5%) of the selected teachers were diploma holders, 24(25.8%) were university graduates, 29(31.2%) had certificate while the rest significant few had post graduate degree. The findings showed that majority of the respondents had diploma followed by those who had certificate. This might have been so since in order to be a teacher in Kenya; one should have at least a certificate course in education to be considered. It was noted that the selected respondents answered the items set adequately and accurately because they had sufficient knowledge on the area of coverage. The

certifications for teachers are in two classifications: teaching and training skills in general and primary education, which includes pre-school (MOEST, 2015).

4.2.4 Head Teachers Highest Education Level

Questions were posted on the interview schedule that sought to know Head teachers highest Education level. Figure 6 shows the findings based on the response of the Head teachers.
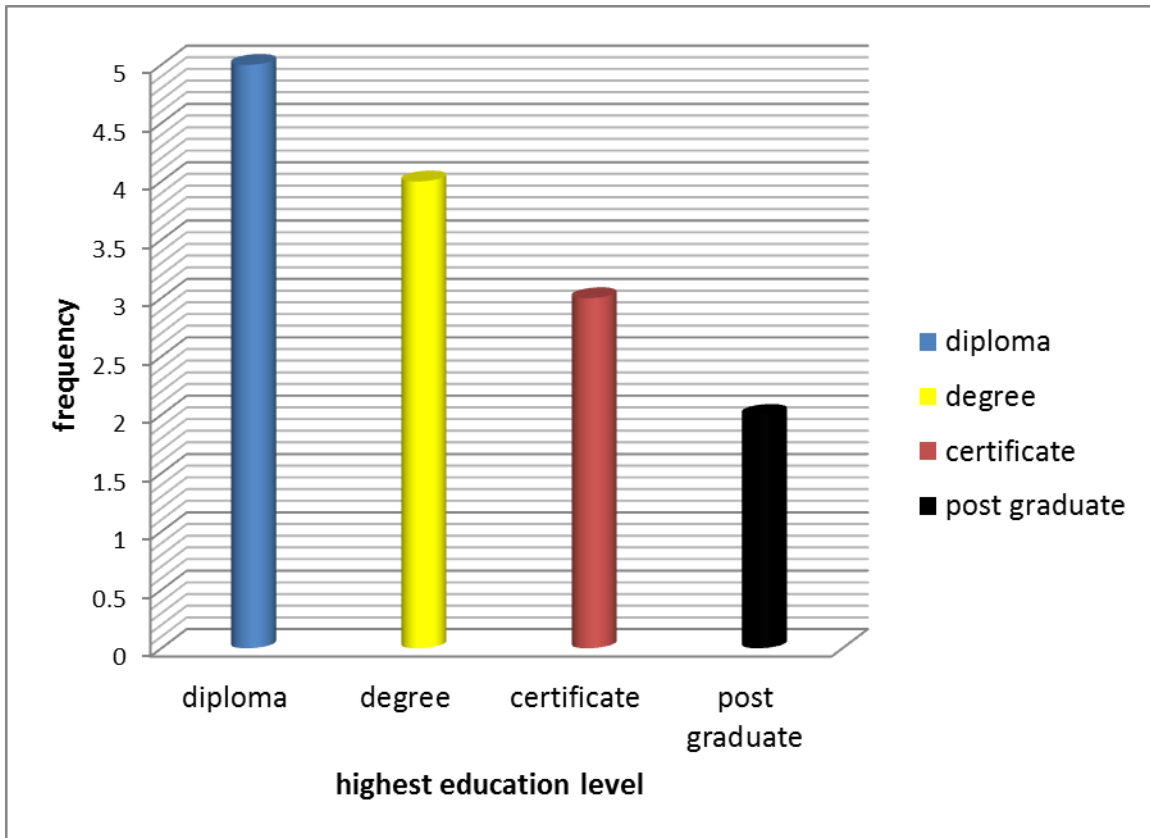
Figure 6: **Distribution of Head Teachers according to Highest Qualification Attained**

From figure 6, it is clear that most head teachers 5(35.7%) were diploma holders, 4(28.6%)of them had a university degree, 3(21.4%) had certificate while the rest 2(14.3%) had post graduate degree. This was so because to be a teacher in kenya one should have least PTE/diploma certificate to be considered a teacher (Kenyaweb, 2001).

4.2.5 Teachers Teaching Experience

An item was included in the questionnaire for the teachers which sought information on the teaching experience. Figure 7 presents information on their teaching experience.
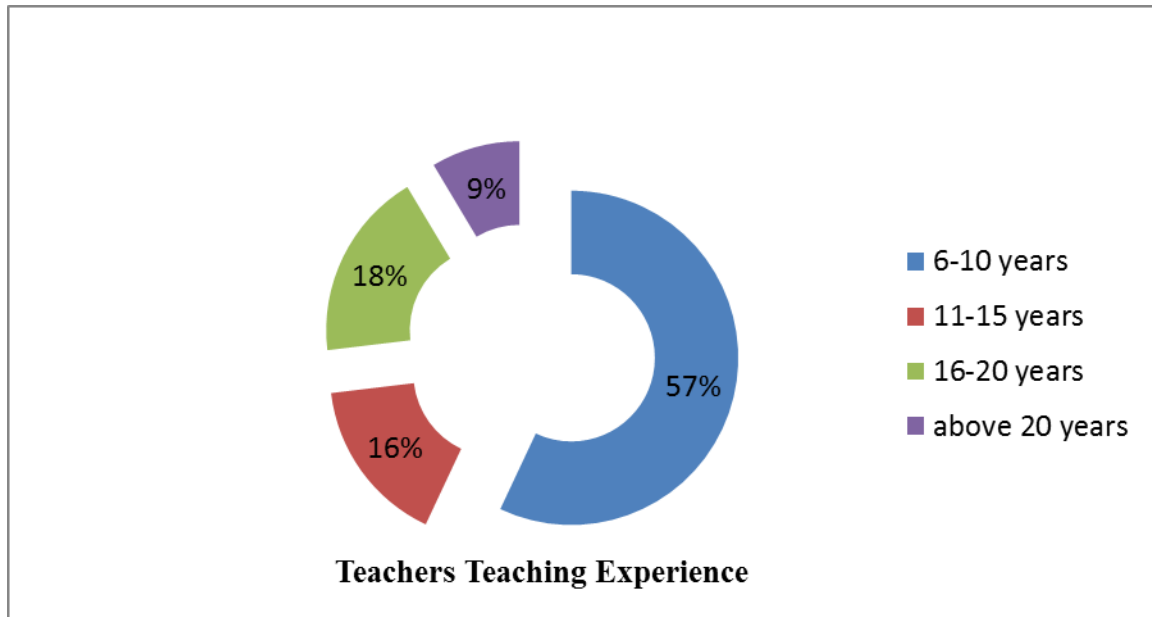
Figures 7:   Teachers Teaching Experience

Out of 93 teachers in the sample 53(57%) had been teaching for a period between 6 and 10 years, 15(16.1%) had worked between 11-15 years, 17(18.3%) had been in the teaching profession between 16-20 years while the rest 8(8.6%) had been in this profession for over 20 years. This showed that majority of the teachers had been in their teaching profession for a period of between 6-10 years. However there were 8(9%) who have been in teaching for over 20 years, these were the senior teachers and therefore were aware and were able to identify school characteristics and its effects on pupils drop out. This finding is in agreement with Schultz and Schultz (1986) who observed that experience on the job usually brought greater competence, confidence, self-esteem and high levels of performance among employees.

4.2.6 Head Teachers Work Experience

An item was included in the interview schedule which sought information on work experiences of the Headteachers .Table 6 presents the information on Head teachers'

responses.

Table 6

Head Teachers Work Experience

Period	Frequency	Percent
6-10 years	3	21.4
11-15 years	2	14.3
Over 20 years	9	64.3
Total	**14**	**100**

Out of the 14 head teachers, 9 (64.3%) had been teaching for over 20 years while only a small proportion 2(14.3%) had been teaching between 11-15 years. This showed that most of them had been in administration position for sufficient period of time and therefore had experience to manage their schools.

4.2.7 Kind of Leadership Styles

An item was included in questionnaire which sought information on the kind of leadership Style adopted by the Headteachers. The results are illustrated in figure 8.
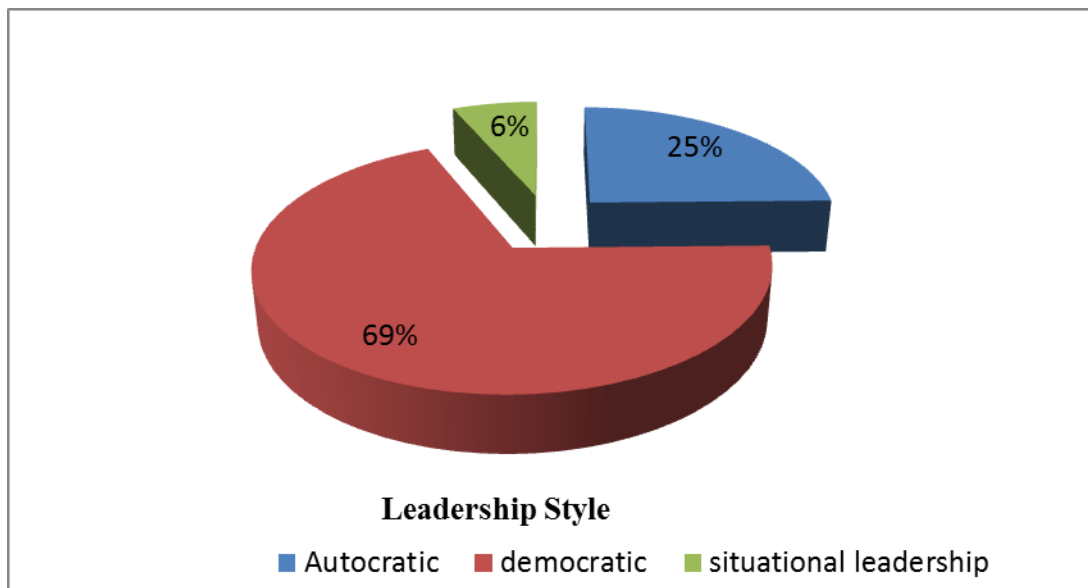
Figures 8:   **Leadership Style adopted by head teachers**

From figure 8 23(24.7%) indicated that the school management applies autocratic leadership while 64(68.8%) teachers indicated that the head teachers use democratic leadership style and the rest 6(6.5%) indicated that they applied situational leadership. The findings show that most of the head teachers use democratic leadership style. This according to Okumbe (2005) is the decentralization of authority participatory planning and mutual communication is some of the main features of democratic leadership. On the other hand as Oyetunyi (2006) points out, the major point of focus is sharing; the manager shares decision-making with the subordinates. He further indicated that even though the school management invites contributions from the subordinates before making a decision, they retain the overall authority to make decisions.

4.3   Leadership Styles and Dropout Rates in Schools

Objective one sought to establish the influence of leadership styles on drop out in public primary schools. The objective was stated as to establish the influence of leadership styles on dropout rates in public primary schools in Emgwen Division, Nandi County. In order to establish this objective an item was included on the questionnaire for teachers which sought information on the influence of leadership styles on dropout rates. The findings are presented in table 7

Table 7

Leadership Styles and Dropout Rates

Leadership Styles and Dropout Rates	Strongly Disagreed	disagreed	Not Sure	Agreed	strongly agreed
Teachers participate in decision making and this reduces dropout rate among the pupils	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	48(51.6%)	45(48.4%)
Teachers attend to school programmes without interference and this reduces student dropout rates.	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	55(59.1%)	38(40.9%)
Teachers often engage in addressing administrative issues and this reduces student dropout rates.	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	61(65.6%)	32(34.4%)

	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)		
Teachers have freedom to do as they think best in the interest of promoting student retention in the school.				58(62.4%)	35(37.6%)
All power is centralized to the head teacher and this influence dropout rates	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	64(68.8%)	29(31.2%)

As shown in Table 7, 48(51.6%) agreed that teachers participate in decision making and this reduces dropout rate among the pupils while the rest 45(48.4%) strongly agreed. Table 7 also indicates that 55(59.1%) agreed that teachers attend to school programmes without interference and this reduces student dropout rates while the rest 38(40.9%) strongly agree, 61(65.6%) agreed that teachers often engage in addressing administrative issues and this reduces student dropout rates whereas 32(34.4%) strongly agreed. This shows that schools in location for the study practice participatory leadership which has helped in reducing the rate the at which pupils drop from school. This finding agrees with Leithwood & Riehl (2003) who concluded that school leadership has significant influence on student learning.

Moreover, 58(62.4%) agreed that teachers have freedom to do as they think best in the interest of promoting student retention in the school,35(37.6%) strongly agreed as compared to 64(68.8%) who agreed that all power is centralized to the head teacher and this influence dropout rates, and 29(31.2%) who strongly agreed. This findings confirm that of Blase & Blasé (2002) who asserted that, school leaders who practiced effective instructional leadership created cultures of collaboration, inquiry, lifelong learning, experimentation, and reflection consistent with positive visions and missions for learning.

As revealed by the findings in table 7 most of the teachers indicated that they participate in decision making, attend to school programmes without interferences often engage in addressing administrative issues, have freedom to do as they think best in the interest of promoting student and that all power is centralized to the head teacher. These entire attribute indicates how the school management is democratic in their way of management as indicated earlier and this has led to a decrease in pupils drop out. This will aid in bonding staff together and in easing the pressures on schools head teachers. The burdens

of leadership will be less if leadership functions and roles are shared and if the concept of leadership density will be to emerge as a viable replacement for head teacher leadership.

The study also interviewed the head teachers on the school issues that influence student performance, from the interview it was noted that majority 80% of them had been in the profession between 3-7 years although a few had taught for less than 3 years and over 15 years and during this period most of them admitted to have noted increased cases of students dropout. When asked to state their position on how they would ensure that student retention in their school is maintained, 80% indicated that they should provide conducive learning environment; one head teacher stated that:

> *'By ensuring that there is a good learning environment and understanding student needs'*

Another said that;

> *'They will ensure that the school is captivating and pleasant place for the learners'.*

Similarly according to a study by Akunga (2009), teachers who are most effective at diagnosing and improving student retention in schools, linking education with things students value, and encourage autonomy more than control in their classrooms. Akunga (2009), asserted that teachers can also help to reduce student dropout rate by increasing motivation through encouraging students to do best, setting high expectations, allowing students some choice where possible and using lessons that involve higher order thinking, collaboration and student participation strategies.

Furthermore the interview revealed that ten percent of the head teachers interviewed indicated that school should organize school talks while a further ten percent were of the view that they should motivate the pupils and educate parents and the community on the importance of education.

When asked to state to how they would ensure that the leadership style they adopt helps to minimize student drop out, most of them indicated that they would apply guiding and

counseling. One of them said that:

> *'Through championing of guidance and counseling in all classes to assist the pupils with problems or challenges. Being closer to the prospective drop out in guiding and making them feel school is their place'*

Another one said that:

> *'Promoting guidance and counseling in schools in order to understand pupils feelings, being closer to learners who are susceptible to dropping out and ensuring proper guidance and counseling is done'*

Similarly this type of leadership is viewed by Burns (2008) as an important aspect of empowerment, teamwork and collaboration. Burns (2008) observed that a school is more effective when those who are affected by the organization's decisions are fully involved in the decision-making process. However he further indicated that participative style of leadership wastes time due to endless meetings and may lead to confusion and lack of direction. On the contrary Ackers (2009) opinioned that by implication, it is not appropriate for use in times of crisis when the situation demands on-the-spot decision.

According to Mwangi, Mukulu and Kabare (2011) the use of democratic leadership style is preferred. They were of the view that school managers know that no one does his/her best when feeling weak, incompetent or alienated; they know that those who are expected to produce the results must feel a sense of ownership. They further indicated that in order for a school to provide quality education, those who have been empowered to lead the transformation of the schools to address the challenges of the new millennium should carefully nurture democratic leadership. Their views were supported by Ndani (2004) who indicated that democratic leadership can be effectively utilized to extract the best from people and the most effective and efficient educational climate can be created in a school when democracy is employed.

Mukundi (2004) also noted that democratic leadership practices in primary schools outline procedures to develop and use the potential of all the stakeholders of a school in order to create and foster quality education. He further opinioned that the principles of democratic leadership are flexibly applied in order to create a climate in which all

stakeholders are able to express themselves freely and hence feel that they are part of the democratic decision-making process.

4.4   Leadership Characteristics and Dropout Rates in Schools

Objective two sought to establish the influence of leadership characteristics on dropout rate in public primary schools. The objective was stated as to find out the influence of leadership characteristic on pupils dropout rates in public schools. This was done through evaluating the Inter-personal and communication skills of the school management against drop out in schools. Table 8 presents data on the views of teachers concerning the inter-personal and communication skills of the school management.

Table 8

Leadership Characteristics and Dropout Rates in Schools

Leadership Characteristics and Dropout Rates in Schools	Strongly Disagreed	disagreed	Not Sure	Agreed	strongly agreed
The Head teacher has warm relationship towards teachers and pupils and this helps to reduce dropout rates.	0(0%)	0(0%)	18(19.4%)	40(43.0%)	35(37.6%)
There is effective coordination between the Head teacher and the school management committee and this helps to reduce dropout rates.	0(0%)	0(0%)	32(34.4%)	35(37.6%)	26(28.0%)
The Head teacher encourages team building among school stake holders and this helps to reduce dropout rates	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	65(69.9%)	28(30.1%)
The Head teacher and teachers interact with pupils freely and this reduces dropout rates.	0(0%)	0(0%)	17(18.3%)	51(54.8%)	25(26.9%)
The Head teacher and teachers should study pupils' problems and solve them amicably and this helps to minimize student dropout rates.	0(0%)	0(0%)	14(15.1%)	57(61.3%)	22(23.7%)

The Head teacher and teachers communicate well with pupils in the school and this reduces dropout rates.	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	65(69.9%)	28(30.1%)
The school has well defined communication channels used by pupils and this reduces dropout rates.	0(0%)	0(0%)	17(18.3%)	25(26.9%)	51(54.8%)
The Head teacher informs pupils of current educational policies and this helps reduce dropout rates	0(0%)	0(0%)	14(15.1%)	44(47.3%)	35(37.6%)
Head teacher and teachers share responsibilities and this helps to reduce dropout rates.	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	40(43.0%)	53(57.0%)

The table 8 shows that 18(19.4%) were not sure if the Head teacher had a warm relationship towards teachers and pupils and this helps to reduce dropout rates, 40(43.0%) agreed while the rest 35(37.6%) strongly agreed, 32(34.4%) were undecided on whether there is effective coordination between the Head teacher and the school management committee and this helps to reduce dropout rates, 35(37.6%), agreed while the rest 26(28.0%) strongly agreed. These findings confirms to Willstatter (2003) opinion who suggested that an effective school which can promote student outcomes need to provide a climate that stimulates ideas and facilitates the exchange of ideas with colleagues and hence reduce school dropout rates.

Table 8 further shows that 51(54.8%) agreed that the Head teacher and teachers interact with pupils freely and this reduces dropout rates, 25(26.9%) strongly agreed whereas 17(18.3%) were not sure, 57(61.3%) agreed that the head teacher and teachers should study pupils' problems and solve them amicably and this helps to minimize student dropout rates, 22(23.7%) strongly agreed, while the rest 14(15.1%) were not sure. A similar situation was depicted in Earley (2004) study who notes that the leadership characteristics are portrayed by the school managers' inter-personal skills. Interpersonal skills are about working with and supporting others through encouragement, receiving and giving constructive criticism, free interaction among students, teachers and the management (Oyetunyi, 2006).

The findings also showed that 65(69.9%) agreed that the Head teacher and teachers communicate well with pupils in the school and this reduces dropout rates, 28(30.1%) strongly agreed, 51(54.8%) strongly agreed that the school has well defined communication channels used by pupils and this reduces dropout rates, as compared to 17(18.3%) who were not sure whereas 25(26.9%) strongly agreed. Similar to these findings is Wekesa (2005) argument which noted that to improve students' retention school managers are required first to improve the management of the schools through effective communication strategies. It was also noted that 44(47.3%) agreed that the Head teacher informs pupils of current educational policies and this helps reduce dropout rates, 14(15.1%) were not sure and 35(37.6%) strongly agreed. Finally it was noted from the findings in table 8 that, 40(43.0%) teachers agreed that head teacher and teachers share responsibilities and this helps to reduce dropout rates, 53(57.0%) strongly agreed. Similar findings were explained by Deal & Peterson (2002) who noted that interpersonal skills are about working with and supporting others through encouragement, sharing responsibilities, receiving and giving constructive criticism.

The findings indicate that most of the respondents agreed that the Head teacher has warm relationship towards teachers and pupils and this helps to reduce dropout rates. It was also noted that most teachers agreed that there is effective coordination between the Head teacher and the school management committee and this helps to reduce dropout rates, that the Head teacher encourages team building among school stake holders and this helps to reduce dropout rates and that the Head teacher and teachers interact with pupils freely and this reduces dropout rates. Similarly Mendez-Morse (2003) opinioned that school managers are required to promote and implement change in education and this requires certain skills which in the current scenario most of the head teachers effectively coordinate with the student's school management and pupils to ensure that school are a good place for everyone.

The findings as shown in table 8 indicate that there were a few who were not sure if the school has well defined communication channels used by pupils and if this reduces dropout rates and were not sure if the head teacher informs pupils of current educational policies and whether this helps reduce dropout rates, however most of the them agreed on

the two statements. In view of this Ayot and Briggs (2002) point out that, poor results in education are related to the poor communication and poor leadership. If these parameters are not recognized, it becomes very difficult to understand why a school continues to perform poorly in national examinations.

Similarly according to Pitner and Ogawa (2003), the school manager should ensure that there are regular staff meetings which are important for the well-being of the school. Staff meetings should be held at the beginning of every term ends of term, or before a special occasion and whenever there is an official issue which has arisen. They further argued that the school manager chairs all the meetings. In such meetings teachers get to be involved in decision making to own these same decisions. However, it is misleading to imagine that, within hierarchical organizational structures such as public primary schools, there ever will be complete delegation of one's responsibilities as the head teachers. It is possible, nonetheless to build a working relationship that values and encourages constructive engagement, and dialogue in dealing with issues that require decisions about strategic direction of the school because when it comes down to it, no matter how much decision making is shared, there should be someone who is in charge.

It was noted that 57% of the teachers strongly agreed that head teacher and teachers share responsibilities and this helps to reduce dropout rates. According to Nsubuga (2003) the communicating and listening skills of school managers are an important characteristic of leaders who facilitate school change. It is the basis for their ability to articulate a vision, develop a shared vision, express their belief that schools are for the pupils learning, and demonstrate that they value the human resources of their peers and subordinates. In conclusion, being an effective communicator and listener are key ingredients of minimizing student dropout rates in schools. In the context of our findings participatory decision making does not refer to a particular leadership style, but rather, to an engaged working relationship between the school management, pupils, teachers and other stakeholders whom he/she has line management responsibility.

4.5 Motivation Approaches and Dropout Rates in Schools

Objective three sought to establish the influence of motivation approaches on dropout rates in schools. The objective was stated as to look into the influence of motivation approaches on dropout in public schools. Table 9 presents the results on the views of teachers concerning the motivation strategies adopted by the school management.

Table 9

Motivation Approaches and Dropout Rates in Schools

Motivation Approaches and Dropout Rates in School	Strongly Disagreed	disagreed	Not Sure	Agreed	strongly agreed
Pupils and teachers are usually rewarded when they perform well and this reduces dropout rates.	0(0%)	49(52.7%)	17(18.3%)	0(0%)	27(29.0%)
Student leadership is recognized and usually given some privileges and this reduces dropout rates.	0(0%)	55(59.1%)	14(15.1%)	0(0%)	24(25.8%)
The school has a good history on the way pupils are handled and this reduces student dropout rates.	0(0%)	45(48.4%)	21(22.6%)	0(0%)	27(29.0%)
Teachers are exemplary role models and this helps to reduce dropout rates.	0(0%)	40(43.0%)	17(18.3%)	0(0%)	36(38.7%)
The school usually organizes for trips and excursion and this reduces dropout rates.	0(0%)	40(43.0%)	14(15.1%)	39(41.9%)	0(0%)
Teaching and learning activities are student-centered and this reduces dropout rates.	0(0%)	51(54.8%)	0(0%)	42(45.2%)	0(0%)

Guidance and counseling is embraced in the school and this reduces student dropout rates.	0(0%)	49(52.7%)	0(0%)	44(47.3%)	0(0%)

The study revealed that, 17(18.3%) were not sure if pupils are usually rewarded when they perform well and this reduces dropout rates, 49(52.7%) disagreed while the rest 27(29.0%) strongly agreed. Furthermore 14(15.1%), are not aware if student leadership is recognized and usually given some privileges and this reduces dropout rates, 55(59.1%), disagreed while 24(25.8%) strongly agreed. Contrary to this Alfie Kohn (2009) believed that pupils are punished by rewards. Pierce and Cameron (1996) for instance stated that a behavioral view suggests that it is only when rewards function as discriminative stimuli that one might expect to observe a decline in intrinsic motivation.

In addition 21(22.6%) were not sure if the school had a good history on the way pupils are handled and this reduces student dropout rates, 45(48.4%) disagreed while the rest 27(29.0%) strongly agreed, 17(18.3%) were not sure whether teachers are exemplary role models and this helps to reduce dropout rates, 36(38.7%) agreed while 40(43.0%) disagreed. On the other hand 14(15.1%) were not sure the school usually organizes for trips and excursion 39(41.9%) agreed whereas 40(43.0%) disagreed. Student's history in terms of their family background and type of parenting has been seen by researcher such as (Mclanaham, 2004) to influence student drop out. Children born into socio-economically disadvantage circumstances (Mclanaham, 2004).,particularly single-parent homes are less likely to have the opportunity to benefit from the kinds of parental attention, activities, and resources that stimulate them to continue with the studies and these make them to drop out of school. Out of the sample of 93 teachers 42(45.2%) agreed that teaching and learning activities are student-centered and this reduces dropout rates while the rest 51(54.8%) disagreed on the other hand 44(47.3%) agreed that guidance and counseling is embraced in the school and this reduces student dropout rates while the rest 49(52.7%) disagreed.

As revealed by the findings most of the respondents disagreed that pupils and teachers are usually rewarded when they perform well and this reduces dropout rates, and that student leadership is not recognized and usually are not given some privileges and this has

increased dropout rates. A teacher who focuses student interest toward studies should actively involve learner in the teaching learning process. Activities to direct towards the learning of important processes or skills involve acquisition of useful knowledge. The findings on rewards are contrary to Seifert, (2004) ideologies who were of the view that motivating pupils using rewards help to bring balance to an education styles that expects pupils to exert effort up front for the promise of rewards and thus this helps to minimize student dropout rate in schools. He added that rewards have long been a part of education and can help level the playing field for low-income pupils whose parents lack the means to offer than incentives for academic success and a positive behavior change towards schooling hence reducing student dropout rate.

Low motivation and engagement was linked to increased dropout rates and reduced levels of student success, however, keeping pupils interested in school and motivating them to succeed are challenges that present themselves year after year to even the most seasoned teachers. By the time pupils reach middle form school, lack of interest in schoolwork becomes increasingly apparent in more and more pupils, and by high school, as dropout rates attest, too many pupils are not sufficiently motivated to succeed in school. Similarly Raymond (2008) opinioned that higher motivation to learn has been linked not only greater conceptual understanding, satisfaction with school self-esteem, social adjustment and drastic reduction of school dropout rates.

It was also noted that most of the teachers disagreed that the school has a good history on the way pupils are handled and this has increased student dropout rates. They further disagreed that teachers are exemplary role models and this increased dropout rates. Teachers can influence student motivation; certain practices do work to increase time spent on task; and that there are ways to make assigned work more engaging and more effective for pupils at all levels. By focusing on both in-school activities, teacher characteristics like the history on the way they handled drop outs offers some practical strategies for promoting student engagement in learning and hence reducing drop out.

It was noted that most of the respondents disagreed that the school usually organizes for trips and excursion, teaching and learning activities are student-centered and this has

increased dropout rates and that guidance and counseling is not embraced in the school and this has increased student dropout rates. Teachers do not focus on the interests of the pupils, rather than those of others involved in the educational process, such as teachers and administrators. This approach has many implications for the design of the curriculum, course content and interactivity of courses. They did not acknowledged student voice as central to the learning experience for every learner. In some classes, pupils do not choose what they would learn, how they would learn, and how they would assess their own learning. These findings are similar to those of Basut (2006) who asserted that teachers can utilize successful strategies and tactics to make the learning effective because motivation plays a significant role to arouse the pupil interest towards the learning process. As such it was noted that teachers did not focus on pupil interest and studies.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   Introduction

This chapter presents summary of findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further study. The purpose of this study was to establish the influence of school management practices specifically the leadership styles, leadership characteristics and motivation approaches on dropout rates in public primary schools in Emgwen Division, Nandi County.

5.2   Summary of major findings

Based on the study objectives, research questions and data analysis, the following summary of the research findings are presented;

  i. The study found out that on the influence of leadership styles on drop out, 45(48.4%) of the teachers indicated that they participate in decision making and this has reduces dropout rate among the pupils, 61(65.6%) of them agreed that they often engage in addressing administrative issues and this reduces student dropout rates. Moreover 64(68.8%) teachers agreed that leadership in the school is centralized to the head teacher and this influence dropout rates

  ii. On determining the influence of leadership characteristics on dropout rates in schools, the study established that: 43.00% of the respondents agreed that Headteachers have warm relationship towards teachers and pupils, 37.6% of them agreed that effective coordination between the Headteacher and the school management board helps to reduce dropout rates in schools and 69.9% indicated that Headteachers encourage team building and a further 54.8% indicated that Headteachers and teachers interact freely with pupils. About 69.9% of the respondents indicated that Headteachers and teachers communicate well with the pupils and a further 54.8% strongly agreed that the school management have well defined communication.57.0% of the respondents indicated that the Headteachers

and teachers shared responsibilities and thus helps to minimize dropout rates in schools.

iii. On establishing the influence of motivation approaches in dropout rates in schools, the study found out that: 52.7% of the respondents indicated that pupils and teachers are rarely rewarded when they perform well and a further 59.1% observed that student leadership was never recognized. 48.4 % of the respondents indicated that the school lacked good history on the way pupils are handled. About 38.7% of them indicated that teachers are exemplary role models and in addition 41.9% agreed that schools usually organize for trips and excursion. 45.2% of the respondent indicated that teaching and learning activities are student- centered and 52.7% of them noted that guidance and counseling is   fully embraced in schools.

5.3   Conclusions

The main purpose of this study was to establish the influence of school management practices on dropout rates in public primary schools in Emgwen Division, Nandi County. From the findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn;

i.   Most of the school administrators adopted democratic leadership technique.

ii. Most of the Head teachers demonstrated exemplary leadership characteristics in the management of the schools.

iii. Motivation of students and teachers in most school is still a great challenge hence there is urgent need to address this situation. This will translate to reduce dropout rates in schools.

5.4   Recommendations

The following were the recommendations of the study:

i.   The school administration needs to adopt a leadership style that will encourage and promote cooperation and understanding in order to improve on academic performance and reduce dropout rates.

ii.   The ministry of education should provide capacity building for Headteachers and teachers for efficient management of schools.

iii. Establish the means of ensuring that motivation of students and teachers is done regularly.

5.5   Suggestions for Further Studies

The research findings from this study have shown that school management practices specifically the leadership styles, leadership characteristics and motivation approaches have an influence on students' dropout rates in schools. However, there is need to carry out the following:

i.   A research should be carried to determine the influence of other school management practices on dropout rates in schools.

ii.   Similar studies should be carried out in other sub-counties in Kenya to find out the influence of school management practices on dropout rate in other regions in Kenya.

iii. A nation –wide research to be carried out in order to determine the influence of the of school management practices on dropout rates in public schools.

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APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

I am a student at Egerton University pursuing degree of Master of Education in Educational management. I am currently carrying out a research study entitled "**Influence of Selected School Management Practices on Dropout Rates in Public Primary Schools in Emgwen Division, Nandi County".** The study is expected to provide useful information that will be beneficial in improving school management as well as pupil retention in public primary schools. You have been identified as one of the key respondents in study. This is therefore to request you to complete the questionnaire as honest as possible. All information that you provide shall be treated with utmost confidentiality and will be used for the purposes of this study only.

Instructions

    a. Please do not write your name in the questionnaire

    b. Indicate your choice using a tick   (✓)

    c. Kindly answer all the questions

    d. The information provided will be treated with confidentiality

SECTION A: Background information

1. Please indicate your Gender

    a. Male   ( )

    b. Female   ( )

2. What is your highest qualification attained?

    a. Certificate   ( )

    b. Diploma   ( )

    c. Degree   ( )

    d. Post graduate   ( )

    e. Other (Please specify)   …………………………………

3. Please indicate your teaching experience

    a. 1 - 5 years   ( )

    b. 6 - 10 years   ( )

    c. 11 - 15 years   ( )

    d. 16 - 20 years   ( )

    e. Above 20 years   ( )

4. What kind of leadership style does your school administration use?

    a. Autocratic/authoritarian leadership

    b. Democratic leadership

    c. Laissez- faire

    d. Situational Leadership

    e. Others (specify) ………………………………………………………………

SECTION B: LEADERSHIP STYLES AND DROPOUT RATES

5) On a scale of 1-5(where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3= not sure, 4=agree and 5=

strongly agree) please score your agreement to the following leadership styles on how it

influence dropout rates in your school.

LEADERSHIP STYLES AND DROPOUT RATES	1	2	3	4	5
Teachers participate in decision making and this reduces dropout rate among the students					
Teachers attend to school programmes without interference and this reduces student dropout rates.					
Teachers often engage in addressing administrative issues and this reduces student dropout rates.					
Teachers have freedom to do as they think best in the interest of promoting student retention in the school.					
All power is centralized to the head teacher and this influence dropout rates					

6) On a scale 1-5(where1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree,3=not sure, 4=agree and 5= strongly agree please score your agreement to the following interpersonal and communication skills influence dropout rates.

INTER-PERSONAL AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS AND DROPOUT RATES	1	2	3	4	5
The Head teacher has warm relationship towards teachers and students and this helps to reduce dropout rates.					
There is effective coordination between the Head teacher and the school management committee and this helps to reduce dropout rates.					
The Head teacher encourages team building among school stake holders and this helps to reduce dropout rates					
The Head teacher and teachers interact with students freely and this reduces dropout rates.					
The Head teacher and teachers should study students' problems and solve them amicably and this helps to minimize student dropout rates.					
The Head teacher and teachers communicate well with students in the school and this reduces dropout rates.					
The school has well defined communication channels used by students and this reduces dropout rates.					
The Head teacher informs students of current educational policies and this helps reduce dropout rates					
Headteacher and teachers share responsibilities and this helps to reduce dropout rates.					

7) On a scale of 1-5 (where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=not sure, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree) please score your agreement to the following influence of motivation approaches on dropout rates.

MOTIVATION APPROACHES AND DROPOUT RATES	1	2	3	4	5
Students and teachers are usually rewarded when they perform well and this reduces dropout rates.					
Student leadership is recognized and usually given some privileges and this reduces dropout rates.					
The school has a good history on the way students are handled and this reduces student dropout rates.					
Teachers are exemplary role models and this helps to reduce dropout rates.					
The school usually organizes for trips and excursion and this reduces dropout rates.					
Teaching and learning activities are student-centered and this reduces dropout rates.					
Guidance and counseling is embraced in the school and this reduces student dropout rates.					

APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR HEAD TEACHERS

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to establish the influence of Selected School Management Practices on Dropout Rates in Public Primary Schools in Emgwen Division, Nandi County. Feel free to respond to all the questions as the responses will be used only for the study.

SECTION A: Background information

1. Please indicate your gender

   Male _____   Female_____

2. How long have you been the head teacher in this school?

   _____

3. What is your highest qualification attained

   a) Certificate   ☐

   b) Diploma   ☐

   c) Degree   ☐

   d) Post graduate   ☐

   e) Others specify_____

4. Please indicate the status of your school?

   a. Public day primary school   ( )

   b. Public boarding primary school   ( )

SECTION B: Issues related to the influence of school management practices on student dropout rates

3) In your school, do you sometimes experience student dropping out?

   …………………………………………………………………………………

   …………………………………………………………………………………

4) How do you ensure student retention in your school?

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5) How do you ensure that the leadership style you adopt helps to minimize student dropout rate in your school?

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6) How do you motivate the students in your school?

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7) How do you make decisions regarding to important matters in your school?

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8) In your own opinion, what do you think are some of the school management practices that influence student dropout rates in your school?

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APPENDIX III: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Telephone:Kapsabet 0773044624

E-mail: cdenandicounty@yahoo.com

Fax: 05352084

When replying please quote

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

County Director of Education
Nandi County,
P. O. Box 36,
KAPSABET.

9th July, 2014

Ref:NCD/CDE/GEN/1/VOL.1/129.

James Kimaiyo Bungei
Egerton University
P.O Box 536- 20115
EGERTON.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORISATION

The above named person has been granted permission by the CDE to carry out research or *"influence of school management practices on dropout rates in Public Primary Schools in Emgwen Division Nandi County,"*

Kindly provide him all the necessary support he requires

ARITA BWANA
FOR: COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
NANDI COUNTY

APPENDIX IV: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION FOR MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND CO-ORDINATION OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

THE PRESIDENCY

MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND COORDINATION OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

Tel: 053 52621, 52003, Kapsabet
Fax No. 053 – 52503
E-mail:
nandicountycommissioner@gmail.com
When replying, please quote

Ref: No.NC.EDU/4/1/VOL.11/ (7)

County Commissioner's Office,
Nandi County
P.O. Box 30,
KAPSABET.

9th July, 2014

James Kimaiyo Bungei
Egerton University
P.O. BOX 536-20115
EGERTON

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

This is in reference to letter No. NACOSTI/P/14/7664/1884 dated 2nd July, 2014 from the Secretary/CEO, National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation on the above subject matter.

You are hereby authorized to conduct a research on **"Influence of school management practices on dropout rates in public primary schools in Emgwen Division Nandi Central"** within Nandi County for the period ending 20th August, 2014.

Wishing you all the best.

M. P. SAKWA (MS)
County Commissioner,
NANDI.

Copy to:

The Deputy County Commissioner,
Nandi Central.

APPENDIX V: RESEARCH PERMIT FROM NACOSTI

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Telephone: +254-20-2213471,
2241349, 310571, 2219420
Fax: +254-20-318245, 318249
Email: secretary@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke
When replying please quote

9th Floor, Utalii House
Uhuru Highway
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref: No.

Date:

2nd July, 2014

NACOSTI/P/14/7664/1884

James Kimaiyo Bungei
Egerton University
P.O.Box 536-20115
EGERTON.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on *"Influence of school management practices on dropout rates in public primary schools in Emgwen Division Nandi County,"* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Nandi County** for a period ending **20th August, 2014.**

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

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf** of the research report/thesis to our office.

SAID HUSSEIN
FOR: SECRETARY/CEO

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
The County Director of Education
Nandi County.

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

APPENDIX VI: RESEARCH CLEARANCE PERMIT FROM NACOSTI

CONDITIONS

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

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NACOSTI

National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation

RESEARCH CLEARANCE PERMIT

Serial No. A 2097

CONDITIONS: see back page

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
MR. JAMES KIMAIYO BUNGEI
of EGERTON UNIVERSITY, 858-30300
KAPSABET,has been permitted to
conduct research in *Nandi County*

on the topic: *INFLUENCE OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON DROPOUT RATES IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN EMGWEN DIVISION NANDI COUNTY*
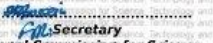
for the period ending:
20th August,2014

Permit No : NACOSTI/P/14/7664/1884
Date Of Issue : 2nd July,2014
Fee Recieved :Ksh 1,000

Applicant's
Signature

Secretary
National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation

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APPENDIX VII: PILOT RESULTS

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.701	.794	24