

**EFFECT OF DIFFERENT LEADERSHIP STYLES ON ACADEMIC  
PERFORMANCE OF PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN  
IGEMBE NORTH DISTRICT MERU COUNTY**

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## ABSTRACT

The quality of Leadership makes the difference between the success and failure of a school. Head teachers as schools' chief executives, are charged with this daunting task of managing teachers among other school resources. The menace of vices, poor academic output and poor performance at work in the society has been a source of concern to all the stakeholders in education i.e. government teachers, parents, religious bodies, law environment agents and society at large. Performance in national examinations in public primary schools in Igembe North district is poor. The purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of different leadership styles and on academic performance of public primary school in Igembe North District Meru County. The findings of this study were significant in various ways: first on the theoretical value, it would provide greater insight to the administrators and managers of schools into the factors that contribute to high academic performance in schools in Igembe North district. Second on the practical value, the findings would serve as reference points for head teachers of schools in Igembe North district on management skills that would lead to improvement of public pupils' performance in national examinations. The findings of the study would also benefit Kenya Education staff Institute (KESI) with regard to salient training needs for head teachers that needs to be addressed in Igembe North district. The study adopted descriptive survey to find the head teachers' leadership styles and how they affect the performance of the pupils in K.C.P.E in Igembe North district. The study targeted 20 head teachers' and 380 teachers in Igembe North district. The primary schools were stratified into high performing with a mean score of 330 and above in K.C.P.E examinations, average performing with a mean score of 329 to 291 in K.C.P.E examinations and low performing schools with a mean score of 290 and below in K.C.P.E examinations. 15 head teachers and 15 schools were purposively selected. Four teachers were randomly selected from every school to form a sample size of 75 respondents for the study. Questionnaires for head teacher and teachers were used as research instruments. The data collected was arranged and grouped according to particular research objectives. For every research objective, the responses were tabulated in a frequency distribution table. The recommendations made from the study were that; autocratic style of leadership should not at all be exercised in school as it exerts pressure on teachers and pupils which lead to schools not performing well and drop out of students and stress to teachers, head teachers should exercise democratic leadership which majority feel is the best and Laissez Faire style of leadership gives too much authority hence should also not be practiced as it could give too much freedom and bring laxity hence poor performance in examinations.