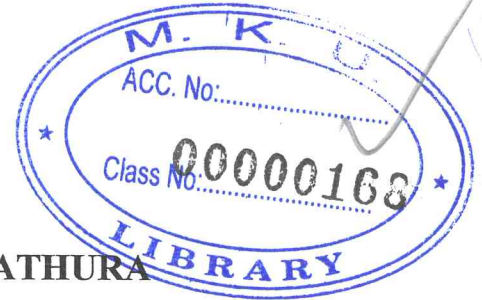


**AN ASSESSMENT OF PRINCIPALS' FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT  
TRAINING NEEDS AND SKILLS IN ENHANCING SECONDARY  
SCHOOL MANAGEMENT IN KENYA: A CASE STUDY OF LOWER  
YATTA DISTRICT**



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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to assess principals' financial management training needs and skills in enhancing management of public secondary schools in Kenya. The study was carried out in Lower Yatta District in Kitui County. The research objectives that guided the study were: to assess the level of competences and skills in financial management by principals of public secondary schools; to identify the extent of the training needs and skills in financial management required by principals of public secondary schools; to find out the areas in financial management perceived necessary for principals to enhance financial management in public secondary schools. The study adopted a qualitative research methodology and a case study research design was used to obtain in depth and detailed information on principals' financial management training needs and skills. The researcher purposely sampled all the principals, deputy principals, heads of science department and bursars/account clerks of public secondary schools, and the schools' auditor in the district. The sample size comprised of 73 respondents out of which 18 were principals, 18 deputy principals, 18 heads of science department, 18 bursars/account clerks and one (1) district schools' auditor. Data was collected using questionnaires, an interview schedule and a document observation schedule. A pilot study was carried out on respondents selected from public secondary schools in the neighboring Kitui West district to establish whether the research instruments would collect the required data. Test – retest method was used to measure the reliability of the research instruments. Recommendations from the supervisor's feedback were incorporated in the final research instruments to ensure content validity. Data was analyzed qualitatively using thematic analysis and then presented in form of descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution tables, percentages, graphs and pie charts. The findings of this study were useful in providing the education policy makers with the insight on the areas practicing principals required training needs and skills in order to initiate appropriate training programs on financial management. The findings of this study revealed that; first, the level of principals' skills and competences was wanting and was rated as bad especially in drawing the budget, strictly following the budget, keeping up to date financial records and internal auditing. Secondly, it was revealed that the current training of principals in financial management was inadequate and that principals had training needs and skills in specific financial management areas which among others included: preparing school budget jointly with other administrative staff, planning and sourcing funds for school improvement, working within the constraints of the school budget, keeping accurate financial information about the school and ensuring that the budget reflected agreed goals and objectives in line with the school strategic plan. Thirdly, it was revealed that principals required training in key areas of financial management in order to enhance financial management in public secondary schools. This study concluded that principals' as school managers and accounting officers had inadequate training, low levels of skills and competences in financial management and that training in financial management was inadequate. The study recommended that appointment of teachers to position of principal should be based strictly on their competences on management and administration especially financial management, among other recommendations. A further research study should be conducted to compare financial management training needs and skills of principals based on gender, academic qualifications and experience. A study on financial management training needs and skills of members of board of management as school managers in public secondary schools should be done. There was also the need to replicate this study in other districts/counties in the marginal areas and compare the results.