

**PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP PRACTICES AND THEIR EFFECT ON
STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS:
A CASE OF PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN TINDERET SUB COUNTY,
KENYA**

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION IN PARTIAL
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ABSTRACT

The provision of quality education and the subsequent high performance in schools is inevitable for the realization of millennium development goals and the Kenya's vision 2030. In Kenya, the education system has been hit by students' poor academic performance every year the KCSE results are announced. Some schools have maintained good KCSE performance while others have consistently lagged behind. The differences in KCSE performance are brought about by many factors and one major factor is the principals' leadership practices. The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of principals' leadership practices on KCSE performance of students in public secondary schools in Tinderet sub county, Kenya. The objectives of this study were; to determine the effect of instructional supervision on the academic achievement of students in national examinations in Tinderet sub county, to assess the effect of strategic planning on the academic achievement of students in national examinations in Tinderet sub county and to investigate the effect of adequate physical school facilities on the academic achievement of students in national examinations in Tinderet sub county, Kenya. The study is hinged on the Education Production Function (EPF) by a sociologist James S. Coleman (1966). The theory relates various inputs affecting the students' learning to the measured outputs. The study adopted a descriptive survey design targeting 18 principals and the 187 teachers in the 18 public secondary schools in Tinderet sub county, Kenya. Simple random sampling technique was used in this study. The strata included; 3 boys' schools, 3 girls' schools and 9 mixed schools. 6 teachers were selected from each strata thus bringing a total number of 90 teachers. The principals of the 15 sampled schools were included in the study. The sample size for the study therefore was 105 respondents. Two sets of questionnaires were used to collect data; the principals' questionnaires and the teachers' questionnaires. The reliability coefficient for the principals' questionnaires was 0.91 and the one for the teachers' questionnaires was 0.92. The descriptive design was used. The design adopted a mixed approach thereby generating both qualitative and quantitative data. Quantitative data was analyzed using the descriptive statistics including frequencies and percentages. Qualitative data was put under themes consistent with the research objectives. Inferences were made using the Pearson product moment correlation. The analyzed data was then presented in the form of graphs, pie charts and tables for easy interpretation. The study revealed that the correlation coefficient value between instructional supervision and students' performance was found to be 0.102 thus it was not statistically significant. There was a strong positive correlation of 0.564 between strategic planning and below average performance and also a strong positive correlation of 0.658 between strategic planning and average performance but there was a weak positive correlation of 0.053 between strategic planning and above average performance. The correlation coefficient value between school facilities and students' academic performance was -0.076. This implied that there was a weak relationship between school facilities and KCSE performance. The study concluded that; since most principals 65.2% had experience of between 6-10 years and that 65% of them had undergone KEMI in-service training in Educational Management, the poor performance could be attributed to the effectiveness of the in-service training and other challenges facing the principals as instructional supervisors in schools such as higher work load. The study recommended that; the school principals should delegate duties to the deputy principals and Heads of departments to enable the task of instructional supervision in schools to be effective, the ministry of education officials in the sub county should ensure that all schools involve relevant stake holders in the strategic plan formulation and implementation and that the government should ensure that all categories of schools have adequate learning facilities such as laboratories and libraries.