

Abstract

Literature shows headteachers' leadership styles impact on students' performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (K.C.P.E). Majority of the pupils who sat for K.C.P.E. over the last five years in Kikuyu district had average marks. This is despite the schools having qualified teachers, adequate resources and facilities to enhance effective learning and good performance. This study purposed to investigate the effects of headteachers' leadership styles on students' performance in K.C.P.E in public primary schools in Kikuyu district. The study adopted ex-post facto survey research design. All teachers and headteachers in all the public primary schools in Kikuyu district were targeted. Twenty seven headteachers and 154 teachers were randomly sampled from 27 primary schools. Responses were obtained using questionnaires. Descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were utilized in data analysis. Findings revealed there was a significant relationship between headteachers' leadership styles and students' academic performance. There was no relationship between headteachers' gender, age, teaching experience and marital status and their leadership styles. Teachers perceived their headteachers as autocratic. Recommendations were that headteachers should enhance their leadership skills and use the most appropriate leadership style for a conducive teaching and learning environment.