

Abstract

Performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examination (KCSE) in public secondary schools in Makueni County, Kenya has consistently been on the decline over years. Studies have not identified any particular cause to this trend. Principals' being heads of academic issues in the schools have a responsibility to correct this trend through among other ways, promotion of staff professional development in their respective schools. This down trend in KCSE performance created the need for this study. The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of principals' promotion of staff professional development on KCSE performance in public secondary schools in Makueni County, Kenya. The hypothesis for the study was that there is no statistically significant relationship between principals' promotion of staff professional development and KCSE performance in public secondary schools in Makueni County, Kenya. The study employed mixed methods research design. The target population was all principals and teachers of public secondary schools in Makueni County. The study employed stratified sampling technique for schools, equal allocation sampling technique for both principals and teachers for quantitative phase while maximal variation sampling was used for qualitative phase. Means, percentage and frequencies were used to determine the distribution of variables under study among the respondents and presented in frequency tables. Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test the relationship between principals' promotion of staff professional development and KCSE performance in public secondary schools in Makueni County. The results for quantitative phase indicated that the coefficient of correlation (r) for the objective was 0.64 at significance level of 0.03. Principals interviewed attested that they promoted and encouraged staff professional development in their schools. The study concluded that principals of public secondary schools in Makueni County, Kenya embraced a variety of staff professional development strategies that positively influenced KCSE performance. The study recommends that the Ministry of Education and Teachers Service Commission to come up with formal and fully funded teacher-capacity – building programmes to equip teachers with new skills, methodologies and pedagogical skills since education is dynamic.