

Relationship between Principals' Emotional Intelligence and Students' Learning Achievements in Public Secondary Schools in Nairobi County, Kenya.

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Abstract

Studies in the business field indicate a positive relationship between emotional intelligence of heads of institutions and performance of such institutions. Few studies though, have been conducted to examine the role of emotional intelligence in the field of education. The main objective of this study was to establish the relationship between the principals' emotional intelligence and students' learning achievements in public secondary schools in Nairobi County, where learning achievements included performance in academic and co-curricular activities. A correlation design was used. The independent variable in the study was emotional intelligence of principals while the dependent variables were achievements in the academic and co-curricular activities of the students. Purposive sampling was used. The institutions sampled include national and county public schools in Nairobi. The sample of the study was 294, made up of 35 principals, 35 deputy principals and 224 heads of departments. Data was collected using adapted Emotional Competence Inventory questionnaire whose average reliability is .63 and has high validity. Students' performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education and co-curricular activities were collected from the sampled schools and verified with records from the Kenya National Examinations Council and the Ministry of Education, respectively. The data collected was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics such as standard deviations, t-test, Spearman correlation and Pearson product moment correlation. The findings of the study indicated that there is a statistically significant relationship between emotional intelligence of principals and students' academic achievements in national schools and in co-curricular activities. The other findings were that there is statistically significant relationship between emotional intelligence of principals and involvement of members of Board of Governors and parents in students' learning achievements. The findings did not show statistically significant relationship between emotional intelligence of principals and students' academic achievements in county secondary schools. In addition, the findings did not indicate statistically significant relationship between the emotional intelligence of principals and their gender, professional qualification and length of service. In conclusion, there were gaps identified in some emotional intelligence competencies of principals that need to be enhanced. Considering the inter-play between emotional intelligence of principals and learning achievements of students, the researcher recommends that the concept be incorporated in the in-service courses for serving and aspiring principals, criteria for identification of principals and deputy principals and in the school and post school curricular for all levels of education. Further research is recommended in the area of emotional intelligence of principals and other stakeholders in schools.

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