

Preparation and Development of Public Secondary Schools Principals in Kenya.

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Abstract

Within the complex operation of schools in the 21st century, the principal plays a very vital role in bringing about school improvement and effectiveness. Increased interest leadership preparation and development is based on the fact that school leaders can make a difference in both the effectiveness and efficiency of schooling (Hallinger & Snidvongs, 2008). Consequently, there is need therefore, to ensure that the principal plays this role effectively through providing them with knowledge, skills and attributes to enable them run schools effectively and efficiently. This can be achieved mainly if such principals are specifically prepared for school leadership before appointment and then developed continuously to enhance their performance of duties as school leaders after appointment. Preparation and development of principals will provide a framework within which they will operate to achieve not only the school but also the national objectives of education. In this chapter, I will discuss findings on the experiences of public secondary schools principals in Kenya on how they are prepared and developed for school leadership and factors which facilitate and hinder their preparation and development. The findings from this qualitative study that employed interviews and document analysis indicate that despite lack of specific preparation and development of principals, there are other ways in which principals are prepared and developed for school leadership. These include in-service courses, principals' conferences and personal initiatives. While former principals support, availability of in-service courses and finances facilitate preparation and development, irregularity of in service courses and lack of money hinders the same. It is recommended that the government should make preparation and development of principals formal and support other agencies whether private or non governmental in provision of services in preparation and development of principals.

Keywords: leadership, leadership preparation, leadership development, principals and school leadership.

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