

**CHALLENGES FACED BY PRINCIPALS IN ENHANCING STUDENTS'
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN
NDHIWA SUB-COUNTY, KENYA**

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This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my beloved wife Lucy A. Mwalo, my children Albert, Stanley, Esther, Faith, Peter and Pendo my late mother, Rusanael Osiko together with all my brothers.

ABSTRACT

Globally, principals play a very important role in enhancing students' academic achievement. However, in the process of doing this, studies have shown that, principals are faced with a number of challenges resulting in poor performance of students. Public Secondary Schools in Ndhiwa Sub County have not been performing well academically as shown by Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (K.C.S.E) examination results between the years 2013 and 2018, compared to the neighboring Sub Counties within Homa Bay County. Average KCSE mean scores was 4.7 when compared to other Sub-counties, which are higher; Homa-Bay: 6.0; Suba 5.0; Rachuonyo North 5.1; Rachuonyo South 5.2; Mbita 5.3. Hitherto the challenges principals face relating to their areas of operations are unknown in Ndhiwa Sub County, the knowledge gaps this study sought to fill. The purpose of this study therefore was to determine challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub- County, Kenya. The objectives of the study were to: determine school based challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement; establish student based challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement; establish government policy based challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement; and determine economic based challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in Public Secondary Schools in Ndhiwa Sub County. Grounded theory was used to guide the study. A conceptual framework based on concept that challenges faced by principals (Independent Variables), must be overcome in order to enhance student academic achievement (Dependent Variables) was used. The study employed descriptive survey research design. The study population comprised 45 principals, 203 teachers, 2,469 Form three students and 1 Sub-County Quality Assurance and Standards Officer (SCQASO). Saturated sampling was used to select 26 principals, and 1 SCQASO. Simple random sampling was used to select 133 teachers and 332 students. Data was collected using questionnaire, interviews and focus group discussion. Face validity of the instruments was established by experts in educational administration. The reliability of these instruments was established through test-retest method in 3 schools. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, means and percentages. Qualitative data was transcribed and analyzed in emergent themes and sub themes whereby a Pearson's r coefficient of 0.79 and 0.80 for principals and teachers respectively above at a p-value of 0.05 was considered reliable. The study established that school based and student based challenges posed bigger challenges to the principals in enhancing students' academic achievement as indicated by the overall mean rating of 3.64 and 3.34 respectively. Economic based challenges and Government policy based challenges posed a big challenge with overall mean rating of 3.30 and 3.21 respectively. The study recommended that: principals need to be given a lot of training on management of finances to enable them manage the little financial resource available in their schools; the stakeholders like the Boards of Management should think of other sources of funds that the schools can engage in to boost the financial resources; the principals and teachers should give priority to developing the attitude of students positively to enhance performance of students in their schools. The study may be significant in: enlightening policy makers in identifying better strategies to address challenges facing principals in enhancing student' academic achievement.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ANOVA	-	Analysis of Variance
BOM	-	Board of Management
C.D.F	-	Constituency Development Fund
C.S.E.E	-	Certificate of Secondary Education Examination
EFA	-	Education for All
F.A.W.E	-	Forum for Africa Women Education
FDSSE	-	Free Day Secondary School Education
HIV/AIDS	-	Human Immune Virus/ Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
K.C.P.E	-	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
K.C.S.E	-	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
M.O.E	-	Minister of Education
N.C.S	-	National Curriculum Statement
S.C.D.E	-	Sub- County Director of Education
SCQASO	-	Sub- County Quality Assurance and Standards Officer
SIP	-	School Improvement Programme
UNICEF	-	United National International Children Education Fund

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

School principals play a very important role in enhancing students' academic performance both internationally and locally. Bakhda (2010) indicates that head teachers play a very important role in maintaining appropriate and detailed records of the students' academic progress and their social growth. Hompashe (2018) established the association between measures of instructional leadership (e.g. teachers' understanding of curricular goals and teachers' degree of success in implementing curricular goals) and student scores for mathematics and science using linear probability models. Findings confirm the existence of the principal-agent problem in education, since many school respondents indicated that curriculum delivery monitoring was not conducted as expected. From the multivariate analysis, instructional leadership variables, such as teachers' understanding of curricular goals and teachers' degree of success in implementing the curriculum appear as important correlates of student achievement, though significance differs according to level of schooling and whether the questions were answered by principals or teachers.

In a conference paper presented by Dina (2012) on challenges faced by educational leadership on influencing student learning, it was established that major challenges having a significant impact on students' learning are school conditions, teachers as well as student background and the government policies and school approaches.

A study by Ndyali (2013) on the roles of school heads in enhancing students' academic performance was carried out in Mbeya Urban, Tanzania established that school heads are surrounded by many challenges which make the school management to be unbearable and that their roles had been hampered by unfriendly working situations in which schools operate under shortage of teachers, facilities, funds and lack of commitment among stakeholders. The study concluded that the students' poor academic performance in the context of the roles of school heads prevailing in community secondary schools is a result of an educational system that produces predetermined poor results. Indeed, Abdurashed and Bello (2015) confirmed this study in their research, on the challenges to secondary school principals' leadership in Northern Region of Nigeria. They established that poor funding of schools is a major problem and that secondary school education board did not have a system of organizing seminars for capacity building to re- train and improve leadership effectiveness of principals in the region. A study by Ndotu (2015) on challenges faced by Principals of Newly established secondary schools and their coping strategies in Mwingi Central Sub County, Kitui County also established that principals face financial challenges, inadequate facilities and shortage of teaching staff. It is thus clear from the above studies that principals influence students' academic achievement and those principals face challenges in enhancing students' academic achievement.

Mugambi (2015) in a study to establish the role of principals in promoting student academic performance in secondary schools in Tigania West Sub – County, Meru County, established that there was an association between the school's performance and its principal's instructional management practices. Other findings were that, some minor approaches like use of students to monitor teacher lesson attendance and visiting class to observe a teacher were

rarely used. Mugambi (2015) further established that schools faced challenges that include inadequate trained teachers, learning/ teaching materials, irregular fee payment, inadequate science laboratories and lack of time to check on the teachers' and students' work by principals.

The principals also face student-based challenges as observed by studies conducted without and within the country. For instance, Waseka and Simatwa (2016), carried out a study on student factors influencing academic performance of students in secondary education in Kakamega County, Kenya. The study established that performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education, age, participation in co-curricular activities and exclusion from school were student factors. This study however, did not establish which one of these are a challenge to the principals, the knowledge gap this study sought to fill in public secondary schools in Ndiwa Sub - County.

On the other hand, there are government policy based factors, which pose challenges to the school principals in enhancing the students' academic performance. For instance, Nurudeen, Wan, Abdul and Latif (2018) carried out a study on the impact of government funding on students' academic performance in Ghana and the findings indicated that government funding (Progressive Fee Policy) has a greater impact on students' academic performance. Any challenge on the funding by the government would therefore pose a challenge to the principals in their effort to enhance students' academic achievement.

Similarly, Badugela (2012) conducted a study on problems facing educators in implementing the National Curriculum Statement (N.C.S) at Tshifhena Secondary school, Vhembe District, Limpopo Province, South Africa. The study established that the implementation of the N.C.S was problematic and far from satisfactory. The respondents posted a gloomy picture about the previous conditions in the schools with 67% of the respondents indicating lack of support from the education department and 75% of respondents indicated a shortage of learning and teaching resources. It was not clear from these studies, the extent to which government policies were a challenge to the principals in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub - County, the knowledge gap this study sought to fill.

Another area that posed challenges to the principals was economic based challenges. Ndereba (2011), Njuguna (2011), Michubu (2013), Muchunku (2014), Wambui (2017) and Kieti (2017) were in agreement that parental income, parental occupation, parental level of education and parental - school cooperation were very important factors that enhance students' academic achievement. A challenge to any of these factors would be a challenge to the principals in their effort to enhance students' academic achievement in public secondary schools. These studies equally did not establish the extent to which each one of these was a challenge to the principals in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub - County, the knowledge gap this study sought to establish.

The Kenyan Government allocates more than 50% of its total recurrent expenditure on education. The problem of poor performance in national examinations is costly for any country since education is a major contributor to economic growth (Atkinson, 2012). The

poor performance in KCSE in Ndhiwa Sub- County for the last six years is depicted in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1
Trends in KCSE Performance for Homa Bay County 2013 -2018

Sub- County	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Av
Ndhiwa	4.3	4.8	5.1	4.9	5.2	4.1	4.7
Homa Bay	5.7	5.8	6.0	6.3	6.4	6.3	6.1
Suba	4.5	4.8	5.4	5.6	5.0	5.2	5.1
Rachuonyo North	4.8	5.0	5.2	5.1	5.4	5.4	5.2
Rachuonyo South	4.5	4.1	5.1	6.1	5.4	5.6	5.1
Mbita	4.6	4.8	5.1	5.7	5.8	5.5	5.3

Source: County Quality Assurance and Standards Office, Homa Bay County, 2018

From Table 1.1, Ndhiwa Sub - County had the lowest mean score of 4.1 in 2013 and the highest mean score was 5.2 in 2017, compared to the K.C.S.E performance in Homa Bay Sub - County where the highest was 6.4 in 2017 and the lowest was 6.0 in 2015. In Suba Sub - County, the highest mean score was 5.6 in 2016 while it registered 4.5 mean score in 2013 as the lowest, which was still higher than the lowest in Ndhiwa Sub - County. Rachuonyo North had KCSE performance of 4.8 as the lowest in 2013 and the highest as 5.4 in 2017 and 2018. This was still higher than what Ndhiwa Scored as its highest mean score of 5.2 in 2017. In Rachuonyo South, K.C.S.E performance in 2016 was the highest with a mean score of 6.1 while the lowest was 4.1 in 2014, same to the lowest in Ndhiwa Sub - County in 2018. Mbita Sub - County K.C.S.E performance mean score lowest stood at 4.6 in 2013 and highest at 5.8 in 2017 which was higher than Ndhiwa Sub - County. The average mean score for the six

years in Homa bay County, Ndhiwa Sub - County ranked lowest with an average mean score of 4.7 in K.C.S.E performance, compared to 6.1 (Homa Bay), 5.1 (Suba), 5.2 (Rachuonyo North), 5.1 (Rachuonyo South), and 5.3 (Mbita).

Ndhiwa Sub – County has experienced poor academic performance from time to time, which has witnessed standoffs, protests and principals have been the point of focus, the Board of Management (B.O.M) and other stakeholders. The fact that the poor performance sparked potential riots and rejection of principals suggested that perhaps there are challenges, issues which principals face which was worth a research. It is against this backdrop that a research on the challenges faced by principals in enhancing students’ academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub- County was conducted.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

School principals have a responsibility to enhance students’ academic achievement through good management of finances, human resources, physical facilities, creating a cordial working relationship with the parents, implementing government policies and so on. It is expected that by doing this, students’ academic achievement be enhanced as reflected in their final examinations, in this case, KCSE. In the process of doing this, principals are faced with a number of challenges running from school- based challenges, student –based challenges, government policy -based challenges and economic- based challenges. Reviewed studies worldwide, revealed that principals face challenges and ultimately affect students’ academic achievement. Public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub - County had performed poorly in K.C.S.E examinations for the last six years with average KCSE mean scores between 2013

and 2018 being 4.7. Some of the causes of poor performance may include: student entry behavior, challenges faced by principals, student attitude, staffing, teaching learning resources, socio-economic status of parents among others. All these factors present themselves as challenges to the principals whose main role is to examine students' academic achievement. It was not clear whether the low performance in KCSE in Ndhiwa Sub - county was as a result of the challenges faced by principals or not. It is against this background that a study was conducted to establish the challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub - county.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub- County.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The objectives guiding this study were to:

- i. Determine school based challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County.
- ii. Establish student based challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County.
- iii. Establish government policy based challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County.
- iv. Determine economic based challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County.

1.5. Research Questions

The research sought to answer the following questions:

- i. What are the school - based challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County?
- ii. What are the student -based challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County?
- iii. What are the government policy - based challenges faced principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County?
- iv. What are the economic based challenges faced by the principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are likely to:

- i. Provide background information in understanding the challenges prevalent among principals in Ndhiwa Sub-County.
- ii. Provide suggestions on how principals in the Sub - County can overcome their challenges and its impact on achievement of quality education in public schools.
- iii. Provide information to the Ministry of Education in training of principals and handling of challenges faced by them in public secondary schools.

1.7 Assumptions of the Study

The study was guided by the following assumptions: -

- i. That principals were aware of school based challenges such as inadequate funds, lack of laboratories and inadequate boarding facilities in their endeavor to enhance students' academic achievement in public secondary schools.
- ii. That principals were aware of student based challenges such as drug abuse, peer influence, entry behavior and theft in their endeavor to enhance student academic achievement in public secondary schools.
- iii. That principals were aware of government policy based challenges such as delay in disbursement of funds and re-entry policy in their endeavors in enhancing students' academic achievement in secondary schools.
- iv. That principals were aware of economic based challenges such as low parental income, child labor, and absenteeism due to fees in their endeavors to enhance student academic achievement in public secondary schools.

1.8 Scope of the Study

This study was limited to the challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in 26 public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub - County. The study period was six (6) years; between 2013 and 2018 in order to give a trend of whole cycle from F1-F4 and beyond. The respondents were public secondary school principals, teachers, students and Ndhiwa Sub - County Quality Assurance and Standards Officer.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

The SCQASO did not provide much information on government policy based challenges principals face in enhancing students' academic achievement when interviewed.

1.10 Conceptual Framework

The study was conceptualized on the basis of variables to be used in the study. In this case, the study assumes that students' academic achievement was affected by a combination of various variables namely school based challenges, student based challenges, government policy based challenges and economic based challenges.

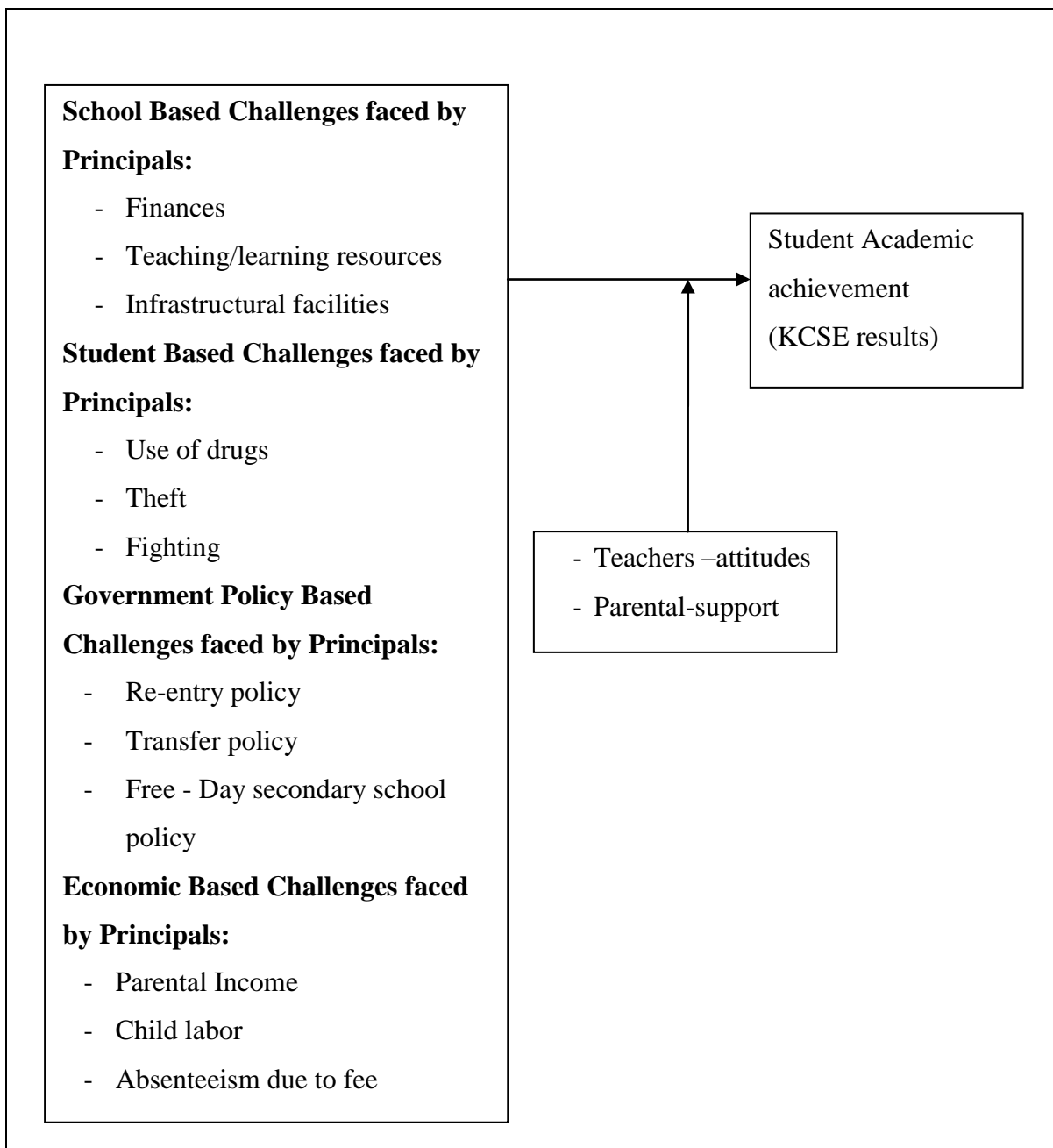


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework showing Challenges Principals' face in Enhancing Students' Academic Achievement

The conceptual framework postulates that independent variables (School based challenges, Student based challenges, government policy based challenges and economic based challenges) negatively affect the dependent variables (students' academic achievement). The school based challenges for this study are finances, library, water, teaching staff, non teaching staff, infrastructural facilities, recreational facilities and laboratory chemicals and equipment. Student based challenges are drug abuse, theft, taking class assignment, fighting, destruction of school properties, entry behavior, attitude and peer influence. Government policy based challenges are free day secondary school policy, re-entry policy, school sponsorship policy, standards and safety policy and student discipline management policy. Economic based challenges are parental income, child labour, funds for students' uniform, funds for personal text books and absenteeism due to fee. However, there are other factors like teachers' attitude and parental support which may intervene resulting in better performance of the students.

Studies have shown that there is a significant relationship between school based factors, student based factors, Government policy based factors and economic based factors and students' academic performance Abdulrasheed and Bello (2015), Wekesa and Simatwa (2016), Badugela (2012) and Ndereba (2011). Similarly, studies have shown that school based challenges, student based challenges, Government policy based challenges and economic based challenges surround the school principals and this impact negatively on the results (Ndyali, 2013 & Ndotu, 2015). In this study, the extent to which these challenges influence students' academic achievement will be measured.

1.11 Operational Definition of Terms

Academic achievement -Is the level of performance Kenya certificate of secondary examinations as measured in terms of grades obtained.

Challenges -these are challenges that tend to hinder principals from enhancing student academic achievement.

Economic Based Challenges -these financial difficulties emanating from parents that hinder principals from enhancing students' academic achievement.

Government Policy Based Challenges -these are difficulties that arise from government policy that hinder the principals from enhancing student academic achievement.

Principals/ Headteachers - these are teachers in charge of public secondary schools who enhance students' academic achievement and are faced with a number of challenges in doing this.

Public Secondary Schools-these are schools financed by the Government offering secondary education.

School Based Challenges -these are challenges due to financial and human resources and physical resources hinder the principals from enhancing students' academic achievement.

Student Based Challenge - these are challenges due to students' background, morals and entry behavior that hinder the principals from enhancing students' academic achievement.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this section, related literature review on the challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools, was reviewed under the following sub-headings: school based challenges, student based challenges government policy based challenges and economic based challenges principals face in enhancing students' academic achievement.

2.2 School - Based Challenges

According to Onyara (2013), school-based challenges are those within school control that can influence students' academic performance in public secondary schools. They include; teaching resources, teacher adequacy, physical facilities and head teachers' supervisory role.

A number of studies have been carried out on the challenges principals face with respect to school-based challenges and other related studies both internationally and locally. For instance, Wise (2015) carried out a study on emerging challenges facing principals focusing on US public schools and established that principals face challenges including overwhelming effects of poverty, increasing pressure on students' achievement, the breakdown of communities, lack of financial resources and a host of other issues. Over 10, 000 principals participated as respondents in this study. In this study one of the school based challenge that was addressed was financial resource, which the study did not tell us the extent to which it is a challenge among others. Indeed, school activities cannot be run without finances. However, other school – based challenges were not addressed which the current study sought to address.

In a conference paper presented by Dina (2012) on challenges faced by educational leadership on influencing student learning, it was argued that major challenges having a significant impact on students' learning are school conditions, teachers as well as student background and the government policies and school approaches. Whereas the findings of this study were true as established by other scholars, the educational leaders need to understand the extent to which these challenges affect the students' academic achievement in order to have them addressed, the knowledge gap this study sought to bridge.

In Nigeria, Abdulrasheed and Bello (2015) also carried out a study on challenges to secondary school principals' leadership in Northern Region of Nigeria and found out that poor funding of schools is a major problem of principals' leadership ineffectiveness and lack of availability of funds directly to the schools account to run the schools. This study also established that secondary school education board did not have a system of organizing seminars for capacity building to re train and improve leadership effectiveness of principals in the region. In essence, this study actually concurs with those of Wise (2015) and Dina (2012) which established financial resources to be a challenge but added the fact that the capacity building of the principals needed to be taken care of in order learn how to address such kind of challenges.

A study conducted by Owoeye and Yara (2011) looked at the provision of facilities as it relates to academic performance of students in agricultural science in Ekiti state of Niger between 1990 and 1997. The study population was results of the West African School Certificate Examination (WASCE) conducted between 1990 and 1997 in 50 secondary

schools in both rural and urban areas of the state. One validated instrument (STQ) was used for data collection. Data were analyzed using measurement and T-test. The result showed that there were no significant differences in the performance of students between rural and urban secondary schools in terms of library facilities. This meant that the challenges faced by principals in both rural and urban secondary schools were similar.

In Kenya, other related studies have been carried out. For example, a study conducted by Onyara (2013) on school-based challenges influencing students' academic performance at Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education in Teso South District, established that some of the school-based challenges that influence academic performance included human resources, financial resources, physical resources and learning techniques. In this study, it was established that human resources is not well handled, financial resources was not well established and physical resources were not well developed which is an indicator that principals face challenges in such areas in enhancing students' academic achievements. I fully concur with the findings that human resources, financial resources, physical resources and learning techniques are all important in enhancing students' academic achievement. However, it is equally true as established by other researchers that principals face challenges with these aspects to which each one of them is a challenge was not addressed, the knowledge gap the current study sought to address in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County.

Musau (2015) also conducted a study on school-based challenges influencing students' performance at Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education in Masiga Sub County, Machakos County, Kenya, where it was established that schools lacked adequate teaching/ learning

resources as indicated by 11 out of 15 school principals. The study further established that there were inadequate teachers to accommodate the large number of students. Further, the majority of principals indicated that water and laboratories in their schools were not adequate. Musau's (2015) findings, concurs with those of Ondieki and Orodho (2015), who established that the main school based challenges that negatively influenced performance of pupils in transition from lower to upper classes included inadequate teaching and learning resources, sketchy syllabus coverage due to inappropriate instructional strategies and poor attitude among pupils and teachers. The point of divergence in the two studies is that Ondieki and Orodho (2015) focused in primary school, which was in a stage of implementing a newly introduced curriculum, and therefore the challenge of instructional materials was expected. However, lack of teaching/learning materials was common to both studies. The two studies however, did not reveal which teaching/ learning materials was a challenge. This is the knowledge gap, the current study sought to establish in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County.

According Mutindi (2018), in his study on school based challenges influencing students' performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examination in Public Secondary Schools in Kathiani Sub County, it was established that teaching resources especially radios, televisions, computers and projectors were inadequate. Teacher inadequacy also occasioned by the fact that there were no immediate replacements made once teachers were transferred. In addition, the study established among others that library and laboratory facilities were inadequate. Head teachers were also found to rarely vet teachers' lesson notes and rarely appraised teachers. Overall, the study found out that teaching resources, teacher adequacy, physical

facilities and head teachers' supervisory role had positive and significant relationship with students' performance at KCSE. In other word, these findings established that inadequate teaching resources, teacher inadequacy, inadequate physical facilities and inadequate head teachers' supervision were challenges that influenced students' academic achievement.

A related study was conducted by Nthenya (2012) on Challenges faced by secondary school head teachers in leadership and management in human resources in Nzau District, Makueni County, Kenya, which established that there was a major challenge of in servicing teachers and developing them because of resistance to change and lack of commitment towards learning and training. This study majorly focused on human resource as a school based challenge, yet there are other school-based challenges.

Ndotu (2015) in a study on challenges faced by principals of newly established schools and their coping strategies in Mwingi Central Sub County, Kitui County, Kenya, established that principals face financial challenges, inadequate facilities and shortage of teaching staff. This study closely relates to the one carried out by Obaga (2013), on challenges experienced by public day secondary school head teachers in implementing of free day secondary education in Nyamira County. The study findings revealed that, most secondary school head teachers did not have adequate training on financial management and therefore they needed more training on how to manage both human and financial resources. The study further revealed that physical facilities were not adequate to satisfy the increasing number of students joining the secondary schools. Whereas it's worth appreciating the fact that financial challenges, inadequate facilities and shortage of teaching staff are common in beginning schools and in

day schools which do not have any extra levies charged on parents, it should be noted that that these are also equally the challenges faced by the so called established schools, both day and boarding. The only thing these studies did not reveal to us is which of these is the biggest challenge and which is the least challenge, the knowledge gap this study sought to fill.

In their study on challenges faced by head teachers in public secondary schools in Nyeri South Sub County, Nyeri County, Gichu, Kibaara and Njagi (2017), established that indiscipline, teachers' attitude, poor infrastructure, failure to do assignment by students and uncooperative parents were major challenges. The study further found out that the challenge of indiscipline was due to high enrolment of pupils, drug abuse and exposure to televisions and radios.

Finances enable all the programs in the institution to run smoothly. Finances within the school facilitate boarding facilities, services (water, electricity and telephone) enhance general repairs and maintenance, facilitates construction of physical facilities and payment of salaries of some teaching and non-teaching staff (Otula, 2007). Ngotie (2009) observes that secondary schools are faced with difficulties of trying to source for alternative funding other than traditional school fees paid by parents mainly public resources and grants from donors and bilateral loans, fund the public education sector. Private investors, religious, charitable, and other Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) also play a major role in financing education programs in various parts of the country (MOEST, 2007).

Olendo (2008) studied the relationship between mean performance in KCSE examination and educational resource inputs in public secondary schools in Nyando Sub County and established that textbooks and KCPE marks contributed significantly to mean performance in KCSE. Other challenges were student absenteeism; poor fee payment and negative attitude by students in some subjects. In the absence of textbooks, which can only be obtained in the presence of finances, it becomes a challenge to the principals.

Conclusively, the above studies have identified financial resources, human resources, and physical facilities as challenges the principals face in enhancing students' academic achievement. However, it was not clear from the studies, which school- based challenges principals faced in their endeavors to enhance students' academic achievement in Ndhiwa Sub County, Kenya, the knowledge gap this study sought to fill in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County, Kenya.

2.3 Student-Based Challenges

Other than school based challenges, there are challenges which principals face which are student based in nature. Abuu, Al- Emran and Shaalan (2019), conducted a study about challenges affecting students' performance in higher education, established that most common challenges that affect the students' academic performance, are grouped under four main categories, namely students' previous grades and class performance, students' e- learning activities, students' demographics and students' social information. All these were found to be student based. Indeed, performance at KCPE in Kenya by students, for example, has a positive influence on their performance at secondary school level.

Chan and Sidhu (2014) investigated learning challenges faced by students in higher education and presented in the 5th world conference in which data indicated eight (8) main learning challenges faced by students in higher education namely: cognitive challenges, becoming an active learner, copying with reading materials, instructional problems, language barrier, time management, burden of assignment, and cultural difference in higher education.

A related study on the challenges affecting academic performance among students by Varaprasad and Manikanta (2018) established that there is a positive and statistically significant impact of academic engagement, individual differences and proper guidance from teachers on students' academic performance. The two studies may not have mentioned out rightly the student based challenges, but from the list given, aspects like becoming an active learner, copying with reading materials, language barrier, time management, burden of assignment (Chan & Sidhu, 2014) and academic engagement (Varaprasad & Manikanta, 2018) were clearly student based challenges.

Waseka and Simatwa (2016), carried out a study on student challenges influencing academic performance of students in secondary education in Kakamega County, Kenya. The study established that performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education, age, participation in co-curricular activities and exclusion from school were student challenges. They were found to be statistically significant predictors of students' academic performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examinations. Whereas Kenya Certificate of Primary Education mark, exclusion from school and co-curricular activities enhanced students' academic performance, age (18 years and above) reduced students' academic performance.

Unrest, absenteeism from school, class and preps were not statistically significant predictors of students' academic performance. This study specifically examined the influence of study habits, peer influence, absenteeism, indiscipline and students' entry behavior (Kenya Certificate of Primary Education) on students' academic performance in secondary education. It is therefore clear that poor performance at Kenya Certificate of Primary Education examinations, exclusion of students from school due to indiscipline lack of participation in co-curricular activities, over age (18 years and above), unrest, absenteeism from school were some of the student based challenges. This study however, did not establish which one of these are a challenge to the principals, the knowledge gap this study sought to fill in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County.

A study on the role of student - related challenges in the performance of Biology subject in secondary schools in Eldoret Municipality carried out by Mukhwana (2013), revealed that student related challenges affecting performance of biology in Eldoret municipality are: primary school science which provides requisite background at the secondary school level; interest in Biology (theory and practical) provides a force for learners to participate in the learning process; their ability to carry out practical effectively; and the students' ambitions and attitudes. Whereas this study revealed that student based challenges affected performance of biology, it was not clear the challenges had influenced the performance and the extent to which each of the challenges a challenge to the school principals. Moreover, the study only focused on Biology as a subject and did not include all other subjects in general.

Generally, the above studies identified a number of student – based factors as challenges the principals face in enhancing students’ academic achievement in different regions over the world. However, it was not clear from the studies, which student -based challenges principals faced in their endeavors to enhance students’ academic achievement in Ndhiwa Sub County, Kenya, the knowledge gap this study sought to fill in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County, Kenya.

2.4 Government Policy Based Challenges

Acknowledging that quality teaching is imperative for student achievement, governments and educational accrediting bodies enact policies designed to improve teacher quality (Dinham, 2013; Witte & Jansen, 2015). Molokomphale and Mhlauli (2014) are of the view that education is a promoter of human development and a centre of any society’s life and concern. It is a social artifact embodying aspirations of the welfare and development a society deems to have. In Batswana, education is expected to contribute towards the social, cultural, political, and economic welfare and development of citizens; and this calls for a critical role in education arena. According to Botswana educational goals, children who complete secondary education are expected to have acquired lifelong skills and be competitive in the global village when it comes to their employability (Nichols & Sutton, 2013). This therefore, calls for students to excel academically and perform to the satisfaction of the nation. At primary level, basic education is free to all children in Botswana and the government is the sole sponsor for the education of the students from primary to secondary school levels.

A number of studies have been done in relation to government policy based challenges both internationally and locally. Usman and Abdullahi (2015) conducted a study on Socio – economic challenges and political challenges affecting students’ performance in selected secondary schools in Gusan Metropolis and established that majority of the respondents (100%) were of the opinion that the government had never provided writing materials either weekly, monthly, termly or annually. Higher percentage of the respondents (56.7%) were of the opinion that the government was only able to provide one laboratory. 70% of the respondents indicated that the classrooms the government provided were inadequate and that the teachers were not receiving their salaries and promotions at the appropriate time. There were also rare supervisions by the government, which was once per term from the study. This means that if it were the government’s policy to provide such things as the writing materials and providing classrooms and laboratories, then the performance of the students would be greatly hampered with as the government had failed to it to the standard. This would in turn be a challenge to the principal as he/she will be the one questioned over poor performance. Moreover, if salaries and promotions are not received at the appropriate time by the teachers, they become demoralized and fail to perform their noble duty, hence poor academic performance. The government equally has a responsibility to ensure that the policies are implemented by thorough supervision. If the supervision is not thorough, then many of the policies may not be implemented resulting in poor performance of the school. All these become a challenge to principals who have very little to do on policies which the government have to implement, more particularly, when they are not facilitated.

In Ghana some schools introduced indirect fees despite free education to compensate for the lost revenue. Similarly, in Nigeria provided tuition free secondary education, yet different forms of fees were imposed on parents to cover the cost to meet cost of running the system (UNESCO, 2007). The possibility for this is that the governments (Ghana and Nigeria) could not have been remitting the monies in good time as reflected by Nyaega (2011) or it was inadequate.

Ford (2013) in a study on the impact of the school board governors on academic achievements in Diverse States revealed that the way in which school boards govern does affect district level performance. Specifically, the school boards that engage in strategic planning view their superintendent as a collaborator and mitigate conflict, perform better on academic outcome indicators. Since it is the role of the government to constitute the Board of Management (BOM), it has the sole responsibility to ensure that the BOM constituted performs its role effectively to enhance academic achievement, failure to which, the principal faces the challenge as reflected in the students' academic achievement. This study, however, did not reveal the BOM was a challenge to the principals, the knowledge gap that this study sought to fill.

Nurudeen, Wan, Abdul and Latif (2018) carried out a study on the impact of government funding on students' academic performance in Ghana and the findings indicated that government funding (Progressive Fee Policy) has a greater impact on students' academic performance.

Badugela (2012) equally conducted a study on problems facing educators in implementing the National Curriculum Statement (N.C.S) at Tshifhena Secondary school, Vhembe District, Limpopo Province, South Africa, established that the implementation of the N.C.S was problematic and far from satisfactory. The respondents posted a gloomy picture about the previous conditions in the schools with 67% of the respondents indicating lack of support from the education department and 75% of respondents indicated a shortage of learning and teaching resources. However, did not reveal which aspect was a challenge to the principals, the knowledge gap that this study sought to fill.

Ndeto (2013) also carried out a study on effectiveness of school rules and regulations in enhancing discipline in public secondary schools in Kagundo division, Machakos County, where the findings established that the students were not adequately involved in the formation of school rules and regulations though they were highly involved in implementation of the same. It was also revealed that the students were positive about school rules and regulations. They were willing to embrace them and seemed to recognize their intrinsic value in day-to-day life and discipline enhancement. Discipline is key for good performance as reflected by a study conducted by Karanja and Bowen (2012) who established that strikes negatively affected the academic performance of the students and a correlation carried out confirmed the negative relationship between students' unrests and academic performance. Further, schools where students went on strike showed higher variation in the mean grade when compared to schools where students did not go on strike. Its thus imperative that when the government comes with a policy in enhancing discipline among the students, then the students ought to be

involve fully in its development to improve their owning of the same. Without this done, then the principal who is directly involved in this faces a very big challenge being an implementer.

In another related study, King'oina, Ngaruiya and Mobegi (2017) on the role of board of management as a determinant of pupils' academic performance in public primary schools in Marani Sub County, established that majority of the schools' BOM did not participate in matters of discipline, promote a culture of dialogue and democratic governance, undertake guidance and counselling. The study as well found out that inadequate executive of BOM role by the members negatively influenced pupils' academic performance.

In its efforts to achieve education for all, Kenya has enacted various educational policies in pursuit of this important international convention. One such policy is the educational re-entry policy for girls after teenage pregnancy. This policy was meant to promote the education of girls and help the country towards the attainment of education for all Kenyans. This policy was introduced in Kenya in 1994 and supported young mothers to continue schooling after delivery (Republic of Kenya, 2005). Despite the introduction of the re-entry policy there has not been a major increase in enrolment of girls in schools. This scenario is confirmed by the research carried out by the Forum for African Women Educationalists, which indicates the persistently low levels of girls' participation in education as compared to boys (FAWE, 2001).

However, an earlier study carried out by FAWE (2001) Kenya found that though the readmission strategy has been pronounced, it has been left to the discretion of the head teachers and school boards to decide whether to readmit the girls or not. The Forum then

concluded that in the event that the head teachers or school boards do not value girls' education, then the girls seeking re-admission suffer. Many schools prefer to expel pregnant girls as they are seen as a bad influence on other girls in the school. The Kenya Children Act (Republic of Kenya, 2001) unequivocally stipulates every child's entitlement to education, thus ensuring full inclusion of girls in basic education.

Chabari (2010) conducted a study on challenges facing effective implementation of free secondary education in public secondary education in Kangundo District. All the respondents indicated that the allocation to various schools were not adequate to meet the needs of the school. Conclusively, the above studies have identified government policy based challenges, which involve the implementation of free day secondary school, discipline among the students and curriculum changes. However, it was not clear from the studies, which government – based challenges principals faced in their endeavors to enhance students' academic achievement in Ndhiwa Sub County, Kenya, the knowledge gap this study sought to fill in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County, Kenya.

2.5. Economic - Based Challenges

Parents of different occupation classes often have different styles of child rearing, different ways of disciplining their children and different ways of reacting to their children. These differences do not express themselves consistently as expected in the case of every family; rather they influence the average tendencies of families for different occupational classes (Rothstein, 2004). Economic based challenges are also encountered by the principals in enhancing students' academic achievement.

A number of studies have also been carried out with respect to economic based challenges faced by the principals. For instance, the findings of Obidile, Amobi, Ozoekwe and Akuezilo (2017) in their study of perceived challenges influencing academic performance of students in accounting in secondary schools in Anambra State showed that institutional and socio – economic challenges affect students’ academic performance.

Salameh (2012) on a study of the impact of social and economic challenges on students’ English Language performance in EFL classrooms in Dubai public secondary schools, considered economic challenges such as parents’ occupation, education and financial status. On performing correlation, it was established that parents’ level of education, income and occupation had significant and positive correlation with pupils’ educational performance. This study was in agreement with that of Korir and Wambugu (2018) in which ANOVA revealed that the parental income significantly influenced students’ academic performance. However, the two studies disagreed with the outcome on the parental level of education that it had no effect on students’ academic performance as computed by Korir and Wambugu (2018).

Nnadi, Dimnuobi, Nwokoye, Osigwe, and Ekisiobi (2016) in a study on socio – economic determinants of academic performances in Aguata local Government area, established that parental income, number of hours of study, parental educational achievement and power supply have positive and significant impact on students’ academic performance, whereas residential area has positive but insignificant impact on academic performance. This study confirmed the findings of Salameh (2012). Arzu (2018) also carried out a study on effect of parental socio-economic condition on the students’ learning achievement at higher secondary

level of education in Jamalpur District and the study revealed that parental education, occupation, income and social status affects the learning achievement. Parents' occupation, parental level of education parental income, and number of hours of study are some challenges the school principal have no control over, and as result they pose challenges to the school principals. The three studies however, did not reveal which aspect was a challenge, the knowledge gap the current study sought to fill.

Achoka, (2008) observes that a substantial number of Kenyans live below the poverty line and this will compromise school attendance of many children from poor households. The tuition subsidy by the government is just a small fraction of the role of secondary school student. From this study, it is clear that a good number of students were unable to pay the school fee effectively and at the same time, the government subsidy was not sufficient to manage the school. This study therefore sought to establish the economic based challenges met by the principals in enhancing students' academic achievement.

In Kenya, related studies were done. For example, a study conducted by Wambui (2017) on challenges influencing students' academic performance in Kenya certificate of Secondary Examination in Kirinyaga Central Sub County established that family background including, parental level of education, alcohol and drug abuse, poor role models and parents' income affect academic performance in one way or the other as reported by 86.7% of the respondents.

Njuguna (2011) also carried out a study on challenges influencing academic performance of public primary schools in Makuyu division, Muranga South District, and revealed that the socio – economic challenges that influence the students’ academic achievements include low parental/ guardians’ education level, low income and pre- occupation with work.

Another study by Michubu (2013), on socio – economic challenges influencing students’ academic performance in public secondary schools in Igembe South District, found out that the main findings of the study were, parental level of education has no influence on the students’ academic performance; parental involvement in child education, income of the parents and financial and material support given to the students by their parents influenced students’ academic performance. The study recommended sensitization of the parents by the government agent on the importance of involvement towards their children education is necessary so that they can be more involved. Parents – school cooperation should be encouraged by the school management and parents need to be encouraged to buy the necessary support materials for better academic performance. Further, the study recommended that parents should be encouraged to buy extra textbooks and other learning materials for students to use at home especially day scholars.

Muchunku (2014) on a study to establish effects of socio – economic challenges on pupils’ performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education in Chuka Division, Tharaka – Nithi County, revealed that failure to pay other school levies probably due to low family incomes, was a most significant economic factor affecting students’ academic performance. This implies that academic achievement of pupils is likely to be influenced by parental income.

Kieti (2017) investigated challenges influencing students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Matungulu Sub County, Machakos County, and the findings of the study revealed that the learning resources were inadequate and hence affected academic performance to great extent. The study also revealed that the influence of administrative practices on academic performance was strongly positive and significant ($r = .844$), $p \leq 0.5$; and similarly, teacher related challenges and socio-economic background of the learners had a statistically significant influence on academic performance.

Ndereba (2011) established socio-economic challenges influencing students' performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examination in secondary schools in Igembe South District, Eastern Province and revealed that students from low economic status were more likely to drop out of school and the study recommended that school heads should come up with ways of bridging the socio-economic gap between students by channeling CDF funds and bursaries to needy students.

Ndereba (2011), Njuguna (2011), Michubu (2013), Muchunku (2014), Wambui (2017) and Kieti (2017) were in agreement that parental income, parental occupation and parental-school co-operation were very important challenges that enhance students' academic achievement. However, it was not clear from the studies, which economic-based challenges principals faced in their endeavors to enhance students' academic achievement in Ndhiwa Sub County, Kenya, the knowledge gap this study sought to fill in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County, Kenya.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section describes research design, area of study, study population, the sample and sampling techniques, instruments, data collection procedures, methods of data analysis and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive survey design, which allows for collection of both qualitative and quantitative data. In a descriptive form of research, the method involves asking a group of people questions about a particular issue (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). Orodho (2003), emphasizes that, a descriptive survey is a method of collecting information by interviewing or administering questionnaires to a sample of individuals. Descriptive survey design was considered appropriate for this study to help the researcher explore the challenges principals face in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County.

3.3 Area of Study

The study was conducted in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub- County, Homa Bay County. The economic activities of the inhabitants of this Sub- County grow cash crops and subsistence crops. They plant sugarcane, and keep livestock on small-scale basis. Sugarcane farming is boosted by the existing sugar factory Sukari Limited at Riat and is expected to enhance schooling as parents would get money to pay as fees from sugar cane growing. Other

economic activities include trade. Although the people in the sub-county engage in wage employment, education is still not given the importance it deserves. Ndhiwa Sub County is divided into six administration units (division), Ndhiwa, Pala, Kobodo, Riana, Nyarongi and Kobama. The Sub County lies between latitudes 0°43'43''North and longitudes 34° 21'53''East. The Sub County consists of 45 public secondary schools and the performance had not been good for the 6 year period (2008 -2013). The Map of Ndhiwa is labeled Appendix G.

3.4 Study Population

The study population comprised 45 Principals, 203 teachers, 2469 form three students and 1 SCQASO in Ndhiwa Sub County (SCDE, Ndhiwa Sub County, 2013-2018). However, for the purpose of this study, only 26 schools which had presented students for KCSE for the period 2013-2018 continuously were used. Principals were considered appropriate as respondents in this study since they were the ones who faced these challenges. Teachers and the Sub County QASO were used to help corroborate the principals' responses.

3.5 Sample and Sampling Technique

Fisher's model (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003) was used to determine the sample size of teachers and students (Appendix E). Purposive random sampling was used to select 26 principals of schools that had presented students for KCSE continuously for the period 2013-2018. Simple random sampling was used to select 133 teachers and 332 students. Simple random sampling was appropriate to sample principals, teachers and students as indicated by Bhattacharjee (2012), that in this method, all possible subsets of a population (more

accurately, of a sampling frame) are given an equal probability of being selected. Saturated sampling was used to sample Sub County Quality Assurance and Standards Officer. This was done because there is only one SCQASO in the sub county. The numbers were written on papers and wrapped to conceal identities. They were mixed and put in a container and they were picked and recorded and returned. In the cases where they were repeatedly picked, they were returned without recording until the target of 133 was reached.

The same procedure was used to select students to participate in the study as respondents.

Table 3.1

Sample Frame

Category of Respondent	Target Population (N)	Sample Size (n)
Principals	45	26
Teachers	203	133
SCQASO	1	1
Form 3 Students	2469	332

3.6 Instruments of Data Collection

Data was collected using questionnaires, interview schedule, focused group discussion and document analysis guide. Questionnaires were prepared for the school principals and teachers while interview schedule was organized for SCQASO. The questionnaires comprised of open and closed - ended questions. The open - ended questions elicited freedom of response while the close - ended questions facilitated consistency of data across respondents. The questionnaires comprised of statements that required rating by the respondents ranging from

least challenge (1) to the biggest challenge (5) on a Likert Scale of 1-5. Interview schedule was organized for the SCQASO to respond to questions on the challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools within Ndhiwa Sub County.

Face to face interview were used because it would enlist corporation of respondents hence create a rapport. Questionnaires are often used to collect information from a large sample, while interviews were used to follow up questionnaire responses.

3.6.1 Principals Questionnaire (PQ)

The Principals Questionnaire were used to collect information on challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County. The questionnaire had both closed-ended and open-ended items. They focused on collection of data on; school based challenges, student based challenges, government policy based challenges and economic based challenges faced by principals in their endeavor to enhance student academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County.

3.6.2 Teachers Questionnaire (TQ)

The Teachers Questionnaire was used to collect information on challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa. The questionnaire had both closed –ended and open-ended items. They focused on collection of data on; school based challenges, student based challenges, government policy based challenges and economic based challenges faced by principals in their endeavors to enhance student academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County.

3.6.3 Students ‘Focus Group Discussion (SFGD)

The student’s focus group discussion comprised open-ended items and was used to collect information on challenges principals face in enhancing students’ academic achievements in Ndhiwa Sub County. The researcher used 26 Focus Group Discussion, one from each school. Each group consisted of 13 form three students randomly selected. The researcher chaired the Focus Group Discussion and a trained research assistant recorded the responses. The discussions covered; school based challenges, student based challenges, government policy based challenges and economic based challenges faced by principals in their endeavors to enhance student academic achievement in public schools in Ndhiwa Sub County.

3.6.4. SCQASO’S Interview Guide (SIG)

In-depth interview guide was used on SCQASO to solicit information on school based challenges, student based challenges, government policy based challenges and economic based challenges faced by principals in enhancing students’ academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County.

3.7 Validity of the Instruments

Validity is concerned with the question “Am I measuring what I intended to measure”. Fraenkel and Wallen (2009) argue that an instrument may be used to measure a number of things thus the validity of such instrument must be established. They assert that before testing an instrument it is vital to define the variables to measure and ask the experts in the area of research to evaluate the content of the instrument in order to determine its content validity. If the contents are judged to be adequate, they will then generate data which is relevant.

To enhance face and content validity as well as identifying the vague, ambiguous parts of the questionnaires, the instruments were given to three experts in the Department of Education Management and Foundations at Maseno University who are specialists in the area of Education Administration to examine them and improve its validity. Their views were discussed and incorporated to revise questionnaires and interview schedule before preparing the final draft to make it suitable for data collection.

3.8 Reliability of the Instruments

Reliability shows the extent to which an instrument is free of error which is caused by challenges such as ambiguous questions, language or even the researcher's order of items in the instrument. Fraenkel and Wallen (2009) argue that reliability measures the degree of accuracy in the measurements an instrument provides. It ensures that instruments generate similar data when used by independent researchers. He argued that to remove possible errors every instrument should be tested before it is formally administered. To ensure reliability of the instruments, the researcher conducted a test-re-test pilot study of the instruments on three schools that were left out during the actual study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003) in a span of two weeks. Form 3 students were also considered appropriate as the ones whose performance may be affected by the challenges the principals faced and the fact that the form three students have stayed longer in the school.

The data collected in a span of two weeks were correlated using Pearson's correlation coefficient, r , and was determined at 0.79 for principals which was considered reliable as it was above 0.70 at p – value of 0.05 as recommended by Lomax (2007).

3.9 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher sought for permission from the School of Graduate Studies (SGS), Maseno University, whose consent was used to seek for further permission from the Sub County Director of Education (SCDE), Ndhiwa Sub County. The sampled schools were then visited to administer questionnaire. Twenty six questionnaires were distributed to the 26 principals and 133 questionnaires to the teachers. The respondents were given appropriate time to fill the questionnaire ranging from 30 – 40 minutes. Focus group discussion was conducted with 13 students from each sampled schools. This lasted between 30 – 45 minutes. An in - depth interview was then held with the Sub County Quality and Standards Officer, SCQASO- Ndhiwa Sub County, which lasted for about 1 hour. Frankel and Wallen (2009) observed that survey research has four basic ways of collecting data namely: administering the instruments “live” to a group, by mail, telephone and by face-to-face interview.

3.10 Data Analysis

Quantitative collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics with the aid of statistical package for social sciences (S.P.S.S), version – 20. Mean ratings of the challenges faced by principals were worked out and presented in tables. Qualitative collected data were analyzed thematically based on the objectives of the study and presented objective wise. This allowed for generalizations and conclusions.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Before conducting the study, the researcher sought and obtained the permission from the School of Graduate Studies (SGS), Maseno University, whose consent was used to seek for further permission from the Sub County Director of Education (SCDE), Ndhiwa Sub County. The researcher gave opportunity to the respondents to choose whether or not to participate in the study. All the respondents were advised not to write their names on the questionnaire for confidentiality. Privacy of the respondents was guaranteed by ensuring that structured interview was conducted in an office away from the general public. The researcher assured the respondents that the data collected would only be used for the purpose of this study only.

CHAPTER FOUR
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with analysis and presentation of results from the study on challenges faced by Principals in enhancing student academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub-County.

The study findings are presented in this chapter based on objectives of the study which were to:

- i) Determine school based challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County.
- ii) Establish student based challenges faced by principal in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County.
- iii) Establish government policy based challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County.
- iv) Determine economic based challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County.

Table 4.1

Return Rate of Questionnaire

Respondents	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Principals	26	100
Teachers	133	100

From Table 4.1, the return rate for principals and teachers was 100%. This was attributed to the fact that the respondents were physically visited and the researcher waited to collect the questionnaire. Appointment was made with the Sub County Quality and Standards Officer, Ndhwa Sub County for an interview. Focus group discussion with the students was also conducted with the students during the data collection in the respective schools.

4.2 Demographic Data of Respondents

The respondents involved in the study were: Principals, Teachers, Students and the Sub County Quality Assurance and Standards Officer.

The principals were asked to indicate the category of school, gender, age range and the 2014 K.C.S.E Mean Score for their schools in addition to their gender and range. Teachers were also asked to indicate their gender and age range. The findings were as shown in Tables 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5.

Table 4.2

Category of Schools

	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
National	0	0
Extra County	0	0
County	5	19.2
Sub County	21	80.8
Total	26	100

From Table 4.2, it was observed that there were only five (5) County schools and a higher number of schools (21) being Sub County Schools with no National or Extra County schools.

Table 4.3

Distribution of Principals and Teachers by their Age

Age	Principals		Teachers	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
25 – 30	0	0	10	7.5
31– 40	0	0	98	73.7
41 -50	21	80.8	15	11.3
51 – 60	5	19.2	10	7.5
Total	26	100	133	100

From Table 4.3, it was revealed that majority of the principals 21 were in the age bracket of 41-50 (80.8%). This meant that the majority of the principals had gained reasonable experience and hence were appropriate to respond to aspects of challenges they face in enhancing students’ academic achievements. Moreover, 5(19.2%) principals were aged between 51 and 60, meaning even more experienced. It was also noted that majority of teachers were aged between 31 and 40(73.7%). This was attributed to the fact that from the year 2009 there had been a number of new schools established through C.D.F that required to be posted. At the same time, they have gained experience and can easily observe the challenges that principals face in enhancing students’ academic achievement. Twenty 25(33.3%) teachers were found to be aged above 40 meaning that they were satisfactorily experienced and were in a position to respond to challenges faced by principals in enhancing students’ academic achievement. Only 10(13.3%) teachers were aged between 25 and 30.

Table 4.4**Distribution of Principals and Teachers by Gender**

Gender	Principals		Teachers	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)
Male	21	80.8	90	67.7
Female	5	19.2	43	32.3
Total	26	100	133	100

From Table 4.4, it can be noted that 21(80.8%) principals were males while 5(19.2%) principals were females. At the same time, 90(67.7%) teachers were males and 43(32.3%) were females. This indicated that there is still gender disparity in distribution of teachers in Ndhiwa Sub County.

Table 4.5**2018 KCSE Performance by Schools in Ndhiwa Sub County**

Mean Score	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1.00 - 3.44	6	23.2
3.45 - 5.44	14	53.8
5.45 - 7.44	5	19.2
7.45 - 8.44	1	3.8
Total	26	100

From Table 4.5, it was observed that 6(23.2%) schools had very low performance in 2018 KCSE examinations with a mean score between 1.00 and 3.44; 14(53.8%) schools had performance of mean score ranging from 3.45 to 5.44; 5(19.2%) schools had average performance between 5.45 and 7.44 and only 1(3.8%) school had high performance between 7.45 and 8.44. This performance indicated that most schools in Ndhiwa Sub County performed below average of a score of 6.00 out of 12.00.

4.3 School-Based Challenges

The first objective of this study was to determine the school based challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub- County. To achieve this objective, principals and teachers in public secondary schools were asked to respond to aspects of school based challenges that the principals faced in their endeavor to enhance students' academic achievement. The responses sought to answer the research question that: What are the school based challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub-County? The results were as shown in Tables 4.6.

Table 4.6

School Based Challenges faced by Principals in enhancing Students 'Academic Achievement as reported by Principals (n=26) and Teachers (n=133)

Aspects of School based challenges	Respon dents	Ratings					Total Score	MR	OMR
		1	2	3	4	5			
Finances	P	0	0	0	8	18	122	4.69	
	T	0	0	1	52	80	610	4.59	4.61
Infrastructural Facilities	P	0	7	13	5	1	78	3.00	
	T	1	13	61	47	11	554	3.41	3.34
Library	P	0	0	0	7	19	123	4.73	
	T	0	0	6	66	62	589	4.43	4.48
Water	P	0	5	15	5	1	80	3.08	
	T	1	8	55	48	21	479	3.60	3.52
Recreational Facilities	P	3	13	9	1	0	60	2.31	
	T	8	48	52	25	0	360	2.71	2.64
Laboratory Chemicals and Equipment	P	0	0	8	12	6	102	3.92	
	T	0	1	37	54	40	583	4.38	4.31
Teaching Staff	P	0	2	9	9	6	97	3.73	
	T	0	2	37	61	33	524	3.94	3.91
Non – Teaching Staff	P	6	15	5	0	0	51	1.96	
	T	18	61	42	12	0	314	2.36	2.30
Overall Mean									3.64

Key: P- Principal T- Teacher OMR- Overall Mean Rating MR-Mean Rating

Interpretation of Mean Ratings

1.00-1.44 = Least Challenge;

1.45-2.44 = Less Challenge;

2.45-3.44 = Big Challenge;

3.45-4.44 = Bigger Challenge;

4.45-5.0 = Biggest Challenge

From Table 4.6, it can be observed that challenges related to finance rated highest by both the principals and teachers at 4.69 and 4.59 respectively, meaning the biggest challenge with overall mean rating of 4.61. This was followed by library which was rated at 4.73 by principals and 4.43 by teachers. Overall, library was rated at 4.48 which was also biggest challenge. Laboratory was rated at 4.31, teaching staff rated at 3.91, water at 3.52, infrastructural facilities at 3.34, recreational facilities at 2.64 and lastly, non-teaching staff which was rated at 2.30. Rating of finance at 4.61 and library at 4.48 meant that both financial resources and library were the biggest challenge the principals faced among the school factors. Indeed, these findings concur with those of Onyara (2013) and Ndotu (2015) who established in their studies that principals faced financial challenges in their administration. On financial aspect, Otula (2007) indicated that finances within the school facilitates boarding facilities, services (water, electricity and telephone), enhance general repairs and maintenance, facilitates construction of infrastructural facilities and payment of salaries of some teachers and non-teaching staff.

During an interview with the SCQASO, he stated,

“most of the schools in Ndhiwa Sub County faced financial challenges due to the fact that there was low income amongst the surrounding community which was the major source of students, and therefore, poor fee payment.”

At the same time, when asked about the school based challenges that the principals faced, one of the students in a focus group discussion stated,

“Some academic activities cannot be done as planned and when we ask the principal about it, he tells us that there are no finances to support such programs.”

It therefore implies that finances play a major role in the school and as a result enhancing students' academic achievement. Any inadequacy of finances therefore would mean a challenge to the principals as it is rated as biggest challenge. This is because the principals cannot get money to run academic activities such as symposia, laboratory experiments, educational tours and bench marking, the principals cannot hire BOM teachers to take care of the understaffing, Other essential services and equipment such as computers. Water, electricity cannot be catered for yet that is the critical role of the principals. The principals keep on struggling on how to provide for these activities in order to enhance student academic achievement. The principals face financial challenges in their attempt to enhance students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County.

Library was equally rated as the biggest challenge in this study, which concurred with the findings of Mutindi (2018). Library plays a very important role in enhancing students' academic achievement. It was clear that most of the public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County had no libraries but instead had book stores as explained by the SCQASO during an interview. Ida (2016) equally carried out a study and the study revealed that some of the secondary schools in Mitwara Mikindani Municipality Tanzania had no libraries. Moreover, the students from secondary schools with libraries and enough materials were observed to perform better in Certificate of Secondary Education Examination (CSEE) than secondary schools with no libraries and enough materials due to the fact that, availability of well-equipped libraries, encourage learning habits and strengthened students study skills which results to good performance of students at CSEE. Whereas it was clear that availability of the library was necessary in boosting students' academic achievement, the principals actually

experienced a challenge since most of the schools in Ndhiwa Sub County lacked the libraries. Indeed, this is detrimental to the performance of students as they lack special place for doing research.

Challenges due to laboratories, teaching staff and water, were rated as bigger challenges at 4.31, 3.91 and 3.52 respectively. It actually concurs with the rating in laboratory, because good performance in sciences in schools is based on how well the laboratory is equipped and used. In the absence of the same, the overall performance of students cannot be good. Neji, Ukwetang and Nja (2014), in their study found out that laboratory facilities in secondary schools are not adequately enough for teaching Chemistry. This means that the principals faced challenge in line with laboratory facilities. Further, the study established that adequacy of facilities does not significantly contribute to the variance in students' academic achievement in chemistry. This is contrary to the findings of this study whose expectation was that the availability of laboratory facilities would enhance performance in Sciences and hence students' academic achievement. Similar challenge was also established in another study by Musau (2015), who established in his study that teachers, water and laboratories were not adequate in their schools. This concurs with this finding as teaching staff and water was also rated as bigger challenge to the principals. Mutindi (2018) also established that laboratory facilities were inadequate. When students were asked about availability of laboratories in the school during focus group discussion, one of them said,

“laboratory is a term we meet in theory but we have not seen it practically. Any time we have a demonstration; it is done in a classroom as organized by teachers. Worst of all is when we have exams in which many classrooms are converted into laboratories.”

Public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County actually presented a picture that most schools had no equipped laboratories posing challenge to the principals in their endeavor to enhance students' academic achievement.

Ebenezer, et al (2015), in a study established that even though the quality of teachers was high in terms of their academic and professional qualification, it did not reflect much in the performance of the students. This means that teachers were not necessarily a challenge in terms of their quality. However, when asked about the staffing in Ndhiwa Sub County, the SCQASO explained;

Public secondary schools in Ndhiwa are greatly understaffed. Most of the Principals in the Sub County use teachers employed on BOM terms, against the financial challenges. As a result, they end up employing those who were still in the universities who can take little money and this results in inconsistency in content delivery, as they keep coming and going back to their universities or colleges.

The comments of the SCQASO indicates that there would be high workloads amongst the teachers in the Sub County. This would actually pose a challenge to the principals since Adika and Sika (2019) revealed in their study that influence on teachers' workload on academic performance was significant ($r = .523$, $N = 154$, $p < 0.01$) and that for every unit increase on teacher workload, there was a decrease in pupils' academic achievement as signified by the coefficient $-.558$. Therefore, principals in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County faced bigger challenge with teaching staff.

Infrastructural facilities and recreational facilities were rated as big challenges at 3.34 and 2.64 by principals and teachers respectively. This finding agrees with that of Owoeye (2010)

who observed that provision of facilities especially for recreational and co-curriculum relates to academic performance of students in Niger particularly in Agricultural Sciences. Ogundele (2012) equally established in their study that high positive significant relationship exists between recreational facilities availability, utilization, improvisation and students' academic performance of secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria. Coupled with the fact that Ndhiwa Sub County was having newly established schools at this time, it was clear that many of them would experience challenge with recreational facilities making it a big challenge to the principals in their endeavor to enhance students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County. This means that, even though the principals faced challenges with infrastructural facilities and recreational facilities, they were not highly rated challenges.

The rating of non-teaching staff at 2.30 meant that they posed less challenge to the principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County. This means that non-teaching staff as a school based challenge was so low that it could not hinder the principal from enhancing students' academic achievement. Whereas the non-teaching- staff plays a vital role in the school, principals and teachers in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa did not focus challenge that they posed to the principals in their attempt to enhance students' academic achievement.

The study therefore established that both finances and library posed biggest challenge to the principals in enhancing students' academic achievement, meaning that the financial and library challenges would to a greater extent interfere with the principals' performance. This was followed by laboratory, teaching staff and water as bigger challenges meaning they hinder the principals' performance to a bigger challenge. Infrastructural facilities and

recreational facilities posed big challenge to the principals and therefore would only hinder the principals' to a small extent, and finally non-teaching staff posed less challenge to the principals, meaning, very little effect that would actually not hinder the principals in enhancing students' academic achievement. Overall, school based factors posed bigger challenge the principals faced in enhancing students' academic achievement as the mean rating was determined to be 3.64 in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County. This means that the effort by the principals to enhance students' academic achievement was hindered to a great extent in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County.

4.4. Student Based Challenges

The second objective of this study was to determine the student based challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub- County. To achieve this objective, principals and teachers in public secondary schools were asked to respond to aspects of student based challenges that the principals faced in their endeavor to enhance students' academic achievement. The responses sought to answer the research question that what are the student based challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub-County? The results were as shown in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7**Student Based Challenges faced by Principals in enhancing Student Academic Achievement as reported by Principals (n=26) and Teachers (n=133)**

Aspects of Student based challenges	Respon dents	Ratings					Total Score	MR	OMR
		1	2	3	4	5			
Drug Abuse	P	1	2	7	11	5	95	3.65	
	T	2	4	33	65	29	513	3.86	3.83
Theft Cases	P	1	11	14	0	0	65	2.50	
	T	2	50	71	9	1	356	2.68	2.65
Taking Class Assignment	P	0	0	14	11	1	91	3.50	
	T	0	19	75	36	3	422	3.17	3.23
Fighting	P	1	9	14	2	0	69	2.65	
	T	5	62	59	6	1	335	2.52	2.54
Destruction of school Property	P	3	22	1	0	0	50	1.92	
	T	17	49	36	21	10	356	2.68	2.56
Entry Behavior	P	0	0	7	10	9	106	4.08	
	T	0	1	28	64	40	543	4.08	4.08
Attitude	P	0	0	0	7	19	121	4.65	
	T	0	0	7	66	60	585	4.40	4.45
Peer Influence	P	0	1	8	14	3	97	3.73	
	T	6	29	34	45	19	442	3.32	3.38
Overall Mean									3.34

Key: P: Principal T: Teacher OMR: Overall Mean Rating MR: Mean Rating

Interpretation of Mean Ratings

1.00-1.44 = Least Challenge;

1.45-2.44 = Less Challenge;

2.45-3.44 = Big Challenge;

3.45-4.44 = Bigger Challenge;

4.45-5.00 = Biggest Challenge

From Table 4.7, students' attitude rated highly at 4.65 and 4.40 by principals and teachers respectively. This was followed by students' entry behavior rated at 4.08 both by principals and teachers; drug abuse challenge was also rated at 3.65 and 3.86 by principals and teachers respectively; peer influence among the students was rated by principals and teachers at 3.73 and 3.32 respectively; Taking class assignment was rated at 3.50 and 3.17 by principals and teachers respectively; theft amongst the students was rated at 2.50 and 2.68 by principals and teachers respectively; Destruction of school property was rated by principals and teachers at 1.94 and 2.68 respectively and finally, fighting among the students rated lowest at 2.65 and 2.52 by principals and teachers.

The overall rating of students' attitude at 4.45 meant that this was the biggest challenge among the student factors that the principals faced in enhancing students' academic achievement. During Focus Group Discussion, the students underscored the importance of attitude in their academic achievement. They noted that, students have a negative attitude towards science subjects such as Mathematics, Chemistry, Biology and Physics in that during practical, they put less effort and this makes the teachers to complain and report to the principals mainly because the sciences play a key role in determining the mean score in KCSE. The principals therefore face the students negative attitude as a big challenge in their endeavor to enhance student academic achievement. This is true because principals are often heard complaining in different forum that students have a negative attitude towards the sciences and the resulting poor performance. It is true that students' attitude is paramount in enhancing their academic achievement. In the event that a school, the government and family offers all that is required but students have negative attitude, they cannot do well

academically. The findings seem contrary to what the students said when they were self-reporting about their attitude being positive. Adekunle and Femi –Adoye (2016) carried out a study which established that there is a significant relationship between students’ attitude to Biology and students’ academic performance in Biology. Similarly, Atta, ITA and Nchor (2018) established that students’ attitude had a significant influence on their achievement in English language. Whereas it was clear from these two studies that students’ attitude positively influenced their academic performance, Langat (2015) in a study found out that most of the students had positive attitude towards Mathematics and they perceived Mathematics to be doable, learnable and important, yet this did not translate to good grades. In all these arguments, the principals would still face challenges with students’ attitude since this is the driving force for the students towards academic achievement. Principals in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County faced biggest challenge with students’ attitude in their attempt to enhance students’ academic achievement.

Entry behavior and drug abuse were found to be bigger challenges to the principals as they were rated at 4.08 and 3.83 respectively. When asked to comment about some of the student based challenges the principals’ face, the SCQASO noted “One factor that has greatly influenced the performance of students in this Sub County is the students’ entry behavior.” He explained that students who are admitted in the schools are generally poor performers in KCPE. This therefore implies that principals have challenges of ensuring that these weak students perform better. For such a student to perform better, much of teacher in put is required in remedial teaching and most teachers are overloaded such that they don’t have time to attend to such cases. Notwithstanding this fact, parents of these children put a lot of

pressure on principals to enhance performance. Overallly the fact that most of the schools are Sub County secondary schools means that the schools admitted students with the lowest K.C.P.E marks, and this posed a very big challenge to the principals.

Obwoye (2013) carried out a study which established that the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) results highly determined the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) performance of boys and girls in Kajiado North Sub County. The study further revealed that there was a significant positive linear relationship between KCPE results and KCSE performance of $r = 0.701$, regardless of the school where the candidate sat for the KCSE examination. This finding actually concurs with the current study since the low KCPE marks of the students as pointed out by the SCQASO means that the students' would not eventually do well academically and this would be a bigger challenge to the principals.

Okari (2018) concluded in his study that drug and substance abuse among the students led to school dropouts, strained relationship with other students, lack of interest in studying, truancy, low concentration span and health problems such as anxiety, headaches, feeling sleepy and confusion leading to declining academic performance. Akanbi, et al (2015) also established that there is a significant difference between the academic performance and students who abuse drugs and those who do not. Indeed, as the findings reveal, this would be a bigger challenge to the principals in their endeavor to enhance students' academic achievement, more particularly in public secondary schools where this vice existed. Therefore, public secondary school principals in Ndhiwa Sub County face bigger challenges with entry behavior and drug abuse.

Peer influence, taking class assignment, theft, destruction of school property and fighting were rated as big challenges as reflected in the overall ratings of 3.38, 3.23, 2.65, 2.56 and 2.54 respectively. According to Misanya (2013), peer group members who scored good marks in KCPE had positive influence to girl students' academic performance in girls' secondary schools in Kanduyi constituency. Ajibade (2016) also established in another study that peer group influences learning and certain factors like the socio – economic status and parental factors as they determine membership in most groups. On class assignment, Udeh, Edeoga and Okpube (2017) established that take home test, exercise and project, influence students' performance in Mathematics. Based on performance within Ndhiwa Sub County, class assignment was found to pose big challenge to the principals. This means that even though they were a challenge, they were not so much felt by the principals in enhancing students' academic achievement, meaning that there were minimal cases of peer influence, theft, destruction of school property, fighting and class assignment were also well taken. Principals in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County faced big challenge with peer influence, taking class assignment, theft, destruction of school property and fighting in their efforts to enhance students' academic achievement.

Overall, students' attitude posed the biggest challenge to the principals amongst the student based challenges. Students' attitude would therefore to a very great extent hinder the principals' effort to enhance students' academic achievement. Entry behavior and drug abuse were a bigger challenge to the principals and would affect the principals to a great extent and finally, peer influence, taking class assignment, theft, destruction of school property and fighting rated as big challenges, which would hinder the principals' endeavor to enhance

students' academic achievement just to a small extent. Student based challenges which the principals faced in enhancing students' academic achievement rated overall at 3.34, meaning that they were big challenge, meaning a small extent to the principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County.

4.5 Government Policy Based Challenges

The third objective of this study was to determine the government policy based challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub- County. To achieve this objective, principals and teachers in public secondary schools were asked to respond to aspects of government policy based challenges that the principals faced in their endeavor to enhance students' academic achievement. The responses sought to answer the research question that: What are the government policy based challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub- County? The results were as shown in Tables 4.8.

Table 4.8

Government Policy Based Challenges faced by Principals in enhancing Students' Academic Achievement as reported by Principals (n=26) and Teachers (n=133)

Aspects of Government Policy based challenges	Respon dents	Ratings					Total Score	MR	OMR
		1	2	3	4	5			
Free Day Secondary School Policy	P	0	0	3	14	9	110	4.23	
	T	8	44	45	27	9	384	2.89	3.11
Re – Entry Policy	P	0	0	6	16	4	102	3.92	
	T	1	11	32	58	31	505	3.80	3.82
School Sponsorship Policy	P	4	15	7	0	0	55	2.12	
	T	10	45	42	26	10	380	2.86	2.74
BOM Management Policy	P	1	7	12	6	0	75	2.88	
	T	3	31	56	41	2	407	3.06	3.03
Standards and Safety Policy	P	3	15	7	1	0	58	2.23	
	T	8	57	41	20	7	360	2.71	2.64
Student Discipline Management Policy	P	0	0	6	12	8	106	4.08	
	T	0	2	40	65	26	513	3.86	3.90
Overall Mean									3.21

Key: P: Principal T: Teacher OMR: Overall Mean Rating MR: Mean Rating

Interpretation of Mean Ratings

1.00-1.44 = Least Challenge;

1.45-2.44 = Less Challenge;

2.45-3.44 = Big Challenge;

3.45-4.44 = Bigger Challenge;

4.44-5.0 = Biggest Challenge

From Table 4.8, it can be observed that students discipline management policy was highly rated as a bigger challenge at 4.08 and 3.86 by principals and teachers respectively. Re – entry policy was rated at 3.92 by principals and at 3.80 by teachers. Free Day Secondary School Policy which was rated by the principals at 4.23 and 2.89 by teachers. School sponsorship policy was lowly rated at 2.12 and 2.86 by principals and teachers respectively. Finally, Standards and safety policy was rated at 2.23 by principals and 2.27 by teachers.

The rating of student discipline management policy highest at 3.90 overall, meant that it was a bigger challenge faced by the principals in enhancing students’ academic achievement. With regard to student discipline SCQASO noted “more often students defy school administration orders and instructions. This results in school unrests and in some cases students strike destroying school property and even cause injury to fellow students and teachers. This is a matter that rests squarely with the principals he is required by the parents and MOE to explain. As such, this is a big challenge because it impacts negatively on students’ academic achievement.” Indeed it is true that indiscipline students cannot perform better in their academics because they lose focus and concentrate on issues that do not help them in their academic work. During SFGD, the students expressed the fact that they were aware of the negative effect of school unrests. They explained that school unrests lead to loss of time, disruptions of learning, demotivation of teachers and even parents. This poses a challenge to principals because principals status is rated on their performance in terms of student’s performance in KCSE. Therefore, principals have student discipline as a bigger challenge. Students’ leadership plays an important role in linking the teachers, school administration and the students. In the event that with the policy put in place, wrong leaders are chosen, student

management becomes difficult and this would negatively impact on students' academic achievement. Re - entry policy was also found to be a bigger challenge rated overall at 3.82. Wekesa (2014) established that mother students perform poorly in schools and this impacted on their final Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) performance. However, Nsalamba and Simpande (2019) concluded in their study on Re - Entry policy that perceived poor performance in Mathematics by reentered girls is a "social construct" and not solely due to re - entry policy. In Ndhiwa sub County, re - entry policy posed a bigger challenge to the principals as reported by the principals and teachers meaning that the argument of Wekesa (2014) were confirmed but does not rule out the findings of Nsalamba and Simpande (2019). Public secondary school principals in Ndhiwa Sub County faced both student discipline management policy and re - entry policy as bigger challenges.

Free Day Secondary School Policy (3.11), B.O.M policy (3.03), Sponsorship Policy (2.74) and Standards and Safety Policy (2.64) were all rated as big challenges. On cost sharing, Wanjiru (2012) found out that there was an escalation of school fees at secondary school level. On Free Day Secondary Education Policy, a study by Omondi (2011) revealed that increased enrolment has not compromised the standards of teaching and learning in public secondary schools. According to this study, it was not expected to be a big challenge to the principals who reported otherwise in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County. The finding of the Board of Management Policy as big challenge to the Principals concurs with the study of Ibrahim and Orodho (2014) which revealed that most of the members of B.O.M lacked requisite knowledge and skills to manage these institutions as a result of their low level of education. As a result, there were challenges including: lack of monitoring of most

decisions made by the Board; frequent political interference especially from powerful politicians and members of the provincial administration; general school management among others. These challenges impacted negatively on students' academic performance in the study locale. Free Day Secondary School Policy, B.O.M policy, sponsorship policy and standards and safety policy were a big challenge to the principals in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County.

Overall, students discipline management policy posed as a bigger challenge to the principals amongst the government based challenges. Re -entry policy was also a bigger challenge to the principals. This meant that students discipline management policy and re – entry policy hindered the principals' effort to a great extent. Finally, free day secondary school policy, B.O.M policy, sponsorship policy and standards and safety policy rated as big challenges, meaning that they posed challenges just to a small extent to the principals. Government based challenges which the principals faced in enhancing students' academic achievement rated overall at 3.21 in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County, meaning that they were big challenge and only hindered their performance to a small extent.

4.6. Economic Based Challenges

The fourth objective of this study was to determine the economic based challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub- County. To achieve this objective, principals and teachers in public secondary schools were asked to respond to aspects of economic based challenges that the principals faced in their endeavor to enhance students' academic achievement. The responses sought to

answer the research question that: What are the economic based challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub- County? The results were as shown in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9**Economic Based Challenges faced by Principals in enhancing Student Academic Achievement as reported by Principals (n=26) and Teachers (n=133)**

Aspects of Economic based challenges	Respondents	Ratings					Total Score	MR	OMR
		1	2	3	4	5			
Parental Income	P	0	0	2	6	18	120	4.62	
	T	0	0	0	71	62	595	4.47	4.49
Child Labor	P	0	1	9	14	1	92	3.54	
	T	0	4	42	69	18	500	3.76	3.72
Funds for Students' Uniform	P	3	13	8	2	0	61	2.35	
	T	17	56	40	18	2	331	2.49	2.47
Funds for Personal Text Books	P	0	11	13	2	0	69	2.65	
	T	7	56	54	13	3	348	2.62	2.62
Absenteeism due to Fee	P	0	1	7	12	6	101	3.88	
	T	0	6	45	64	18	493	3.71	3.74
Overall Mean									3.30

Key: P: Principal T: Teacher OMR: Overall Mean Rating MR: Mean Rating

Interpretation of Mean Ratings

1.00-1.44 = Least Challenge;

1.45-2.44 = Less Challenge;

2.45-3.44 = Big Challenge;

3.45-4.44 = Bigger Challenge;

4.44-5.0 = Biggest Challenge

From Table 4.9, it can be noted that parental income among the economic based challenges rated at 4.62 and 4.47 by principals and teachers respectively. Absenteeism due to school fee was equally highly rated at 3.88 and 3.71 by principals and teachers in that order. Child labour was rated by the principals at 3.54 and by teachers at 3.76. Text books were rated by

principals and teachers at 2.65 and 2.62 respectively. Funds for student's uniform was lowly rated at 2.35 and 2.49 by principals and teachers respectively.

Rating of parental income overall at 4.49 meant that it was the biggest challenge and this was in line with the argument of the SCQASO who indicated that there was low income amongst the community surrounding the school and therefore low fee payment. This finding actually concur with that of Salameh (2012), who established that parental income had a positive correlation with pupils' educational performance, and at the same time, it is in agreement with the study conducted by Korir and Wambugu (2018) whose ANOVA revealed that the parental income significantly influenced students' academic performance. Similarly, Michubu (2013), established that parental involvement in child education, income of the parent and financial and material support given to students by their parents influenced students' academic performance. It's therefore clear that this was the biggest challenge amongst the economic based challenges that the principals faced in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County.

Absenteeism due to fee and child labor were overaly rated at 3.74 and 3.72 respectively, meaning they were bigger challenge to the principals. Indeed, if parental income was the biggest challenge, then it was definite that most students would be sent home normally for fee giving the principals a challenge of retaining students in school for studies. With the kind of economic activities going on in the Sub County, child labor was expected. With respect to absenteeism, the SCQASO said,

“Due to financial constraints in many schools, students are commonly sent home for fee of which, they are not able to get in good time. Some students take long before they resume and they miss a lot of teaching done in their absence.”

During student focus group discussion (SFGD), students emphasized that students when sent home report after two or three weeks of absence. Such students find it difficult to cope with the rest. They become frustrated, demotivated, and demoralized. This affects the performance of their classes negatively leave alone own performance. This is a concern to the principals as the principals are rated annually on the basis of their students’ performance in KCSE, hence a very big challenge to the principals.

Funds for personal text books and funds for students’ uniform were rated overall at 2.62, and 2.47 respectively and this meant that they posed a big challenge to the principals in enhancing students’ academic achievement. On their school uniforms students reported in one of the focus group discussions,

“We thank our parents because they have ensured that we have full school uniform at all the time, except for a few of us who could be having some little challenge from home.”

Funds for personal text books and funds for student’s uniform posed big challenge to the principals in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County.

Conclusively, parental income posed the biggest challenge to the principals amongst the economic based challenges and therefore to a greater extent would hinder the principals’ performance in their endeavor to enhance students’ academic achievement. Absenteeism due to fee and child labor were a bigger challenge to the principals hindering the efforts of the principals to a great extent, and finally, funds for personal text books and funds for student’s

uniform rated as big challenges which would hinder to a small extent the principals' efforts in enhancing students' academic achievement. Economic based challenges which the principals faced in enhancing students' academic achievement rated overall at 3.30 in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County, meaning that they were big challenge.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the study findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestion for further studies.

5.2 Summary of Findings

5.2.1 School Based Challenges

Findings concerning School based challenges faced by principals were as follows:

- i. Finances and library posed the biggest challenge to the principals in enhancing students' academic achievement with overall rating of 4.61 and 4.48 respectively.
- ii. Laboratory, teaching staff and water were bigger challenges to the principals in enhancing students' academic achievements as rated at 4.31, 3.91 and 3.52 respectively.
- iii. Infrastructural facilities and recreational facilities posed big challenges to the principals in enhancing students' academic achievements as rated at 3.34 and 2.64 respectively.
- iv. Non-teaching staff posed less challenges to the principals in enhancing students' academic achievements as rated at 2.30.
- v. Overall, school based challenges posed a bigger challenge to the principals in enhancing students' achievement as indicated by the overall mean rating of 3.64.

5.2.2 Student Based Challenges

Findings concerning student based challenges faced by principals were as follows:

- i. Students' attitude posed biggest challenge to the principals in enhancing students' academic achievement as rated at 4.45.
- ii. Entry behavior and drug abuse were found to pose bigger challenge to the principals in enhancing students' academic achievement as rated at 4.08 and 3.83 respectively.
- iii. Peer influence, taking class assignment, theft, destruction of school property and fighting posed big challenge to the principals in enhancing students' academic achievement as rated at 3.38, 3.23, 2.65, 2.56 and 2.54 respectively.
- iv. Overall, student based challenges posed a bigger challenge with an overall mean rating of 3.34.

5.2.3 Government Policy Based Challenges

Findings concerning government policy based challenges faced by principals were as follows:

- i. Student discipline management policy and re - entry policy were bigger challenges faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement with overall mean rating of 3.9 and 3.82 respectively.
- ii. Free day secondary school policy, board of management, sponsorship and standards and safety policy were a big challenge faced by principals in enhancing students' academic achievement with overall mean rating of 3.11, 3.03, 2.74 and 3.82 respectively.
- iii. Overall, government policy based challenges posed a big challenge with an overall mean rating of 3.21.

5.2.4 Economic Based Challenges

- i. Parental income posed the biggest challenge to the principals in enhancing students' academic achievement as overallly rated at 4.49 which was the biggest challenge.
- ii. Absenteeism due to fee and child labor were found to pose bigger challenge to the principals in enhancing students' academic achievement as rated at 3.74 and 3.72 respectively.
- iii. Funds for personal text books and funds for student's uniform were found to pose a big challenge to the principals in enhancing students' academic achievement as rated at 2.62 and 2.47 respectively.
- iv. Overall, economic based challenges posed a big challenge to the principals with an overall mean rating of 3.30.

5.3 Conclusions

The following conclusions were made from the study:

- i. School based challenges and student based challenges were a bigger challenge to the principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County.
- ii. Government policy based challenges and economic based challenges were a big challenge the principals faced in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County.
- iii. Finances, libraries, students' attitude and parental income to a greater extent interfered with the principals' efforts to enhance students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County, as they were rated as biggest challenge.

- iv. Recreational facilities, Non-teaching staff, theft, fighting, destruction of school property, school sponsorship, standards and safety policy, funds for student's uniform, and funds for personal text books did not hinder the endeavors of the principals in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County given that they had very little effect all rated below 3.00.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings that finances among the school factors was the biggest challenge, the study recommended the following:

- i. That principals need to be given a lot of training on management of finances to enable them manage the little financial resource available in their schools in enhancing students' academic achievement.
- ii. The stakeholders like the Board of Management should think of other sources of funds that the schools can engage in to boost the financial resources.

Based on the findings that students' attitude among the student based factors was the biggest challenge, the study recommended the following:

- i. The principals should give priority to developing the attitude of students positively to enhance performance of students in their schools.
- ii. Teachers should help in developing attitude of students in their subjects to enhance their performance in those subjects.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

The present study focused on the challenges principals face in enhancing students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa Sub County and exposed gaps that could be filled by further research:

- i. Influence of parental income on the principals' performance in Public Secondary School.
- ii. Assessment of financial Management in enhancing principal's performance in Public Secondary Schools.
- iii. Strategies for principals' in developing positive attitude among the learners in Public Secondary Schools.

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APPENDIX A

PRINCIPAL’S QUESTIONNAIRE (PQ)

The purpose of the study for each of these questionnaires will be to collect information on challenges faced by the principals in enhancing students’ academic achievements in Ndhiwa Sub- County. All your responses and information collected were treated with utmost confidentiality and only used for analytical purpose of the study. Please give your review by filling in the blank spaces or putting a tick (√) in appropriate spaces.

SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Category of school

National ()

Extra County ()

County ()

Sub- County ()

2. Gender

Male ()

Female ()

3. Age bracket

25- 30 () 31- 40 ()

41-50 () 51- 60 ()

4. KCSE Mean Score (2014): _____

SECTION B: SPECIFIC INFORMATION

The following are some of the challenges faced by the principals in enhancing students’ academic achievements in public secondary schools.

School Based Challenges

The following are some of the school based challenges faced by the principals in enhancing students’ academic achievement in secondary schools. Rate on a 5-point scale with a tick (√) the ones applicable to your school, where; 1= Least Challenge, 2= Less Challenge, 3= Big Challenge, 4= Bigger Challenge and 5= Biggest Challenge

Aspect	Rating				
	1	2	3	4	5
Finances	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Boarding Facilities	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Library	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Water	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Recreational Facilities	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Laboratory Chemicals and Equipment	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Teaching Staff	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Non- Teaching Staff	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

Any Other (Specify.....

Student Based Challenges

The following are some of the student based challenges faced by the principals in enhancing students’ academic achievements in public secondary schools. Rate on a 5-point scale with a tick (√) the ones applicable to your school, where;

1= Least Challenge, 2= Less Challenge, 3= Big Challenge, 4= Bigger Challenge and 5= Biggest Challenge

Aspect	Rating				
	1	2	3	4	5
Drug Abuse	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Theft Cases	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Taking Class Assignment	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Fighting	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Destruction of School Property	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Entry behavior	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Attitude	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Peer Influence	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

Any Other (Specify):

.....

.....

Government Policy Based Challenges

The following are some of the government policy based challenges faced by the principals in enhancing students’ academic achievements in public secondary schools. Rate on a 5-point scale with ticks (√) the ones applicable to your school, where 1= Least Challenge, 2= Less Challenge, 3= Big Challenge, 4= Bigger Challenge and 5= Biggest Challenge

Aspect	Rating				
	1	2	3	4	5
Free Day Secondary School Policy	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Re – Entry Policy	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
School Sponsorship Policy	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
BOM Management Policy	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Standards and Safety Policy	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Student Discipline management Policy	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

Any Other (Specify):

.....

.....

Economic Based Challenges

The following are some of the economic based challenges faced by the principals in enhancing students’ academic achievements in public secondary schools. Rate on a 5-point scale with ticks (√), the ones applicable to your school, where: 1= Least Challenge, 2= Less Challenge, 3= Big Challenge, 4= Bigger Challenge and 5= Biggest Challenge

Aspect	Rating				
	1	2	3	4	5
Parental Income	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Child Labor	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Funds for students uniform	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Funds for personal text books	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Absenteeism due to Fee	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

Any Other (Specify):

.....

.....

APPENDIX B

TEACHER'S QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of the study for each of these questionnaires will be to collect information on challenges faced by the principals in enhancing student academic achievements in Ndhiwa Sub- County. All your responses and information collected were treated with utmost confidentiality and only used for analytical purpose of the study. Please give your review by filling in the blank spaces or putting a tick (√) in appropriate spaces.

SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Gender

Male ()

Female ()

2. Age bracket (Years)

25- 30 ()

31- 40 ()

41-50 ()

51- 60 ()

SECTION B: SPECIFIC INFORMATION

School Based Challenges

The following are some of the school based challenges faced by the principals in enhancing students’ academic achievements in public secondary schools. Rate on a 5-point scale with a tick (√) the ones applicable to your school, where; 1= Least Challenge, 2= Less Challenge, 3= Big Challenge, 4= Bigger Challenge and

5= Biggest Challenge

Aspect	Rating				
	1	2	3	4	5
Finances	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Infrastructural Facilities	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Library	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Water	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Recreational Facilities	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Laboratory Chemicals and Equipment	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Teaching Staff	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Non- Teaching Staff	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

Any Other (Specify):

.....

.....

Student Based Challenges

The following are some of the student based challenges faced by the principals in enhancing students’ academic achievements in public secondary schools. Rate on a 5-point scale with a tick (√) the ones applicable to your school, where;

1= Least Challenge, 2= Less Challenge, 3= Big Challenge, 4= Bigger Challenge and 5= Biggest Challenge

Aspect	Rating				
	1	2	3	4	5
Drug Abuse	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Theft Cases	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Taking Class Assignment	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Fighting	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Destruction of School Property	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Entry behavior	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Attitude	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Peer Influence	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

Any Other (Specify):

.....

.....

Government Policy Based Challenges

The following are some of the government policy based challenges faced by the principals in enhancing students’ academic achievements in public secondary schools. Rate on a 5-point scale with a tick (√) the ones applicable to your school, where 1= Least Challenge, 2= Less Challenge, 3= Big Challenge, 4= Bigger Challenge and 5= Biggest Challenge

Aspect	Rating				
	1	2	3	4	5
Free Day Secondary School Policy	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Re - Entry Policy	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
School Sponsorship Policy	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
BOM Management Policy	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Standards and Safety Policy	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Student Discipline management Policy	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

Any Other (Specify):

.....

.....

Economic Based Challenges

The following are some of the economic based challenges faced by the principals in enhancing students’ academic achievements in public secondary schools. Rate on a 5 point scale with a tick (√). The ones applicable to your school, where: 1= Least Challenge, 2= Less Challenge, 3= Big Challenge, 4= Bigger Challenge and 5= Biggest Challenge

Aspect	Rating				
	1	2	3	4	5
Parental Income	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Child Labor	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Funds for students uniform	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Funds for personal text books	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Absenteeism due to Fee	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

Any Other (Specify):

.....

.....

APPENDIX C

STUDENTS FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

- i. What is your general attitude towards learning?
- ii. How often are you sent home for fee?
- iii. Do you have any problems in paying extra academic levies?
- iv. In your opinion, do you have adequate
 - a. Library?
 - b. Laboratory?
 - c. Infrastructural facilities?
 - d. Teaching staff?
 - e. Water?
- v. Do you have cases of the following in your school?
 - a. Theft;
 - b. Fighting;
 - c. Destruction of school property.
- vi. Do the above challenges affect your performance in class? If yes, explain.

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE SCQASO

The purpose of the study for which this in-depth interview was designed, is to investigate challenges faced by principals in enhancing student academic achievement in Ndhiwa district. All your responses and information will be treated with utmost confidentiality and only used for analytical purpose of the study. Please give your views freely and sincerely.

In your opinion, to what extent do the following pose challenges to the principals in enhancing students' academic performance in this Sub County?

- a) School Based Challenges?

- b) Student Based Challenges?

- c) Government policy Based Challenges?

- d) Economic Based Challenges?

APPENDIX E
FISHER'S MODEL

$$n_f = \frac{n}{1 + \frac{n}{N}}$$

Where:

n_f = the desired sample size (where the population is less than 10, 000)

n = the desired sample size (where the population is more than 10, 000 =384)

N = the estimate of population size

APPENDIX F

RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION LETTER



REPUBLIC OF KENYA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

State Department of Early Learning and Basic Education

Email: deondhiwa@yahoo.com

When replying please quote

OUR Ref: MOEST/NDH/ADM/70/VOL.1/26

SUB COUNTY DIRECTOR EDUCATION
NDHIWA SUB COUNTY,
P.O BOX 12 - 40302,
NDHIWA.

Date: 26/07/2016

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION FOR
ONYANGO JARED MWALO - REG.NO. PG/MED/6027/2011

The above named person is a bonafide student of Maseno University, pursuing a Master Degree program leading to the award of Master in Educational Administration.

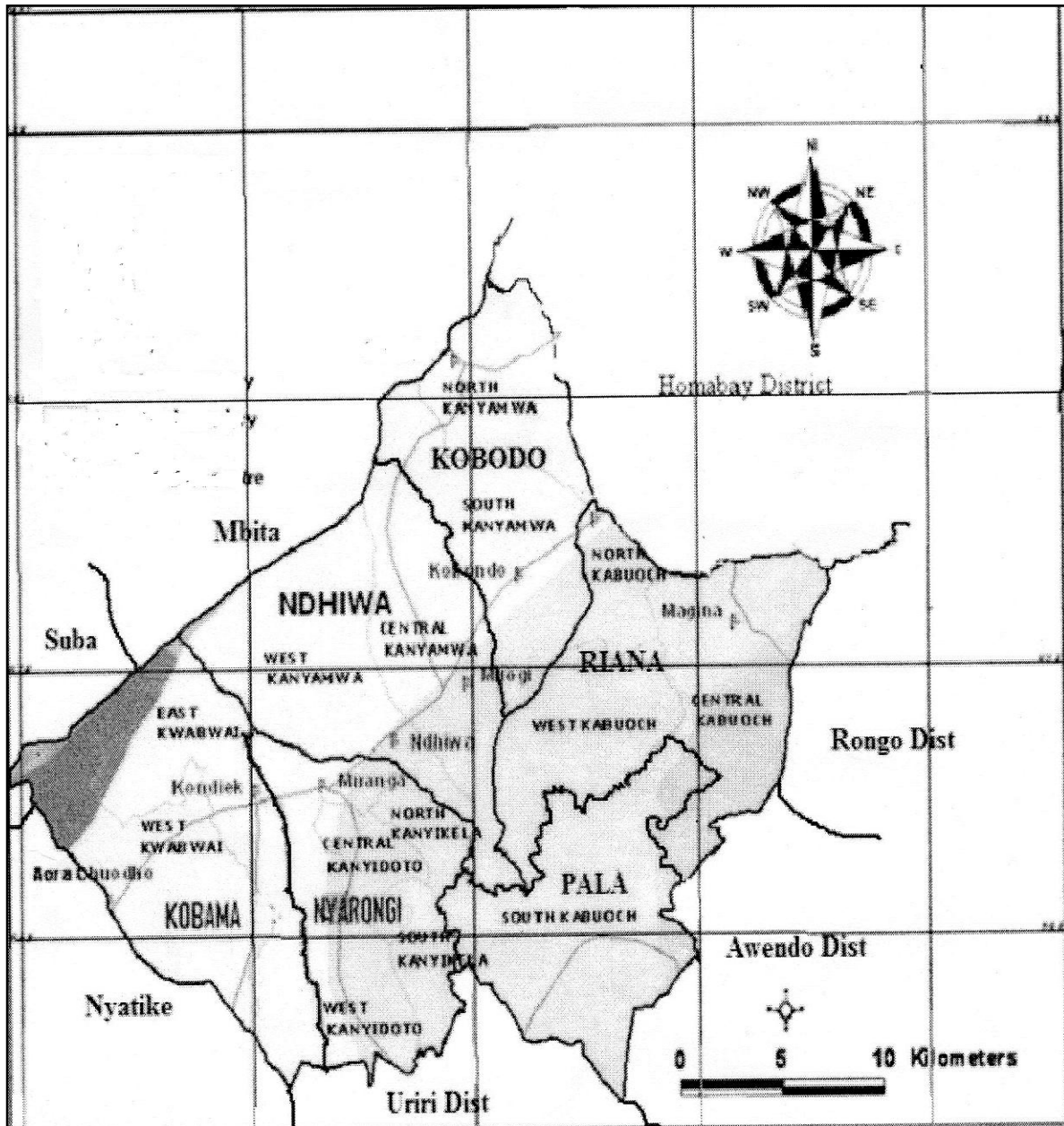
This is to confirm that this office has no objection in the student collecting data for his research proposal entitled: *“Challenges faced by Principals in enhancing student academic achievement in public secondary schools in Ndhiwa sub County, Kenya”*

Kindly accord him the necessary assistance and support.

M. O. JAYORO
SUB COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
NDHIWA SUB COUNTY

APPENDIX G

NDHIWA SUB COUNTY MAP



Source: Ndhwa Sub County Agricultural Office - 2017