INFLUENCE OF PRINCIPALS' ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN PUBLIC SENIOR SCHOOLS IN KIPIPIRI SUB-COUNTY, NYANDARUA COUNTY, KENYA.

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree or any other academic award in any other university or institution. Where the work of other scholars has been used, it has been duly acknowledged and referenced in accordance with academic conventions.

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DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my family for their unwavering support and encouragement throughout this academic journey.It is also dedicated to all educators whose commitment continues to shape learners' academic success**.**

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I sincerely thank God for the strength, wisdom and good health that enabled me to undertake this study. I wish to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisors Prof. Peter Koros and Dr. Esther Omundi for professional guidance throughout the development of this thesis. I am also grateful to the lecturers in the Department of Education for equipping me with the knowledge and skills necessary for this study. I also appreciate the Next Generation Leadership Program family for the financial support. Special appreciation goes to school principals, Teachers Service Commission Sub- County Director, Quality Assurance and Standards Officer, teachers and students who participated in the study, as well as my colleagues and friends for their encouragement and moral support. I acknowledge all those who contributed in one way or another to the successful development of this thesis.

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the influence of principals' administrative functions on students' academic achievement in senior schools in Kipipiri sub-county Nyandarua County, Kenya. The study was guided by six research questions: How does the principals' planning function influence student academic achievement in public senior schools? What is the influence of the principals' organizing function on student academic achievement in public senior schools? In what ways does the principals' controlling function influence student academic achievement in public senior schools? What is the influence of principals' directing function on student academic achievement in public senior schools? What challenges are encountered by principals in enhancing student academic achievement in public senior schools? What strategies could be adopted by principals to enhance student academic achievement in public senior schools? Fayol's Administrative Theory of Management guided the study. The study employed a convergent mixed method design, using a cross-sectional survey and phenomenology approaches. The target population comprised of 15 public senior school, 15 principals, 214 teachers,1012 form four students, 1 Teachers Service Commission Sub-County Director and 1 Sub- County Quality Assurance and Standards Officer. Purposive sampling and Stratified simple random sampling techniques were used to select 383 respondents for this study. Data was collected using questionnaires, interview guides and document analysis. Validity was tested by research experts and pilot testing and Reliability was confirmed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.92. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics while qualitative data was subjected to thematic content analysis. Ethical considerations were observed throughout the study. The findings demonstrated that the four principals' administrative functions collectively have an important influence on students' academic achievement. Although individual administrative functions may not consistently demonstrate strong independent influence on achievement, their combined implementation provides a meaningful contribution to explaining differences in student academic outcomes. Inadequate staffing, delayed government capitation, shortages of instructional resources limited the effectiveness of administrative functions. In order to improve students' academic achievement, the study recommends strengthening participatory planning, improving instructional resource provision, enhancing systematic monitoring and examination analysis, and addressing staffing and financing constraints that undermine effective administration.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

KCSE	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
MOE	Ministry of Education
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
SQASO	Sub-County Quality Assurance and Standards officer
TSC SCD	Teacher Service Commission Sub-County Director
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Education is widely recognized as a cornerstone for societal growth and national development. It equips learners not only with essential knowledge but also with the skills, attitudes, and values necessary for meaningful participation in economic and social life (UNESCO, 2022). The quality of education provided in any institution largely depends on the effectiveness of its leadership. Evidence from international and local studies indicates that school leadership is a critical factor influencing student outcome, its impact, when combined with classroom instruction, often exceeds that of other school-related variables (World Bank, 2018).

In Kenyan senior schools, the principal is the chief executive officer charged with the responsibility of carrying out essential administrative functions. The school principal oversees all day-to-day operations and ensures that objectives are achieved. Leithwood et al., (2020) reaffirms that principals play an important role in shaping school achievement and also responsible for both successes and failures within their schools. School principal as the administrative and instructional leader is central in steering the institution towards its academic objectives (Gakenia et al., 2017). As Peregrino et al., (2021) emphasize that school principals play a key role in the maintenance of the quality of education and the direction taken by schools toward fulfilling their goals.

According to Nwuke (2020), school administration is the systematic application of laid down programs and good management of resources to achieve educational goals. Chesseret et al,. (2024) also define school administration as a connection between classes, schools, and national education systems, which facilitates learning with the help of excellent leadership and

conducive conditions. Administration encompasses both managerial and leadership responsibilities, requiring principals to perform multiple roles simultaneously (Bush, 2020). Therefore, the school principal is more than a manger or a leader but an administrator.

School administration is currently being seen as a big contributor to student success and improvement in education (Leithwood et al., 2020). Although teaching is the direct impact on the learning process, good administration provides the organizational environment that can allow teaching excellence and continuous improvement. Bush (2020) explains that the necessary administration functions of principals include planning, organizing, directing and controlling, which comprise activities such as curriculum planning, goal setting, monitoring and supervision, resource planning and achievement evaluation.

Contemporary research underscores that principals are not just strategic leaders but administrators whose administrative functions significantly shape school outcome including students' academic achievement (Mikayilova et al., 2025). The effectiveness of school administration depends on how well principals translate administrative functions into practical actions that support teaching and learning processes. Administrative functions give an abstract guideline through which administration of institutions is administered. Robbins and Coulter (2021) assert that planning, organizing, directing and controlling are some of the administrative functions that offer a systemic method of attaining organizational goals.

Hallinger (2020) underlines that, the success of school administration depends not only on the theoretical knowledge of what administrative function is, but on the practical approaches that the administrators use to influence teaching and learning. As principals adhere to the effective implementation of the practice which is aligned with the administrative functions, the management of the school was efficient and contributes to the academic success.

Planning, organizing, and controlling are core administrative functions that guide school management processes. Planning involves setting academic targets, forecasting needs, and determining strategies to achieve desired educational outcomes. According to Bush (2021), effective planning helps align school resources and activities with academic goals, thereby improving teaching effectives and students achievement. Planning enables principals to establish academic target, allocate resources effectively and coordinate instructional programs. Educational planning entails establishing clear objectives, determining the resources required, and formulating appropriate strategies to achieve the desired outcomes (Nurhikmah, 2024). Organizing focuses on structuring the institution, assigning responsibilities, and distributing resources effectively to facilitate the teaching and learning process. Directing (or leading) involves guiding, motivating, and coordinating both individuals and groups toward the attainment of educational objectives. Controlling refers to the continuous monitoring and assessment of activities to ensure they align with established plans and goals. (Nurhikmah, 2024)

Research by Leithwood, Harris and Hopkins (2020) indicates that effective organizational structure within schools create supportive condition for teacher s which ultimately enhances student learning outcomes. Controlling on the other hand involves setting achievement standards, monitoring syllabus coverage, classroom visitation and taking corrective measures where necessary. Hallinger (2020) notes that effective monitoring and evaluation practices by school leaders contribute to improved instructional quality and student academic achievement.

Comparative studies across countries including the United States, Canada, China, Australia, and Turkey have consistently shown a positive relationship between school administration and academic achievement. Özdemir et al. (2022) conducted a systematic review

in United States and found out that principal's influence student outcomes mainly through school-level processes. (Özdemir et al., 2022).

A systematic review of principal influence on student academic achievement done in the United States since 2000 indicated that in learning institutions where the school principal was more effective, more significant learning took place in both math and reading. A study by Grissom et al.(2021) on how principals influence students and schools revealed that principals shape not only test achievement but also school culture, teacher quality, and student emotional well-being. A multivariate meta-analysis of 42 empirical studies done in the United States done in the last 20 years assessing school principal influence on student achievement showed a strong and consistent connection between principal leadership and academic results (Wu, 2020).

In Pakistan, a study carried out to examine the effect of principal administrative practices on student academic achievement at the senior school level by comparing the perceptions of school leaders and teachers found a positive influence on principal administrative practices and learner's academic achievement (Tatlah et al., 2014). A study in China assessing the role played by school principals in improving student achievement in senior school in Changchun found that classroom supervision, organizing, goal setting, working together for the common good keeping scrutiny on learners' development, and steering teacher independence were the principal administrative practices that enhanced greater achievement in schools (Tedla and Kilango,2022). A recent study by Mergoni, Camanho, Soncin, Agasisti, and De Witte (2025) examined how school principals' managerial practices influence school efficiency in Italian schools demonstrated that effective managerial strategies among Italian principals enhanced both school efficiency and learner achievement .

A study conducted in South Africa found that strategic planning, monitoring and proper organization by school managers correlated positively with improved learner achievement (Bayat et al., 2022). A study done in Nigeria examining administrative skills of principals as predictor of student academic achievement showed that there was a significant relationship between principal administrative skills and student academic achievement (Mohammmed et al., 2020).

Salifu (2024) examined administrative practices in a set of rural Ghanaian basic schools and documented that where principals enacted systematic planning, supervision and school-level monitoring, pupil achievement improved though gains were often limited by material shortages and community factors. Similarly, Mensah (2024) surveyed senior high schools in Ghana and reported that principals' strategic planning and monitoring significantly correlated with teacher commitment and higher student attainment in national examinations. This regional studies emphasis that planning and monitoring are critical administrative levers in resource-constrained African contexts, but their effectiveness depends on enabling conditions.

In Kenya, a number of studies provide direct local evidence that principal administrative functions are associated with student outcomes. A study done in Rangwe Sub-County on Influence of principals administrative functions indicates that the achievement of senior schools is closely tied to the administrative strategies of the principals (Juma 2021). Gatama et al. (2023) studied public senior schools in Nyeri and Nyandarua counties and found that principals' instructional and administrative leadership explained a measurable share of variation in KCSE achievement; the authors reported that strategic provision of learning resources and teacher capacity building had the largest observed effects.

Maina's (2021) institutional study in Nyandarua County examined specific administrative practices inclusive decision-making, teacher appraisal, parental involvement and

found significant relationships between those administrative practices and learners' academic achievement. Chesseret et al. (2024) in their study found that school principal administrative practices had a positive influence in student academic achievement in public senior schools in North Rift of Kenya.

In Kipipiri sub-county, KCSE achievement has remained below the County average over the last five years. Kipipiri Sub-County over the past five years (2020-2025) has posted an average mean of 3.121(Kipipiri Sub-County Education Office 2025). Even though the factors that have been contributed to poor achievement in KCSE such as lack of teaching resources, shortage of teachers, incomplete syllabus coverage, learner's absenteeism, and other government related issues have been addressed, the achievement has continued to dwindle. This has prompted the current study to examine the influence of principals' administrative functions on student academic achievement in public senior schools in Kipipiri Sub-County, Nyandarua County, Kenya.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Despite evidence that effective school leadership and administrative functions contribute to improved student academic achievement (Leithwood et al., 2020; Özdemir et al., 2022; Juma, 2021; Gatama et al., 2023), academic performance remains low and inconsistent in many public senior schools. In the 2024 KCSE, only 25.5% of the 962,512 candidates attained C+ and above, while in Kipipiri Sub-County only 13% qualified for university admission (Business Daily Africa, 2025; Kenya News Agency, 2024). Public senior schools in Kipipiri Sub-County have continued to record fluctuating KCSE results, with only a few showing sustained improvement. This situation has raised concern among religious leaders, political leaders, parents, teachers and

education officials, who question whether school leadership and administration are adequately supporting improved academic outcomes. The persistent underachievement limits students' opportunities for further education and future socio-economic advancement.

In Kenya senior schools, the principal is the chief executive officer charged with the responsibility of carrying out essential administrative functions such as planning, organizing, controlling and directing. When these administrative functions are effectively implemented, schools are expected to realize improved and stable academic achievement among learners (Ralebese et al., 2025). Although principals are trained and supported through various capacity-building programs, weaknesses in the execution of their administrative functions may contribute to the persistence of the problem**.** However, there is limited empirical evidence on the extent to which principals' planning, organizing, controlling and directing functions influence student academic achievement in public senior schools in Kipipiri Sub-County. This knowledge gap makes it difficult for education stakeholders to identify which aspects of school administration require strengthening. Therefore, this study seeks to examine the influence of principals' administrative functions on student academic achievement in public senior schools in Kipipiri Sub-County, Nyandarua County, Kenya

1.3 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

i. How does the principals' planning function influence student academic achievement in public senior schools in Kipipiri Sub-County, Nyandarua County?

ii. What is the influence of the principals' organizing function on student academic achievement in public senior schools in Kipipiri Sub-County Nyandarua County?

iii. In what ways does the principals' controlling function influence student academic achievement in public senior schools in Kipipiri Sub-County Nyandarua County?

iv. What is the influence of principals' directing function on student academic achievement in public senior schools in Kipipiri Sub-County Nyandarua County?

v. What challenges are faced by principals in their efforts to perform administrative function in public senior schools in Kipipiri Sub-County, Nyandarua County?

vi. What strategies could be adopted by principals to effectively perform their administrative functions in order to enhance student academic achievement in public senior schools in Kipipiri Sub- County Nyandarua County?

1.4 Research Hypothesis

The study tested the following hypothesis:

H_{01}: There is no statistically significant influence of principals' Administrative functions on students' academic achievement in public senior schools in Kipipiri Sub-County

1.5 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study may be relevant to education policy, leadership in schools, and scholarly research because it investigates the influence of administrative functions of principals that include planning, organizing, controlling and directing in academic achievement of students in senior schools in Kipipiri Sub-County, Nyandarua County.

To policymakers, the findings may provide evidence-based guidance for developing leadership training programs and frameworks that enhance principals' administration

competencies. Understanding the relationship between administrative functions and student outcomes will enable the Ministry of Education and the Teachers Service Commission to design targeted interventions that strengthen school administration and improve academic achievement across public schools.

To the principals and school administrators, the study may offer practical recommendations on how to effectively execute administrative functions to enhance instructional quality, teacher achievement, and overall school efficiency. By identifying which administrative functions have the greatest influence on student achievement, school leaders was better positioned to allocate resources, set strategic goals, and establish effective monitoring systems that promote continuous improvement.

For educators and stakeholders, the study may underscore the critical role of leadership in shaping school culture and sustaining academic excellence. It may also help school boards and parent-teacher associations appreciate the importance of supporting leadership initiatives that foster a conducive learning environment. The study may benefit the community and the students because through the effective practice of administrative function, student achievement in KCSE is expected to improve and hence they can enrolment in courses that are more beneficial to the wellbeing of the society like improved health care, innovation, agriculture, and housing.

In terms of academia, the research may add to the current body of research on educational administration by empirically exploring the particular influence of administrative function of principals on student academic achievement in a rural Kenyan school. It may further provide a contextualized understanding of school administration dynamics in rural Kenyan settings, serving as a useful reference for future research on educational management and achievement improvement.

1.6 Scope and Delimitation of the Study

It shall concentrate on studying the influence of administrative functions on student academic achievement in Kipipiri Sub-County (Nyandarua County), Kenya, in public senior schools. The research was limited to senior schools in this sub-county due to disparities and variation of Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) achievement despite the existence of qualified teachers and better resource allocation.The study covered the period between 2021 and 2025, a time frame that was in accordance with the current KCSE achievement trends, and will enable an evaluation of the present leadership and management practice within schools. The principal, teachers, and education officers were included in the target population because these factors are directly related to the school management and monitoring of the academic achievement.

As to the content scope, the research solely looked at the four classical administrative functions; planning, organizing, controlling and directing as they are the basis of management theory and the key to school leadership practice. Other administration or leadership aspects like staffing, reporting and budgeting though they are also pertinent, were not be scrutinized in detail because they are not part of the main purpose of this study. These functions are vital; however, they encompass more issues and frequently conflict with planning, organizing, directing and controlling. Their inclusion would make the study too general and narrow the level of analysis of the key administrative functions being examined.

The study was restricted to public senior schools only; the private schools were not included since they work on different governance systems, resource base, and accountability systems and these may not give a true reflection of the outcome. Moreover, the research involved

the administrative functions of the principals and not on the wider areas of leadership behavior or character traits. Although the results shaded light on the connection between the administrative roles and academic achievement, the results cannot be extrapolated to all the counties in Kenya because of the contextual differences in school facilities, community participation and enactment of policies. Nevertheless, the findings of this study are likely to provide a representative insight on the dynamics of leadership and achievement in a comparable setting of rural public-schools.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework refers to the structured set of concepts, theories, and assumptions that underpin a study and guide the interpretation of research findings. It provides a lens through which the researcher understands relationships among variables and anchors the study within existing scholarly knowledge (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). In essence, a theoretical framework explains why a research problem exists and how the selected variables are expected to interact.

This study was guided by the Administrative Theory of Management, originally advanced by Henri Fayol and widely applied in organizational and educational management contexts. The theory emphasizes key managerial functions; planning, organizing, directing, and controlling as essential processes for achieving organizational goals (Fayol, 1949/2016; Daft, 2021). In the context of education, these functions provide a useful framework for understanding how school principals manage resources, coordinate instructional activities, and monitor achievement to enhance student academic achievement.

1.7.1 Strength of Fayol's Administrative Theory of Management

One of the most enduring strengths of Fayol's theory is its clear articulation of administrative functions. By categorizing management into planning, organizing, directing, and controlling, Fayol provided a logical framework that simplifies complex administrative roles (Nkonge & Mudulia, 2024). Nkonge & Mudulia, (2024) affirm that this functional clarity enhances managerial effectiveness. Similarly, Bush (2020) argues that the enduring relevance of Fayol's functional approach lies in its ability to provide a foundational "management language" that informs both theory and practice in educational leadership.

Wren, Bedeian, and Breeze (2002) emphasize that one of the key strengths of Henri Fayol's Administrative Theory is its universal applicability and strong practical grounding. They argue that Fayol's principles are drawn from extensive managerial experience, making them broadly adaptable across industries, time periods, and organizational contexts. They further credit Fayol as a foundational figure in administrative management for successfully integrating theory and practice by demonstrating how core functions such as planning, organizing, and controlling enhance organizational effectiveness.

Similarly, Jones-Washington (2018) affirms that Fayol's management concepts remain highly relevant due to their universal nature, particularly their applicability in both corporate and educational institutions. The principles provide a clear administrative structure that guides leaders in coordinating activities, allocating responsibilities, and improving efficiency in management systems.

Bacud (2020) further strengthens the theory by noting that organizations applying Fayol's principles demonstrate improved coordination, accountability, and overall achievement. This suggests that the framework remains effective in enhancing governance and administrative

efficiency when adapted to modern organizational environments. In addition, Pryor and Taneja (2010) argue that Fayol's work laid the conceptual foundation of modern management practice by clearly defining managerial roles, improving decision-making processes, and strengthening achievement management systems.

Robbins and Coulter (2021), also strengthens the theory by noting that clearly defined managerial functions improve accountability by ensuring that "managers know what is expected of them and can be evaluated on how well they meet those expectations" this suggest that Henri Fayol's administrative theory strongly promotes accountability and managerial responsibility through clearly defined managerial roles and responsibilities. Collectively, these studies demonstrate that Fayol's theory remains highly relevant and influential due to its simplicity, adaptability, and practical focus, making it particularly suitable for guiding leadership and administrative practices in educational institutions.

1.7.2 Weaknesses of Fayol's Administrative Theory of Management

Although the theory is very strong, there are also limitations to the administrative structure presented by Fayol, as identified by scholars. Wren et al., (2020) recognize that critics have misunderstood the principles of Fayol to be strict, or even dictatorial in nature, whereas they believe that Fayol intended them to be flexible, however, the industrial-oriented orientation of the theory renders it less adaptable to the multifaceted and contextual aspects of the modern organization, including the school. It is a mechanistic and hierarchical perspective of organizational structure that presupposes that human behavior is predictable and that organizational settings are consistent, such rigidity can inhibit the creativity, flexibility, and

employee engagement factors required in dynamic systems like education (Robbins and Coulter, 2019).

Authority and formal structure are also given a lot of importance in the theory as compared to human relations, motivation and participation decision-making (Koontz and Weihrich, 2012). According to Pryor and Taneja (2020), the theory developed by Fayol is clear and structured but has a tendency to be overly authoritative, hierarchical, and centralized, which restrains creativity and participation and flexibility in contemporary organizations. Bacud (2020) also warns that implementing the ideas of Fayol without any changes can cause bureaucratic inflexibility that prevents innovation and collaboration between teachers. Thus, although Fayol's ideas remain useful in explaining administrative efficiency, they require adaptation to fit modern, participatory, and learner-centered school environments. A key limitation of the Administrative Theory is its hierarchical and rigid structure, which may underemphasize collaboration, shared decision-making, and instructional focus.

To address this, the study interpreted Fayol's functions planning, organizing, and controlling as participatory processes, where principals involve teachers and other stakeholders in decision-making. In addition, the theory was complemented with instructional leadership perspectives to ensure a stronger focus on teaching and learning outcomes. The principle of controlling was also applied in a developmental sense, emphasizing feedback and continuous improvement rather than strict supervision. These adaptations help align Fayol's framework with contemporary educational leadership while retaining its analytical value.

1.7.3 Application of Fayol's Administrative Theory of Management

The Administrative Framework proposed by Fayol is quite applicable in the present study since it provides systematic and organized perspective of evaluation of school leadership practices where the effectiveness and unity of administrative operations are the major determinations of school success. Although modern education systems need adaptive and participatory models of leadership, the framework provided by Fayol still offers a useful platform on which the competencies of managers that form the foundation of academic achievement in Kenyan senior schools can be evaluated.

The theory is applicable in the education sector as it offers a structured framework for school leadership. In schools, these principles assist principals in defining roles, maintaining discipline, promoting teamwork, and ensuring effective coordination of activities. Similarly, the managerial functions guide principals in planning academic goals, organizing resources, and controlling instructional processes to enhance student achievement. Therefore, Fayol's theory provides a strong foundation for examining how administrative practices influence academic achievement in schools.

The Kipipiri Sub-County senior schools are put into perspective in the sense that good planning helps the principals to establish academic objectives, school programs, resource distribution, and forecast various challenges that may arise to the academic achievement. Organizing helps them to create order within the school operations, duties are allocated, and resources are managed effectively to facilitate effective teaching and learning. Controlling, conversely, gives the principals the opportunity to oversee the teaching processes, check achievement and take corrective measures to make sure that the academic goals are achieved. As indicated by Bacud (2020), once the principles of Fayol are updated to facilitate inclusivity and

flexibility; they boost leadership and achievement within institutions. Therefore, the Administrative Theory by Fayol can offer a powerful conceptual framework on how the administrative functions played by principals in their administrative capacity impact on student academic achievement in the Kipipiri Sub-County, in the County of Nyandarua, Kenya.

1.8 Conceptual Framework

According to Adom, Hussein, and Agyem (2020), a conceptual framework is a structured representation of key variables and their presumed relationships within a study. It provides a logical foundation linking theory to empirical investigation. A conceptual framework helps organize ideas and illustrate how independent and dependent variables interact (Adom et al., 2018)

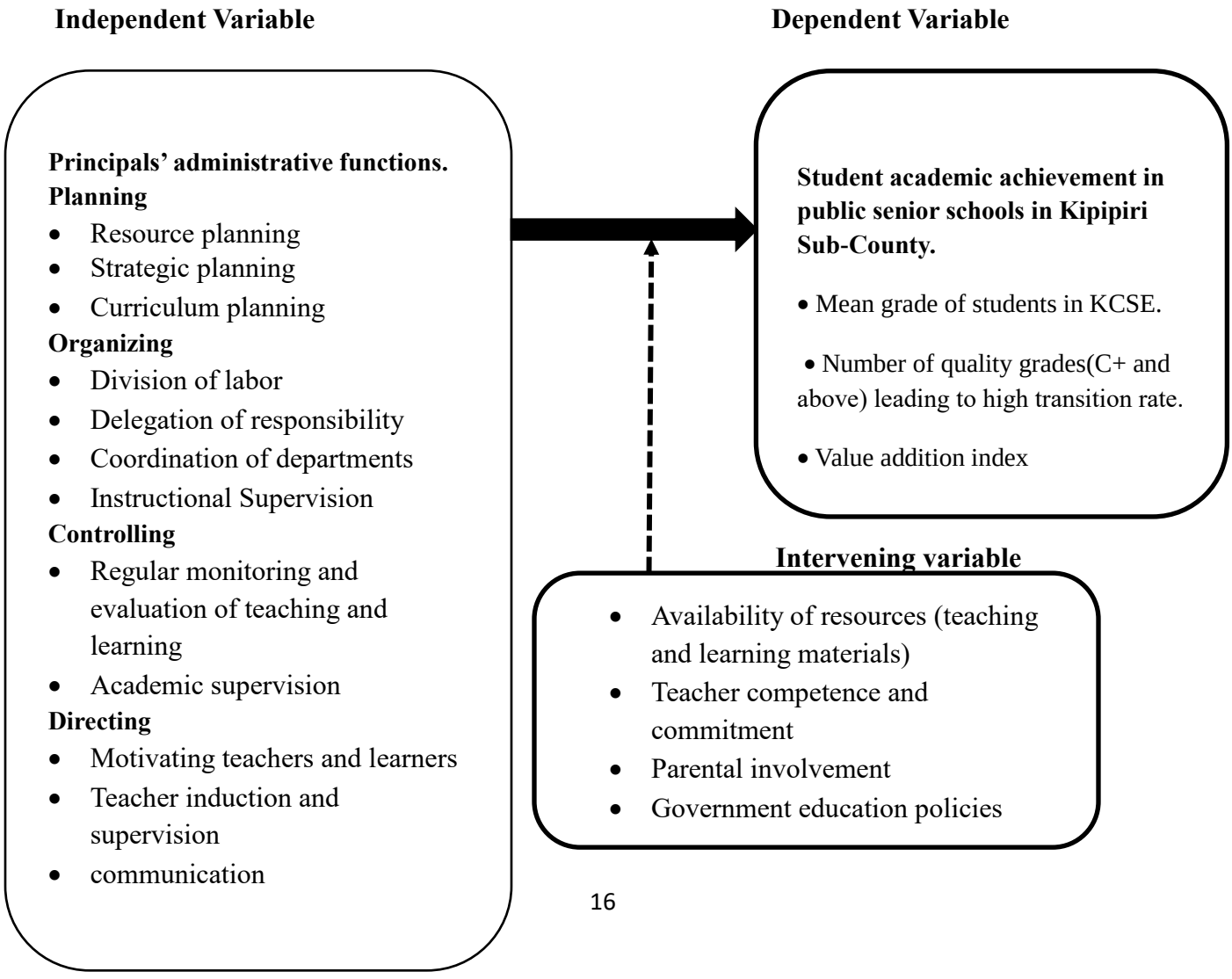


Figure 1: Conceptual framework of the study

The conceptual framework of this study is grounded on the assumption that the administrative roles of school principals influence student academic achievement. The study focuses on three key independent variables derived from classical administrative functions: planning, organizing, and controlling (Robbins & Coulter, 2018). The dependent variable is student academic achievement.

Planning involves setting academic goals, allocating resources, and scheduling instructional activities. It is expected to enhance achievement by improving instructional focus, efficient use of time, and alignment of school priorities with learning outcomes (Locke & Latham, 2019; Ng, 2023). Organizing refers to the structuring of school activities through role allocation, delegation, and coordination of staff, which improves teacher effectiveness and instructional delivery (Robbins & Judge, 2020). Controlling involves monitoring academic standards, evaluating achievement, and implementing corrective actions, thereby ensuring accountability and continuous improvement in teaching and learning (Bush, 2020).

The framework assumes a direct relationship where effective execution of these administrative functions leads to improved learning environments and higher student academic achievement. However, this relationship may be influenced by moderating factors such as teacher quality, availability of teaching resources, and parental involvement, which can either strengthen or weaken the impact of administrative practices on student outcomes.

1.9 Operational Definition of Key Terms

Administrative Functions: The planning, organizing, controlling and directing activities carried out by school principals to ensure achievement of educational objectives.

Controlling Function: Are administrative practices undertaken to monitor, evaluate, and regulate school activities to ensure that set educational goals and quality standards are achieved in senior schools

Directing Function: Are leadership practices employed to guide, influence, and motivate stakeholders, fostering their commitment and active participation in achieving educational objectives in senior schools.

Planning Functions : Are administrative practices involved in determining educational objectives, identifying necessary resources, and establishing strategies required to accomplish desired goals in senior schools.

Student: Learner enrolled in senior schools within Kipipiri Sub-County, who is actively participating in formal education and whose academic achievement is being assessed to determine the influence of principals' administrative functions.

Academic achievement: Achievement of students as measured by their results in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE). It serves as the primary indicator of the effectiveness principal administrative functions on student academic achievement.

Mean Grade: The average KCSE achievement of all candidates in a secondary school, as a measure of overall student academic achievement influenced by the effectiveness of principals' administrative functions such as planning, directing, and controlling.

Quality Grades: The number of students in a secondary school who attain a minimum grade of C+ in KCSE, used as an indicator of high academic achievement and eligibility for tertiary education, reflecting the effectiveness of school administrative practices.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews empirical literature and theories that underpins the study on influence of principals' administrative functions on students' achievement in the Kenya Certificate of Senior Education (KCSE) examinations in public senior schools in Kipipiri Sub-County, Nyandarua County. In this chapter, the study reviewed different scholarly articles that are related to the administrative function and their influence on students' academic achievement in public senior school. It will also focus on possible challenges encountered by principals and strategies that can be adopted by principals to enhance students' academic achievement.

2.2 Review of Related Theories

This section presents the theoretical foundation that underpins the study on the influence of principals' administrative functions on students' academic achievement in senior schools. The theories reviewed provide a lens through which the role of principals in planning, organizing and controlling instructional processes cab be understood. This section discusses Goal setting theory and Instructional leadership theory. These theories explain how principals administrative functions shape teaching and learning processes and ultimately in influencing students' academic achievement.

2.2.1. Goal Setting Theory

Goal-Setting Theory was developed by Locke in the late 1960s and later expanded by Locke and Latham (1990).Locke's research found that setting specific and challenging goals, resulted in better achievement than 'do-your-best' goals (Locke, 1968). Locke and Latham (2013) asserted that goal setting involves translating ideas into action through clearly defined

goals, whether at an individual or school level, as it forms a critical foundation for success. Locke (2013) noted that goal setting helps students understand what is expected of them, enabling them to focus more effectively on achieving their objectives.

Clear, specific, and challenging goals enhance achievement by directing attention, increasing effort, and fostering persistence (Locke and Latham 2019). In the school context, principals' goal-setting practices such as setting academic targets, clarifying instructional expectations, and monitoring progress serve as a critical administrative function that shapes teaching and learning processes.

Despite its strengths goals setting theory has some limitations. Ethical concerns and achievement pressure may arise when the principal set too difficult goals. Higher achievement target if not supported adequately can cause stress and may increase unethical practices like cheating in examination and manipulation of assessment procedure (Locke & Latham, 2020). According to Drach-Zahavy & Erez (2020) challenging goals can be viewed as a threat. Latham and Locke (2006) stated that: "A potential problem with goal setting is that it may be viewed as a threat rather than a challenge". Unrealistic goals may place too much pressure on teachers and students leading to teacher burnout and reduced morale (Swann et al, 2021).

This theory is relevant as it explains how principals administrative functions such as planning and controlling can be used to set instructional targets align teachers' effort with instructional objectives and truck student progress. Individuals and organizations perform better when goals are clear, specific, and accompanied by regular feedback (Locke & Latham, 2002). It offers a more practical and achievement-oriented framework for explaining how principals' administrative functions directly influence student academic achievement Planning enables

principals to set clear academic goals and achievement targets aligned with curriculum objectives. Through organizing, principals allocate instructional resources, assign responsibilities, and coordinate teaching activities to support goal attainment. Controlling function enables principals to monitor instructional practices, evaluate progress, and provide feedback, which strengthens goal commitment and enhances student academic achievement.

2.2.2 Instructional Leadership Theory

This theory was designed by Hallinger and Murphy (1985), who conceptualize instructional leadership as a leadership approach that prioritizes core school mission teaching and learning. Hallinger and Murphy developed the Instructional Leadership Modell which positions the principal as the central figure responsible for coordinating curriculum , supervising instruction and promoting positive learning environment .According to this model effective school leadership involves three key functions: establishing and clearly communicating the school's mission; overseeing and guiding curriculum development and instructional practices; and fostering a supportive and positive school environment that encourages teaching and learning (Hallinger 2011) .

Hallinger (2011) posits that instructional leadership positively influences the quality of teaching, playing a key role in enhancing teachers' instructional effectiveness. According to Sufean (2014), instructional leadership is a form of leadership that prioritizes academic management, with the primary responsibility of school principals being the enhancement of teaching and learning in the classroom. According to Bush (2015) an effective instructional leader prioritizes curriculum and instruction, mobilizes resources to achieve school goals, and fosters a culture of high academic expectations among learners.

This theory places the school principal at the center of learning process and emphasizes direct leadership actions such as setting academic goals, supervising instruction and monitoring student progress (Hallinger 2011)Instructional leadership influences student learning by creating a supportive school environment, defining the school mission and educational vision, establishing specific goals, inspiring and guiding staff, and fostering a positive school culture that promotes greater student engagement (Harris & Jones, 2023).

Instructional leadership theory provides a clear focus on teaching and learning which aligns with the core mandate of schools. Unlike other leadership models, it links leadership actions to classroom activities and student academic achievement (Hallinger, 2021). Instructional leadership promotes accountability and achievement monitoring by emphasizing data use, academic target setting and supervision of instruction. The theory strengthens institutional mechanisms for ensuring improved achievement (Leithwood et al., 2020).The theory also promotes professional development and instructional capacity building. Through classroom observations, mentoring and feedback, principals support continuous teacher improvement thus improving student leaning outcome (Robinson, 2020; Leithwood et al., 2020).

Despite its strengths, instructional leadership theory has notable limitation. It put too much emphasize on the role of the principal, thus overlooking distributed leadership structures within the schools. The present educational environments require a collaborative leadership model rather than principal centered approaches (Leithwood et al., 2020). The theory pays little attention to social and economic conditions that affect school achievement. Factors such as government policies, lack of resources and others can limit how effective instructional leadership practices are in improving student achievement.

Instructional Leadership Theory provide a theoretical framework for the current study as it explains the mechanism through which administrative practices influence academic achievement when they are oriented towards teaching and learning. The theory posits that effectiveness of school leadership not only lies in the execution of managerial duties, but in the extent to which such duties are directed towards improving instructional processes and student outcomes (Hallinger, 2021; Robinson, 2020).

Instructional Leadership Theory translates classical management principles into school based instructional practices. While Fayol explains how organizations should be managed, institutional leadership explains how schools should be led to improve teaching and learning. Administrative functions only improve students learning when they are executed with an instructional focus (Hallinger, 2020; Leithwood et al., 2020; Robinson, 2020) The theory offers a conceptual explanation of how principal's administrative functions influence student academic achievement through their impact on instructional processes. It therefore provides a strong theoretical foundation for examining the relationship between school leadership practices and student learning outcomes in senior schools

2.3 Review of Empirical Studies

Empirical studies provide evidence-based insights into how school principals' administrative functions influence student learning outcomes in senior schools. Reviewing such studies is essential in establishing what are already known, identifying consistencies and gaps in existing findings, and justifying the need for the present study**.**

2.3.1 Principals' Planning Function and Students' Academic Achievement

Planning is a key component of educational administration that ensures educational goals are achieved efficiently and effectively. It involves setting objectives, determining priorities, allocating resources, and evaluating outcomes. According to Henri Fayol, planning is a fundamental administrative function defined as "looking ahead" to determine what is to be done, how it was done, and who will do it (Fayol, 1916, as cited in Wren et al., 2002). In school administration, planning includes setting academic goals, developing strategic plans, scheduling instructional programs, and budgeting resources (Koontz et al., 2019).

A central aspect of planning is goal setting, which provides direction and motivates achievement improvement. Clear academic targets established by principals enhance teacher and student commitment to achievement (Nkonge & Mudulia, 2024). Goal-setting theory further argues that specific and challenging goals improve achievement by focusing effort and attention (Dekker et al., 2021). In senior schools, this includes targets such as KCSE mean scores, transition rates, and curriculum coverage.

Timetable planning is also critical in enhancing academic achievement. A timetable organizes when school activities occur, ensuring coordination of teaching and learning processes (Chinyama & Innocent, 2019; Grafiati, 2021). It structures daily operations and optimizes the use of teachers, learners, classrooms, and instructional time (Nwonkwo & Dede, 2024). UNESCO (2021) further notes that well-structured timetables improve learning outcomes by aligning instructional time with learner needs and subject demands.

Resource forecasting and budgeting are equally essential in planning as they determine the availability and quality of instructional inputs. Effective resource planning ensures optimal

use of financial, physical, and human resources to support teaching and learning (UNESCO, 2020). It involves anticipating future needs such as enrolment changes, staffing requirements, and infrastructure maintenance (World Bank, 2021). Studies show that schools with accurate resource forecasting are more likely to provide consistent learning materials and minimize instructional disruptions, leading to improved academic achievement (Waweru & Gathara, 2020; Abdu & Alhassan, 2022).

Miskell (2020) examined the effect of strategic planning on student achievement in rural public schools in New York State using a qualitative research design involving administrators from 11 schools. The study found that strategic planning processes, particularly goal formulation, strongly supported the alignment of school missions and visions, which in turn contributed to improved student academic outcomes. This suggests that structured planning plays a significant role in enhancing educational effectiveness.

However, the study presents a narrow geographical scope, as it was conducted in rural schools in New York State, a context characterized by different socio-economic conditions, governance structures, and resource availability compared to African or Kenyan educational systems. The study focused exclusively on school administrators, thereby excluding key stakeholders such as teachers and students, whose perspectives are critical in understanding how planning translates into classroom practice and learner outcome. The qualitative design limits the generalizability of the findings to broader school populations.

In contrast, the current study situates itself within the Kenyan senior school context, where educational challenges such as resource constraints, large class sizes, and policy implementation gaps may influence the effectiveness of planning practices differently. It seeks to

examine how principals' planning functions particularly goal setting, timetable scheduling, and resource allocation relate to student academic achievement. By broadening the contextual scope and focusing on principals as key instructional leaders, this study extends existing knowledge and addresses the contextual and methodological gaps identified in Miskell's (2020) work.

Sides and Cuevas (2020) explored the impact of goal-setting on students' achievement in elementary mathematics in United States, focusing on its effects on motivation, self-efficacy, and academic achievement. Using a quasi-experimental design, they engaged 70 students in 3rd and 4th grade classrooms; the study compared an experimental group engaged in goal-setting activities with a control group that did not set explicit goals. The finding indicated that students who actively set specific academic goals demonstrated significant improvements in mathematics achievement, although there were no notable changes in motivation or self-efficacy over the study period.

Sides and Cuevas (2020) concluded that specific academic goals help learners concentrate on priority tasks, reducing distractions and enhance skill mastery .the study focused on elementary school students limiting applicability of the findings to senior school context. Similarly, it was conducted in a mathematics classroom setting thus the findings may not reflect the broader school administrative context that influence academic achievement across subjects. While the study focused on students' goal-setting practice, the current study targets principals' administrative goal-setting practices and how these contribute to student academic achievement within the senior school context.

Nwonkwo and Dede (2024) investigated the relationship between timetable management and students' academic achievement in public senior schools in the Ikwerre Education Zone,

Rivers State, Nigeria. The study targeted all students and teachers in public senior schools within the Zone during the 2022/2023 academic year, comprising 2,200 students and 850 teachers. The finding revealed that schools with well-organized timetables where subjects are scheduled according to teacher specialization and instructional periods are allocated efficiently demonstrated higher levels of student academic achievement**.** They concluded that effective timetable management plays a significant role in supporting instructional delivery and enhancing learner outcomes.

While they focused on relationship between timetable management and students' academic achievement, the present study focuses on how principals' timetable planning influences students' achievement. Also, the research relied on correlational design limiting deeper understanding of administrative function and excluded principals who are the key administrators responsible for timetable management and other administrative functions. The study was conducted Nigeria, whereas the current one is based in Kenya whose educational policy dynamics and school governance structures vary. The current study expanded the contextual, population and methodological scope of the existing research.

Effectiveness of strategic planning and its influence on academic achievement in public senior schools in Babati District, Tanzania was investigated by (Kwaslema and Onyango 2021). Using a mixed-methods approach, the findings revealed that effective planning practices enhanced academic achievement by motivating teachers, providing clear direction for instructional activities, and fostering commitment among school stakeholders. The study established that strategic planning is a critical administrative function that aligns school goals with teaching and learning processes, thereby improving overall school achievement. The study largely relied on teachers' perceptions to assess the effectiveness of strategic planning while the

current study seeks to examine principals' administrative functions more comprehensively and relate them directly to student academic achievement. Secondly the study was conducted in Babati District, Tanzania, whose educational policy environment, leadership structures, and accountability mechanisms differ from those in Kenya. As a result, the findings may not be directly generalizable to senior schools in Nyandarua County, thereby justifying the need for a context-specific investigation within the Kenyan education system.

The resource allocation study by Kawinzi et al. (2024) also focuses on the resource allocation as an institutional factor to the implementation of strategic plans in the public senior schools in Kenya. The research evaluated how far financial, human, and physical resource allocation has a role in the successful implementation of the school strategic plans. Principals, heads of departments, and teachers were the sources of data used through the descriptive survey design. The results proved that proper and fair distribution of resources contributed greatly to effective process of strategic implementation in senior schools. This paper has emphasized the significance of the availability of resources in facilitating institutional planning.

Nkonge and Mudulia (2024) tested the relationship between the goal-setting skills of principals and academic achievement of students in Maara Sub-County, Kenya. The research paper has pointed out those principals who are successful in establishing and communicating clear academic objectives make teachers share a vision that promotes motivation, responsibility, and systematic instructional plans. The study using a mixed-method design in which 59 principals and 967 teachers were involved came up with quantitative and qualitative data that indicated that goal-setting skills have a positive relationship with the academic achievement of the students. Particularly, the researchers have shown that the schools under the leadership of principals who possessed strong goal-setting skills were more likely to have positive student

achievement as they were more aligned with school goals, and the academic achievement was closely monitored. The researchers considered only goal setting skills as a leadership strategy which neglected other administrative functions, which can also bear an impact on student outcome. The study was also restricted to the Maara Sub-County which does not rule out generalization of the study to other counties like Nyandarua which may vary in terms of contextual influences like school facilities, supply of teachers and the socioeconomic statuses.

Mwikaria, Gori, and Chepkonga, (2019) investigated the impacts of the human and financial resources management on the academic achievement of learners in the public senior schools within Garissa Sub-County Kenya. The survey research design was adopted, with the survey focusing on public senior schools, and school principals and heads of departments were the key informants in the survey. The information was gathered through questionnaires and interview. The results found that the correlation between academic achievement and management of human as well as financial resources in senior schools was statistically significant, which means that the schools that managed to manage their teaching staff, departmental leadership and financial inputs well achieved higher student academic achievement. These findings have revealed the significance of resource management as an important aspect of school administration and its role in academic success of the students.

Muriuki et al. (2022) investigated the influence of head teachers' use of goal setting on students' academic achievement in private primary schools in Nyeri and Murang'a counties. The study established a statistically significant association between goal setting and students' academic achievement, highlighting goal setting as an effective motivational strategy. However, the study was conducted in private primary schools, limiting its applicability to public senior schools. It also did not specifically examine principal-initiated goal setting as an administrative

and motivational strategy influencing student academic achievement. Consequently, there is limited empirical evidence on how principals' goal-setting practices affect students' academic achievement in public senior schools, particularly within the Kenyan context.

2.3.2 Principals' Organizing Function and Students' Academic Achievement

Organizing refers to the systematic arrangement of tasks, delegation of authority, and coordination of departments, work supervision and optimal utilization of human and material resources to achieve institutional goals efficiently (Fayol 1916). It focuses on structuring human and material resources to achieve institutional goals. In educational settings, organizing is critical in ensuring that school activities, personnel, and instructional processes are systematically aligned to enhance teaching and learning outcomes. Empirical research has emphasized the importance of organizational structure in educational success. Bush and Glover (2020) found that schools with clear defined organizational structures experienced improved teacher productivity and learner achievement.

Wambua and Njue (2021) noted that effective coordination among teaching staff enhances instructional consistency and accountability. Madukwe et al., (2024) assert that delegation of authority by school principals foster goal attainment facilitates goal achievement by empowering teachers and promoting teamwork. According to Nyang'au (2022), empowering teachers through delegation enhances morale and commitment which translates to better students' achievement. A study by Kimani and Ochieng (2023) also in their study indicated that schools with collaborative management structures achieve higher efficiency and responsiveness to academic needs.

In Nigeria, the paper by Madukwe, Obioma, Obona and Akwu (2024) in the Abia State studied the relationship between goal achievement and participative leadership behavior of principals in government senior schools. The research population consists of 303 principals who were the representative of all the senior schools that were run by the state, which were public. The study selected 160 principals using simple random methods of selection. Data collection was conducted through the use of a systematic questionnaire, and ex-post facto study method was applied. The findings revealed that the achievement of schools that had less centralized leadership practices compared to schools that have higher principal engagement of teachers and other stakeholders in leadership practices was not successful in meeting their institutional goals.

Although the study did serve as an eye opener in the connection that existed between participatory leadership and attainment of the institutional goals, it was conducted at the cost of the possibility of response bias since self-reported surveys were used, with the principals having filled the questionnaires. In order to make the findings accurate and credible, this study will poll as many people as possible. Basic random selection of participants in the study throws the question of whether the study was able to represent the different types of schools fairly. The current research employs stratified sampling in order to ensure that the respondents are all represented.

Livingstone and Andala (2023) have investigated the historic achievement of students in Rwandan state high schools in relation to their supervision by principals. The research strategy employed in this study was correlational by nature to examine the effects of various types of instructional supervision on the achievement of classroom students. The study targeted principals and teachers in a sample of that subset of the public high schools in Muhanga district. We got 108 respondents after applying the approach of Slovene. The data collection occurred by using

surveys and documents. The results of assessment as well as the degree of interest towards learning were found to improve when supervisory procedures, such as classroom monitoring, feedback, and instructor supervision are applied. Though the research assisted in illuminating the role of instructional supervision on the success of students in history, it did not consider the overall academic achievement of the students due to the limitation of the topic. We do not know much about the influence of other primary roles on the student academic progress as the study focuses only on one of the administration functions, which is supervision. To address this gap, the current study associates a number of administrative tasks to the overall academic achievement of students.

In a study in Kisii County, Kenya, Nyang (2022) inquired whether the delegation of principals did impact the achievement of teachers or not. The ones who completed the descriptive survey were principals and teachers. Data on the delegation procedures and teacher achievement measures were collected using structured questionnaires. The results indicated that the effectiveness of a teacher in schools varied and delegation was being used significantly in the schools under examination. It is important to note that the given research has demonstrated that delegation and teacher achievement are positively and significantly connected, which implies that delegating the appropriate quantity of work to a teacher enhances his or her motivation and efficiency in the classroom. The current research is in contrast to the last one because student academic achievement is the major outcome measure in the current research instead of the teacher achievement. This implies that, administrative delegation is currently linked towards the achievement of the staffs as well as the academic achievement of students.

Hanshi and Mosomi (2023) examined the effect of instructional supervision by the principals on the academic achievement of students in a group of public senior schools in the

Mandera East Sub County of Kenya, which belonged to low-income families. The conceptualization of instructional supervision adopted in the study was described by the classroom observation, comments and analysis of instructional documentation as principal's actively monitoring, guiding and supporting teachers. This study involved 214 respondents; it included 16 principals and 198 teachers. The data was gathered through interviews of the principals and the issue of questionnaires to the teachers. The mixed-method application of instructional monitoring by principals has a positive influence on the academic achievement of students, as indicated by the study. Both teachers and administrators reported improved teaching quality, motivating teachers and improving academic achievement of students as a result of such activities like classroom visiting, mentorship, and formal feedback. According to the findings, the most significant administrative role that leads to the achievement of senior schools is instructional supervision. The reliance on the limited purposive sampling in this study increases the chances of bias and subjectivity on the part of the researcher. Both stratified and random sampling was applied to the current study in order to create a greater degree of assurance to the results.

2.3.3 Principal controlling functions and student academic achievement

According to Hallinger (2020) controlling function is a managerial role of instructional leader who is the school principal. As a managerial role of an instructional leader, control function involves monitoring teaching and learning activities, supervising curriculum implementation, evaluating achievement and ensuring adherence to school policies (Musingafi et al., 2020). According to Nwankwo, (2020) regular classroom observation, checking of lesson plans and monitoring students' progress contribute to better academic outcomes. Principals who

actively supervise and control school operations help maintain high academic standards, which positively affect students' achievement (Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2020)

According to Enwezor and Nzeri (2025) monitoring is the continuous tracking and evaluation of students' engagement, achievement, and conduct through both physical observation and digital tools, aimed at enhancing effective teaching and learning. Aku (2023) observed that inadequate monitoring of teachers is a significant factor contributing to poor academic achievement. Nwankwo (2020) noted that effective monitoring minimizes student behavioral problems, thereby allowing more time to be devoted to teaching and learning.

A study by Persson, Kristina, and (2025) examined the influence of Principals instructional leadership on student achievement in Sweden. Employing longitudinal research design, the study conceptualized instructional leadership to include key controlling function elements such as overseeing instructional programs, monitoring teaching, and ensuring alignment of school goals with classroom practices. Findings revealed that continuous monitoring and evaluation of teaching practices enhanced consistency in instruction, which contributed to improved learner outcomes.

While the study provide empirical evidence from Sweden context, it relied heavily on existing datasets, which limited the ability to capture detailed context specific information on how principals implement controlling practices such as monitoring and evaluation. The study also dwelt majorly on quantitative methods that could not provide deeper insights into how controlling function influencing students' academic achievement. The current study employed both qualitative and quantitative methods in data collection and analysis.

A study by Hallinger and Heck (2020) in the United States examined the relationship between instructional leadership practices and student achievement using quantitative survey data. The study found that principals who actively monitored instruction, used achievement data, and provided feedback significantly improved student academic outcomes. The findings emphasized that controlling practices enhance instructional quality by ensuring alignment between teaching activities and curriculum goals.

Although the study provides strong empirical evidence linking leadership to achievement, it conceptualizes controlling broadly within instructional leadership without isolating it as a distinct managerial function. Methodologically, it relies heavily on structured quantitative surveys, limiting deeper understanding of how controlling is practically implemented in schools. Contextually, the findings are situated in a highly resourced education system, reducing applicability to developing contexts such as Kenya. Theoretically, the study is grounded mainly in instructional leadership theory, without integrating classical management theories such as Fayol's Administrative Theory, which would better explain controlling as a systematic managerial function.

Robinson (2021) in New Zealand investigated leadership practices influencing student outcomes using a mixed-methods approach. The study revealed that leadership actions such as monitoring instruction, evaluating teaching quality, and providing feedback had a strong positive influence on student achievement through improved teacher effectiveness and engagement. While the study highlights the importance of leadership practices, it does not disaggregate the controlling function into its core components such as standard setting and corrective action. Methodologically, the study emphasizes general leadership behaviors rather than specific control

mechanisms. Conceptually, controlling is subsumed under broader leadership categories, making its independent contribution unclear.

In Anambra State in Onitsha North, Nigeria, Enwezor and Nzeri (2025) examined the relationship between the monitoring processes of the teachers and the academic achievement of the students. The study involved 260 participants who completed a self-administered questionnaire whose research method is correlated. Findings revealed that management of tabs on the behavior, attendance, and academic achievement of the students had a positive and significant influence on the end result of the grades of students. Teachers monitoring achievement of students improve their conduct, attendance and achievement in school.

The research although found that monitoring procedures of the teachers were significantly influencing the academic achievement of students, it largely involved classroom level of monitoring. The study did not consider monitoring as an administrative task of school leadership or research on the role of school administrators in monitoring instructional processes. To address this gap in knowledge, the current study considers monitoring by principals as a role of the administration in the academic achievement of students.

Kwasi (2021) investigated the impacts of school monitoring on the student grades of junior high school students at the North Municipality of Ghana. The findings were that the relationship between monitoring and the grades of the students was significantly correlated. The findings of the study that regular evaluation was not a part of the study were also identified to impede the ability of teachers to give students a regular and prompt feedback on their achievement. However, this survey is not only about establishing how frequently teachers are monitored and how they are engaged in terms of the administration of tests, but about examining

how school principals are engaged in terms of monitoring activities such as physical lesson observation; monitoring student discipline and classroom visitation.

Based on the example of Cornerstone Leadership Academy, Nabea (2022) examined the impact of assessment and monitoring on the academic achievement of the students in the private senior school of Tanzania, which is located at the elite level. Descriptive research design was adopted for the study. Data was collected by use of questionnaires. Based on the findings of the study, the ability to improve the academic achievement largely relies on effective monitoring and assessment frameworks. The study continued to indicate that assessment and monitoring processes assist in the education process by identifying issues concerning the instruction and school achievement in general. The observed beneficial effect of monitoring and assessment on the academic achievement of the students may have been missed by the study due to its descriptive nature and over-dependence on the information gathered through questionnaires as opposed to the fact that it identified that monitoring and assessment had a positive influence on student learning outcomes. To close this knowledge gap, this study employed a mixed approach to examine the connection that exists between administrative role and the academic achievement of students.

Michael (2022) researched on the issue by observing the results of various management practices in the public high schools in the Yumbe District, Northern Uganda in relation to their impact on grades of students. The mixed-methods cross-sectional survey methodology of the study involved selecting individuals that were surveyed and interviewed. To enhance the achievement of students in school it was revealed that effective control systems are required. To enhance the achievement of kids in school, proper methods of control are needed. The study found that the control can be achieved by setting and applying achievement standards, internal

policies, and applying control measures in key aspects to the teaching and learning aspect, staff welfare, safety and security, financial management, and instructional supervision in the public senior schools. Although the proposed study examined the same thing through the perspective of principals in Uganda, the current study examined it through the perspective of Kenyan principals and the direct relationship between the control functions of principals and academic progress of students.

Ochieng and Karina (2024) examined the influence of supervision of principals over instructional assessment and their effects on the outcomes of instructions and student achievement in Kenya. The research used the philosophy of result-based management as the blue print. In the investigation, the use of descriptive survey design was applied. The data were collected through surveys and predetermined interviews. In the results, it was revealed that monitoring can be used in enhancing the attendance of teachers and the preparation of their lessons. Timely feedback on their classroom achievement can help teachers to cover more ground in their lessons and improve their professional development. The study did not examine the role of principals in monitoring instruction in relation to student academic achievement, but it addressed them. However, this study was examining the relationship between academic achievement of students and the number of times principals visit classes to monitor their progress in classes.

Kinyua (2025) in Igembe North Sub-County; Meru County, Kenya investigated the influence of principals' instructional supervision on students' academic achievement in public senior schools. The study focused on examining supervisory techniques used by principals, identifying factors influencing academic achievement, assessing teachers' perceptions of instructional supervision, and exploring challenges faced by principals in executing their

supervisory responsibilities. It was guided by the Psychological Theory of Supervision, which advocates for supportive and developmental approaches to enhance teacher effectiveness.

Employing a concurrent triangulation mixed-method design, the study integrated both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The population included principals, teachers, and Form Four students from all public senior schools in the sub-county. The findings indicated a statistically significant relationship between principals' instructional supervisory practices and student academic achievement, suggesting that effective supervision contributes positively to learning outcomes. Despite its contributions, the study has some limitations. Its focus on a single sub-county limits the generalizability of the findings to other contexts, such as Nyandarua County. Moreover, reliance on self-reported data may have introduced response bias.

2.3.4 Principals Directing Function and Student Academic Achievement.

Directing is a critical administrative function that focuses on guiding, supervising, motivating and leading employees towards the achievement of organizational goals. Directing converts plans, structures and resources into meaningful action thus it serves as a link between planning and execution, ensuring that organizational strategies are carried out effectively through the efforts of people (Fleming and Kowalsky 2025) .Robbins and Coulter (2021) argues that directing focuses on influencing human behavior to ensure that organizational goals are achieved through coordinated efforts. Fleming and Kowalsky (2025) conceptualize directing as the implementation phase of management where organizational plans are executed through established structures to achieve institutional goals.

Abdallah and Alkaabi (2023) conducted a stringent analysis of the induction program effectiveness in improving the achievement levels of students and the pedagogical practices of

the new teachers in numerous countries. The data indicated a positive correlation between induction programs and the learning outcomes of the student. Findings indicated that such programs enhanced the academic achievement of students by enhancing the self-esteem of the teachers, their classroom management skills and also their instructional delivery. Although the study did discover that induction program had a positive impact on student achievement, it also investigated only induction programs and not the bigger administrative processes.

Mogea (2022) conducted research on student achievement in East Ratahan schools of the public elementary schools of Massachusetts and related it to principal academic supervision and teacher teaching achievement. The research design employed in the study was a quantitative post-event research. A principal supervising the course work of students was found to have significantly improved their academic achievement. In this study, principal supervision, teacher achievement, and student success were not defined causally as it was ex-post facto-based research.

In a research by Amadi (2023) the effects of communication on the academic achievement of students in senior schools in River state, Nigeria, was studied. Data in the study was also gathered through a descriptive survey method, which entailed distribution of questionnaires to the teachers and the principals. It was found that clear instructions, good relationship amongst school stakeholders, and good teacher-student relationships are all part of effective communication that result in greater student achievement in the classroom. The study is based on self-reported information, which could have been biased, although the factual evidence gathered by the research supports the assumption that communication plays an important role in the academic achievement of students.

A study in the Muhanga district of Rwanda in public schools found that there was a correlation between instructional supervision practices and the learners in history classes (Livingstone and Andala, 2023). The researchers discovered more favorable supervision methods in the schools achieved higher achievement on history tests, and also improvement in attendance and graduation rates. The research was based on document analysis and questionnaires that might not have been the most appropriate means of getting the breadth and depth of supervision.

Dindia and Mbirithi (2025) studied elementary schools in the Mombasa County, Kenya, to determine the extent to which teacher motivation can impact the grade of the kids. The mixed-methods embedded design was employed in the study, 109 educators (including 10 principals) took part in the study by being surveyed through semi-structured questionnaires, and face-to-face interviews. The findings of the study positively associated the academic achievement of students with the level of motivation by the teachers. Intrinsically motivated teachers are more committed to their job, practice more effective classroom teaching methods and more engaged with their students, which translate to higher student achievement.

2.3.5 Challenges Encountered by Principals in Enhancing Students' Academic Achievement

Students' academic achievement can be affected by a combination of various factors, namely government policy based challenges, teachers' attitude and parental support which may result in better or poor achievement. Baloyi (2020) investigated the achievement of rural children in South Africa in the Ga Sekgopo Village, which belongs to the Limpopo Province, when subjected to socioeconomic influences. A qualitative research method was employed in this study to unravel the truth behind it. The in-depth interviews were used to collect data. The outcomes revealed that some items influence education, such as socioeconomic status, inappropriate

facilities, insignificant parental involvement in the education of their children, the proliferation of HIV/AIDS, poor services by the government, and poor implementation of policies. The gap in information that this research sought to close regarding the situation in the public senior schools in Kipipiri Sub-County was that it failed to establish which of these is the most challenging to the administrators.

Adeoye and Akinnubi (2023) conducted a study in Nigerian public senior schools to identify the difficulties of transformative leadership styles of principals. The findings revealed that implementing a transformational leadership style has several barriers despite the fact that it may increase academic achievement. These may include, among others, cases where the stakeholders and educators are opposed to change, resources are limited, professional growth opportunities are limited, and community and parental expectations are in conflict with each other. The current study will seek to cover some of the administrative tasks whereas the earlier study was more or less on the subject of leadership style nonetheless it also offers some insight on leadership challenges. Additionally limiting the scope of generalizability of the study is the fact that the research is founded on the results of the investigation in Nigeria, which has its specific dynamics in the educational policy and school management.

Simwata (2022) examined the challenges that principals in the Ndhiwa Sub County face in their attempts to improve the academic achievement of their students as a result of policies that the government has introduced to them. The grounded theory informed the investigation. The findings demonstrated that principals are forced to prioritize administrative compliance over instructional development because their administrative discretion was diminished because of the bureaucracy and high compliance demands. The center of attention was nothing but a problem. This research is aimed at determining the numerous challenges faced by school administrators in

the process of performing their duties as administrators as well as how these challenges influence the achievement of students in school.

2.3.6 Strategies Adopted by School Principals to Enhance Students' academic Achievement.

The role of the principal as a leader in the school is critical towards improving the achievement of the teachers and students. However, the question remains as to what types of leadership methods or behaviors are best likely to improve student achievement and teacher achievement.

The topic of interest to Gordon and Hart (2022) was the way in which the administrators of urban schools in the US with high levels of student poverty could enhance the academic achievement of their students. The authors of the study discovered that effective administrators are characterized by the following: laying out of specific academic goals, an emphasis of instructional leadership, strategic management of school resources, positive school climate, and the inclusion of all parties involved. To these strategies, principals can address the challenges affecting the underfunded schools and concentrate on learning among students. Although the study offers some useful information about good leadership, it cannot be generalized to Kenya, a third-world country with its own range of problems due to relying on urban schools in the established country of the United States.

The authors of the research Ahmad, Bibi, and Imran (2023) also examined the relationship between the intrinsic motivation of teachers and the achievement of their students in the Pakistani high schools of the Karachi District. In addition, the results indicate that teacher motivation depends on professional development as a significant determinant that affects student achievements and classroom achievement. The studies provide a clear correlation between the

wish of the teachers to engage in professional development and the outcomes of their students in the classroom, which contributes to the existing literature on the educational management. Nevertheless, more in-depth causal associations were not researched, as the research was much more emphasized on descriptive statistics. A descriptive correlational research strategy will enable researchers working on the project to find the connection between the variables of the study.

The study, published in 2022, was based on observation, interviews, and questionnaires as the tools of choice of the researcher used to collect data; the study was a qualitative descriptive one, as it aimed at improving the achievement of the students in the classroom. The study results support the fact that the school environment promoting and facilitating professional growth and instructional supervision of teachers facilitated by administrators actively participating in those activities are related to high student achievement. Though the underpinning of the study was the leadership strategies of enhancing senior school education, it is too extensive and does not break down the administrative actions into the specific impacts of the administrative actions on the grades of students. This study will fill that gap by breaking down the administrative roles of principals each by each and make correlations between them and the academic success of students.

Bagine (2022) examined the effects of management styles by principals on the academic achievement of students in the public high schools in Meru County. The descriptive survey form of the study involved questionnaires, which were sent to school administrators and principals. These findings indicated that improved achievement on national exams (in terms of average marks) was associated with improved application of such tactics as planning, supervision, and resource management. Using self-reported data of principals leads to the issue of bias of

responses, though it helps to learn more about the roles of principals in the academic achievement of students. Moreover, the research lacked adequate qualitative knowledge to enlighten the effects of management techniques on the learning outcomes. To eliminate these limitations, this research will integrate qualitative and quantitative techniques to offer more credible findings.

2.4 Summary of literature reviewed and the knowledge gap

The reviewed literature has demonstrated that the administrative role of principals has a connection with the academic achievement of students. These include effective timetable planning financial planning, monitoring and evaluation instructional, supervision, goal setting, delegation of duties among others. Through this literature, it has been established that school administrators, principals have to strategize to see that the students fulfill their academic aspirations and ambitions despite the challenges.

UNESCO (2021) highlights that the effective utilization of teaching time helps to achieve better learning, especially in cases when the schedule is developed based on the cognitive rhythms of students and the difficulty of the material to be covered. According to a study by Miskell (2020) in New York State, it was found that there is a positive correlation between strategic planning and student academic achievement. In a study in the United States by Sides and Cuevas (2020), the authors indicated that students who proactively made certain goals related to academic achievements showed remarkable achievement advances.

A research conducted by Michael (2022) in Uganda put in place that effective control mechanisms are needed to improve the academic achievement of students. In Tanzania, Nabea (2022) emphasized that proper application of monitoring and evaluation structures contributes largely to improvement of academic achievement. In Rwanda, Livingstone and Andala (2023)

concur on the importance of supervisory practices like classroom observation, feedback, and teacher guidance and better student results like examination results and learner engagement. Waweru and Gathara (2020) suggest that forecasting resource needs is more likely to help schools to provide regular instructional resources and minimize learning breaks. According to Nwonkwo and Dede (2024) in Rivers State, Nigeria, schools that had proper timetables showed students high academic achievement.

Abdu and Alhassan (2022) agree by indicating that an instructional resources-focused financial planning like learning materials, digital tools, and teacher professional development have a big positive impact on the student academic achievement. Waweru and Gathara (2020) state that schools in which the resources required are predicted will tend to have more consistent instructional materials and, as a result, minimize learning disruptions. Another study that was conducted by Kimani and Ochieng (2023) in their research cited that schools with collaborative management structure are more efficient and responsive to the academic needs.

Despite this substantial body of evidence, several knowledge gaps remain. Most of the reviewed studies have examined administrative functions in isolation without providing a comprehensive analysis of how these functions collectively influence student academic achievement within a single framework. A significant proportion of the studies have been conducted outside Kenya, particularly in Western and other African contexts, thereby limiting their direct applicability to the Kenyan education system, which operates under unique policies. Although a few studies have been conducted in Kenya, they have not specifically focused on the combined influence of principals' administrative functions on student academic achievement using the specific variables addressed in the current study.

Furthermore, there is a contextual and geographical gap, as no known study has been conducted in Kipipiri Sub-County, Nyandarua County, to examine how principals' administrative functions influence student academic achievement. Given the persistent variations in academic achievement in the region, it is unclear how administrative practices such as organizing, planning, supervision, and control contribute to these outcomes. It is against this background that this study seeks to investigate influence of principals' administrative functions on student academic achievement in public senior schools in Kipipiri Sub-County, Nyandarua County, Kenya.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes research methodology that was employed in the research. It pays attention to research design, study place, target population, sample and sampling method, data collection instruments, piloting, data collection methods, data analysis methods and logistical and ethical issues.

3.2 Research Design

According to Creswell (2023), research design refers to the overall plan or strategy that guides the procedure for collecting analyzing and interpreting data in a research study. The study adopted convergent design under mixed method research approach. This approach involves collecting both qualitative and quantitative data concurrently during the same phase of research process, analyzing data separately and then merge the results during interpretation study (Creswell & Plano Clark 2023). This approach was considered appropriate because it enabled the researcher to examine the statistical relationship between principals' administrative functions and students' academic achievement and also to gain in depth insights into how these functions are practiced within schools.

For quantitative method, the study adopted a cross-sectional survey design to enable the researcher describe the variable as they naturally occur, and determine the strength and direction of the relationship between the variables (Johnson & Larry, 2020)For the qualitative component, the researcher adopted phenomenology research design. Trophe and Oriedo (2024) describe phenomenology as an approach that focuses on exploring and understanding individuals lived experiences as expressed by the participants themselves.

3.3 Study Locale

This study was carried out in Kipipiri Sub-County, Nyandarua County, one of the counties located in central part of Kenya. Kipipiri Sub-County has a total population 93,855 with an average household size of 4 (KNBS 2019). The sub-county lies along the eastern part of Nyandarua County. The Sub-County has 15 public senior schools and 2 private senior schools distributed across both rural and semi-urban setting. Like other Sub-Counties in Nyandarua County, schools in Kipipiri record varied levels of academic achievement in the KCSE examinations. The variation provided a suitable environment for examining how principals' administrative functions can significantly influence students' academic outcome.

In many schools within Kipipiri Sub-County administrative functions are implemented under varying conditions such as limited resources, teacher shortages and infrastructural challenges. These disparities created a situation where some schools perform relatively well while others consistently registered low academic achievement. This inconsistency suggests possible gaps in how school principals executed their administrative roles. The rural nature of the sub-county also reflected the conditions under which many Kenyan public senior schools operate, making the findings of the study more relevant for improving school leadership and academic achievement in similar contexts.

3.4 Target population of the study

The target population refers to a specific subset or segment within the larger population that is the primary focus of a study (Willie 2023). The research was carried out in public senior schools in Kipipiri Sub-County which had a total of 15 public senior schools, 15 school principals, 214 teachers, 1012 form four students, 1 Sub- County Director of Teachers Service

Commission and 1 Sub-County quality assurance and standards officer. (Kipipiri Sub-County Education Office)

3.5 Sampling procedures and Sample size

Since the research used a mixed approach, both probability and non-probability sampling techniques were employed in the study.

3.5.1 Sampling of Schools

Due to the small number of public senior schools in Kipipiri Sub- County all the 15 public senior schools, representing 100% of all public senior schools, were purposively included in the study. Cohen, Manion and Marrison (2007) citing Krejeie and Morgan (1970) affirm that the researcher may use the whole population rather than a sample in the situation where the population is small.

3.5.2 Sampling of principals

Principals as the heads of schools carry out both administrative work and teaching. In this study, the principals were automatically included because they are administrators charged with performing the administrative functions thus they play important role in ensuring that students realize their academic potential. Every school that had been sampled contributed one principal, since each school has one principal who is best placed to respond to questions on administrative functions, thereby making a total of 15 principals representing 100% of the principals of public senior schools was included in the study.

3.5.3 Sampling of Teachers.

Teachers play a key role in teaching and learning processes which greatly influence student academic achievement. They also work together with the principals in implementing administrative functions and instructional procedures, teachers thus they are expected to provide feedback to support and affirm the comments of the principals. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) define a typical sample size as ten to thirty percent of population of interest. Out of the 214 teachers, 69 of them were sampled to participate in the study, representing 30% of teachers. The sampling of the teachers was done through stratified random sampling, with special attention being taken to make sure that various departments were represented sufficiently. The teachers were grouped by the departments that are language, humanities and science departments, after a simple random sample approach was adopted to pick the participants in each stratum.

3.5.4 Sampling of TSC SCD and SQASO

Since a Sub-County has only one TSC SCD and one SQASO, both officers were purposively included in the research, due to their supervisory capacity in the school administration and academics achievement in the sub-county.

3.5.5 Sampling of students

The expected population of form four students in the 15 public schools within Kipipiri Sub-County is 1012 students. The sample size for the students was determined using Yamane (1967) formula, which is appropriate for finite populations:

$$n = N / (1 + Ne2)$$

Where:

n = sample size

N = total population (in this case, 1012)

e = margin of error (at 95%, e=0.05)

The sample size was computed as follows:

$n = N / (1 + Ne2)$

$n = 1012/ (1 + 1012 \times (0.05)2$

$n = 1012/ (1 + 1012 \times 0.0025)$

$n = 1012/ (1 +2.53)$

$n = 1012/ 3.53$

n = 287 students

Simple random sampling was used to sample form four students to give them equal chances of participation. Therefore, 19 students were selected from each school. To ensure random selection, nineteen small pieces of paper labeled “Agree” and the rest labeled “Disagree” were prepared, folded, and mixed. Each Student from form four then picked one piece of paper at random. Those who selected a piece labeled “Agree” were included in the study sample.

Table 1

Sampling Matrix

Category	Target Population	Sampling technique	Actual sample	Percentage
Schools	15	Automatic inclusion	15	100%
TSC SCD	1	Automatic inclusion	1	100%

SQASO	1	Automatic inclusion	1	100%
Principals	15	automatic inclusion	15	100%
Teachers	214	Stratified random sampling	69	30%
Students	1012	Stratified random sampling	287	28%
Total	**1258**		**383**	

Source: Kipipiri Sub-County Education Office, 2026

3.6 Description of Data Collection Instruments

In this study the researcher used questionnaire, interview guide and document analysis to collect data from the respondents.

3.6.1 Teachers Questionnaires

Primary data was collected through the questionnaires to be filled by the teachers. The questionnaires were used as they enabled the gathering of large volumes of data at low costs, as well as a diverse group of individuals, spread across a wide geographical location. Using questionnaires, respondents can take their time to reflect on the issues and give them a serious reply (Kothari, 2014).

The teachers were asked to fill in open-ended and closed-ended questions. Open-ended questions allowed teachers to share their views in a more open way, and close-ended questions will provide alternatives to choose from. The questionnaire consisted of eight parts. The demographics of the respondents was addressed in Section A, planning function of principals and students' academic achievement in Section B, organizing role of principals and their student academic progressions in Section C, the role of principals in ensuring order in Section D and directing role of principal was addressed in section E. Student academic achievement was

handled in section F. Section G addressed the challenges that administrators encounter when attempting to increase the academic achievement of their students. The last section H ended with remedies of the issues principals encounter when attempting to improve the academic achievement of their students. (Ref. Appendix ii) pg. 155

3.6.2 Principals Interview guide.

In the case of the principals, an interview guide was developed as a semi-structured one. The interview guide yielded rich and extensive data that would not otherwise be received through surveys, as replies can be questioned and explained. The open-ended questions were formulated in order to meet the objectives of the study. The information was obtained through in-depth interviews with principals regarding their personal background, the achievement of students, their duties, challenges they face, and how they can be able to enhance the achievement of kids in academic areas.

The guide had eight sections, A to H. Section A explored the background information and planning function of principals and students' academic achievement in Section B, organizing role of principals and their student academic progressions in Section C, directing role of principal was addressed in section D and the role of principals in ensuring order in Section E. Section F addressed the challenges that administrators encounter when attempting to enhance the academic achievement of their students. Strategies adopted by principals in order to enhance students' academic achievement were handled in section G. The last section H ended with recommendations (Ref. Appendix iii) pg. 162

3.6.3 TSC SCD Interview Guide

To collect the qualitative data of the TSC SCD, a semi-structured interview guide was developed that aligned with the study topics. The interview guide was used to get comprehensive

data regarding the administrative practices of principals and how they affect the academic achievement of the students. The guide had eight sections, A to H. Section A explored the background information and planning function of principals and students' academic achievement in Section B, organizing role of principals and their student academic progressions in Section C, directing role of principal was addressed in section D and the role of principals in ensuring order in Section E. Section F addressed the challenges that administrators encounter when attempting to enhance the academic achievement of their students. Strategies adopted by principals in order to enhance students' academic achievement were handled in section G. The last section H ended with recommendations. (Ref. Appendix iv) pg. 164

3.6.4 SQASO Questionnaire

An open ended questionnaire was designed in alignment with the research questions to collect qualitative data from the SQASO. The purpose of questionnaire was to collect in-depth information regarding how principals' administrative functions influence student academic achievement. The questionnaire consisted of two sections; A and B. Section A consisted of demographic information items. Section B consisted of list of questions that revolved around achievement of students, practice of administrative functions, challenges faced by principal, and plans to enhance students' academic achievement. (Ref. Appendix V).

3.6.5 Student Questionnaire

The form four students were asked to fill in open-ended and closed-ended questions. The questionnaire consisted of six parts. The demographics of the respondents was addressed in Section A, planning function of principals and students' academic achievement in Section B, organizing role of principals and their student academic progressions in Section C, directing function of principals in Section D and controlling function in section E. Section F dealt with open-ended question on students perception and challenges that administrators encounter when attempting to improve the academic achievement of their students. (Ref. Appendix vi) pg. 169

3.6.6 Document Analysis guide

KCSE results for the past five years and student progress report was analyzed. This involved analysis of individual schools KCSE results and Sub-County KCSE results between the years 2021 and 2025. Also grade attainment and university entry throughout the five years was analyzed (Ref. Appendix vii) pg. 170

3.7 Validity, Pilot Testing and Reliability of Research Instruments

This section presents discussion on the validity, piloting test, and the internal coherence of the study tools. Ensuring reliability and validity in the study is important in ensuring the results truly reflect the problem statement of the study.

3.7.1 Validity of Instruments

When a research tool is a good measure of the constructs, which it purports to measure, then we state that the research tool is valid (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). According to Ngeno (2022), content validity refers to the measure of the ability of a research instrument to describe and reflect all the characteristics of a subject it is designed to test. To ensure content validity, the

data collection instruments were scrutinized by experts from the department .It was done beforehand to ensure that there was no errors in the questionnaire and ensure that its contents are authentic. The researcher then revised the findings on their suitability, understandability and thoroughness in regard to the objectives addressed by carrying out a thorough analysis.

The supervisors of the research and the educational research specialists previewed the instruments to make sure that they were clear, relevant and applicable in the measurement of the study variables; a process that determines the face validity of the instruments.

3.7.2 Pilot Testing of Research Instruments

The research instruments were subjected to pilot testing to determine their reliability and validity. The research instruments were administered to respondents from two schools outside the study area that had similar characteristics as the target population. These schools were for pilot testing only and did not participate in the main study.in the pilot schools, two principals were interviewed using the instruments before they were used to collect data. Questionnaires were administered to ten teachers and twenty students from the two schools. The returned instruments were used to check spelling mistakes, layout, format, ambiguous questions and typographical errors. The instruments were then revised and adjusted accordingly.

3.7.3 Reliability of Research Instruments

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) argue that a test-retest procedure is reliable when the research instruments are able to consistently measure the variables. Test-retest procedure was used to establish the reliability of the research instruments. According to Creswell & Creswell (2023), reliability is the ability of instruments to produce consistent and stable results under

comparable circumstances. Reliability coefficient was determined by using Cronbach alpha, and tested at 0.7 level of coefficient. Reliability test was replicated with the instruments being investigated and refined whereby in case the reliability coefficient is shown to be below acceptable level of 0.7.

Included in the tools were respondents in schools that share similarities with the subjects of the research, but were not be part of the main study. The level of reliability of 0.7 and above was considered satisfactory when examining the responses based on SPSS and Cronbach alpha coefficient. Pilot interview was carried out to ascertain the reliability of interview guide. Also, to make the interview questions more relevant and intelligible, expert assessment was applied.

The teachers' questionnaire was pilot-tested on five teachers, while the students' questionnaire was separately pilot-tested on ten students to establish the reliability of each instrument. The data obtained from the pilot test were analyzed using SPSS, and Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated for each instrument.

Table 2:Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficients for the Teacher Questionnaire

Construct	Items	Cronbach's α
Planning	10	.90
Organizing	10	.86
Controlling	10	.86
Directing	10	.92
Student Academic Achievement	5	.88
Challenges	9	.92
Strategies	9	.93
All items combined	63	.92

Source: *Researcher, 2026*

All seven constructs in the teacher questionnaire returned alpha coefficients above the .70 threshold, ranging from .86 for organizing and controlling to .93 for strategies, and the combined

63-item scale returned an alpha of .92. These figures indicate that the teacher instrument measured each construct with a high degree of internal consistency and that the items within each section were coherently related to one another.

Table 3:Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficients for the Student Questionnaire

Construct	Items	n	Cronbach's α
Planning	5		.85
Organizing	5		.84
Directing	5		.86
Controlling	5		.87
Student Academic Achievement	5		.85
All items combined	25		.91

Source: *Researcher, 2026*

Among the student subscales, planning (α = .85), organizing (α = .84), directing (α = .86), controlling (α = .87), and student academic achievement (α = .85) all met the .70 benchmark, and the full 25-item scale returned a strong alpha of .91.

3.7.4 Trustworthiness of Qualitative Instruments

Credibility, dependability, conformity and transferability approach was adopted to guarantee the trustworthiness of the research instruments. The researchers will enhance credibility through expert reviews, piloting, triangulation of data sources, and member checks, giving participants opportunity to check and verify the accuracy of their responses. Support for dependability was maintained through an audit trail that keeps a record of all the stages of data collection, coding, and analysis. Conformability was achieved through peer debriefing, which involves cross-checking independently derived codes against each other to minimize researcher bias, while the thick descriptions of context, participants, and procedures afforded by transferability will allow judgments about the applicability of findings to similar settings. These

together ensure that these instruments yield reliable, valid, and contextually meaningful data for the study.

3.8 Description of Data Collection Procedures

Clearance was obtained from the Postgraduate Studies in Education department at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa and an introductory letter was presented prior to any further action being taken. The researcher applied to NACOSTI to obtain a research authorization in accordance with the set protocol. This was followed by booking appointments with various respondents. Teachers were supplied with questionnaires to complete fully with adequate time provided. The questionnaires were then collected immediately. Researcher interviewed the selected principals using interview guide and took note of their observations with their consent. KCSE results from school records and Sub-County records were examined to obtain data about academic achievement of students

3.9 Description of Data Analysis Procedures.

Data in this study was analyzed using quantitative and qualitative methods. Analysis of data involves systematic organizing, summarizing, and scrutinizing responses obtained from respondents, whether in text format (qualitative data) or numbers (quantitative data). Quantitative data analysis procedures entailed data editing, coding, and entering in the Statistical Package for Social Sciences SPSS (Version 27). The entered data in SPSS was then analyzed using descriptive statistics: means, percentages, and frequencies.

Analyzed data was then presented in frequency tables and bar graphs. The descriptive statistics enabled the researcher to describe the influence of principal administrative functions on student academic achievement in Kipipiri Sub-County. To investigate relationships and test hypotheses, inferential statistics were used. Regression analysis was conducted using ANOVA to

determine the extent to which administrative functions influence student academic achievement in public senior schools. The inferential statistics was presented as variance, standard deviation, and P-value

The qualitative data obtained from open-ended questions, interview guide, and document analysis guide was summarized in themes based on research questions. The researcher organized and prepared data from transcribes and field notes for analysis. Having read through the data, the researcher coded the data to generate themes and thick descriptions in the form of powerful quotes. Qualitative data through interview guides was presented through narratives based on direct quotations.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

The researcher observed all the existing ethical standards governing research in education during the research. The researcher was cleared by the Department Post Graduate Studies in Education department of Catholic University of Eastern Africa and issued with a research introduction letter. The researcher then obtained research license from National Council for Science Technology & Innovation (NACOSTI).the researcher obtained research authorization from the County Director of Education and County Commissioner. Subsequently, the researcher obtained permission and notification to research from Kipipiri Sub- County Education. The researcher then proceeded to respective schools for data collection.

The researcher sought consent from the participants to ensure that they participated in the study freely without coercion. In respect to this, the researcher didn't offer any incentive whatsoever that would have encouraged participants to participate in the study. For the participants to give informed consent and maximize freedom of participation, a briefing regarding study objectives, rationale, and confidentiality of opinion was confirmed. The

researcher also informed the participants how the findings would be used so that they make an informed decision whether they were to participate or not including the option to withdraw.

To ensure confidentiality and anonymity, students and teachers selected were requested not to disclose their identities in the questionnaires. Respondents were assured that their responses would be used solely for the study. Also, the researcher didn't record the names of respondents on the data collection sheets but use numbers. The researcher ensured that the information given by participants was accurate and used it in analysis, interpretation, and reporting only. The researcher put mechanisms in place to curb plagiarism by ensuring that all the documents and scholarly work referred to in-text were duly acknowledged. Participants were offered the opportunity to receive the report on the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION, AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents, analyzes, interprets and discusses the findings of the study on the influence of principals' administrative functions on student academic achievement in public senior schools in Kipipiri Sub-County, Nyandarua County, Kenya. The study examined four administrative functions: planning, organizing, directing and controlling. It also examined the challenges principals face in enhancing student academic achievement and the strategies adopted to address these challenges.

4.2 Research Instruments Return Rate

The researcher interviewed fifteen principals one Teachers Service commission Sub-County Director. Three sets of questionnaires were distributed among 69 teachers, 287 students and 1 Sub-County Quality Assurance and Standards Officer. Although the schools accepted the research to be done, they were affected by the schools strike. The variation in the number of valid responses for individual questionnaire items resulted from occasional item non-response rather than incomplete questionnaires.

Table 4

Return Rate of Research Instruments

Instruments	Sample	Returned	Percentage
Questionnaire for Teachers	69	69	100.0%
Questionnaire for students	287	241	83.7%
Interview Guide for principals	15	15	100.0%
Sub- County Quality Assurance and Standards Officer	1	1	100.0%

Interview Guide for Education Division Manager	1	1	100.0%
Document Analysis Guide	15	15	100.0%

Source: ***Field Data, 2026***

Table 4 demonstrates that the study achieved a high return for all the research instruments administered to the respondents. Sixty nine (100.0%) of the questionnaires that were given to teachers were successfully returned. Similarly all the 15(100.0%) principals were available for interview. Out of the 287 questionnaires issued to students only 241(83.7%) were returned. While the entire 15 document analysis guide were successfully performed and completed. The interview with Teachers Service Commission Sub- County Director and SQASO were both successful presenting (100.0%) return rate. The overall high return rate suggests that the respondents were cooperative and eager to take part in the survey, which improves the validity and dependability of the information gathered. The researcher's in-depth follow-up, efficient scheduling, and concise explanation of the study's goal to the participants may also have contributed to the high response rate.

The findings imply that the data collected were adequate for meaningful analysis and valid generalization of the study findings. A response rate of 50% is sufficient for analysis, 60% is good, and 70% and more is regarded as very good for research purposes, according to Mugenda and Mugenda (2019). Similarly, Kothari (2019) notes that a high return rate reduces bias and boosts the reliability of study findings. As a result, the high return rates enhanced the quality, precision, and reliability of the research findings.

4.3 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The study gathered the background characteristics of the participants who took part included teachers, students, and school principals, Teachers Service Commission Sub-County Director and Sub-County Quality Assurance and Standards Officer.

4.3.1 Demographic Characteristics of Teacher Respondents

The demographic information for the teachers' questionnaire includes gender, age, and academic qualification, length of teaching, and duration in the current school. The data was analyzed and provided in Table 5.

Table 5

Demographic Characteristics of Teacher Respondents

Variable	Category	n	%
Gender	Male	33	47.8
	Female	36	52.2
Age	20–29 years	50	73.5
	30–39 years	9	13.2
	40–49 years	9	13.2
	50 years and above	0	0.0
Highest academic qualification	Diploma	3	4.8
	Bachelor's degree	53	85.5
	Postgraduate diploma	6	9.7
	Master's degree	0	0.0
	PhD	0	0.0
Teaching experience	1–5 years	28	42.4
	6–10 years	25	37.9
	11–15 years	5	7.6
	16 years and above	8	12.1
Duration in current school	Less than 2 years	18	29.0
	2–5 years	27	43.5
	6–10 years	11	17.7
	Over 10 years	6	9.7

Source: *Researcher, 2026*

Table 5 presents the demographic characteristics of the 69 teacher respondents who participated in the study. In terms of gender, the findings show that the teacher respondents were relatively well balanced, with a slightly higher share of female respondents (52.2%) than male (47.8%). The relatively small difference of 4.4 percentage points indicates that the study obtained views from both male and female teachers without substantial gender imbalance. The fairly distribution suggests that the findings were not overwhelmingly shaped by the experiences of one gender group.

With regard to age, the findings indicate that great majority of the teachers, close to three-quarters, were in the youngest age band of 20 to 29 years (73.5%), while 13.2% were aged 30-39 years and another 13.2% were aged 40-49 years and none of the respondents were aged 50years or above, which points to a comparatively young teaching workforce in the sampled schools. This distribution suggests that most teachers in the sampled senior schools were relatively young professionals. The dominance of teachers aged 20–29 years may be associated with the increasing recruitment of recently qualified teachers into the education sector and the staffing patterns of the sampled schools.

The majority of teachers had bachelor's degree (85.5%), with a further 9.7% holding a postgraduate diploma; no teacher in the sample held a master's degree or a PhD. The absence of teachers holding Masters or PhD degrees indicates that advanced postgraduate qualifications were not common among teachers in the sampled schools. The small proportion of diploma holders indicates that most respondents had progressed beyond diploma level. In terms of experience, (42.4% with 1–5 years and 37.9% with 6–10 years), and a similar pattern held for time spent in the current school, where 72.5% of teachers had been at their present school for five years or less. These figures suggest that most teacher respondents possessed the academic

qualifications necessary for teaching in senior schools, although the teaching workforce was predominantly young and moderately experienced. This is in consistent with Darling-Hammond (2017), who highlights that teacher qualification has a major influence on instructional quality and learner accomplishment.

4.3.2 Demographic Characteristics of principals

Table 6 presents the demographic characteristics of the 15 principals who participated in the study. The characteristics considered were gender, age, highest academic qualification, and teaching experience. These characteristics are important in understanding the professional background of the principals and the extent to which they were positioned to provide informed responses concerning the influence of principals' administrative functions on student academic achievement in public senior schools in Kipipiri Sub-County.

Table 6

Demographic Characteristics of Principals

Variable	Category	n	%
Gender	Male	9	60.8
	Female	6	40.2
Age	31–40 years	0	00.0
	41–50 years	3	20.0
	50 years and above	12	80.0
Highest academic qualification	Diploma	0	00.0
	Bachelor's degree	10	66.7
	Postgraduate diploma	0	33.3
	Master's degree	5	0.0
	PhD	0	0.0
Teaching experience	1–5 years	2	13.3
	6–10 years	3	20.0
	11–15 years	6	40.0
	16 years and above	5	26.7

Source: *Researcher, 2026*

Regarding gender, the findings indicate that male respondents constituted the majority, accounting for 60.0% (9), while 40.0% (6) were female. The participation of six female principals provides a substantial female perspective on school administration. This gender profile is consistent with Njogu (2022) who found that school leadership is dominated by male. The findings on age demonstrate that the principals were predominantly mature professionals. The findings on age demonstrate that the principals were predominantly mature professionals. A large majority, 80.0% (12), were aged 50 years and above, while 20.0% (3) were aged between 41 and 50 years. None of the principals were aged between 31 and 40 years. This age profile indicates that school leadership in the sampled public senior schools was largely entrusted to highly mature professionals. The absence of principals below 41 years may suggest that appointment to be principal generally occurs after teachers have accumulated considerable professional experience and demonstrated leadership competence.

In terms of academic qualification the findings show that, 66.7% (10) held Bachelor's degrees, while 33.3% (5) had Master's degrees, indicating that all principals possessed university-level qualifications relevant to school administration. The fact that one-third of the principals had master's degrees demonstrates that a considerable proportion had pursued education beyond the basic university degree. Principals with university and postgraduate education may have greater exposure to theoretical and practical approaches to educational management, which can support their capacity to plan school activities, organize personnel and resources, direct teachers towards institutional goals, and control or monitor curriculum implementation. This interpretation is consistent with Odinga (2025), who emphasized the importance of principals' technical, conceptual and interpersonal skills in influencing academic

performance; suggesting that the capabilities are developed through professional experience and training.

The teaching experience of the principals provides further evidence of their professional maturity. The largest proportion, 40.0% (6), had between 11 and 15 years of teaching experience. This was followed by 26.7% (5) who had 16 years or more of experience, while 20.0% (3) had 6–10 years and only 13.3% (2) had 1–5 years of experience. Consequently, 66.7% of the principals had more than ten years of teaching experience. This indicates that most principals had accumulated substantial experience in the teaching profession before and during their transition into school leadership. This interpretation is consistent with Odinga (2025), who emphasized the importance of principals' technical, conceptual and interpersonal skills in influencing academic performance; suggesting that the capabilities are developed through professional experience and training.

4.3.3 Demographic Characteristics of Students

Table 7 presents the demographic characteristics of students who participated in the study. The characteristics considered were gender, age, year in current school and self- rated academic achievement

Table 7

Demographic Characteristics of Student Respondents

Variable	Category	n	%
Gender	Male	70	29.0
	Female	171	71.0
Age	15–16 years	41	17.0
	17–18 years	167	69.3
	Above 18 years	33	13.7

Variable	Category	n	%
Years in current school	1 year	21	8.8
	2 years	19	7.9
	3 years	19	7.9
	4 years	180	75.3
Self-rated academic achievement	Excellent	34	14.7
	Good	99	42.7
	Average	92	39.7
	Below average	7	3.0

Source: *Researcher, 2026*

Table 7 shows that female students made up 71.0% of the student sample against 29.0% male. The majority of respondents (69.3%) were between 17 and 18 years old, while 17.0% were aged 15-16years and 13.7 % were above 18 years old. The presence of 13.7% of students aged above 18 years suggests that these students may include learners who entered school at an older age, repeated a class or experienced interruptions in schooling. Three-quarters of the students (75.3%) had been enrolled in their current school for the full four years, meaning most respondents were well placed to comment on their principal's administrative practices over an extended period rather than a single term. When asked to rate their own academic achievement, more than half of the students described it as good (42.7%) or excellent (14.7%), just under two-fifths (39.7%) rated it as average, and a small minority (3.0%) rated it as below average.

4.4 Findings According to Research Questions

4.4.1 Influence of Principals' Planning Function on Student Academic Achievement

The first research question asked how principals' planning function influences student academic achievement in public senior schools in Kipipiri Sub-County. Ten planning-related statements were put to teachers and five to students, each rated on a five-point scale ranging

from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Table 8 reports the teachers' ratings and Table 9 the students' ratings.

Table 8

Teachers' Ratings of the Principal's Planning Function

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	M
B1. The principal develops a comprehensive school academic improvement plan annually.	1 (1.5)	3 (4.4)	5 (7.4)	40 (58.8)	19 (27.9)	4.07
B2. The principal sets clear academic performance targets for students.	0 (0.0)	2 (2.9)	7 (10.1)	45 (65.2)	15 (21.7)	4.06
B3. The principal prepares a school calendar that effectively supports teaching and learning.	1 (1.5)	3 (4.4)	5 (7.4)	38 (55.9)	21 (30.9)	4.10
B4. The principal plans adequately for procurement of teaching and learning resources.	2 (2.9)	2 (2.9)	2 (2.9)	49 (71.0)	14 (20.3)	4.03
B5. The principal plans staffing requirements to support effective curriculum implementation.	1 (1.4)	4 (5.8)	6 (8.7)	37 (53.6)	21 (30.4)	4.06
B6. The principal plans student enrolment to ensure effective utilization of school resources.	2 (2.9)	1 (1.4)	6 (8.7)	43 (62.3)	17 (24.6)	4.04
B7. Curriculum implementation is guided by well-developed academic plans.	3 (4.3)	2 (2.9)	7 (10.1)	36 (52.2)	21 (30.4)	4.01
B8. Teachers participate in the preparation of academic plans.	4 (5.8)	3 (4.3)	5 (7.2)	45 (65.2)	12 (17.4)	3.84
B9. School improvement plans are aligned with Ministry of Education policies.	3 (4.3)	3 (4.3)	1 (1.4)	39 (56.5)	23 (33.3)	4.10
B10. Academic plans are regularly reviewed and updated.	1 (1.4)	5 (7.2)	8 (11.6)	40 (58.0)	15 (21.7)	3.91

Key: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral/Undecided, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree. Values in the SD through SA columns are counts, with column percentages in parentheses; M = item mean on the 1–5 scale.

Source: *Researcher (2026)*

According to Table 8's findings, majority of teachers rated the planning function highly, recording an overall mean of 4.02 (SD = 0.62). The highest-rated item concerned School improvement plans that supports teaching and learning, with a mean of 4.10. The lowest-rated item was teachers' participation in preparation of academic plans, with a mean of 3.84.Other planning practices also received favorable ratings. Teachers reported that principals develop annual academic improvement plans (M = 4.07), set academic performance targets (M = 4.06), plan staffing requirements (M = 4.06), plan student enrolment (M = 4.04), procure teaching and

learning resources (M = 4.03), align school improvement plans with Ministry of Education policies (M = 4.10), and regularly review academic plans (M = 3.91).These results demonstrate that planning was a relatively strong administrative function in the sampled schools and that principals in the sampled schools are broadly seen by their staff as competent planners of the academic program.

Table 9

Students' Ratings of the Principal's Planning Function

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	M
B1. The school has clear academic goals that are communicated to students	13 (5.5)	16 (6.8)	9 (3.8)	82 (34.7)	116 (49.2)	4.15
B2. Academic activities are well planned throughout the school year.	5 (2.1)	23 (9.8)	13 (5.6)	96 (41.0)	97 (41.5)	4.10
B3. Learning materials are available when needed.	17 (7.4)	30 (13.0)	14 (6.1)	76 (33.0)	93 (40.4)	3.86
B4. School programs support effective learning.	18 (8.1)	10 (4.5)	19 (8.5)	77 (34.5)	99 (44.4)	4.03
B5. The principal plans activities that help improve students' academic performance.	12 (5.2)	35 (15.2)	7 (3.0)	60 (26.1)	116 (50.4)	4.01

Key: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral/Undecided, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree. Values in the SD through SA columns are counts, with column percentages in parentheses; M = item mean on the 1–5 scale.

Source: *Researcher, 2026*

Students, too, rated planning favorably (grand mean = 4.04, SD = 0.84), again in the "high" band. The item with the strongest agreement was that the school has clear academic goals that are communicated to students (M = 4.15), whereas learning materials are available when needed attracted comparatively more disagreement (M = 3.86), with 20.4% of students disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with that statement. The convergence between the teacher and student ratings on this construct, both clustering just above four on a five-point scale, offers an early indication that planning is a relative strength of school leadership in Kipipiri Sub-County, a pattern examined more formally in the correlation and regression analyses reported later in this chapter.

According to Table 8's and Table 9's findings on principals' planning function (,) planning was a relatively strong administrative practice in the sampled public senior schools in Kipipiri Sub-County. Teachers rated the planning function highly, recording an overall mean of 4.02 (SD = 0.62)**,** while students similarly rated the function highly, with a grand mean of 4.04 (SD = 0.84)**.** The close similarity between the two ratings suggests considerable convergence in the perceptions of teachers and students regarding the extent to which principals engage in effective academic planning. Since teachers are directly involved in implementing school plans while students are the primary beneficiaries of these plans, the agreement between the two groups provides a strong indication that planning practices are visible and operational within the sampled schools.

The relatively high ratings further suggest that principals had established structures for giving direction to academic activities. Effective school planning provides a framework within which principals can identify academic priorities, establish performance targets, determine activities, assign responsibilities and organize resources towards the achievement of desired outcomes. The finding is consistent with Sila (2024), who found that principals' strategic planning competencies were important in enhancing academic performance. In this sense, planning provides the foundation upon which other administrative functions such as organizing, controlling and directing can operate. A school may have competent teachers and adequate resources, but without clear academic priorities and a coordinated plan, these inputs may not necessarily be translated into improved student achievement. The findings therefore suggest that the relatively favorable academic environment reported by respondents may partly be associated with the ability of principals to translate institutional priorities into identifiable academic activities.

These findings of the study agree with Miskell (2020) who observed that planning positively affect students' achievement when goals developed through the planning process are aligned with the school's mission and vision. The study further established that school leaders implemented strategic goals through distributed leadership. The principals interviewed described planning as a collaborative process involving teachers and Heads of Departments. Thus, the influence of planning appears to arise not simply from the existence of written plans, but from the extent to which the plans provide a practical framework for action. These findings suggest that planning becomes more meaningful when it translates institutional goals into coordinated actions involving different members of the school community. The findings are also consistent with Wren et al. (2020), who emphasized the importance of academic goal setting and strategic planning in providing direction for school improvement. The qualitative findings provide further explanation of how planning was translated into practice. The qualitative findings provide further explanation of how planning was translated into practice .One principal reported:

> *"Every academic year begins with an academic improvement plan developed collaboratively with teachers and Heads of Departments. The plan identifies specific academic priorities, sets clear and measurable performance targets, establishes realistic timelines, and assigns responsibilities to individual teachers and departments. Making implementation easier and improving KCSE performance." (Personal communication, July 4, 2026)*

Another principal explained:

> *"Academic planning helps us identify areas of weakness early enough allowing timely and targeted interventions. Through departmental planning and review meetings, teachers analyze students' assessment results, identify topics and skills that require*

greater attention, and collaboratively agree on appropriate intervention strategies. These strategies may include remedial teaching, continuous assessment, individualized learner support, revision programs, peer tutoring, and additional practice." (Personal communication, July 8, 2026)

These accounts suggest that planning in the sampled schools extended beyond the preparation of administrative documents. Instead, it involved diagnosing academic weaknesses, identifying appropriate responses and coordinating the efforts of teachers and departments. Such processes provide a plausible pathway through which planning can influence student achievement because they connect identified performance problems with specific corrective actions.

The TSC SCD and SQASO similarly emphasized that schools with structured and regularly monitored academic plans tend to demonstrate better curriculum implementation and academic outcomes. The SQASO specifically associated comprehensive academic improvement plans with better curriculum implementation because activities are coordinated and monitored throughout the year. Similarly, the TSC SCD associated consistent academic performance with principals who prepare realistic plans and monitor their implementation. The finding agrees with Lesiriko (2022), whose study established that effective implementation of strategic plans promotes action, coordination, concentration, and organizational efficiency, with implications for students' academic performance.

Among the teacher-rated items, the highest-rated practices were the development of school improvement plans that support teaching and learning and alignment of school improvement plans with Ministry of Education policies**,** both of which recorded a mean of 4.10. This finding indicates that principals place considerable emphasis on institutional planning and

ensuring that school-level priorities are consistent with national education policies. School improvement plans provide a framework through which principals can identify academic priorities, establish targets, determine activities and allocate available resources. The SQASO reported;

> *"Quality assurance visits have shown that schools with comprehensive academic improvement plans experience better curriculum implementation because activities are coordinated and monitored throughout the year."(Personal communication, July 3, 2026)*
>
> Similarly, the TSC SCD noted;
>
> *"Schools that consistently perform well are characterized by principals who prepare realistic academic plans and regularly monitor their implementation. Such schools usually record better KCSE results than schools without structured planning." (Personal communication, July 3, 2026)*

Alignment with Ministry of Education policies also provides schools with a common direction for curriculum implementation and academic improvement. Such planning may create an enabling environment for effective teaching and learning and consequently contribute to improved student academic achievement.

The high rating for the development of annual academic improvement plans **(**M = 4.07**)** further indicates that principals provide structured direction for academic activities. Annual planning can provide a basis for sequencing curriculum activities, organizing assessments, scheduling remedial programs, preparing students for national examinations and allocating responsibilities among departments and teachers. The qualitative findings indicate that these plans were used to identify areas of weakness and determine appropriate interventions. This

suggests that academic planning is not limited to the preparation of formal documents but also involves identifying specific academic challenges and developing interventions to address them. When academic activities are planned systematically, teachers are better positioned to organize instruction and allocate sufficient time to different areas of the curriculum. Such coordination is important in senior schools because students are expected to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for successful completion of their secondary education and performance in national assessments.

The setting of academic performance targets also received a high rating (M = 4.06). The finding indicates that setting academic targets establish expected levels of performance against which academic achievement can be assessed. Academic targets can provide a reference point against which schools can evaluate progress and identify achievement gaps. They can also help teachers and students focus their efforts on clearly defined outcomes. This finding is in agreement with Nkonge and Mudulia (2024) on the importance of principals' goal-setting in relation to students' academic performance in public senior schools in Maara Sub-County, Kenya. In the context of the present study, targets may enable principals and teachers to compare actual performance with expected outcomes and initiate interventions where students or departments fall below the desired level. Thus, target setting provides an important link between planning and subsequent monitoring and corrective action.

The student responses reinforce the importance of academic goal setting. The highest-rated student item was that the school has clear academic goals that are communicated to students, with a mean of 4.15. This finding is particularly significant because it demonstrates that academic planning was visible to the intended beneficiaries of school programs. It suggests that principals were not only establishing academic expectations internally but were also

communicating them to students. The finding is supported by Leithwood et al. (2020), who established that clear goals enables school leaders to communicate what the school seeks to achieve and to align teachers' and students' efforts towards common priorities.. From the perspective of Goal Setting Theory (2002), clearly communicated and appropriately defined goals can provide direction, focus attention and encourage individuals to regulate their effort towards desired outcomes. Within a school setting, students who understand the academic standards expected of them may be better positioned to monitor their own progress and appreciate the purpose of academic activities. The finding therefore suggests that communication constitutes an important mechanism through which planning can extend from the administrative level to the learner level.

Planning student enrolment also received a favorable rating (M = 4.04**)**. Enrolment planning is important because changes in student numbers have implications for class sizes, teacher requirements, learning materials, accommodation and other school resources. Effective principals need to anticipate enrolment changes and incorporate them into school plans. Where enrolment is not adequately considered, increased student numbers may place pressure on available resources and reduce the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Principals who anticipate enrolment changes can make appropriate arrangements to ensure that increases in student population do not unnecessarily compromise instructional quality. The relatively high rating therefore suggests that principals in the sampled schools recognize the need to align school capacity with student population.

Teachers also rated the planning of procurement of teaching and learning resources highly **(**M = 4.03**)**. This finding indicates that principals recognize the importance of resources in supporting curriculum implementation. Planning for procurement allows schools to identify

resource requirements, prioritize expenditure and organize the acquisition of materials needed for instruction. Adequate teaching and learning resources can facilitate classroom instruction, student practice and independent learning. Although teachers rated procurement planning highly, students gave a comparatively lower rating to the availability of learning materials when needed with a mean of 3.86. The findings are supported by Okech et al. (2023)**,** who reported that effective planning of human and physical resources, organizational strategies, and curriculum were associated with students' academic performance. This indicates a possible implementation gap between planning and actual resource availability. A principal may have a procurement plan, but the existence of such a plan does not automatically guarantee that materials will be purchased, delivered, distributed and made accessible to students at the time they are required. It suggests that the effectiveness of planning depends not only on identifying what resources are required but also on ensuring that the planned actions are implemented within the appropriate timeframe.

The relatively lower teacher rating on teachers' participation in the preparation of academic plans (M = 3.84) is also noteworthy. Although the rating remains within the favorable range, it was the lowest among the teacher-rated planning practices. This suggests that while principals are generally perceived as competent planners, opportunities for teachers to participate fully in the planning process may be comparatively limited. Teacher participation is important because teachers possess first-hand knowledge of classroom conditions, students' learning difficulties, curriculum implementation challenges and resource requirements. Their involvement can therefore make academic plans more realistic and responsive to school-level needs.

The finding also has implications for the implementation of academic plans. Plans developed with limited teacher participation may face challenges if teachers do not feel

sufficiently involved in determining the priorities and strategies they are expected to implement. Plans developed with limited teacher participation may be perceived as administrative directives rather than shared academic commitments. Conversely, participatory planning can promote ownership, commitment and shared responsibility among teachers. Involving teachers in setting academic priorities and identifying strategies for improving student performance may therefore strengthen the implementation of school improvement plans and enhance their potential contribution to academic achievement.

Regular review of academic plans also received a relatively lower, though still favorable, rating from teachers **(**M = 3.91**).** This finding indicates that principals generally review academic plans, but the practice may not be as strong as the development and communication of plans. This finding is significant because effective planning is not a one-time activity. School conditions change during the academic year as student performance develops, staffing situations change, resources become available or constrained, and new academic challenges emerge. Regular review allows principals to determine whether planned activities are being implemented as intended and whether adjustments are necessary. The qualitative evidence from the TSC SCD and SQASO similarly emphasized the importance of monitoring the implementation of academic plans. Therefore, the relatively lower rating for plan review may indicate an area in which the planning function could be made more dynamic and responsive.

The relatively high ratings for preparing plans and setting targets indicate that principals were effective at establishing academic direction, whereas the somewhat lower rating for regular review suggests that the continuous adaptation of those plans may be less consistent. This means that the schools may have strong initial planning structures but could benefit from more systematic feedback mechanisms. For example, assessment results, departmental reports and

examination analyses can provide evidence for determining whether the strategies contained in academic plans are producing the desired results. Such evidence can then be used to modify activities, redirect resources or introduce additional interventions. Planning therefore becomes more useful when it operates as a continuous cycle of planning, implementation, assessment, review and adjustment.

The differences between the teacher and student responses are also important for understanding the planning function. Teachers gave the highest ratings to school improvement planning and policy alignment **(**M = 4.10**),** whereas students gave the highest rating to communication of academic goals **(**M = 4.15**).** This difference is understandable because teachers are more directly exposed to administrative planning processes, while students primarily experience the outcomes of those processes. Teachers are therefore likely to notice formal planning activities such as preparation of academic plans, procurement and staffing, while students are more likely to observe whether academic expectations are clearly communicated and whether learning resources are available.

Despite these differences, the overall ratings of 4.02 for teachers and 4.04 for students demonstrate a strong convergence between the two respondent groups. The difference of only 0.02 between the two grand means suggests that both groups broadly share the view that principals demonstrate effective planning practices. This convergence strengthens the descriptive evidence that planning is a relative strength of principals' administration in the sampled public senior schools. It also suggests that planning is not merely an administrative activity undertaken behind the scenes but one whose effects are sufficiently visible to students and teachers

From the perspective of this study, the planning function may influence student academic achievement through several interconnected pathways. Setting academic goals provides direction

for teachers and students. Similarly, academic improvement plans establish activities for addressing identified performance needs. Staffing and enrolment planning can also help create appropriate conditions for curriculum implementation. Procurement planning supports access to instructional resources. Finally, regular review of academic plans allows principals to respond to emerging performance gaps. These mechanisms demonstrate that planning can influence achievement both directly through academic goal setting and indirectly through the organization of teaching and learning conditions.

At the same time, the study found that effective planning should not be assessed solely on the basis of the existence of plans. The comparatively lower student rating concerning the availability of learning materials and the lower teacher ratings for teacher participation and regular review indicate that the effectiveness of planning depends on implementation and continuous evaluation. A well-designed academic plan may have limited influence on student achievement if teachers are not adequately involved, resources are not available when needed, or plans are not reviewed in response to emerging challenges. Consequently, principals need to ensure that planning is participatory, adequately resourced, continuously monitored and responsive to evidence of student performance.

However, the findings also reveal that the planning function can be strengthened by paying greater attention to the implementation dimension. The finding agrees with Lesiriko (2022), whose study established that effective implementation of strategic plans promotes action, coordination, concentration, and organizational efficiency, with thus influencing students' academic achievement. Greater teacher participation would enhance ownership and ensure that plans incorporate classroom-level realities. More systematic review of academic plans would enable principals to respond to changing student performance and emerging school needs.

Similarly, stronger follow-through on procurement plans would help ensure that learning materials are available when students and teachers require them. These areas are important because the influence of planning on student academic achievement is ultimately determined by the extent to which plans are translated into timely and coordinated action. Okech et al. (2023) similarly emphasized the importance of principals' coordination of school resources and instructional activities in supporting academic achievement.

Generally, the findings indicate that planning constituted an important administrative mechanism through which principals created academic direction, coordinated school activities and established conditions supportive of student learning. The high ratings from both teachers and students, supported by the qualitative accounts, demonstrate that planning was broadly visible and operational in the sampled schools. Nevertheless, its contribution to student academic achievement appears to depend on the quality of implementation, teacher participation, availability of resources and continuous review. Thus, the evidence suggests that effective planning is not simply about having academic plans; it is about developing realistic and participatory plans, communicating clear goals, mobilizing the necessary resources, implementing planned interventions and continuously reviewing progress against student achievement.

4.4.2 Influence of Principals' Organizing Function on Student Academic Achievement

The second research question examined the influence of principals' organizing function on student academic achievement. Ten organizing-related statements were answered by teachers and five by students; results were presented in Table10 and Table 11.

Table 10

Teachers' Ratings of the Principal's Organizing Function

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	M
C1. The principal allocates teachers according to their subject specialization.	2 (2.9)	1 (1.5)	3 (4.4)	32 (47.1)	30 (44.1)	4.28
C2. Teaching workload is distributed fairly among teachers.	1 (1.5)	2 (2.9)	7 (10.3)	37 (54.4)	21 (30.9)	4.10
C3. Teaching and learning resources are adequately organized and distributed.	2 (2.9)	0 (0.0)	8 (11.6)	40 (58.0)	19 (27.5)	4.07
C4. The principal ensures that the departmental responsibilities are clearly assigned.	1 (1.4)	0 (0.0)	9 (13.0)	41 (59.4)	18 (26.1)	4.09
C5. The principal coordinates co-curricular and academic activities effectively.	1 (1.5)	2 (2.9)	14 (20.6)	36 (52.9)	15 (22.1)	3.91
C6. The school timetable is well organized to support effective learning.	0 (0.0)	3 (4.5)	4 (6.1)	31 (47.0)	28 (42.4)	4.27
C7. The school committees function effectively under the principal's coordination.	0 (0.0)	3 (4.4)	14 (20.6)	35 (51.5)	16 (23.5)	3.94
C8. The principal ensures effective utilization of the available school resources.	1 (1.5)	5 (7.4)	3 (4.4)	32 (47.1)	27 (39.7)	4.16
C9. Communication among departments promotes teamwork.	0 (0.0)	3 (4.4)	11 (16.2)	34 (50.0)	20 (29.4)	4.04
C10. Teachers work collaboratively to achieve school academic goals.	0 (0.0)	3 (4.4)	3 (4.4)	35 (51.5)	27 (39.7)	4.26

Key: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral/Undecided, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree. Values in the SD through SA columns are counts, with column percentages in parentheses; M = item mean on the 1–5 scale.

Source: *Researcher, 2026*

The organizing function received the highest grand mean of the four administrative functions in the teacher data set (M = 4.09, SD = 0.62), placing it in the "high" band. Teachers most strongly agreed that the principal allocates teachers according to their subject specialization (M = 4.28), and agreement was comparatively softer, though still positive, on the principal coordinates co-curricular and academic activities effectively (M = 3.91).

A supplementary closed item asked teachers directly whether the principal involves them in decision-making related to curriculum and academic goals. Of the 61 teachers who responded to this item, 59 (96.7%) said yes and 2 (3.3%) said no, corroborating the generally favorable

Likert ratings for this construct and suggesting that participatory decision-making is a widely, though not universally, experienced practice.

Table 11

Students' Ratings of the Principal's Organizing Function

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	M
C1. Teachers attend lessons regularly.	20 (8.4)	20 (8.4)	9 (3.8)	78 (32.9)	110 (46.4)	4.00
C2. Lessons are well organized according to the timetable.	21 (8.8)	9 (3.8)	6 (2.5)	80 (33.6)	122 (51.3)	4.15
C3. Classrooms and learning facilities are organized to support learning.	12 (5.1)	15 (6.4)	22 (9.4)	83 (35.5)	102 (43.6)	4.06
C4. Learning resources are fairly available to students.	26 (11.4)	18 (7.9)	21 (9.2)	91 (39.7)	73 (31.9)	3.73
C5. Academic and co-curricular activities are well coordinated.	26 (11.3)	24 (10.4)	24 (10.4)	70 (30.3)	87 (37.7)	3.73

SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral/Undecided, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree. Values in the SD through SA columns are counts, with column percentages in parentheses; M = item mean on the 1–5 scale.

Source: *Researcher, 2026*

Students rated organizing somewhat more moderately (grand mean = 3.93, SD = 0.79), still within the "high" band but the lowest of the four functions in the student data set. The statement attracting the most agreement was that lessons are well organized according to the timetable (M = 4.15), while two items tied for the lowest mean at 3.73: that learning resources are fairly available to students, and that academic and co-curricular activities are well coordinated.

Tables 10 and 11, together with the qualitative interview findings, demonstrate that principals generally performed the organizing function effectively in public senior schools in Kipipiri Sub-County. The organizing function is important because it provides the structural link between what a school intends to achieve and how those intentions are translated into daily activities. Planning may establish academic targets and priorities, but those plans require an

appropriate organizational structure for implementation. The principal therefore has to determine who performs particular tasks, how responsibilities are distributed, how teachers are deployed, how instructional time is allocated, how departments and committees operate, and how resources are made available for teaching and learning. In this respect, organizing creates the conditions under which teachers can concentrate on instruction and students can participate in a predictable and coordinated learning program. The findings therefore suggest that the relatively strong organizing practices reported in the sampled schools provided an important administrative foundation for curriculum implementation.

Among teachers, the highest-rated aspect was that the principal allocates teachers according to their subject specialization (M = 4.28). This finding indicates that principals generally considered teachers' subject expertise when assigning teaching responsibilities. Assigning teachers according to their areas of specialization may enhance instructional effectiveness because teachers are more likely to possess the knowledge and skills required to deliver the curriculum effectively. This finding was strongly supported by the interview data. One principal explained,

> *"Teachers are assigned classes based on their subject specialization and teaching experience. This improves instructional quality because teachers handle subjects in which they are competent and also promotes confidence and preparedness in lesson delivery, facilitates better coverage of the curriculum, and enables teachers to respond more effectively to students' learning needs." (Personal communication, July 7, 2026)*

Fair distribution of teaching workload was another highly rated organizational practice, with a teacher mean of 4.10. This suggests that principals generally attempted to distribute

teaching responsibilities equitably among teachers. Workload distribution has important implications for instructional quality because excessive or uneven workloads may contribute to teacher fatigue and reduce the time available for lesson preparation, marking, learner support and professional collaboration. This finding is particularly consistent with Musyoki et al. (2024), who found that heavy workload could affect timely syllabus completion, while appropriate workload management could create conditions more conducive to teacher productivity and student achievement. Conversely, a reasonably balanced workload can provide teachers with adequate time to prepare lessons assess learners and participate in departmental activities. Thus, the organization of workload may influence achievement indirectly by creating more favorable conditions for effective teacher performance.

In addition, clear assignment of departmental responsibilities received a high teacher mean of 4.09. Clearly defined departmental responsibilities can reduce uncertainty regarding who is responsible for curriculum implementation, assessment, resource management and reporting of academic progress. The qualitative evidence reinforces this finding, with participants emphasizing the importance of clearly defined roles for departments and committees, suggesting that effective organization contributes to clarity of roles and reduces duplication or conflict among members of staff. Clear structures may therefore enable teachers and departments to concentrate on their specific responsibilities while working towards common academic objectives. The SQASO explained that;

> *"Schools with clearly defined organizational structures experience fewer administrative conflicts because roles, responsibilities, authority, and reporting relationships are clearly established this facilitates effective coordination of teaching and learning activities,*

including lesson scheduling, curriculum implementation," (Personal communication, July 4, 2026)

This finding is important in relation to student academic achievement because schools are complex organizations in which many individuals perform interdependent tasks. If responsibilities are unclear, important activities may be duplicated, delayed or neglected. For example, where responsibility for monitoring curriculum coverage or coordinating departmental interventions is unclear, weaknesses in student performance may not receive timely attention. Clear departmental structures can therefore establish accountability and ensure that academic responsibilities are distributed across the organization rather than being concentrated entirely in the principal's office.

The findings further show that principals used delegation and collaborative structures as part of organizing. Teachers rated the statement that teachers work collaboratively to achieve school academic goals at 4.26, while communication among departments recorded a mean of 4.04. These results indicate that organizing extended beyond the allocation of individuals to specific duties and included the development of relationships through which teachers could work collectively towards shared academic objectives. Results line up well with Bush and Glover (2020), who found that schools with clearly defined organizational structures saw improved teacher productivity and learner achievement, and with Madukwe et al. (2024), whose study of participative leadership in Abia State, Nigeria, found that principals who involved teachers and other stakeholders in decision-making were more successful in meeting institutional goals. The interview findings indicated that principals delegated responsibilities to departments and school committees, thereby creating organizational structures through which teachers could participate

in the implementation of school programs The TSC Sub-County Director of Education (TSC SCD) observed that;

> *"well -performing schools have clearly and well-organized departmental structures where Heads of Departments supervise curriculum implementation and also regularly review assessment results and provide feedback to the principal on departmental performance, emerging challenges, and proposed interventions. (Personal communication, July 4, 2026)*

The importance of this participatory dimension is that academic achievement is rarely produced by the efforts of a principal acting alone. Curriculum implementation requires cooperation among subject teachers, Heads of Departments, class teachers, examination coordinators and other members of the school community. The finding is consistent with Wakoli and Kitainge (2023), who found that that, schools using participative administrative strategies performed better than those using non-participative strategies. By delegating responsibilities and involving teachers in academic decision-making, principals can make use of the expertise available within the school. This may also strengthen teachers' sense of ownership of school academic goals because they participate in determining how those goals are to be achieved. Consequently, organizing can influence achievement by creating a collaborative environment in which teachers coordinate their instructional efforts rather than operating as isolated individuals.

The organization of instructional time was another strong aspect of the organizing function. Teachers rated the statement that the school timetable was well organized to support effective learning at M = 4.27, while students similarly rated the organization of lessons according to the timetable at M = 4.15. A well-designed timetable ensures that subjects receive

appropriate instructional time, teachers are assigned to lessons without unnecessary clashes, and academic programs such as practical lessons, remedial sessions and examinations can be accommodated within the school calendar. The qualitative findings provide further explanation of this result. One principal stated,

> *"The school timetable is carefully prepared to ensure balanced and adequate allocation of time for regular lessons, practical and laboratory sessions, remedial teaching, examinations, and co-curricular activities. The preparation of the timetable takes into consideration the number of lessons required for each subject, teachers' workloads, availability of learning facilities, and the academic priorities of the school. Proper scheduling minimizes clashes, reduces unnecessary interruptions, and ensures that instructional time is fully." (Personal correspondence, July, 2026)*

This suggests that timetable preparation was not merely an administrative exercise but was deliberately used to ensure appropriate allocation of instructional time and accommodate different academic programs. The finding is consistent with Nwonkwo and Dede (2024), who linked well-organized timetables to stronger academic performance in Rivers State, Nigeria, since timetabling is one of the planning behaviors this study's teacher questionnaires captured directly. The convergence between teachers, students, and principals therefore indicates that timetable organization was one of the stronger components of the organizing function.

The organization of teaching and learning resources was another important component of the organizing function. Teachers rated the statement that teaching and learning resources were adequately organized and distributed at M = 4.07 and rated effective utilization of available school resources at M = 4.16. These findings suggest that principals had established mechanisms

for organizing available resources and ensuring that they were used to support school programs. Effective resource organization is important because even where resources exist, poor storage, inappropriate allocation or limited access can reduce their educational value. Resources therefore need to be organized in a manner that enables teachers and students to access and use them when required.

However, Students rated the statement that learning resources were fairly available to students at M = 3.73, making it one of the two lowest-rated organizing items. This difference may therefore suggest that although principals had established mechanisms for organizing and distributing resources, students did not always experience resource availability as equally satisfactory. This indicates that resource accessibility was not experienced uniformly across the student population. The qualitative findings indicated that principals allocated resources according to priority and sought to ensure their appropriate utilization. This difference may therefore suggest that although principals had established mechanisms for organizing and distributing resources, students did not always experience resource availability as equally satisfactory. It points to the need for principals to consider not only whether resources are organized and utilized but also whether their distribution is perceived as equitable by learners.

Coordination of academic and co-curricular activities emerged as a comparatively weaker aspect of the organizing function. Teachers rated the effectiveness of this coordination at M = 3.91, while students gave a mean of 3.73. The qualitative interviews indicated that principals coordinated these activities through the school calendar. Nevertheless, the comparatively lower quantitative ratings suggest insufficient coordination of activities. Balancing academic lessons, remedial programs, laboratory sessions, sports, clubs, and other co-curricular activities requires

careful scheduling to avoid unnecessary interruptions to instructional time. The principal's ability to integrate these activities into the school program is therefore an important component of effective organization.

The student findings also indicate that teachers attend lessons regularly (M = 4.00) and that classrooms and learning facilities are organized to support learning (M = 4.06). The student rating of 4.00 suggests that regular attendance was generally experienced positively, although the response pattern shows that not all students agreed. This indicates that teacher availability was strong overall but may not have been completely uniform across schools or classrooms. Regular teacher attendance provides students with consistent access to instruction, while well-organized classrooms and facilities provide a physical environment conducive to learning. Principals therefore need organizational mechanisms that ensure that scheduled lessons are consistently covered and that unavoidable teacher absences are addressed without significant disruption to students' learning.

The organization of classrooms and facilities further suggests that the principals' organizing function extended beyond human resources to include the physical conditions necessary for teaching and learning. The findings are supported by Okech et al. (2023), who reported that effective planning of human and physical resources were associated with students' academic performance. The findings therefore demonstrate that principals' organizing function involves more than simply arranging people and resources. It provides the structure through which school plans are translated into actual teaching and learning activities. Effective organization involves allocating teachers according to specialization and experience, distributing workloads, delegating responsibilities, establishing functional departments and committees,

preparing effective timetables, coordinating academic and co-curricular activities, and ensuring appropriate utilization of instructional resources. When these elements are effectively coordinated, communication and teamwork are strengthened, administrative conflicts are reduced, and teachers are better positioned to concentrate on curriculum implementation.

The findings support the perspective advanced by Bush and Glover (2020), that clearly defined organizational structures can contribute to teacher productivity and learner achievement. Similarly, Madukwe et al. (2024) found that participative leadership involving teachers and other stakeholders in decision-making can support the achievement of institutional goals. These studies help explain why the high ratings for collaborative work, departmental communication and participatory decision-making are important. Organizing is not simply a matter of hierarchical control; it involves creating structures that enable individuals to coordinate their expertise and responsibilities towards shared institutional outcomes

Overall, the findings demonstrate that the organizing function was a significant practical component of school administration in the sampled public senior schools. Principals organized human resources by allocating teachers according to specialization and distributing workloads, organized responsibilities through departments and committees, organized instructional time through timetables, organized resources through allocation and utilization, and promoted collaboration through communication and participatory decision-making. These practices created an institutional structure within which teaching and learning could take place in a coordinated manner.

In the context of the study, the findings suggest several ways through which organizing may contribute to student academic achievement. Appropriate teacher deployment can improve

instructional competence; fair workload distribution can provide better conditions for lesson preparation and learner support; clear departmental responsibilities can strengthen accountability; effective timetabling can protect instructional time; resource organization can improve access to learning materials; and collaboration can facilitate the sharing of information and coordinated responses to academic challenges. These mechanisms indicate that organizing may influence achievement both directly and indirectly by creating the conditions necessary for effective teaching and learning. Nevertheless, the study findings also demonstrate that strong organizational structures do not automatically guarantee improved student achievement. The relatively lower student ratings for resource availability and coordination of academic and co-curricular activities indicate areas where organizational practices may not be fully translating into learner experiences.

According the study, principals' organizing function was generally well established in the public senior schools studied. The strongest areas were teacher deployment according to specialization, timetable organization, workload distribution, collaborative work, departmental responsibility and resource utilization. The qualitative evidence corroborated these findings by showing that principals used departmental structures, delegation, timetables and resource allocation to coordinate school activities. However, the comparatively lower student ratings concerning resource availability and coordination of academic and co-curricular activities reveal areas requiring further attention. The findings consequently suggest that the effectiveness of organizing depends not merely on the existence of organizational structures but on how effectively those structures translate into equitable resource access, uninterrupted instructional time, coordinated activities and supportive learning experiences for students.

4.4.3 Influence of Principals' Controlling Function on Student Academic Achievement

The third research question asked in what ways principals' controlling function influences student academic achievement. Table 12 and Table 13 present the ten teacher items and five student items measuring this construct, which covers supervision, monitoring, and the use of performance data.

Table 12

Teachers' Ratings of the Principal's Controlling Function

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	M
D1. The principal regularly supervises classroom teaching.	2 (3.0)	10 (14.9)	4 (6.0)	36 (53.7)	15 (22.4)	3.78
D2. Schemes of work are regularly checked for completeness	2 (3.0)	1 (1.5)	2 (3.0)	47 (70.1)	15 (22.4)	4.07
D3. Teachers' lesson plans are regularly reviewed by the principal or deputy principal.	3 (4.5)	3 (4.5)	6 (9.0)	35 (52.2)	20 (29.9)	3.99
D4. The principal monitors curriculum implementation throughout the school year.	1 (1.5)	1 (1.5)	5 (7.4)	47 (69.1)	14 (20.6)	4.06
D5. Teacher performance appraisal is conducted regularly.	1 (1.5)	0 (0.0)	8 (11.9)	31 (46.3)	27 (40.3)	4.24
D6. The principal regularly monitors the availability and condition of school resources.	1 (1.5)	3 (4.4)	6 (8.8)	38 (55.9)	20 (29.4)	4.07
D7. KCSE examination results are analyzed to identify strengths and weaknesses.	1 (1.5)	1 (1.5)	4 (5.9)	31 (45.6)	31 (45.6)	4.32
D8. Teachers participate in developing strategies to improve academic performance.	1 (1.5)	5 (7.4)	2 (2.9)	42 (61.8)	18 (26.5)	4.04
D9. The principal regularly reviews progress toward academic targets.	0 (0.0)	3 (4.4)	10 (14.7)	32 (47.1)	23 (33.8)	4.10
D10. Corrective measures are implemented when academic targets are achieved.	0 (0.0)	1 (1.5)	10 (14.7)	39 (57.4)	18 (26.5)	4.09

Key: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral/Undecided, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree. Values in the SD through SA columns are counts, with column percentages in parentheses; M = item mean on the 1–5 scale.

Source: *Researcher, 2026*

Teachers rated controlling almost as highly as organizing (grand mean = 4.08, SD = 0.55), the lowest standard deviation of the four constructs, meaning teacher opinion on this function was more tightly clustered than for the others. The item with the strongest endorsement was that

KCSE examination results are analyzed to identify strengths and weaknesses (M = 4.32), whereas the principal regularly supervises classroom teaching recorded the lowest, though still generally favorable, mean (M = 3.78).

Table 13

Students' Ratings of the Principal's Controlling Function

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	M
E1. The principal monitors teaching and learning in the school.	20 (8.6)	11 (4.7)	15 (6.5)	68 (29.3)	118 (50.9)	4.09
E2. Teachers complete the syllabus on time.	33 (13.9)	21 (8.8)	14 (5.9)	68 (28.6)	102 (42.9)	3.78
E3. Students' academic progress is regularly monitored.	13 (5.6)	22 (9.4)	27 (11.5)	92 (39.3)	80 (34.2)	3.87
E4. Examination results are discussed and used to improve performance.	12 (5.1)	19 (8.1)	15 (6.4)	76 (32.3)	113 (48.1)	4.10
E5. Appropriate action is taken when academic performance declines.	33 (14.0)	12 (5.1)	20 (8.5)	81 (34.5)	89 (37.9)	3.77

Key: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral/Undecided, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree. Values in the SD through SA columns are counts, with column percentages in parentheses; M = item mean on the 1–5 scale.

Source: *Researcher, 2026*

Students rated controlling at a grand mean of 3.91 (SD = 1.04), the largest spread of opinion recorded for any of the four functions among students, again in the "high" band. Agreement was strongest for the statement that examination results are discussed and used to improve performance (M = 4.10), and weakest for appropriate action is taken when academic performance declines (M = 3.77), where close to one in five students (19.1%) disagreed or strongly disagreed.

The findings controlling function was generally strongly practiced by principals in public senior schools in Kipipiri Sub-County is consistent with Juma (2021), who found a statistically significant relationship between principals' controlling function and students' learning outcomes. . Teachers recorded a grand mean of 4.08 (SD = 0.55), while students recorded a grand mean of

3.91 (SD = 1.04). The teachers' relatively low standard deviation indicates a high degree of consistency in their perceptions, while the larger variation among students suggests that experiences of monitoring and control differed somewhat across schools. Nevertheless, both groups rated the function within the high range, demonstrating that monitoring, evaluation, supervision, performance analysis, and corrective action were important components of school administration. The controlling function provides the feedback mechanism through which principals determine whether planned academic activities are being implemented as intended. Planning establishes what a school intends to achieve, while organizing determines how people and resources will be arranged to achieve those objectives. Controlling then provides the mechanism for determining whether implementation is proceeding according to plan.

The study finding established that KCSE examination results were analyzed to identify strengths and weaknesses, which recorded the highest teacher-rated mean of 4.32. This indicates that principals placed considerable emphasis on using examination performance as a source of feedback for school improvement. Results can provide evidence about areas in which students are performing well and subjects or topics where weaknesses persist. The quantitative findings are strongly supported by the qualitative evidence. One principal reported that, *"Every examination is followed by a detailed performance analysis involving teachers, Heads of Departments, students, and parents. Weak areas are identified and intervention measures are immediately implemented." (Personal communication, July 9, 2026)* This account demonstrates that examination analysis formed part of an ongoing improvement cycle rather than being a purely retrospective exercise. Performance information was used to identify weaknesses, discuss possible causes and determine appropriate actions.

Students also supported this finding, rating the statement that examination results are discussed and used to improve performance at M = 4.10. The convergence between teachers and students demonstrates that performance analysis was not confined to administrative discussions but was sufficiently visible within the school environment. The involvement of teachers, Heads of Departments, students, and parents described by the principal further indicates that controlling involved a participatory process in which different stakeholders contributed to identifying academic weaknesses and developing appropriate interventions.

The finding that teacher performance appraisal was conducted regularly (M = 4.24) also received strong support from the qualitative interviews. This indicates that teachers generally perceived performance appraisal as a regular administrative practice. Teacher appraisal can contribute to academic achievement by providing opportunities to assess instructional practices, identify professional strengths and weaknesses and encourage teachers to improve their performance. Participants described classroom supervision and professional document checks as important mechanisms for maintaining instructional quality. One principal stated, *"Classroom supervision plays an important role in ensuring that teachers remain focused on curriculum implementation and the achievement of intended learning outcomes. Lesson observations and professional document checks help maintain instructional quality." (Personal communication, July 3, 2026)* This suggests that principals used both direct and documentary forms of supervision to monitor teachers' preparedness and classroom practices.

Besides, the TSC Sub-County Director of Education emphasized the importance of classroom supervision, noting that "Schools recording consistent academic improvement have principals who regularly monitor classroom instruction and closely monitor syllabus coverage."

(Personal communication, July 4, 2026) This observation reinforces the quantitative finding that principals monitored curriculum implementation throughout the school year (M = 4.06) and checked schemes of work (M = 4.07) and lesson plans (M = 3.99). These findings indicate that principals and their deputies paid substantial attention to teachers' professional records. Such monitoring can help ensure that teachers plan their lessons, organize content systematically and maintain alignment with the curriculum. Regular checking of schemes of work can also help principals determine whether teachers are progressing through the syllabus at an appropriate pace. Similarly, lesson-plan reviews can provide an indication of whether teachers have adequately prepared for classroom instruction. The convergence of the quantitative and qualitative findings suggests that instructional supervision was an important component of the controlling function. The findings were in agreement with Enwezor and Nzeri (2025) that teacher monitoring processes had a positive and significant influence on student grades and Nabea (2022) that assessment and monitoring frameworks improved academic performance.

However, the comparatively lower teacher rating for regular classroom teaching supervision (M = 3.78) deserves attention. Although the rating remained positive, it was the lowest among the ten teacher-rated controlling items. This may indicate that principals were more consistent in reviewing professional documents and examination results than in directly observing classroom instruction. The qualitative evidence, however, emphasizes that classroom supervision is important for ensuring curriculum implementation and instructional quality. This suggests that schools could benefit from strengthening the frequency and consistency of direct classroom observation alongside documentary monitoring. The findings corroborate those of Nurhikmah (2024) who established that continuous monitoring and assessment ensure that activities align with established plans and goals.

Students' responses similarly indicate generally strong monitoring of teaching and learning. The statement that the principal monitors teaching and learning in the school recorded M = 4.09, while students' academic progress is regularly monitored recorded M = 3.87. The latter, although positive, was comparatively lower. This may suggest that students recognize general school-level monitoring but experience less consistency in individualized or continuous monitoring of their academic progress. The finding therefore suggests that principals may need to strengthen the learner-centered dimension of controlling by ensuring that monitoring systems provide regular feedback on individual and group student progress. In the same way, the finding that teachers complete the syllabus on time recorded M = 3.78 suggests that syllabus coverage remains an area requiring continued administrative attention.

The findings further demonstrate that, controlling involved the use of academic targets and corrective action. Teachers rated regular review of progress towards academic targets at M = 4.10, while implementation of corrective measures when academic targets were not achieved recorded M = 4.09. Regular review allows principals and teachers to determine whether students and departments are moving towards expected performance levels. Where progress is below expectations, additional support or alternative strategies can be introduced. Thus, the controlling function provides the feedback necessary to make academic targets operational. The qualitative evidence strongly supports this pattern. The principal reported that weak areas identified after examination analysis were followed by immediate intervention measures. Participants further agreed that continuous monitoring promotes accountability, timely corrective interventions, and sustained improvement in student academic achievement.

Nevertheless, students gave a comparatively lower rating to the statement that appropriate action is taken when academic performance declines (M = 3.77), with 19.1% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing. This difference between teacher and student perceptions is important. It may indicate that corrective interventions are more visible to teachers because they are directly involved in implementing academic improvement strategies, whereas students may not always recognize or experience the administrative actions taken following poor performance. It may also suggest that some interventions need to be communicated more clearly to students so that they understand the measures being implemented to improve their performance.

The monitoring of school resources was another positively rated aspect, with teachers reporting that the principal regularly monitors the availability and condition of school resources (M = 4.07). This suggests that controlling extended beyond teachers and academic outcomes to include the material conditions necessary for effective teaching and learning. Monitoring resources can help principals identify shortages, misuse, or deterioration and initiate corrective measures before such challenges substantially affect instructional activities.

The quantitative and qualitative findings demonstrate substantial convergence regarding the importance of the principal's controlling function. Teachers and students generally perceived monitoring, examination analysis, curriculum supervision, teacher appraisal, and academic progress reviews positively, while interview participants emphasized that continuous monitoring facilitates accountability and timely intervention. The evidence also suggests that effective control is a continuous process rather than an activity undertaken only after examinations. It involves monitoring classroom instruction, checking professional documents, tracking syllabus

coverage, analyzing examination results, reviewing academic targets, monitoring resources, and implementing corrective measures.

Findings indicate that principals' controlling function provides an important mechanism for maintaining instructional quality and responding to academic performance gaps. The strong emphasis placed by interview participants on monitoring and evaluation, together with the high quantitative ratings, suggests that effective control may contribute to improved student academic achievement by ensuring that school activities remain aligned with academic expectations and that emerging weaknesses are addressed promptly. However, the relatively lower ratings for direct classroom supervision, student progress monitoring, and corrective action from students indicate areas where principals could strengthen their controlling practices. The subsequent inferential analysis is therefore necessary to establish whether the observed controlling practices have a statistically significant influence on student academic achievement.

Comprehensively, findings indicate that principals' controlling function influenced the conditions under which teaching and learning occurred through several interconnected mechanisms. Classroom and curriculum monitoring helped ensure that teachers remained focused on curriculum implementation. While, checking professional documents provided a means of assessing teacher preparedness. Teacher appraisal created opportunities for evaluating and improving professional performance. Examination analysis provided evidence for identifying academic strengths and weaknesses additionally. Progress monitoring enabled schools to assess movement towards academic targets. Corrective action provided a mechanism for responding to identified weaknesses. These processes collectively create a feedback loop through which schools can identify problems, respond to them and monitor subsequent progress.

The findings established that principals used supervision, professional document checks, teacher appraisal, curriculum monitoring, examination analysis, academic target reviews, and resource monitoring and corrective measures to maintain academic standards. The qualitative evidence further showed that monitoring was associated with accountability, identification of weaknesses and timely interventions. However, the findings also demonstrate that the effectiveness of controlling depends on the extent to which monitoring information is translated into timely and visible action. Strengthening direct classroom supervision, continuous monitoring of student progress, syllabus coverage and communication of corrective interventions could therefore enhance the contribution of the controlling function to student academic achievement. The subsequent inferential analysis is consequently important for determining whether the observed controlling practices have a statistically significant relationship with, or predictive influence on, student academic achievement.

4.4.4 Influence of Principals' Directing Function on Student Academic Achievement

The fourth research question addressed the influence of principals' directing function on students' academic achievement, covering guidance, motivation, communication of expectations, and conflict resolution.

Table 14

Teachers' Ratings of the Principal's Directing Function

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	M
E1. The principal provides clear guidance to teachers on curriculum implementation.	0 (0.0)	3 (4.5)	9 (13.4)	41 (61.2)	14 (20.9)	3.99
E2. The principal regularly communicates academic expectations to staff.	0 (0.0)	2 (2.9)	7 (10.3)	47 (69.1)	12 (17.6)	4.01
E3. New teachers receive adequate induction upon joining the school.	6 (9.1)	9 (13.6)	7 (10.6)	29 (43.9)	15 (22.7)	3.58
E4. Heads of department receive appropriate	6 (8.8)	8 (11.8)	6 (8.8)	32	16	3.65

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	M
orientation on their responsibilities.				(47.1)	(23.5)	
E5. The principal motivates teachers to improve their performance.	2 (3.0)	6 (9.0)	16 (23.9)	35 (52.2)	8 (11.9)	3.61
E6. The principal recognizes and rewards good academic performance.	5 (7.5)	3 (4.5)	13 (19.4)	32 (47.8)	14 (20.9)	3.70
E7. Parents are actively involved in supporting student academic achievement.	10 (14.7)	9 (13.2)	6 (8.8)	32 (47.1)	11 (16.2)	3.37
E8. The principal encourages teamwork among teachers.	2 (2.9)	3 (4.4)	9 (13.2)	34 (50.0)	20 (29.4)	3.99
E9. The principal effectively resolves conflict affecting teaching and learning.	1 (1.5)	3 (4.5)	7 (10.4)	43 (64.2)	13 (19.4)	3.96
E10. The principal inspires commitment towards achieving academic goals.	1 (1.5)	2 (3.0)	10 (14.9)	33 (49.3)	21 (31.3)	4.06

Key: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral/Undecided, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree. Values in the SD through SA columns are counts, with column percentages in parentheses; M = item mean on the 1–5 scale.

Source: *Researcher, 2026*

Directing recorded the lowest grand mean of the four administrative functions in the teacher data set (M = 3.79, SD = 0.73), though it still falls within the "high" band. Teachers agreed most strongly that the principal inspires commitment towards achieving academic goals (M = 4.06), while the weakest item, and the lowest mean recorded anywhere in the teacher questionnaire outside the challenges and strategies sections, concerned parents are actively involved in supporting student academic achievement (M = 3.37), with close to three in ten teachers (27.9%) disagreeing or strongly disagreeing.

Table 15

Students' Ratings of the Principal's Directing Function

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	M
D1. The principal encourages students to work hard academically	8 (3.4)	4 (1.7)	3 (1.3)	55 (23.3)	166 (70.3)	4.56
D2. The principal communicates academic expectations clearly.	10 (4.2)	11 (4.6)	10 (4.2)	70 (29.5)	136 (57.4)	4.31
D3. Students are motivated to improve their academic performance.	20 (8.5)	10 (4.3)	12 (5.1)	74 (31.5)	119 (50.6)	4.11
D4. Outstanding academic performance is recognized and rewarded.	46 (19.6)	21 (8.9)	11 (4.7)	72 (30.6)	85 (36.2)	3.55
D5. The principal listens to students' academic	25	17 (7.3)	16 (6.8)	78	98	3.88

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	M
concerns.	(10.7)			(33.3)	(41.9)	

Key: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral/Undecided, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree. Values in the SD through SA columns are counts, with column percentages in parentheses; M = item mean on the 1–5 scale.

Source: *Researcher, 2026*

Students rated directing as the strongest of the four functions (grand mean = 4.08, SD = 0.87), placing it in the "high" band. The clearest agreement, and the single highest item mean recorded anywhere on the student questionnaire, was that the principal encourages students to work hard academically (M = 4.56), while outstanding academic performance is recognized and rewarded received comparatively less agreement (M = 3.55).

The findings presented in Tables 14 and 15, together with the qualitative interview findings, indicate that the principal's directing function was generally positively perceived by both teachers and students. However, there was a notable difference between the two groups. Teachers rated directing as the lowest of the four administrative functions, with a grand mean of 3.79 (SD = 0.73), whereas students rated it as the strongest function, with a grand mean of 4.08 (SD = 0.87). This difference suggests that teachers and students experienced or interpreted principals' directing practices differently.

Among teachers, the highest-rated item was that the principal inspires commitment towards achieving academic goals (M = 4.06). This was followed by regular communication of academic expectations (M = 4.01), provision of clear guidance on curriculum implementation (M = 3.99), encouragement of teamwork among teachers (M = 3.99), and effective resolution of conflicts affecting teaching and learning (M = 3.96). These findings indicate that principals generally provided direction through communication, guidance, teamwork, conflict resolution, and the promotion of commitment towards academic goals.

The qualitative findings strongly reinforce these results. Most principals explained that they continuously guided teachers through departmental meetings, classroom visits, and academic review sessions. One principal stated*: "Every month we hold staff meetings to review academic progress. Teachers share challenges, discuss examination performance, and jointly agree on strategies for improvement." (Personal communication, July 3, 2026)*This finding demonstrates that directing was implemented through regular interaction between principals and teachers. Staff meetings provided opportunities for principals to communicate expectations, review academic progress, identify challenges, and jointly formulate strategies for improvement. The findings concurs with Fleming and Kowalsky (2025) that directing converts plans, structures and resources into meaningful action thus it serves as a link between planning and execution, ensuring that organizational strategies are carried out effectively through the efforts of people

Students provided an even stronger assessment of the principal's directing function. The highest-rated item in the entire student questionnaire was that the principal encourages students to work hard academically (M = 4.56). This was followed by clear communication of academic expectations (M = 4.31) and motivation of students to improve their academic performance (M = 4.11). These high mean suggest that principals' directing practices were particularly visible to students through academic encouragement, communication, and motivation. Clear academic expectations can influence achievement by giving students a better understanding of what is expected of them. Students, who are aware of performance standards and examination expectations, are better positioned to organize their efforts towards those expectations. The findings corroborate Amadi (2023) study, which found that clear and effective communication results in greater student achievement in the classroom.

The high rating of M = 4.56 for encouraging students to work hard academically suggests that principals played an important role in creating an achievement-oriented environment. By communicating the importance of academic effort and encouraging students to work towards higher performance, principals may strengthen students' commitment to their studies. The qualitative findings provide evidence that some principals used practical incentives to reinforce academic motivation. Students reported examples such as personalized timetables and recognition for even small improvements in performance. One student reported that students who improved were rewarded with *Mandazi* and a cup of tea. The finding also complements the teacher rating of M = 4.06 for inspiring commitment towards academic goals, suggesting that the principals' efforts to promote academic commitment were recognized by both teachers and students.

In contrast, recognition and reward emerged as a comparatively weaker aspect of the directing function. Teachers rated recognition and reward of good academic performance at M = 3.70, while students gave a lower mean of 3.55 for recognition and reward of outstanding academic performance. These findings indicate that although recognition mechanisms existed, they were not perceived as strongly as other aspects of directing. The qualitative evidence nevertheless indicates that some principals deliberately used recognition as a motivational strategy. One principal explained: *"Recognizing outstanding teachers and students motivates everyone to work harder. We reward excellent performance during assemblies and prize-giving ceremonies." (Personal communication, July 3, 2026)*

The lower students and teachers rating may suggest that recognition practices were not implemented consistently across all schools or that some forms of recognition were not sufficiently visible to students. Strengthening systematic and transparent recognition mechanisms

could therefore enhance motivation among both teachers and students. Dindia and Mbirithi (2025), working in Mombasa County, add a possible explanation for the teacher-side null result: they found teacher motivation to be positively associated with student achievement, but motivation depends on principals actually delivering recognition and support.

Findings show that the principals moderately motivates teachers to improve their performance and that the principal recognizes and rewards good academic performance, were among the lowest-rated items on the entire teacher questionnaire (M = 3.61 and M = 3.70, respectively. This suggests that although principals generally communicated expectations and encouraged commitment, their motivational practices were not perceived as equally strong. Direction requires both clarity of expectations and support for the people expected to meet those expectations. This finding is consistent with Tan et al. (2024) who identified enhanced teacher capacity to influence students' outcome. If teachers are continuously reminded of academic targets without receiving adequate recognition, professional support, feedback or opportunities for development, the effectiveness of such direction may be limited

The SQASO's observation provides useful context: The officer noted that successful principals inspire confidence among teachers by providing professional support, constructive feedback and opportunities for continuous learning. This suggests that motivation should not be understood solely in terms of material rewards. Professional development, supportive feedback, recognition of effort, opportunities to assume responsibility and respectful communication can also contribute to teachers' commitment. Consequently, the finding that teacher motivation recorded M = 3.61 may indicate that principals need to strengthen the supportive rather than merely directive aspects of leadership. Teachers may respond more positively to academic

expectations when those expectations are accompanied by resources, professional guidance, recognition and opportunities for growth.

On the same note, new teacher induction recorded a mean of 3.58, while orientation of Heads of Department recorded M = 3.65. These were among the lower-rated teacher items. The findings suggest that some principals may not provide sufficiently structured orientation for new teachers and departmental leaders. Effective induction can help new teachers understand school expectations, curriculum requirements, reporting procedures, and academic priorities and supports the academic achievement of students by enhancing the self-esteem of the teachers, their classroom management skills and also their instructional delivery. Likewise, proper orientation of Heads of Department can strengthen their ability to coordinate departmental activities and support curriculum implementation as was established in the study of (Abdallah and Alkaabi 2023)

The weakest item in the teacher responses was active involvement of parents in supporting student academic achievement (M = 3.37). The relatively low rating of parental involvement is noteworthy in light of Tan et al. (2024), who identified engagement of external stakeholders as one of the leadership practices associated with student outcomes. This finding indicates that parental engagement was a significant challenge within the directing function. Parental involvement can contribute to student achievement by reinforcing academic expectations outside school, monitoring study routines, responding to teacher feedback and supporting students emotionally and materially. Where communication between schools and parents is weak, opportunities to coordinate interventions for struggling students may be missed

The TSC SCD emphasized the importance of stakeholder collaboration, stating: *"Effective principals maintain open communication with teachers, students, parents, and Boards*

*of Management. Such collaboration creates an environment that supports academic excellence." (Personal communication, July 4, 2026)*This observation suggests that directing should extend beyond teachers and students to include parents and other stakeholders. Greater parental involvement could strengthen academic support at home and improve alignment between school expectations and learners' home environments.

The statement that the principal listens to students' academic concerns recorded M = 3.88. While this indicates a generally favorable perception, it was considerably lower than the rating for encouraging students to work hard (M = 4.56) and communicating academic expectations (M = 4.31). This may suggest that principals were more effective in communicating academic expectations and motivating students than in providing avenues through which students could express their academic concerns. When principals listen to students and respond to their concerns, they can obtain information that may not be available through administrative monitoring alone. The comparatively lower rating therefore points to the importance of strengthening student voice within school leadership. Regular student forums, class representatives, academic committees and structured feedback mechanisms could help principals identify learning challenges earlier and incorporate student experiences into academic decision-making.

The difference between teachers and students is particularly noteworthy. While teachers rated directing as the weakest administrative function (M = 3.79), students rated it as the strongest (M = 4.08). This may be explained by the different experiences of the two groups. Students may primarily experience directing through encouragement, communication of expectations, and motivation, whereas teachers evaluate it from the perspective of professional support, induction, recognition, motivation, and participation in school administration. Thus, the

lower teacher rating does not necessarily contradict the students' positive assessment but highlights differences in stakeholder experiences.

The research findings indicate that principals generally performed the directing function effectively, particularly in encouraging students to work hard, communicating academic expectations, inspiring commitment to academic goals, providing curriculum guidance, and promoting teamwork. Nevertheless, relatively lower ratings for parental involvement (M = 3.37), new teacher induction (M = 3.58), teacher motivation (M = 3.61), and recognition and reward of performance (teachers M = 3.70; students M = 3.55) identify areas that require strengthening. The qualitative evidence reinforces the view that effective directing can improve teacher morale, instructional commitment, teamwork, and students' academic motivation.

Principals' directing function constituted an important dimension of school administration in the sampled public senior schools. Its strongest features were academic encouragement, communication of expectations, and inspiration towards academic goals, curriculum guidance, and teamwork and conflict resolution. These practices potentially contribute to student academic achievement by creating clarity, motivation, commitment and coordinated action among teachers and students. However, the comparatively weaker areas of parental involvement, teacher motivation, induction, orientation and recognition and reward suggest opportunities for strengthening the directing function. The findings consequently imply that effective directing requires more than communicating academic expectations; it requires principals to mobilize, support, recognize, listen to and coordinate the people responsible for translating academic goals into improved student academic achievement.

4.4.5 Challenges Faced by Principals in Enhancing Student Academic Achievement

The fifth research question asked what challenges principals face in their efforts to enhance student academic achievement. This question was addressed both through a set of closed-ended Likert statements on the teacher questionnaire and through open-ended items and interviews that have not yet been analyzed; only the closed-ended results are reported here. Table 16 and Figure 2 present the teachers' ratings of nine potential challenges.

Table 16

Teachers' Ratings of Challenges Facing Principals

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	M
G1. Staff shortages affect effective school administration.	6 (9.5)	11 (17.5)	6 (9.5)	27 (42.9)	13 (20.6)	3.48
G2. Inadequate teaching and learning materials hinder effective learning.	7 (10.8)	13 (20.0)	4 (6.2)	30 (46.2)	11 (16.9)	3.38
G3. Heavy administrative workload limits the principal's focus on instructional supervision.	9 (13.8)	13 (20.0)	5 (7.7)	28 (43.1)	10 (15.4)	3.26
G4. The principal faces challenges due to inadequate financial resources.	14 (21.9)	22 (34.4)	6 (9.4)	15 (23.4)	7 (10.9)	2.67
G5. Government policies and regulations sometimes constrain administrative flexibility.	6 (9.4)	12 (18.8)	10 (15.6)	30 (46.9)	6 (9.4)	3.28
G6. Parental Involvement in academic matters is inadequate.	6 (9.5)	24 (38.1)	6 (9.5)	15 (23.8)	12 (19.0)	3.05
G7. Resistance to change among staff affects implementation of school programs.	6 (9.2)	12 (18.5)	10 (15.4)	27 (41.5)	10 (15.4)	3.35
G8. External pressures (e.g., community expectations, political interference) affect school management.	8 (12.3)	11 (16.9)	9 (13.8)	31 (47.7)	6 (9.2)	3.25
G9. Limited professional development opportunities affect administrative effectiveness.	7 (10.8)	11 (16.9)	8 (12.3)	29 (44.6)	10 (15.4)	3.37

Key: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral/Undecided, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree. Values in the SD through SA columns are counts, with column percentages in parentheses; M = item mean on the 1–5 scale.

Source: *Researcher, 2026*

Collectively, teachers rated the challenge items at a grand mean of 3.23 (SD = 0.97), placing perceived challenges in the "moderate" band, meaning teachers neither strongly endorsed nor dismissed most of these as major obstacles. The three highest-rated challenges were staff shortages affecting effective school administration (M = 3.48), inadequate teaching and learning

materials (M = 3.38), and limited professional development opportunities (M = 3.37). The item rated lowest, meaning the one teachers were least likely to see as a pressing problem, was inadequate financial resources (M = 2.67), although even here more than a third of teachers (34.3%) agreed or strongly agreed that it constrains the principal.

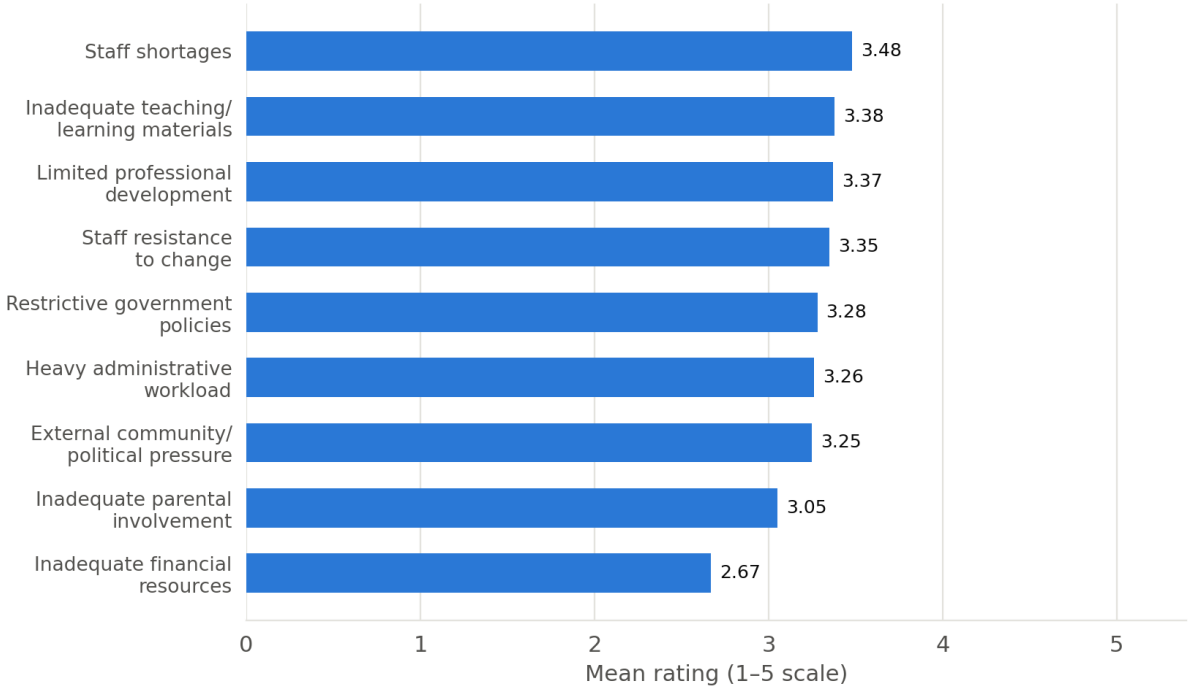


Figure 2: Mean Teacher Ratings of Challenges Facing Principals, Ranked from Lowest to Highest

The fifth research question sought to establish the challenges faced by principals in their efforts to enhance student academic achievement in public senior schools in Kipipiri Sub-County. The findings from the teachers' questionnaire indicate that principals experienced a moderate level of challenges, as reflected by an overall mean of 3.23 (SD = 0.97). This suggests that the identified challenges were present and had the potential to constrain effective administration, although they were not uniformly perceived as severe across all schools. The quantitative findings were further supported by the qualitative interviews with principals, the

TSC Sub-County Director of Education (TSC SCD), and the Sub-County Quality Assurance and Standards Officer (SQASO).

The most highly rated challenge was staff shortages affecting effective school administration (M = 3.48). This indicates that inadequate staffing was the most prominent constraint identified by teachers. The finding was strongly corroborated by the TSC SCD, who observed: *"Teacher shortages remain one of the greatest challenges affecting curriculum implementation, especially in science and mathematics subjects." (Personal communication, July 4, 2026)* Teacher shortages can increase individual teachers' workloads, reduce the time available for lesson preparation and learner support, and make it difficult for principals to allocate teaching responsibilities according to subject specialization. Heavy workloads may also limit opportunities for remedial teaching, individual learner attention, departmental collaboration, and co-curricular activities. Consequently, although principals may develop appropriate academic plans and organize school resources effectively, shortages of teachers may constrain the implementation of those plans.

The second major challenge was inadequate teaching and learning materials (M = 3.38). Teachers therefore perceived shortages of instructional resources as an important constraint on effective learning. The qualitative findings reinforce this observation. The SQASO reported: *"Many schools struggle with inadequate instructional resources, making effective curriculum implementation difficult despite principals' efforts." (Personal communication, July 4, 2026)*Similarly, the qualitative data identified shortages of textbooks, laboratory equipment, and ICT facilities as important challenges. Inadequate instructional materials can affect practical learning, limit teachers' ability to employ diverse teaching strategies, and reduce opportunities

for students to engage directly with learning resources. This is particularly important in subjects requiring laboratory work and technology-supported instruction.

Limited professional development opportunities was the third-highest-rated challenge (M = 3.37). This finding suggests that principals may face difficulties in accessing adequate opportunities for improving their administrative and instructional leadership competencies. Professional development is important because school administration operates within an environment characterized by curriculum changes, new educational policies, technological developments, and changing learner needs. Where principals and teachers have limited opportunities for continuous professional learning, their capacity to respond effectively to emerging educational demands may be constrained.

The qualitative findings also identified heavy administrative workload as a significant challenge. Although the quantitative item on heavy administrative workload recorded a relatively moderate mean of 3.26, the interviews provided a clearer explanation of its implications. One principal stated: *"Balancing administrative responsibilities with instructional supervision is challenging because principals are expected to attend numerous meetings while simultaneously managing daily school operations." (Personal communication, July 9, 2026)* .This suggests that the challenge is not necessarily the existence of administrative responsibilities but the amount of time and attention they require. Principals are expected to manage school operations, attend meetings, handle documentation, coordinate staff and stakeholders, and address day-to-day administrative issues while also supervising teaching and learning. Excessive administrative demands may therefore reduce the time principals can dedicate to classroom supervision, teacher support, academic monitoring, and direct engagement with students. The findings resonates with

Simwata (2022), who found that principals, were often forced to prioritize administrative compliance over instructional development because of heavy bureaucratic demands, a dynamic mirrored in the present study's administrative workload item (M = 3.26).

The challenge of government policies and regulations constraining administrative flexibility recorded a mean of 3.28. This indicates that policy requirements were perceived as a moderate constraint. The qualitative findings further identified frequent government policy changes as a challenge affecting implementation. Frequent adjustments in educational policies can require schools to modify plans, procedures, resource allocation, and curriculum implementation strategies. Although principals are expected to comply with national policies, limited flexibility in adapting these policies to local school circumstances may make implementation more difficult.

Resistance to change among staff recorded a mean of 3.35, indicating that it was another notable challenge. The qualitative findings revealed that some teachers were reluctant to adopt new instructional practices. This item-level pattern maps closely onto Adeoye and Akinnubi (2023), who identified staff resistance to change, resource limitations, and restricted professional development opportunities as the principal barriers to effective leadership. Resistance to change can slow the implementation of school improvement programs, particularly where principals seek to introduce new teaching approaches, assessment strategies, technology, or performance-improvement initiatives. Effective directing and communication may therefore be necessary to build staff understanding and commitment to institutional changes.

Limited parental involvement in academic matters recorded a mean of 3.05. This finding is consistent with the earlier finding on the principal's directing function, where parental

involvement in supporting student academic achievement was one of the lowest-rated items among teachers (M = 3.37). The consistency across the two sections suggests that parental participation represents a recurring challenge in the schools. Limited parental engagement may reduce the academic support available to students outside school and make it more difficult for principals and teachers to establish a strong partnership between the school and home. The findings substantiate those of Baloyi (2020) who identified weak parental involvement as a constraint on rural learners' outcomes in South Africa, which corresponds to this study's moderately rated item on inadequate parental involvement (M = 3.05).

The qualitative findings further identified student absenteeism as an important challenge. Frequent absenteeism can interrupt students' continuity of learning, reduce syllabus coverage, and make it difficult for teachers to maintain consistent academic progress. Although student absenteeism was not included among the nine closed-ended challenge items in Table 18, its emergence from the interviews is important because it demonstrates that some challenges were not fully captured by the structured questionnaire. It therefore provides additional contextual evidence for understanding the difficulties principals encounter in improving academic achievement.

The quantitative findings also show that external pressures, including community expectations and political interference, constituted a moderate challenge (M = 3.25). Such pressures can affect principals' decision-making and administrative autonomy. Principals may sometimes have to balance professional judgments concerning school management with expectations from parents, community members, local leaders, and other stakeholders. Where

these expectations conflict with school priorities or Ministry of Education requirements, they may complicate administrative decision-making.

The least highly rated challenge was inadequate financial resources (M = 2.67). This indicates that teachers were less likely to identify finances as a major constraint compared with staffing, instructional materials, and professional development. Nevertheless, the qualitative findings indicate that financial constraints remained relevant. One principal explained:

> *"Delayed government capitation affects procurement of instructional materials and implementation of planned academic programs." Since many public schools depend on government capitation to supplement other sources of school revenue, delays in disbursement interrupt the procurement of textbooks, revision materials, laboratory supplies, teaching aids, examination materials, and other essential learning resources. Consequently, we are unable to implement activities included in school improvement plans within the scheduled timelines. For example, planned remedial programs, academic clinics, departmental activities, internal examinations, curriculum support activities, and learner support programs may be postponed, scaled down, or cancelled." (Personal communication, July 9, 2026*)

This apparent difference between the quantitative and qualitative findings is important. Although teachers did not rate inadequate finances as the most pressing challenge, principals' experiences indicate that delayed funding can indirectly create other challenges, particularly shortages of instructional materials and difficulties implementing planned academic programs. Thus, financial constraints may operate through their effects on procurement and programs implementation rather than being perceived as a direct administrative obstacle.

Comprehensively, the findings reveal that the challenges facing principals are interconnected rather than isolated. Teacher shortages can contribute to heavy workloads; heavy workloads can reduce opportunities for instructional supervision; inadequate funding can contribute to shortages of learning resources; limited professional development can affect the capacity of staff to respond to new policies and practices; and weak parental involvement can reduce support for students outside the school environment. These interacting constraints may therefore limit the extent to which principals can translate their planning, organizing, controlling, and directing functions into improved student academic achievement.

The qualitative findings provide important contextual support for the quantitative results. The TSC SCD identified teacher shortages as a major obstacle, particularly in science and mathematics, while the SQASO emphasized inadequate instructional resources. Principals highlighted the competing demands of administrative duties and instructional supervision as well as delays in government capitation. The interviews further identified parental support, student absenteeism, resistance to change, and policy changes as challenges affecting school improvement.

Although the overall challenge rating of M = 3.23 indicates a moderate level of constraints, the findings demonstrate that principals operate within a complex environment in which administrative effectiveness is influenced by both internal and external factors. The results also imply that improving student academic achievement requires more than strengthening principals' administrative competencies. It requires addressing structural issues such as teacher shortages, instructional resource gaps, professional development needs, workload pressures, parental participation, student attendance, and timely provision of financial resources.

These findings are particularly relevant to the study because they provide an explanation for why strong administrative practices may not always translate into uniformly high academic achievement across schools. A principal may effectively plan, organize, control, and direct school activities, but the effectiveness of these functions may be constrained by conditions beyond the principal's immediate control. The findings therefore provide an important contextual basis for interpreting the inferential results on the influence of principals' administrative functions on student academic achievement presented in the subsequent section.

4.4.6 Strategies Adopted by Principals to Enhance Student Academic Achievement

The sixth research question asked what strategies could be, or have been, adopted by principals to enhance student academic achievement. As with the challenges construct, this was measured through closed-ended Likert statements on the teacher questionnaire; the open-ended responses on the same theme are reserved for the qualitative chapter.

Table 17

Teachers' Ratings of Strategies Adopted by Principals

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	M
H1. Remedial programs are implemented for weak students	6 (9.2)	10 (15.4)	18 (27.7)	19 (29.2)	12 (18.5)	3.32
H2. The principal organizes regular academic review meetings	10 (15.4)	18 (27.7)	11 (16.9)	22 (33.8)	4 (6.2)	2.88
H3. Academic clinics and revision programs are organized before national examinations.	8 (12.7)	21 (33.3)	4 (6.3)	21 (33.3)	9 (14.3)	3.03
H4. The principal promotes mentorship programs for students.	8 (13.1)	16 (26.2)	12 (19.7)	22 (36.1)	3 (4.9)	2.93
H5. The principal encourages team teaching and collaboration among teachers.	8 (12.5)	24 (37.5)	11 (17.2)	15 (23.4)	6 (9.4)	2.80
H6. Teachers are motivated through recognition and incentives.	4 (6.3)	19 (29.7)	15 (23.4)	17 (26.6)	9 (14.1)	3.13
H7. The principal ensures availability of adequate teaching and learning resources (i).	4 (6.2)	25 (38.5)	9 (13.8)	18 (27.7)	9 (13.8)	3.05
H8. The principal ensures availability of adequate teaching and learning resources (ii).	9 (14.1)	18 (28.1)	15 (23.4)	18 (28.1)	4 (6.3)	2.84

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	M
H9. The principal monitors lesson attendance and syllabus coverage.	7 (10.9)	10 (15.6)	18 (28.1)	18 (28.1)	11 (17.2)	3.25

Key: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral/Undecided, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree. Values in the SD through SA columns are counts, with column percentages in parentheses; M = item mean on the 1–5 scale.

Source: *Researcher, 2026*

Strategies returned the lowest grand mean of any construct measured in this study (M = 3.02, SD = 0.93), placing it in the "moderate" band, which suggests that, in the view of teachers, the deliberate strategies principals have put in place are less consistently felt than the underlying administrative functions of planning, organizing, controlling, and directing. Remedial programs for weak students received the strongest, though still moderate, endorsement (M = 3.32) and monitoring of lesson attendance and syllabus coverage was similarly rated (M = 3.25). Team teaching and collaboration among teachers was the least endorsed strategy (M = 2.80), with exactly half of teachers (50.0%) disagreeing or strongly disagreeing that the principal encourages it.

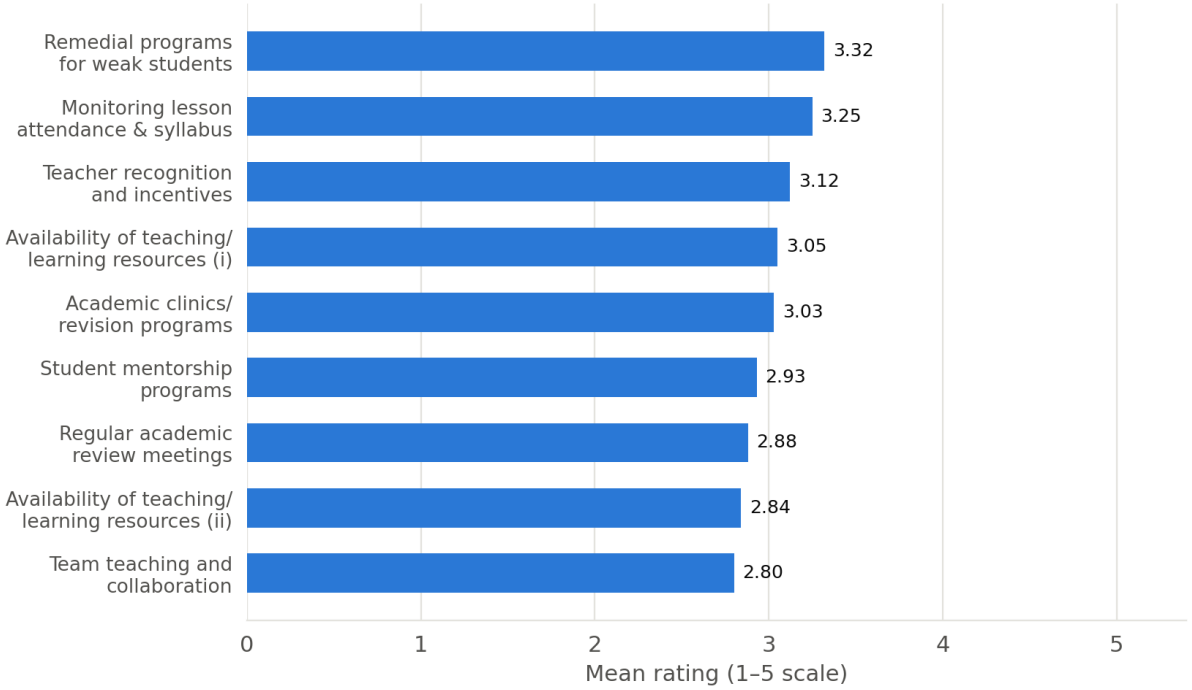


Figure 3: Mean Teacher Ratings of Strategies Adopted by Principals, Ranked from Lowest to Highest

The sixth research question sought to establish the strategies adopted by principals to enhance student academic achievement in public senior schools in Kipipiri Sub-County. The findings presented in Table 19 indicate that the strategies were implemented at a moderate level, as reflected by an overall mean of 3.02 (SD = 0.93). This was the lowest grand mean among the constructs examined in the study, suggesting that although principals had adopted several strategies to improve academic achievement, teachers did not perceive these strategies as being implemented as consistently or strongly as the four core administrative functions of planning, organizing, controlling, and directing.

The most highly rated strategy was the implementation of remedial programs for weak students (M = 3.32). This suggests that principals placed some emphasis on supporting learners who experienced academic difficulties. Remedial programs can enable teachers to identify learning gaps and provide additional instructional support to students who require more time or alternative approaches to master subject content. The qualitative findings support this strategy, as participants identified remedial programs as an important approach to improving the performance of weaker learners. This is particularly relevant where differences in students' abilities require differentiated academic support.

The second relatively highly rated strategy was monitoring lesson attendance and syllabus coverage (M = 3.25). This finding is consistent with the earlier results on the controlling function, where teachers reported favorable ratings for monitoring curriculum implementation and reviewing progress towards academic targets. Monitoring lesson attendance and syllabus coverage enables principals to identify instructional gaps and ensure that teachers remain on

schedule. It can also reduce the likelihood of syllabus sections being omitted or inadequately covered before national examinations. The qualitative findings demonstrate that principals used collaborative approaches to address staffing and curriculum coverage challenges. One principal explained: *"Where staffing is inadequate, teachers collaborate through team teaching and peer lesson observations to ensure syllabus coverage. (Personal communication, July 3, 2026)* This finding suggests that principals did not rely solely on formal staffing arrangements but also encouraged teachers to develop practical responses to shortages. Team teaching and peer lesson observation can facilitate sharing of expertise, improve instructional practices, and help schools maintain curriculum coverage where staffing levels are inadequate.

However, the quantitative finding on team teaching and collaboration among teachers was comparatively weak (M = 2.80). This was the lowest-rated strategy in Table 17. The finding indicates that although principals reported using team teaching as a response to staffing challenges, teachers did not perceive this strategy as being widely or consistently encouraged. This difference between the qualitative and quantitative evidence may indicate that team teaching was practiced in some schools but was not institutionalized across the schools included in the study. It may also suggest that collaborative practices were often informal rather than being systematically organized by principals.

Comparably, the strategy of organizing regular academic review meetings recorded a mean of 2.88, indicating relatively limited endorsement by teachers. This is noteworthy because academic review meetings emerged positively in the qualitative interviews. One principal explained that academic meetings were used to review examination performance, identify weak

areas, and agree on intervention measures. The lower quantitative rating may therefore indicate variation between schools in the frequency, structure, or effectiveness of such meetings.

The strategy involving academic clinics and revision programs before national examinations recorded M = 3.03. This suggests moderate implementation. Academic clinics can provide opportunities for teachers and students to address difficult content, clarify examination expectations, and intensify revision before national examinations. The qualitative findings further indicated that principals involved parents in academic clinics. One principal stated: *"Parents are invited to academic clinics after every examination to discuss students' performance and agree on improvement strategies." (Personal correspondence, July, 2026)* This demonstrates that academic clinics may serve a broader purpose than revision alone. They can provide a platform for collaboration between schools, students, and parents and can strengthen accountability for student performance.

The strategy of mentorship programs for students recorded M = 2.93, indicating moderate but relatively limited implementation. Mentorship can contribute to academic achievement by supporting students' motivation, goal-setting, discipline, and personal development. The TSC SCD emphasized the value of such programs, stating: *"Regular school supervision and mentorship programs have significantly strengthened principals' instructional leadership capacities." (Personal correspondence, July, 2026)* This finding suggests that mentorship should not be viewed solely as a student-support mechanism but also as part of broader instructional leadership. Strengthening mentorship programs could therefore help students develop positive attitudes towards learning and remain focused on academic goals.

Recognition and incentives for teachers recorded M = 3.13, indicating moderate implementation. This finding is consistent with the earlier directing-function results, where recognition and reward of good academic performance received relatively moderate ratings from both teachers (M = 3.70) and students (M = 3.55). The consistency suggests that although recognition systems exist in some schools, they may not be sufficiently systematic or consistently implemented. Recognition of teacher effort and student achievement could strengthen motivation, particularly where financial incentives are limited.

The two items concerning the availability of teaching and learning resources recorded M = 3.05 and M = 2.84, respectively. These relatively moderate and lower ratings suggest that principals faced difficulties in ensuring adequate instructional resources. This finding is consistent with the challenges section, where inadequate teaching and learning materials was identified as one of the major challenges (M = 3.38). The relationship between the two findings is important: the moderate rating of resource-provision strategies may partly reflect resource constraints beyond the principals' direct control.

The qualitative findings similarly identified stakeholder collaboration as a strategy for addressing resource and academic challenges. Principals reported involving parents in academic programs and seeking support from stakeholders. Such collaboration can help schools mobilize additional resources, strengthen parental participation, and create shared responsibility for student academic achievement. The findings therefore indicate that principals adopted a range of strategies, including academic improvement plans, remedial programs, academic review meetings, teacher mentoring, team teaching, stakeholder collaboration, student mentorship, continuous assessment, recognition and reward systems, and guidance and counselling.

However, the overall mean of 3.02 indicates that these strategies were not perceived by teachers as being implemented as strongly as the administrative functions themselves.

An important observation is that the strategies with the strongest ratings—remedial programs (M = 3.32) and monitoring lesson attendance and syllabus coverage (M = 3.25)—are closely linked to the controlling and instructional dimensions of administration. This suggests that principals were more likely to implement strategies involving monitoring and direct academic intervention than strategies requiring extensive collaboration or additional resources. In contrast, team teaching (M = 2.80), resource provision (M = 2.84), and academic review meetings (M = 2.88) received lower ratings, indicating areas where implementation could be strengthened.

The qualitative findings provide further explanation for the moderate quantitative ratings. Principals described using collaborative strategies to overcome staffing shortages, involving parents in academic clinics, implementing mentorship programs, and using academic improvement plans to guide curriculum implementation. These strategies demonstrate that principals were actively attempting to address the challenges identified in the study. Nevertheless, the quantitative findings suggest that implementation varied across schools.

Collectively, the findings suggest that principals had adopted several strategies to enhance student academic achievement, but the moderate overall mean of 3.02 indicates that these interventions were not consistently implemented across the schools. The findings further demonstrate that addressing academic achievement requires a combination of early identification of learning gaps, remedial support, curriculum monitoring, teacher collaboration, mentorship, stakeholder engagement, adequate learning resources, and motivation.

The findings also indicate that strengthening the administrative functions alone may not be sufficient to achieve sustained improvement in student academic achievement. Principals need to translate these functions into practical interventions that directly address the academic needs of learners and the operational challenges facing schools. In particular, greater attention should be given to strengthening team teaching, academic review meetings, mentorship programs, resource provision, and systematic recognition and incentive mechanisms.

Consequently, the findings provide an important basis for understanding the strategies through which principals attempt to translate administrative practices into improved academic outcomes. They also demonstrate that the effectiveness of these strategies may depend on the availability of teachers and instructional resources, stakeholder support, and the capacity of principals to coordinate and sustain implementation. The subsequent inferential analysis is therefore important in determining whether the observed administrative practices and their associated strategies have a statistically significant influence on student academic achievement.

4.5 Testing of Hypothesis

Multiple linear regressions were used to establish the combined and individual predictive contribution of the administrative functions to student academic achievement, separately for each data set. For the student data, the four administrative functions (planning, organizing, directing, and controlling) were entered as predictors. The results are presented in Tables 18, 19, and 20. For the teacher data, planning, organizing, controlling, and directing were entered together with challenges and strategies, since the teacher questionnaire captured these as additional, potentially explanatory, constructs.

Table 18

Regression Model Summary for Student Academic Achievement (Students)

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	SE of the Estimate
1	.63	.40	.39	0.60

Table 19

ANOVA for the Regression of Student Academic Achievement on the Four Administrative Functions (Students)

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Regression	55.67	4	13.92	38.10	< .001
Residual	84.73	232	0.37		
Total	140.40	236			

Table 20

Regression Coefficients for the Prediction of Student Academic Achievement (Students)

Predictor	B	SE B	β	t	p	Tol.	VIF
(Constant)	1.57	0.23		6.87	< .001		
Planning	0.05	0.07	.06	0.82	.411	.50	1.99
Organizing	0.23	0.07	.24	3.27	.001	.49	2.04
Directing	0.17	0.07	.19	2.57	.011	.47	2.15
Controlling	0.18	0.06	.25	3.14	.002	.42	2.38

Source: *Researcher, 2026*

Among students, the findings provide relatively strong evidence that principals' administrative functions are associated with students' academic achievement. The four administrative functions jointly explained 39.6% of the variance in student academic achievement (R^2 = .40, adjusted R^2 = .39), and the overall model was statistically significant, $F(4, 232) = 38.10$, $p < .001$. Therefore, the findings provide strong evidence against the null hypothesis that principals' administrative functions have no statistically significant relationship with student academic achievement. The results indicate that, collectively, planning, organizing,

directing, and controlling are significant predictors of student academic achievement among the students surveyed.

At the level of individual predictors, organizing (β = .24, p = .001), controlling (β = .25, p = .002), and directing (β = .19, p = .011) each made a statistically significant unique contribution to student academic achievement. controlling emerging as the strongest single predictor among students suggests that principals who effectively monitor curriculum implementation, organize school resources and responsibilities, provide direction, communicate expectations, and motivate teachers are more likely to be associated with higher levels of academic achievement.

Organizing also made a significant contribution (β = .24). This may reflect the importance of creating an environment in which teachers, instructional materials, timetables, departments, and co-curricular activities are properly coordinated. Directing (β = .19) was also significant, suggesting that students benefit when principals provide clear academic expectations, motivate teachers, guide curriculum implementation, and promote a culture that values academic achievement .Planning did not contribute uniquely once the other functions were accounted for (β = .06, p = .411), this suggests that planning may operate indirectly through organizing, directing, and controlling. A school may have a good strategic plan, but its effect on students becomes visible only when the plan is translated into organized activities, effective supervision, teacher guidance, and corrective action. The relatively high correlations among the administrative functions may therefore mean that the influence of planning is partly shared with the other functions.

Table 21

Regression Model Summary for Student Academic Achievement (Teachers)

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	SE of the Estimate

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	SE of the Estimate
1	.46	.21	.12	0.91

Table 22

ANOVA for the Regression of Student Academic Achievement on Four Administrative Functions, Challenges, and Strategies (Teachers)

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Regression	11.49	6	1.91	2.34	.045
Residual	43.45	53	0.82		
Total	54.94	59			

Table 23

Regression Coefficients for the Prediction of Student Academic Achievement (Teachers)

Predictor	B	SE B	β	t	p	Tol.	VIF
(Constant)	4.51	1.26		3.58	.001		
Planning	-0.49	0.38	-.29	-1.30	.200	.29	3.41
Organizing	-0.32	0.35	-.18	-0.92	.361	.38	2.61
Controlling	-0.12	0.27	-.07	-0.42	.675	.55	1.82
Directing	0.35	0.35	.28	1.01	.316	.19	5.19
Challenges	0.11	0.15	.11	0.72	.475	.65	1.55
Strategies	0.35	0.15	.34	2.31	.025	.69	1.45

Source: *Researcher, 2026*

As shown in Table 21, the regression model produced a multiple correlation coefficient of R = .46, indicating a moderate positive relationship between the combined predictor variables and student academic achievement. The six predictors together explained 20.9% of the variance in student academic achievement (R^2 = .21, adjusted R^2 = .12). Since the p-value is less than the conventional significance level of 0.05, the overall regression model was statistically significant at the 5% level, though only marginally, F (6, 53) = 2.34, p = 0.045. Since the p-value was below the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis that the six predictor variables, when considered jointly, have no statistically significant influence on student academic achievement

was rejected. This suggests that the six predictors, when considered jointly, significantly predicted student academic achievement. The findings are supported by Okech et al. (2023), who reported that principals' administrative functions are interconnected and cannot influence students' academic achievement in isolation.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the major findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study on the influence of principals' administrative functions on student academic achievement in public senior schools in Kipipiri Sub-County, Nyandarua County, Kenya**.** The study examined four administrative functions, namely planning, organizing, controlling and directing**,** and their influence on student academic achievement. The chapter also

summarizes the challenges faced by principals and the strategies adopted to enhance student academic achievement

5.2 Summary of the Key Findings

The study's findings showed that planning influences students' academic achievement. According to the majority of the respondents, effective planning provided a framework through which principals established academic priorities, set performance targets, prepared school improvement plans, planned curriculum implementation, and anticipated the human and material resources required to support teaching and learning. When academic goals and targets were clearly established, teachers and students had a common direction against which progress could be assessed.

The finding suggests that the presence of planning practices alone may not necessarily translate directly into improved academic achievement but it depends on implementation and follow-up. Preparing academic improvement plans without systematically implementing, monitoring, and reviewing the plan may have limited influence on student achievement. The study therefore suggests that planning is most beneficial when it is linked to measurable targets, resource allocation, continuous monitoring, and corrective action. The inferential results are important in establishing the extent to which planning independently predicted student academic achievement.

The study found that effective organizing created supportive conditions for teaching and learning by ensuring appropriate teacher deployment, timetable management, and delegation of responsibilities, teacher collaboration, departmental coordination, and resource utilization. The findings further showed that principals promoted delegation, departmental coordination, and

clear assignment of responsibilities, communication, and teamwork. These practices helped establish clear organizational structures, reduce administrative conflicts, and support curriculum implementation. The findings therefore suggest that principals' organizing function was generally effective, although some aspects, particularly equitable resource availability and coordination of activities, require further strengthening. However, there is a need for greater attention to equitable resource distribution and better coordination of academic and co-curricular programs.

The study established that controlling contributed to student academic achievement through continuous monitoring, assessment, identification of performance gaps, and timely corrective action. The strongest aspect was analysis of KCSE examination results to identify strengths and weaknesses (M = 4.32). Examination results were not simply used to record past achievement; they provided feedback that enabled principals and teachers to identify weak areas and design interventions such as remedial teaching and academic clinics. Similarly, monitoring syllabus coverage and professional documents helped ensure that planned instructional activities were actually implemented. Other strongly practiced control activities included regular teacher performance appraisal (M = 4.24), monitoring curriculum implementation (M = 4.06), checking schemes of work (M = 4.07), reviewing progress towards academic targets (M = 4.10), implementing corrective measures when targets were not achieved (M = 4.09), and monitoring the availability and condition of school resources (M = 4.07).

However, regular classroom teaching supervision received the lowest teacher rating (M = 3.78) among the controlling items. Students also gave comparatively lower ratings to monitoring their academic progress (M = 3.87) and taking appropriate action when academic performance declined (M = 3.77). These findings suggest that while principals generally maintained strong

monitoring systems, direct classroom observation, individualized student progress monitoring, and communication of corrective interventions require further strengthening. These practices provided mechanisms for maintaining instructional quality and addressing academic weaknesses promptly.

The study findings suggest that effective directing created a supportive and achievement-oriented school environment contributed to academic achievement by mobilizing teachers and students towards shared academic goals. Through communication, guidance, encouragement, teamwork, professional support, and motivation, principals influenced the attitudes and behaviors necessary for effective teaching and learning. Regular staff and academic meetings also provided opportunities to review performance, identify challenges, and agree on improvement measures. However, some aspects of directing were comparatively weak. Parental involvement recorded M = 3.37, new teacher induction M = 3.58, teacher motivation M = 3.61, and recognition and reward of performance received M = 3.70 among teachers and 3.55 among students. These weaknesses suggest that the motivational contribution of directing could be strengthened through more systematic recognition, professional support, teacher induction, and parental engagement.

According to the current study, principals in public senior schools in Kipipiri Sub-County experienced a moderate level of challenges in enhancing student academic achievement (M = 3.23, SD = 0.97). The most significant challenges were teacher shortages (M = 3.48), inadequate teaching and learning materials (M = 3.38), limited professional development opportunities (M = 3.37), staff resistance to change (M = 3.35), government policy constraints (M = 3.28), and heavy administrative workload (M = 3.26). Other challenges included external pressures, limited parental involvement, and student absenteeism. Although inadequate financial resources received

the lowest quantitative rating (M = 2.67), qualitative evidence showed that delayed government capitation affected procurement and implementation of planned academic programs. Overall, the findings indicate that principals' efforts to plan, organize, control, and direct school activities are influenced by interconnected structural and contextual constraints. Consequently, improving student academic achievement requires not only strengthening principals' administrative capacity but also addressing teacher shortages, resource inadequacies, professional development, workload pressures, parental involvement, student attendance, and timely funding.

According to the study, principals adopted various strategies to enhance student academic achievement, but their overall implementation was moderate (M = 3.02, SD = 0.93). Remedial programs for weak students (M = 3.32) and monitoring lesson attendance and syllabus coverage (M = 3.25) were the most strongly implemented strategies, while team teaching and teacher collaboration (M = 2.80), resource provision (M = 2.84), and academic review meetings (M = 2.88) received comparatively lower ratings. The findings further showed that implementation varied across schools and was influenced by teacher availability, instructional resources, stakeholder support, and principals' capacity to sustain interventions. Consequently, improving academic achievement requires principals to complement their administrative functions with consistent remedial support, curriculum monitoring, mentorship, teacher collaboration, stakeholder engagement, and adequate provision of learning resources.

The study finding suggests that academic achievement in the studied public senior schools cannot be adequately explained by principals' administrative functions alone. Other factors may play a more substantial role. The qualitative evidence strongly supports this interpretation. Participants identified teacher shortages, inadequate funding, limited instructional

resources, administrative workload, inadequate parental support, student absenteeism, resistance to change and government policy changes as factors affecting effective school administration and academic achievement. The finding is important because it demonstrates that administrative functions operate within a broader school system. A principal may plan effectively, organize available resources, direct teachers and monitor instruction, but the impact on achievement can be constrained when the school lacks adequate staffing, finance, learning materials or parental support.

5.3 Conclusions

The study concludes that principals' administrative functions collectively have a significant influence on student academic achievement. The finding demonstrated that the manner in which principals perform these admin functions is an important factor in creating conditions that support improved student academic achievement. The study concludes that planning is an important foundation for school administration and has a positive association with student academic achievement. However, planning did not make a statistically significant unique contribution to achievement when the other administrative functions were controlled. This implies that planning is most effective when it is translated into concrete organizational arrangements, direction and monitoring activities. Effective planning enables principals to establish academic priorities, allocate resources, set achievable targets and coordinate activities towards attainment of school objectives.

The study concludes that organizing is an important administrative function influencing student academic achievement. Effective allocation of teachers, distribution of workloads,

assignment of departmental responsibilities, organization of timetables and appropriate utilization of learning resources create conditions that support effective teaching and learning..

The study concludes that controlling is a particularly important administrative function in improving student academic achievement. Continuous supervision, monitoring of curriculum implementation, analysis of examination results, review of academic progress and corrective interventions enable principals to identify weaknesses and respond promptly. Controlling emerged as the strongest predictor among the four administrative functions in the student regression model.

The study concludes that directing contributes significantly to student academic achievement. Clear communication of academic expectations, motivation, guidance, teamwork, conflict resolution and commitment-building help create an environment in which teachers and students remain focused on academic goals. The significant regression coefficient for directing confirms its independent contribution to achievement.

The study concludes that principals' administrative functions collectively have a significant influence on student academic achievement. The four functions explained 39.6% of the variation in student academic achievement in the student regression model. This demonstrates that effective administration is an important component of academic success in public senior schools. However, the findings also show that administrative functions do not operate in isolation. Their effectiveness is affected by teacher availability, instructional resources, parental involvement, professional development, government policies and other contextual factors.

The study concludes that principals face moderate challenges in enhancing student academic achievement, with teacher shortages, inadequate instructional resources, limited professional development and resistance to change being among the most prominent. Although principals have adopted various strategies, including remedial programs, academic reviews, mentorship, monitoring, team teaching and stakeholder collaboration, their implementation remains moderate and inconsistent. Strengthening these strategies is therefore necessary for translating administrative functions into improved academic outcomes.

5.4 Recommendations of the study

Based on the findings, the study made recommendations as follows:

5.4.1 Recommendations for Practice

To enhance student academic achievement, principals need to strengthen the implementation and follow-up of academic improvement plans rather than focusing only on their preparation. Greater attention needs to be given to the equitable distribution of teaching workloads and the strengthening of teacher collaboration, particularly through departmental and peer-support structures. Classroom-based instructional supervision also requires greater emphasis, with monitoring encompassing regular lesson observation, checking of professional documents, and follow-up of syllabus coverage.

Examination analysis needs to translate into specific intervention measures, including remedial teaching, academic clinics, mentorship, and targeted support for weak learners. Clear communication of academic expectations, together with continuous motivation of teachers and students through recognition, feedback, and professional support, is equally important. Greater parental involvement can be promoted through academic clinics, regular communication, and

collaborative intervention programs. In addition, greater use of data from continuous assessments, internal examinations, and KCSE performance would enable principals to make evidence-based decisions in planning and corrective action.

Schools need to strengthen guidance and counseling, mentorship, and student motivation programs to address absenteeism, peer pressure, indiscipline, and other factors that interfere with learning. Greater emphasis also needs to be placed on remedial programs and peer-support initiatives for students experiencing academic difficulties.

5.4.2 Recommendations for Policy

The Ministry of Education needs to address teacher shortages through timely recruitment and equitable deployment based on subject needs, enrolment and workload to ensure effective curriculum implementation. Government capitation needs to be adequate and released on time to enable schools to procure teaching and learning materials and implement planned academic programs without interruptions

In order to support principals in strengthening lesson observation, curriculum implementation monitoring and constructive feedback to teachers, Education officers need to strengthen instructional supervision by providing principals with continuous leadership development, mentorship, and professional support.

Quality assurance visits need to place greater emphasis on the implementation of academic improvement plans, classroom-based instructional supervision, and the use of assessment data. Education officers can further support schools by developing practical approaches to managing principals' administrative workloads, thereby creating sufficient time for instructional leadership.

5.5 Recommendation for Future Research

Based on the findings and limitations of the study, the following areas are recommended for further research:

Similar studies could be conducted in other sub-counties of Nyandarua County to determine whether the findings are consistent across different educational contexts.

i. Examine other factors that may explain student academic achievement, including teacher quality, learner motivation, parental involvement, school resources, and student attendance.
ii. Investigate the mediating or moderating role of teacher quality and school resources in the relationship between principals' administrative functions and academic achievement.
iii. Future studies could use actual school-level KCSE mean scores and value-added indicators rather than perception-based measures of academic achievement.
iv. Explore why some schools translate administrative practices into improved academic outcomes while others with apparently similar administrative practices.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

You are invited to participate in a research study that seeks to examine the Influence of Principals' Administrative Functions on Student Academic achievement in Senior Schools in Kipipiri Sub-County Nyandarua County, Kenya

Participation in this study will involve responding to a questionnaire and where applicable, participating in short interview. This will take approximately 20-30 minutes. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You are free to decline or withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or negative consequences. There are no anticipated risks associated with participating in this study. You may skip any question that you feel uncomfortable with.

Although there are no direct personal benefits, the findings of this study will contribute to improving school administrative practices and enhancing student learning outcomes in senior schools. All information provided will be treated with strict confidentially and be used strictly for academic purposes only. Data collected will be securely stored and accessed only by the researcher.

Statement of Consent

I confirm that I have read and understood the information above and I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

Name of Participant: _____

Signature:_____ Date: _____

Researcher Declaration

I confirm that I have explained the purpose and nature of the study to the participant.

Name of Researcher: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

This study is being undertaken as part of academic requirements and aims to examine how principals' administrative functions specifically planning, organizing, directing, and controlling affect student learning outcomes in Public senior schools

You are kindly requested to respond honestly and objectively based on your experience in this school. Your participation is voluntary, and you are free to decline to answer any question or withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences.

Thank you very much for your time and valuable contribution.

Yours faithfully,

Mildred Okwiri

Section A: Background Information

This questionnaire is for the purpose of research only. Please tick (✓) where appropriate or fill in the information as your response to all the following questions. Do not write your name or the name of your school anywhere. The information was completely confidential.

1. Gender
   ☐ Male
   ☐ Female

2. Age
   ☐ 20–29
   ☐ 30–39
   ☐ 40–49
   ☐ 50 and above

3. Highest Academic Qualification

   ☐ Diploma

   ☐ Bachelor's Degree

   ☐ Postgraduate Diploma

   ☐ Master's Degree

   ☐ PhD

4. Teaching Experience

   ☐ 1–5 years

   ☐ 6–10 years

   ☐ 11–15 years

   ☐ 16 years and above

5. Duration in Current School

   ☐ Less than 2 years

   ☐ 2–5 years

   ☐ 6–10 years

   ☐ Over 10 years

Section B: Principal's Planning Function and student academic achievement

How do you rate your school principal on how the following administrative functions are performed in your school? Indicate your level of agreement using the scale below:

Indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statements. Taking a Likert scale of 1-5 where1 – Strongly Disagree 2 – Disagree 3 – Neutral 4 – Agree 5 – Strongly Agree

No.	Item	SA	A	N	D	SD
1.	The principal develops a comprehensive school academic improvement plan annually.					
2.	The principal sets clear academic achievement targets for students.					
3.	The principal prepares a school calendar that effectively supports teaching and learning.					
4.	The principal plans adequately for procurement of teaching and					

	learning resources.					
5.	The principal plans staffing requirements to support effective curriculum implementation.					
6.	The principal plans student enrolment to ensure effective utilization of school resources.					
7.	Curriculum implementation is guided by well-developed academic plans.					
8.	Teachers participate in the preparation of academic plans.					
9.	School improvement plans are aligned with Ministry of Education policies.					
10.	Academic plans are regularly reviewed and updated.					

Section C: Principal's Organizing Function and student academic achievement

Indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statements. Taking a Likert scale of 1-5 where1 – Strongly Disagree 2 – Disagree 3 – Neutral 4 – Agree 5 – Strongly Agree

No.	Item	SA	A	N	D	SD
1.	The principal allocates teachers according to their subject specialization.					
2.	Teaching workloads are distributed fairly among teachers.					
3.	Teaching and learning resources are adequately organized and distributed.					
4.	The principal ensures that departmental responsibilities are clearly assigned.					
5.	The principal coordinates co-curricular and academic activities effectively.					
6.	The school timetable is well organized to support effective learning.					
7.	School committees function effectively under the principal's coordination.					
8.	The principal ensures effective utilization of available school resources.					
9.	Communication among departments promotes teamwork.					
10.	Teachers work collaboratively to achieve school academic goals.					

i. Does the principal involve teachers in decision-making related to curriculum and academic goals?

Yes ( ) **No ( )**

Section D: Principal's Controlling Function and student academic achievement

Indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statements. Taking a Likert scale of 1-5 where1 – Strongly Disagree 2 – Disagree 3 – Neutral 4 – Agree 5 – Strongly Agree

No.	Item	SA	A	N	D	SD
1.	The principal regularly supervises classroom teaching.					
2.	Schemes of work are regularly checked for completeness.					
3.	Teachers' lesson plans are regularly reviewed by the principal or deputy principal.					
4.	The principal monitors curriculum implementation throughout the school year.					
5.	Teacher performance appraisal is conducted regularly.					
6.	The principal regularly monitors the availability and condition of school resources.					
7.	KCSE examination results are analyzed to identify strengths and weaknesses.					
8.	Teachers participate in developing strategies to improve academic achievement.					
9.	The principal regularly reviews progress toward academic targets.					
10.	Corrective measures are implemented when academic targets are not achieved					

ii. In what ways does the principal monitor and evaluate academic achievement in your school?

……

Section E: principals directing function

Indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statements. Taking a Likert scale of 1-5 where1 – Strongly Disagree 2 – Disagree 3 – Neutral 4 – Agree 5 – Strongly Agree

No.	Item	SA	A	N	D	SD
1.	The principal provides clear guidance to teachers on curriculum implementation.					
2.	The principal regularly communicates academic expectations to staff.					
3.	New teachers receive adequate induction upon joining the school.					
4.	Heads of Department receive appropriate orientation on their responsibilities.					
5.	The principal motivates teachers to improve their performance.					
6.	The principal recognizes and rewards good academic achievement.					
7.	Parents are actively involved in supporting students' academic achievement.					
8.	The principal encourages teamwork among teachers.					
9.	The principal effectively resolves conflicts affecting teaching and					

	learning.					
10.	The principal inspires commitment towards achieving academic goals.					

Section F: Student Academic achievement

No	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
i.	Student academic achievement has improved in recent years					
	The school records higher transition rate to higher level of education.					
ii.	Students demonstrate mastery of subject content					
iii.	The school's overall academic results are satisfactory					
iv.	The number of students attaining quality grades in national examination has increased					

vi. In your opinion, how does the principal's leadership influence student academic achievement? Explain.

……

Section G: challenges faced by principals in performing their administrative functions.

Indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statements. Taking a Likert scale of 1-5 where1 – Strongly Disagree 2 – Disagree 3 – Neutral 4 – Agree 5 – Strongly Agree

No	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
i.	Staff shortages affect effective school administration					
ii.	Inadequate teaching and learning materials hinder effective planning					
iii.	Heavy administrative workload limits the principal's focus on instructional supervision					
v.	The principal faces challenges due to inadequate financial resources.					
vi.	Government policies and regulations sometimes constrain administrative flexibility					

vii.	Parental involvement in academic matters is inadequate					
Viii	Resistance to change among staff affects implementation of school programs.					
ix.	External pressures (e.g., community expectations, political interference) affect school management.					
x	Limited professional development opportunities affect administrative effectiveness					

i. Name other challenges you think could be affecting student academic achievement in your school.

……

ii. Suggest possible ways of addressing the challenges mentioned in (i) above

……

Section H: Strategies adopted by principals to enhance student academic achievement in public senior schools

No	**Statement**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
i.	Remedial programs are implemented for weak students.					
ii.	The principal organizes regular academic review meetings.					
iii.	Academic clinics and revision programs are organized before national examinations					
iv.	The principal promotes mentorship programs for students					
v.	The principal encourages team teaching and collaboration among teachers					
vi.	Teachers are motivated through recognition and incentives.					
vii.	The principal ensures availability of adequate teaching and learning resources					
viii.	The principal monitors lesson attendance and syllabus coverage					

ix.	Parents are actively involved in supporting students' academic progress					

i. What specific strategies has your principal implemented to improve academic achievement?

ii. Which of these strategies have been most effective? Why?

iii. What additional strategies would you recommend to improve student academic achievement?

……
……
……

Thank you

APPENDIX III: PRINCIPALS INTERVIEW GUIDE

This interview seeks to gather your views on how school principals' administrative functions influence student learning outcomes in public senior schools in Kipipiri Sub- County. Responses will remain anonymous, information will be stored securely, data will be used solely for academic purposes and respondents may withdraw at any stage without penalty.

Section A: Demographic data

1. Gender? Male ( ) Female ( )

Age bracket (years)? 31-40 ( ) 41-50 ( ) above 50 years ( )

What are your years of experience as a school principal? ……..……...

2. What is the highest level of your education? Diploma ( ) B.E.D ( ) PGDE ( ) Masters ( ) Ph.D. ( ) others (specify)…….

Have you undertaken courses in administration and planning? Yes ( ) No ( )

Section B: Principals' Planning Function

3. How has your planning role as a principal influenced student academic achievement in your school?

Section C: Principals' Organizing Function

4. How has your organizing role as a principal influenced student academic achievement in your school?

Section D: Principals' Directing Function

5. How has your directing role influenced student academic achievement in your school?

Section E: Principals' Controlling Function

6. How has your monitoring and evaluation role influenced student academic achievement in your school?

Section F: Challenges in Performing Administrative Functions

7. What major challenges do you encounter in performing your planning, organizing, directing, and controlling functions?

Section G: Strategies for Addressing Challenges

8. What strategies have you adopted to address the challenges you face in performing your administrative functions?

9. How do you ensure continuous improvement in student academic achievement despite these challenges?

Section H: Recommendations

10. What recommendations would you make to strengthen principals' administrative functions and improve student academic achievement in public senior schools?

APPENDIX IV: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS SERVICE COMMISSION SUB-COUNTY DIRECTOR (TSC SCD)

This interview seeks to gather your views on how school principals' administrative functions influence student learning outcomes in public senior schools in Nyandarua County. The information provided will be treated confidentially and used strictly for academic purposes.

Section A: Background Information

1. How long have you served as Teachers Service Commission Sub-County Director?

2. Briefly describe your responsibilities in the management and supervision of public senior schools Kipipiri Sub- County

Section B: Principals' Planning Function

3. In your opinion, what role does principals' planning function play in improving student academic achievement?

Section C: Principals' Organizing Function

4. Describe the effectiveness of principals in organizing human and physical resources to support student academic achievement.

Section D: Principals' Directing Function

5. In your opinion, what influence does principals' directing function have on student academic achievement?

Section E: Principals' Controlling Function

6. Describe the monitoring and evaluation practices used by principals to improve student academic achievement.

Section F: Challenges Affecting Principals' Administrative Functions

7. What major challenges do principals encounter in performing their planning, organizing, directing, and controlling functions?

8. In your opinion, what factors contribute most to variations in student academic achievement among public senior schools in the sub-county?

Section G: Strategies and Support

9. Describe the strategies employed by the Ministry of Education and the Sub-County Education Office to strengthen principals' administrative effectiveness.

10. What additional support should be provided to principals to improve student academic achievement?

Section H: Recommendations

11. What policy or administrative changes would strengthen principals' administrative functions in public senior schools?

12. Based on your experience, what recommendations would you make for improving student academic achievement in public senior schools in Kipipiri Sub-County?

APPENDIX V: OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE SUB-COUNTY QUALITY ASSURANCE AND STANDARDS OFFICER (SQASO)

Section A: Background Information

1. State the number of years you have served as the Sub-County Quality Assurance and Standards Officer.

……

2. Highest Academic Qualification
☐ Diploma
☐ Bachelor's Degree
☐ Master's Degree
☐ Doctorate
☐ Other (Specify)

Describe your responsibilities in supervising public senior schools.

……
……

Section B: Planning Function

3. Describe the planning practices commonly used by principals to improve student academic achievement.

……

4. Explain the extent to which school academic improvement plans are effectively implemented in public senior schools.

5. What evidence indicates that principals adequately plan for staffing, teaching and learning resources, and curriculum implementation?

……
……

6. In your opinion, what influence does principals' planning function have on student academic achievement?

……

Section C: Organizing Function

7. Describe the approaches principals use to organize teachers, departments, and school resources to support curriculum implementation.

……

8. Explain the effectiveness of principals in coordinating academic programs, co-curricular activities, and school committees.

……
……

9. What influence does principals' organizing function have on student academic achievement?

……

Section D: Directing Function

10. Explain the strategies principals use to motivate teachers, communicate academic expectations, and involve parents and other stakeholders in supporting student learning.

……

12. In your opinion, what contribution does principals' directing function make towards improving student academic achievement?

……

Section E: Controlling Function

13. Describe how principals monitor curriculum implementation and students' academic progress.

……

14. Explain the ways principals use classroom supervision, teacher appraisal, and academic performance data to improve student achievement.

……

15. What influence does principals' controlling function have on student academic achievement?

……

Section F: Challenges

16. What major challenges do principals encounter in performing their planning, organizing, directing, and controlling functions?

……
18. Describe the strategies principals employ to address the challenges affecting school administration and academic achievement.

……

19. Explain the support provided by the Ministry of Education and the Quality Assurance Directorate in strengthening principals' administrative functions.

……

20. What additional support would enhance principals' administrative effectiveness and improve student academic achievement?

……
……
……

THANK YOU

APPENDIX VI: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

This questionnaire is designed to collect information on how the principal's administrative functions influence students' academic achievement. Your responses was kept confidential and used strictly for academic purposes.

Please answer all questions honestly by ticking **(✓)** in the spaces provided.

Section A: Background Information

1. **Gender**

☐ Male ☐ Female

2. **Age**

☐ 15–16 years ☐ 17–18 years

☐ Above 18 years

3. How long have you been in this school

☐ 1 year ☐ 2 years ☐ 3 years ☐ 4 years

4. How would you rate your academic achievement?

☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Average ☐ Below Average

Section B: Principals' Planning Function

Tick the appropriate response using the scale below:

1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)

2 = Disagree (D)

3 = Neutral (N)

4 = Agree (A)

5 = Strongly Agree (SA)

Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD
1. The school has clear academic goals that are communicated to students.					
2. Academic activities are well planned throughout the school year.					
3. Learning materials are available when needed.					
4. School programs support effective learning.					
5. The principal plans activities that help improve students' academic performance.					

Section C: Principals' Organizing Function

Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD
6. Teachers attend lessons regularly.					
7. Lessons are well organized according to the timetable.					
8. Classrooms and learning facilities are organized to support learning.					
9. Learning resources are fairly available to students.					
10. Academic and co-curricular activities are well coordinated.					

Section D: Principals' Directing Function

Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD
11. The principal encourages students to work hard academically.					
12. The principal communicates academic expectations clearly.					
13. Students are motivated to improve their academic achievement.					
14. Outstanding academic achievement is recognized and rewarded.					
15. The principal listens to students' academic concerns.					

Section E: Principals' Controlling Function

Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD
16. The principal monitors teaching and learning in the school.					
17. Teachers complete the syllabus on time.					
18. Students' academic progress is regularly monitored.					
19. Examination results are discussed and used to improve achievement.					
20. Appropriate action is taken when academic achievement declines.					

Section F: Student Academic Achievement

Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD
21. Students in this school are encouraged to achieve high academic standards.					

22. Academic achievement has improved over the years.					
23. Teachers provide adequate academic support to students.					
24. Students are committed to achieving good KCSE results.					
25. The school environment supports effective learning.					

Section G: Open-Ended Questions

26. In your opinion, what actions taken by the principal have contributed most to improving students' academic achievement?

……
What challenges affect students' academic achievement in your school?
……
What suggestions would you give to the principal to improve students' academic achievement?
……

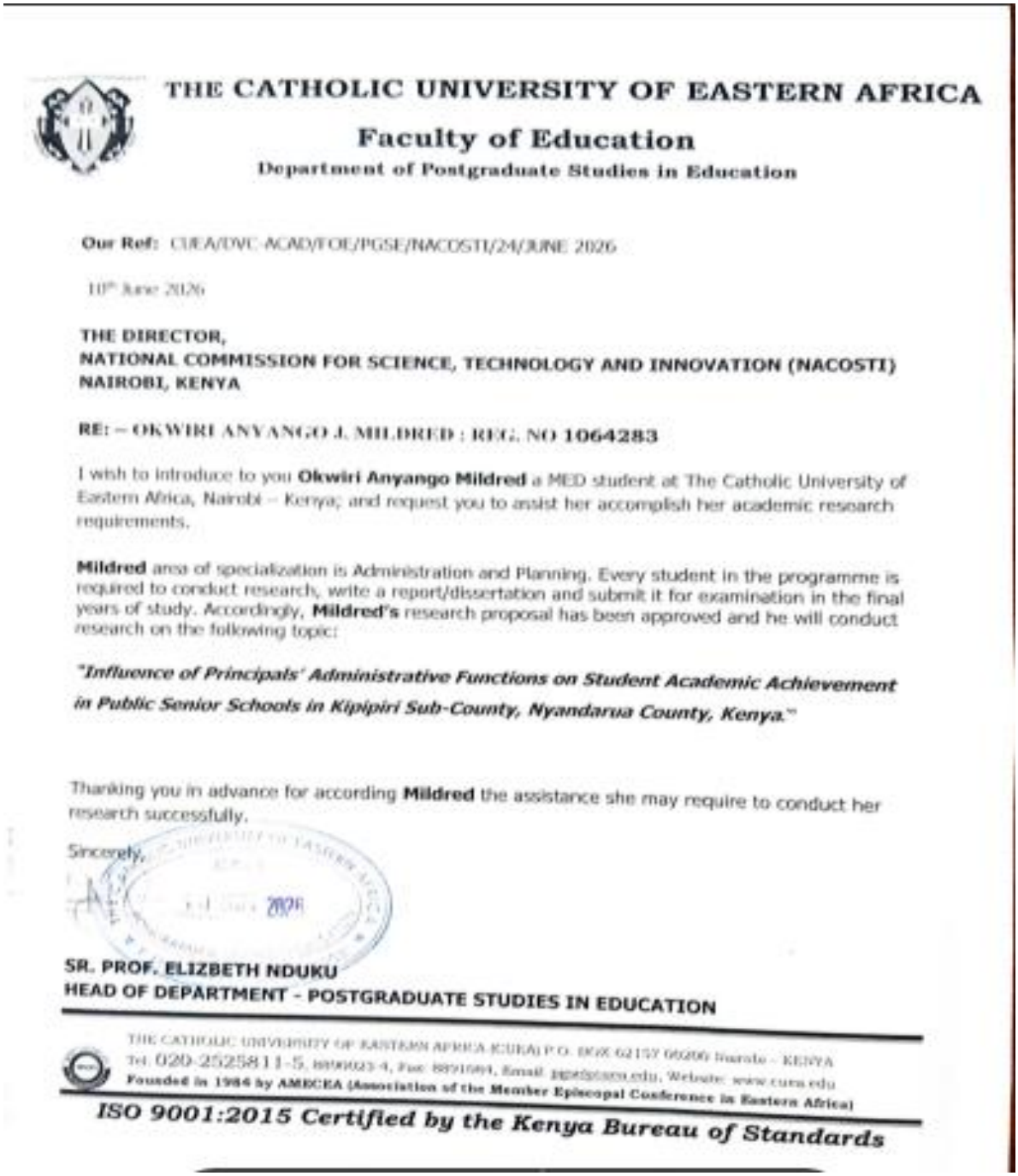
APPENDIX VII: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS GUIDE

No.	Document/Record	Information to be Collected
1.	KCSE Results Register	What was the **KCSE candidature** (number of candidates) for each year from 2020–2025?
2.	KCSE Results Register	What was the **school mean score** in KCSE for each year from 2020–2025?
3.	KCSE Results Register	What percentage of candidates attained a **mean grade of C+ and above** each year?
4.	Admission and Transition Records	What proportion of students **progressed to universities, TVET institutions, and other tertiary institutions** each year?

Summary Table for Recording Data

indicator	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
KCSE candidature					
KCSE mean score					
% C+ and above					

APPENDIX VIII: ATHORIZATION LETTER FROM THE UNIVERSITY



THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA

Faculty of Education

Department of Postgraduate Studies in Education

Our Ref: CUEA/DVC-ACAD/FOE/PGSE/NACOSTI/24/JUNE 2026

10th June 2026

THE DIRECTOR,
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION (NACOSTI)
NAIROBI, KENYA

RE: – OKWIRI ANYANGO J. MILDRED : REG. NO 1064283

I wish to introduce to you **Okwiri Anyango Mildred** a MED student at The Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi – Kenya; and request you to assist her accomplish her academic research requirements.

Mildred area of specialization is Administration and Planning. Every student in the programme is required to conduct research, write a report/dissertation and submit it for examination in the final years of study. Accordingly, **Mildred's** research proposal has been approved and he will conduct research on the following topic:

"Influence of Principals' Administrative Functions on Student Academic Achievement in Public Senior Schools in Kipipiri Sub-County, Nyandarua County, Kenya."

Thanking you in advance for according **Mildred** the assistance she may require to conduct her research successfully.

Sincerely,

SR. PROF. ELIZBETH NDUKU
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT - POSTGRADUATE STUDIES IN EDUCATION

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA (CUEA) P.O. BOX 62157-00200 Nairobi – KENYA
Tel: 020-2525811-5, 8909023-4, Fax: 8911601, Email: [illegible]@cuea.edu, Website: www.cuea.edu
Founded in 1984 by AMECEA (Association of the Member Episcopal Conference in Eastern Africa)

ISO 9001:2015 Certified by the Kenya Bureau of Standards

APPENDIX IX: AUTHORIZATION FROM NACOSTI



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: 737055

Date of Issue: 18/June/2026

RESEARCH LICENSE

This is to Certify that Sr., OKWIRI ANYANGO J MILDRED of Catholic University of Eastern Africa; has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Nyandarua on the topic: INFLUENCE OF PRINCIPALS' ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS ON STUDENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN PUBLIC SENIOR SCHOOLS IN KIPIPIRI SUB-COUNTY, NYANDARUA COUNTY, KENYA. for the period ending : 18/June/2027.

License No: NACOSTI/P/26/4191355

737055

Applicant Identification Number

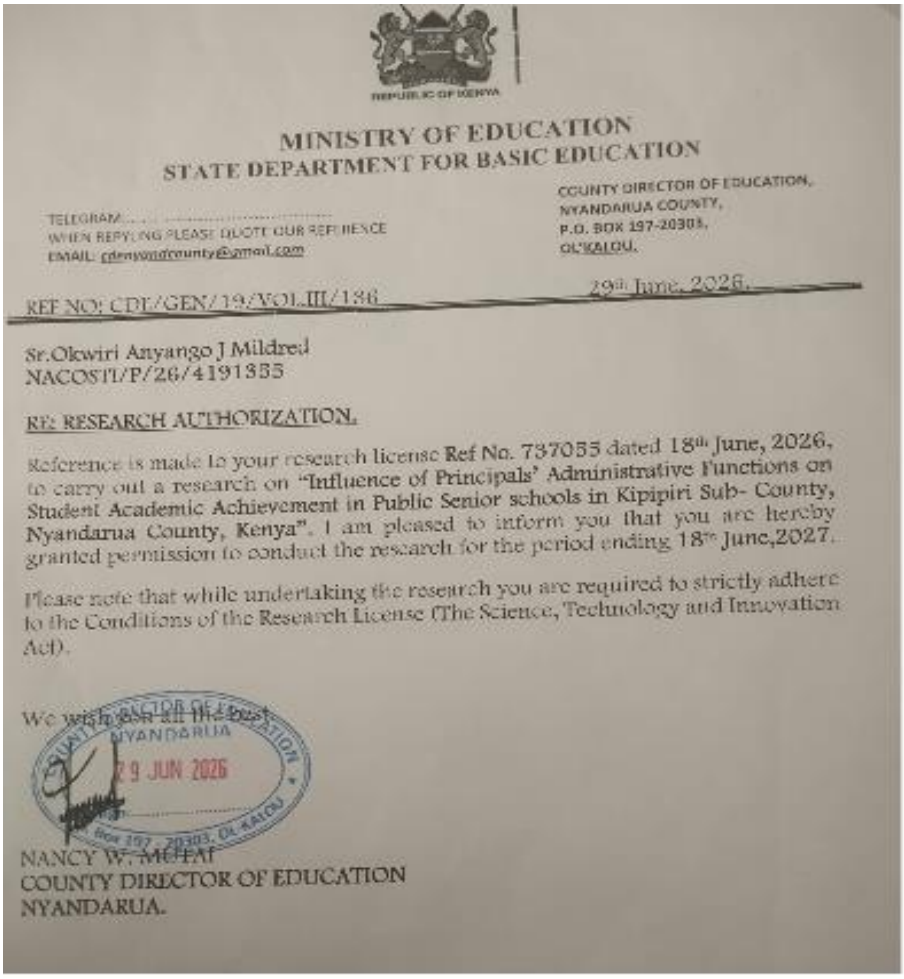
Ag. Director General
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Verification QR Code

NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.

See overleaf for conditions

APPENDIX X: AUTHORIZATION FROM MINISTRY OF EDUCATION



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
STATE DEPARTMENT FOR BASIC EDUCATION

TELEGRAM.....
WHEN REPLYING PLEASE QUOTE OUR REFERENCE
EMAIL: cdenyandrcounty@gmail.com

COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION,
NYANDARUA COUNTY,
P.O. BOX 197-20303,
OL'KALOU.

REF NO: CDE/GEN/19/VOL.III/136 29th June, 2026.

Sr.Okwiri Anyango J Mildred
NACOSTI/P/26/4191355

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION.

Reference is made to your research license Ref No. 737055 dated 18th June, 2026, to carry out a research on "Influence of Principals' Administrative Functions on Student Academic Achievement in Public Senior schools in Kipipiri Sub- County, Nyandarua County, Kenya". I am pleased to inform you that you are hereby granted permission to conduct the research for the period ending 18th June,2027.

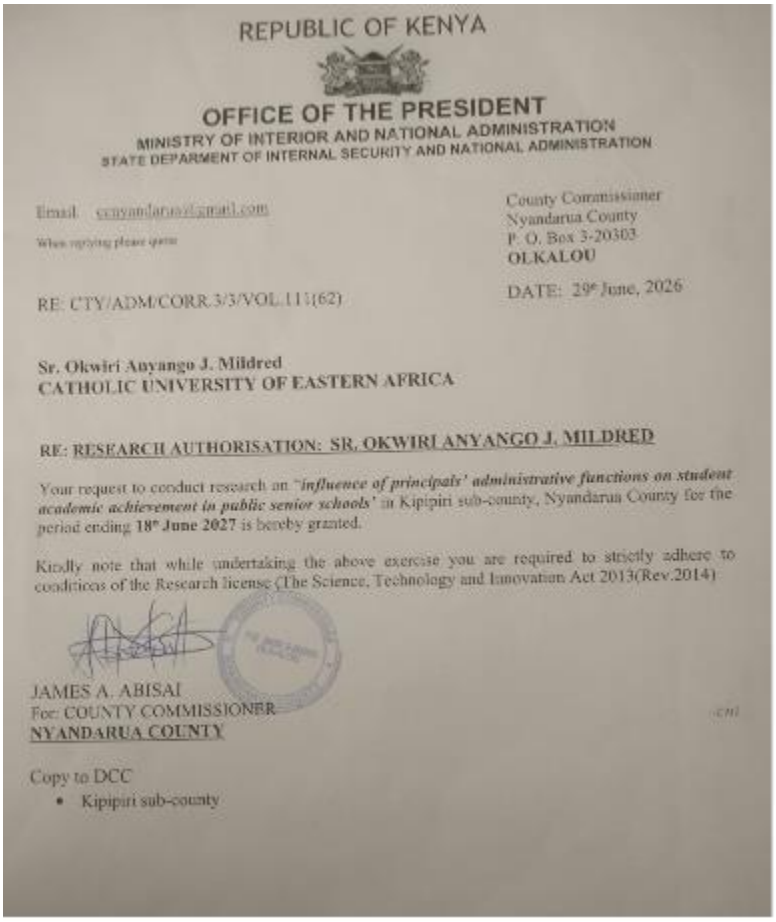
Please note that while undertaking the research you are required to strictly adhere to the Conditions of the Research License (The Science, Technology and Innovation Act).

We wish you all the best.

COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION NYANDARUA
29 JUN 2026
Box 197 - 20303, OL KALOU

NANCY W. MUHAI
COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
NYANDARUA.

APPENDIX XI: AUTHORIZATION FROM MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

STATE DEPARMENT OF INTERNAL SECURITY AND NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Email: cnyandarua@gmail.com

When replying please quote

County Commissioner
Nyandarua County
P. O. Box 3-20303
OLKALOU

RE: CTY/ADM/CORR.3/3/VOL.111(62)

DATE: 29th June, 2026

Sr. Okwiri Anyango J. Mildred
CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORISATION: SR. OKWIRI ANYANGO J. MILDRED

Your request to conduct research on ***'influence of principals' administrative functions on student academic achievement in public senior schools'*** in Kipipiri sub-county, Nyandarua County for the period ending **18th June 2027** is hereby granted.

Kindly note that while undertaking the above exercise you are required to strictly adhere to conditions of the Research license (The Science, Technology and Innovation Act 2013(Rev.2014)

JAMES A. ABISAI
For: COUNTY COMMISSIONER
NYANDARUA COUNTY

Copy to DCC

- Kipipiri sub-county

APPENDIX XII: MAP OF THE STUDY AREA

