

The Preparedness of Secondary School Head Teachers as Leaders and Managers of Schools in Kenya

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Abstract

Management practices in Kenyan Secondary schools have come under scrutiny following the wave of student strikes that swept across the country in recent years. Over the past decade strikes in schools have been increasing phenomenally. Several reasons have been advanced by different stakeholders as the underlying root causes: overloaded curriculum; autocratic school administration; drug and substance abuse; poor living conditions in schools; excessive use of corporal punishment; lack of an effective school guidance and counseling services among others. The latest upsurge in violent strikes in public secondary schools in 2008 brought into sharp focus the role of head teachers in the management of schools in Kenya. The thrust of this study was to establish whether they are prepared to face challenges and problems that come with running these institutions. The fact that they are elevated to head schools without proper training in management practices is a cause for concern. This paper posits leadership and managerial ineptitude on the part of head teachers. The study specifically sought to identify the challenges and training needs of head teachers in secondary schools. It also explored the availability of head teacher training and its importance in managing schools. The data for this paper was collected through review of published and unpublished literature. The need to have management training for teachers' prior to promotion to the level of head teachers should be the focus.