

# Influence of Principals' Inspirational Motivation on Students' Performance at Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education in Public Secondary Schools, Kenya

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**Abstract:** *There is widespread recognition that, education is the key to the well-being of any society. Therefore, this study was motivated by the need to improve students' academic performance at Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examinations in Mbooni West Sub-county, Kenya. The study was guided by two objectives: i. Examine the extent to which principals' leadership practice of inspirational motivation (IM) in public secondary schools influences students' performance at KCSE examinations. ii. Examine the extent to which principals' demographic variables influence leadership practice of inspirational motivation in public secondary schools. The study targeted 42 public secondary schools in the Sub-county. A sample of 38 schools was selected using simple random technique whereby selections are made purely by chance. The study employed descriptive research design. Questionnaires, focus groups discussion, interviews guides, and document analyses were used to collect data. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. In descriptive statistics, frequencies, percentages, means, variance, and standard deviations were calculated and presented in tables. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was computed to test if relationships exist or does not exist between IM and students' performance tested at alpha value 0.05 or 0.01 levels of significance. Further, t-test was used to determine whether principals' demographic variables influence the leadership practices of inspirational motivation. The findings shown that, inspirational motivation has positive significant influence on students' performance at KCSE examinations with .194\*\* at alpha value 0.01 level (2-tailed). Further, results shown that, inspirational motivation is moderately practiced in public secondary schools. Besides, no significant influence found of principals' demographic variables of gender and age on leadership practice of inspirational motivation. Future research should include larger sample sizes of principals and teachers from a variety of schools' settings. Thus, investigate influence of principals' transformational leadership practices (TLP) on teachers' commitment in public secondary schools. This study recommends higher learning institutions to restructure comprehensive courses on TLP for teacher trainees to enhance establishment of effective schools' leadership in Kenya.*

**Keywords:** Principals' influence, inspirational motivational, students' KCSE performance, public secondary school, Mbooni West Sub-county, Kenya

## 1. Introduction

There is widespread recognition that education is the key to the well-being of all global societies (United Nations, 2013). Therefore, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2013) emphasize that, treaties and laws worldwide recognizes that, education is a fundamental human rights and its indispensable role is imparting desired knowledge, skills and attitudes that enable people realize their full potentials for individuals and countries growth and development. Then, UNESCO (2005) emphasize that, progress towards better quality education is constantly assessed by examining trends of schools' leadership practices on students' learning outcomes as measured by the students' achievement in national examination scores. Then, transforming schools and school systems is critical to sustained growth and success to both the individuals and societies (Mascal, 2007).

Khine and Saleh (2009) point out that leading schools is a complex work in times of constant technological changes. This translates that, leadership has become a universal phenomenon observed across every human civilization,

education included. Balyer (2012) highlights that, the more complex society gets the more sophisticated leadership practices must become and schools are not exempted need transformational leadership practices (TLP) as a hallmark of students' success and development. Hence, the debate becomes what specific form of leadership practices are best suited to bring about positive changes within organizations (Kouzes & Posner, 2007), educational institutions inclusion. That's why this study was interested to examine and provide comprehensive information on influence of transformational leadership practice of inspirational motivational (IM) on students' performance at KCSE examinations, Kenya.

Leithwood and Jantz (2005), and Rutledge (2010) are among many researchers who agree that, transformational leadership practice of inspirational motivation will help schools change due to their transforming approaches on teachers' perception, and not only affects teachers' perception but also students' achievement, since teachers' perception too affects students' achievement. Gupta and Gehlawat (2012) and Veysel (2014) advocate that, TLP are required to successfully navigate diversity in terms of transformation

and development of high-quality schools in the 21<sup>st</sup> century global theatre.

According to Muricho and Changach (2013), revolutionary schools' leadership is central in education and training for the production of quality and competitive social capital. This may help Kenya become globally competitive and prosperous country by the year 2030 and beyond (Republic of Kenya, 2007). Studies by Ling and Ibrahim (2013) and Mbithi (2014) advocate that, inspirational motivation is provided in schools where by the school principal builds a mental picture and develops a shared school vision and way of life with subordinates. This brings about partnership learning environment in the school that enhances overall students' academic performance. Therefore, this study was impressive to investigate and provide comprehensive information if leadership practice of inspirational motivation influences students' performance at Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examinations in public secondary schools in Mbooni West Sub-county, Kenya.

### **Inspirational Motivation and Students' Academic Performance**

Lorgwell-Mckean (2012) conducted a study on restructuring leadership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century schools in United States of America (USA). The objective of this study was to explore the connections between the practices of transformational leadership and the presence of quality relationships and its impact in schools. Both qualitative and quantitative data yielded interesting results from teachers who were interviewed and filled questionnaires. The study results show that, inspirational motivation (IM) enables schools' principals to build a school vision and goals that lead to effectiveness of the 21<sup>st</sup> century schools towards good students' academic performance (GSAP). Also, this researcher advocates that, the practice of inspirational motivation leads to the development of collective teachers' efficacy hence positively influence student' academic performance.

Further, Demir (2008) study findings in USA found that, transformational leadership practices play a key role in promoting and managing schools' development as effective communities of learners. This researcher advocates that, principals' professional qualification enhances the practice of *inspirational motivation* (IM) in connecting subordinates to the meaningful work they do. This enhances collective teachers' commitment leading to teachers' professional growth and students' improved academic performance in schools.

Besides, Leithwood and Jantzi, (1997) conducted a study on teachers' perceptions of principals' leadership in schools in USA. The study used sampling plan matrix and analyzed six dimension of transformational leadership. Study results show that, the school leader's behavior on inspiring others with a vision of the future and building consensus on school goals leads to school's improvement on students' performance at national examinations. This is the backbone for teachers' and students' success in schools. This translates that, leadership is a process of influencing others; therefore school principal should be quite self-conscious about doing good work on behalf of the entire school community.

A study results by Hay (2007) advocate that, the ultimate goal of any school is the education and success of its students. Further, this scholar stresses that, today schools need leaders who inspire followers towards the forward movement of the entire schools success. This is realized through collective teachers' teaching responsibilities resulting into continuous school wide improvement on students' achievement. Then, Bass, Avolio, Jung and Berson (2003) found that, it is important for the schools' principals to be professionally qualified and experienced in their work so as to communicate positively the school vision to both teachers and students. Also, Bass and Avolio (1990) pointed out that, the practice of IM inspires both teachers and students hence positively influence the school learning environment.

Khasawneh, Omari and Abu-Tineh (2012) study results on relationship between transformational leadership and organizational commitment in Jordan show that, school principals who practice inspirational motivation help subordinates to focus on their work and try to make them feel their work is significant. Then a study by Leithwood and Jantzi (2008) found that, transformational school principal (TSP) provides inspirational motivation whereby, the school principal articulates a vision that is appealing and inspiring to both teachers and students to strive hard to excel. Also, Bellé (2013) findings emphasize that, by use of inspirational motivation, a school leader communicates the organization's vision, high expectations and standards to followers therefore strive hard to excel.

Further a study by Mascall (2007) on shifting sands of leadership in theory and practice support that, schools' principals should precisely communicate a vision in a persuasive manner, and use symbols to focus efforts of teachers to strive hard towards good students' academic performance in national examinations. Also, Leithwood (2006) study on understanding successful principal leadership show that, transformational school principal develops a school vision and collaborative school culture in the school. This enhance partnership learning environment resulting to improved students' academic performance in the school. Further, a study by Ergeneli, Gohar and Temirbekova (2007) show that, leaders who use inspirational motivation inspire shared vision, model the way, and encourage subordinates to be committed towards the achievement of organizational goals. Leithwood and Jantz (2006) carried out a study in USA and found out that, school principals use IM to motivate and inspire teachers by providing meaning and challenging their work to better students' performance in the schools. While, Bass and Rigglo (2006) advocate that, IM enable principals promote consistent vision, mission and a set of goals and values of the organization to the members.

Rutledge (2010) study results on the effects of transformational leadership on academic optimism within elementary schools in the United States found that, transformational leadership practice of IM enable schools' leaders to foster higher level of motivation and commitment to organizational members by developing organizational vision, and trust among employees. Then, a report on the transformational leadership by Convey (2007) highlights

that, inspirational motivation (IM) deals with articulation of a vision that is appealing and inspiring to teachers to be committed towards improved students' academic performance. Further, this scholar insists that, principal's vision provides framework, and challenge teachers with high standards, communicate optimism about future goals, and provide meaning for the task at hand. Also, Kouzes and Posner (2007) noted that, a leader inspires and shares vision with group members to ensure interests and aspirations of the followers are aligned with the vision for the purpose of members' and organization's success.

A study by Ling (2013) on exploring the relationship among transformational leadership, teacher efficacy and teacher commitment in Malaysian secondary schools found that, transformational leadership practice of IM have great impact on personnel attitudes and commitment towards promotion of change and improvement on students' academic performance in state exams. This scholar points out that, in any educational arena, teachers are very vital, for implementation of educational plans and policies. He further indicated that, gender and professional qualification have influence on transformational leaders' competence on reliability and capability to generate commitment from followers. This brings about a sense of shared purpose and work to bring about human and economic transformation.

According to Khasawneh, Omari and Abu-Tineh, (2009) study results on transformational leadership model in practice in Jordanian schools. This study was quantitative in nature. Five leadership practices were analyzed using Leadership Practices Inventory scale. The study was conducted using a survey methodology. The survey was cross-sectional in nature. A total of 550 school teachers completed and returned the survey usable surveys making the response rate 55%. The data-collection method was a self-administered paper based. Study outcomes show that, by sharing school's goals and expectations with followers strengthens team work to realize organization's success. This provides meaning and challenge followers' work which lead to good students' academic performance.

Nderitu (2012) findings in Nairobi County show that, secondary schools have not been doing well at Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) Examinations due to ineffective leadership practices. The minimum university entry requirement is C+ (plus) and above (MWSCQASO, 2016). Nderitu advocates that, in order realize an exciting big dream of the school vision, school principals should appeal and share with followers. In Kenya, the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) is in charge of basic national examinations, secondary examinations included. Mean grades in KCSE are awarding as follows:- A plain 12 points; A minus 11 points; B plus 10 points; B plain 9 points; B minus 8 points; C plus 7 points, C plain 6 points; C minus 5 points; D plus 4 points; D plain 3 points; D minus 2 points; E 1 point. The results for Mbooni West Sub-county schools for the KCSE examinations (2011-2015) years are shown in Table 1.1.

**Table 1.1:** National and Mbooni West Sub-County KCSE Results Analysis (2011-2015) percentages of C+ and above

Years	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
National index	29.12	28.36	27.46	30.78	31.52
Mbooni West Sub-county	20.42	21.84	24.85	19.31	17.83

Sources: MWSCED and the SCQASO Document analysis (2016) Mbooni West Sub-county

Statistics in Table 1.1 from Mbooni West Sub-County Director of Education (MWSCDE) and Sub-County Quality Assurance and Standards Officer (MWSCQASO) (2016) on KCSE examinations (2011-2015) shows discrepancy. Why? The majority over 75 percent of the students who sat for KCSE examinations for five consecutive years were not able to obtain mean grade of C+ and above which is the minimum university entry requirement in Kenya.

Further, statistics from Makueni County Education Director (MCED) and the Makueni County Quality Assurance and Standards Officer (MCQASO) (2016) reported on KCSE mean scores analyses (2011-2015) years are shown in Table 1.2.

**Table 1.2:** Mbooni West Sub-County KCSE Mean Scores Compared to Makueni County KCSE Mean Scores, Results Analysis (2011-2015)

Years	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Makueni County	4.95	5.00	5.03	5.16	5.07
Mbooni West Sub-county	4.07	4.09	4.16	4.02	4.06

Sources: MCED and the CQASO Document analysis (2016) Makueni County

Table 1.2 shows that, Mbooni West Sub-county is below Makueni County throughout the years (2011-2015). In Kenya, Ministry of Education (MoE) (2014) highlights that leadership is the most important aspects of management and contributes immensely to the general well-being of organizations' success and nations' growth and development. This implies that, education and training are central towards the height of transformation required in Kenya to be globally competitive country that provides a high quality life to its entire citizens by the year 2030 and beyond (Republic of Kenya, 2007). Therefore, this study advocates for sustainable schools' improvement efforts on existing leadership practices to move schools closer toward the ideals of equity and success for every student at KCSE examinations.

## 2. Statement of the problem

Education is widely held to be crucial for the survival and success of individuals and countries. Ministry of Education Science and Technology (2012) emphasizes that, school head teachers shoulders the greatest burden to lead schools achieve educational goals. The government of Kenya immensely invests in training educationalists to enhance provision of quality education, and the establishment of effective leadership practices among teacher trainees for all schools. However, Tables 1.1 and 1.2 shows that, Mbooni West Sub-county schools consistently posted low KSCE mean grades compared to the National Index and Makueni County KCSE results analyses (2011-2015) years respectively.

### 3. Objectives and Hypotheses of the Study

#### 3.1 Objectives

The study was guided by the following objectives:

- 1) Examine the extent to which principals' practice of *inspirational motivation* in public secondary schools influence students' performance at Kenya certificate of secondary education in Mbooni West Sub- County.
- 2) Examine the extent to which principals' demographic variables influence the practices of *inspirational motivation* in public secondary schools in Mbooni West Sub- County.

#### 3.2 Research Hypotheses

The study addressed the following null hypotheses in tune with the above stated objectives:

H<sub>01</sub>. There is no significant relationship between principals' practice of *inspirational motivation* in public secondary schools and students' performance at Kenya certificate of secondary education.

H<sub>02</sub>. There is no significant difference between principals' demographic variables and the practice of *inspirational motivation* in public secondary schools.

### 4. Methodology

#### 4.1 Research design

The study employed descriptive research design which involved observing and accurately describing the behaviors of individuals in a certain situation without influencing them in any way (Oso & Onen, 2009). The main use of descriptive research design was to provide an accurate and valid representation of a situation as it naturally occurs, and summarize the variables that are relevant to the research objectives (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Therefore, this research design helped the researcher to collect data, describe and document aspects of the principals' transformational leadership practice of inspirational motivation on students' academic performance KCSE examinations in Mbooni West Sub-county (2011-1015) years.

#### 4.2 Population and sample size

The target population for this study constituted 42 public secondary schools and 595 teachers (Mbooni West Sub-county, Education Director, 2016) report. This study found Pagano Gauvreau formula (2000) suitable to compute number of schools' and teachers' samples sizes respectively. The researcher randomly selected 38 schools representing 90 per cent of the schools' target population and 266 teachers representing 45 per cent of the teachers' target population.

#### 4.3 Instrumentation

The research adopted and modified a template from Multifactor Leadership questionnaires (MLQ Form 5X) (Bass & Avolio, 1995), which is broadly applicable to a wide range of organizational leadership situations where there is responsibility to influence the actions of others. Besides,

focus groups discussion guides, interviews, and document analysis guide were used to enhance confidence in research findings by triangulation of sources and instruments. There were two questionnaires, one for teachers and the other for the principals. Each questionnaire consisted five items based on a five-point Likert scale answered as 5- strongly agree, 4- agree, 3-Not decided, 2-disagree, 1-strongly disagree to measure principals' transformational leadership practice of inspirational motivation. Higher scores of 4 to 5 indicate high and strong transformational leadership practice (TLP) of inspirational motivation by the school principal, whereas a 3 to 3.99 indicated moderate practice of inspirational motivation and below 3 scores indicated low and weak leadership practice by the school principal. Testing hypothesis in tune with the leadership practice was done at alpha value of 0.05 or 0.01 level of significance.

#### 4.4 Data analysis

Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used for data analysis. Quantitative data from the questionnaires was coded and entered into the computer using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 21.0) program for descriptive statistics analysis on leadership practice of inspirational motivation by calculating frequencies, percentages, Means, and Standard deviations of the data. The results were presented in form of tables. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation of Coefficient (PPMC) referred to as Pearson's r was used to test if relationships exist or does not exist between inspirational motivation and students' academic performance at KCSE examinations tested at alpha value 0.05 or 0.01 levels of significance (Orodho, 2005; Goodman, 2008; Orodho, Khatete & Mugiraneza, 2016).

### 5. Study Findings and Discussion

#### Influence of Inspirational Motivation on Students' Academic Performance at Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examinations

Inspirational motivation (IM) enables the school principal build and share a school vision that generates enthusiasm and commitment of all teachers and students in the school. It is worth noting that, principal's vision provides framework, and challenge teachers and students with high standards. Therefore, the school principal communicates optimism about future goals, and provides meaning for the task at hand. This develops a collaborative school culture that enhance partnership learning environment towards good students' academic performance in all classes in the school.

This practice had 5- items to measure using the scale: 5- strongly agree, 4-agree, 3-Not decided, 2-disagree, 1- strongly disagree. Both principals and teachers used the same items and scale. Higher scores of 4 to 5 indicate high and strong leadership practice of inspirational motivation by the school principal. Whereas 3 to 3.99 indicate moderate leadership practice and below 3 scores indicate low and weak leadership practice of inspirational motivation by the school principal in public secondary schools. Table 5.1 shows principals responses on inspirational motivation in public secondary schools.

**Table 5.1: Principals' Responses on Inspirational Motivation**

As a principal I:-			5	4	3	2	1	Total
1	Provide school vision that has a lot of influence on syllabus coverage resulting to good students' academic performance.	f	13	24	1	-	-	38
		%	34.2	63.2	2.6	-	-	100
2	Provide meaning for the tasks at hand focusing on what teachers should be doing for students' improved performance.	f	13	24	1	-	-	38
		%	34.2	63.2	2.6	-	-	100
3	Encourage teachers to work as a team to improve students' academic standards in the school.	f	26	10	1	-	-	37
		%	70.3	27.0	2.7	-	-	100
4	Demonstrate optimism which encourages teachers to be optimistic in teaching processes.	f	14	16	7	-	-	37
		%	37.8	43.2	18.9	-	-	100
5	Symbolize success within the teaching career.	f	11	13	12	1	-	37
		%	29.7	35.1	32.4	2.7	-	100

**NB:** f stands for frequency.  
 % stands for percent.

Table 5.1 shows five items measuring inspirational motivation. On item one, majority 63.2% of the principals agreed that, they had provided school visions that has a lot of influence on syllabus to enhance students' academic performance at KCSE examinations in schools although 2.6% of the principals were not sure whether the schools have vision or not. On item two, majority 63.2% of the principals stated that, they provide meaning for the tasks at hand focusing on what teachers should do towards good students' academic performance in schools but 2.6% were not able to do so.

Considering item three, majority 70.3% of the principals strongly agreed that, they had been encouraging teachers to work as a team to improve students' academic standards in the schools; however 2.7% were not sure whether they do so or not. After principals rated item four, 43.2% accepted that, they demonstrate optimism in schools which encourages teachers to be optimistic in teaching processes to improve students' performance in KCSE examinations.

The last item measuring inspirational motivation shows that, 35.1% of the principals agreed to be a symbol of success within the teaching career while 2.7% were not sure whether they symbolize success in their schools or not. Table 5.2 gives mean summaries of principals' responses on inspirational motivation.

**Table 5.2: Principals' means on Inspirational Motivation**

As a principal I :-		N	M	SD	CM
1	Provide school vision that has a lot of influence on syllabus coverage resulting to good students' academic performance.	38	4.32	.53	
2	Provide meaning for the tasks at hand focusing on what teachers should be doing for students' improved performance.	38	4.32	.53	
3	Encourage teachers to work as a team to improve students' academic standards in the school.	37	4.68	.53	
4	Demonstrate optimism which encourages teachers to be optimistic in teaching processes.	37	4.19	.74	
5	Symbolize success within the teaching career	37	3.92	.86	4.27

**NB:** N denotes number of participants; M denotes mean; SD denotes standard deviations, and CM denotes cumulative mean.

Table 5.2 shows how principals perceived practice of inspirational motivation in schools. Therefore, principals specified that, inspirational motivation was well exhibited in schools with most of its items with a mean above 4 scores thus, 4.32; 4.32; 4.68; 4.19, and 3.92. The standard deviations were .53; .53; .53; .74, and .86 respectively giving an overall mean of 4.27 and standard deviation of 0.64. These findings indicate that, principals enormously perceived inspirational motivation in schools was high and strong with an overall mean of 4.27 scores. According to these findings, principals had mostly encouraged teachers to work as a team to improve students' academic standards in schools.

Further, teachers' had their own views on how principals practice inspirational motivational in public secondary schools which is shown in Table 5.3

**Table 5.3: Teachers' Responses on Inspirational Motivation**

The principal :-			5	4	3	2	1	Total
1	Provides school vision that has a lot of influence on syllabus coverage resulting to good students' academic performance.	f	102	80	16	11	2	211
		%	47.7	37.4	7.5	5.6	1.8	100
2	Provides meaning for the tasks at hand focusing on what teachers should be doing for students' improved performance.	f	59	113	27	11	-	210
		%	27.7	54.0	12.7	5.7	-	100
3	Encourages teachers to work as a team to improve students' academic standards in the school.	f	56	115	23	10	7	211
		%	26.2	55.1	10.7	4.7	3.3	100
4	Demonstrates optimism which encourages teachers to be optimistic in teaching processes.	f	58	102	34	11	6	211
		%	27.6	47.7	16.4	5.6	2.8	100
5	Symbolizes success within the teaching career.	f	56	95	32	12	12	207
		%	26.7	45.7	15.3	6.2	6.2	100

Table 5.3 shows that, in item one, it is worth noting teachers had variation thus, strongly agree to strongly disagree which differs from principals' perception. Majority 47.7% of teachers strongly agreed that principals had provided school visions in schools which had a lot of influence on syllabus coverage resulting to good students' academic performance at KCSE examination, whereas 1.8% strongly disagreed to have school visions.

On item two, majority 54.0% of the teachers agreed that, principal provides meaning for the tasks at hand focusing on what teachers should be doing for students' improved performance but 5.7% disagreed. When teachers rated item three, there was spread variation whereby majority 55.1% of teachers agreed that, principals encourage teachers to work as a team to improve students' academic standards in the schools and 3.3% strongly disagreed.

Looking at item four, majority 47.7% of the teachers agreed that, principals demonstrate optimism which encourages teachers to be optimistic in teaching processes toward good students' KCSE performance and 2.8% strongly disagreed. Considering item five, majority of the teachers 45.7% of the teachers agreed that, principals symbolize success within the teaching career which enhances students' performance at KCSE examinations though 6.2% strongly disagreed. Table 5.4 shows teachers mean summaries on inspirational motivation.

**Table 5.4:** Teachers' means on Inspirational Motivation

The principal :-		N	M	SD	CM
1	Provides school vision that has a lot of influence on syllabus coverage resulting to good students' academic performance.	211	3.96	.93	
2	Provides meaning for the tasks at hand focusing on what teachers should be doing for students' improved performance.	210	4.05	.78	
3	Encourages teachers to work as a team to improve students' academic standards in the school.	211	4.28	.89	
4	Demonstrates optimism which encourages teachers to be optimistic in teaching processes.	211	3.93	.95	
5	Symbolizes success within the teaching career	207	3.84	1.08	4.01

It is worth noting in Table 5.4 that, there is considerable variation between teachers' perceptions on how Principals practice inspirational motivation in public secondary schools. The means for the five items were 3.96; 4.05; 4.28; 3.93 and 3.84. The standard deviations were .93; .78; .89 and 1.80 respectively. Therefore, inspirational motivation had an overall mean of 4.01 indicating high and strong leadership practice by the schools' principals. Under inspirational motivation, teachers mostly indicated that, school principals had mostly encouraged teachers to work as a team to improve students' academic standards in public secondary schools.

Reports from the majority 63.2 % of the students' focus groups indicated that, inspirational motivation was moderately practised in public secondary schools. This was mostly done by the schools' principals encouraging students to be focused and have good vision on what to do at school in order to be successful in their studies.

The TSC director indicated that, schools' principals lack knowledge on how to practice inspirational motivation at schools. Further, he stated that all public secondary schools in the Sub-county had good visions but majority of schools' KCSE performances of (2011-2015) years were low

compared to Makueni County and the National KCSE index. The Sub-county education director stated that, although schools' principals had established schools visions but students' KCSE performance was low compared to National and County KCSE results analyses (2011-2015) years. This implies that, they were not effective in their work to inspire and lead both teachers and students towards good students' performance at national examinations.

In these findings, both principals and teachers had the same range with Mbithi's (2014) findings with overall mean over 4 scores indicating high and strong inspirational motivation. The study results of Mbithi (2014) on IM was found grand mean of 4.76 and SD 0.34. According to Mbithi's results, the participants perceived top leadership in Kenyan universities as leaders who talk optimistically about the future of their universities. This results into increased individuals' motivation and consequently increased organizational performance. These findings were different from: Saxe (2011) findings who found moderate inspirational motivation. Saxe (2011) results indicate that, IM has a mean of 3.55 and SD of 0.48, and advocate that, the ability of the school leader to manage and recognize bigger picture can lead to meaningful reforms efforts and positive school outcomes. Also, Bekele and Darshan (2011) found moderate practice of inspirational motivation. Bekele and Darshan (2011) findings reflected moderate IM with overall mean of 3.65 and SD of 0.84, and support that, leaders who practice IM communicate a vision with fluency and confidence, increasing optimism and enthusiasm, and giving interesting talks that energize subordinates. Further, Khasawneh, Omari and Abu-Tineh (2009) results show that, IM is moderately practiced and applied by Jordanian schools' principals.

**Hypotheses testing**

H<sub>01</sub>. There is no significant relationship between principals' practice of inspirational motivation in public secondary schools and learners' performance at Kenya certificate of secondary education.

HA1. There is significant relationship between principals' practice of inspirational motivation in public secondary schools and learners' performance at Kenya certificate of secondary education.

Pearson's Product Moment Correlation of Coefficient (PPMC) referred to as Pearson's r was used for testing whether relationship exist or does not exist between principals' practice of *inspirational motivation* in public secondary schools and students' performance at KCSE at alpha value 0.01/0.05 level of significance (Orodho, 2005; Orodho, Khatete & Mugiraneza, 2016). The outcomes are shown in Table 5.5.

**Table 5.5:** Hypotheses testing on inspirational motivation and students' academic performance at KCSE examinations

		Combined mean	Principals' Inspirational Motivation Mean
Combined mean	Pearson Correlation		.194**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.005
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			
N=206			

According to Table 5.5, a positive and significant relationship was found ( $r(204) = 0.194, P < 0.05$ ). Therefore a high score in the principals' inspirational motivation was associated with high overall mean scores for the schools. The null hypothesis was rejected and alternative hypothesis adopted (Goodman, 2008; Orodho, Khatete & Mugiraneza, 2016). This translates that, the practice of inspirational motivation by principals in public secondary schools lead to improved students' academic performance at KCSE examinations.

These findings concur with study findings by Khasawneh, Omari and Abu-Tineh (2009) who found that IM had a positive and significant relationship in secondary schools in Jordan. Further, these findings are supported by findings by Mascall (2007) and Lorgwell-Mckean (2012) who found that, the practice of IM assist schools' leaders in connecting subordinates to the meaningful work. This leads to the teachers' growth and improved students' performance.

### Hypothesis testing

H<sub>02</sub>. There is no significant influence between principals' demographic variables and leadership practice of inspirational motivation in public secondary schools.

HA<sub>2</sub>. There is significant influence between principals' demographic variables and leadership practices of inspirational motivation in public secondary schools.

Therefore, t-test was used to determine whether principals' demographic variables influence differently leadership practice of inspirational motivation. The results shown no significant difference influences found. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted (Goodman, 2008; Orodho, Khatete & Mugiraneza, 2016). This implies that, gender and age does not influence leadership practice of inspirational motivation in public secondary schools.

## 6. Conclusions

### Inspirational Motivation

The study findings revealed that, inspirational motivation had a positive and significant relationship at alpha value 0.01 level of significance, ( $r(204) = 0.194, P < 0.05$ ). This translates that, the practice of inspirational motivation (IM) by principals in public secondary schools lead to improved students' academic performance at KCSE examinations. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and alternative hypothesis adopted. Further, both principals and teachers concurred that, inspirational motivation was high in public secondary schools. This was demonstrated by principals mostly encouraging teachers to work as a team to improve students' academic standards in schools. Furthermore, students' focus groups discussion (FGD) expressed that, inspirational motivation was moderately practised in public secondary schools. Then, both the TSC director and the Education Director of the Sub-county indicated that, principals in public schools' lack knowledge on how to practice inspirational motivation.

Therefore, findings from both principals and teachers concurred with Mbithi's (2014) study findings in Kenya which shown that, inspirational motivation was highly practiced by top leadership in Kenyan universities.

However, both principals and teachers findings differed with findings by Khasawneh, Omari and Abu-Tineh (2009) in Jordan which shown that, inspirational motivation was moderately practiced and applied by Jordanian schools' principals which agreed with the students' focus groups discussion.

### Principals' Demographic Variables

The findings shown no significant influence of gender and age found on the leadership practice of inspirational motivation in public secondary schools.

## 7. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher found it necessary to make recommendations that may be important to the Ministry of Education, Directorate of Quality Assurance, Universities and teachers' training colleges, and Principals.

### Ministry of Education

From policy perspective, a sound policy that enhances students' academic performance at KCSE examinations should be well placed. Further, a well-defined criterion is needed on how to assess, promote and appoint competent schools' principals because many are lacking.

### The Directorate of Quality Assurance

There is need for regular visit to public secondary schools to oversee the progress of curriculum implementation. Organize leadership capacity building to the practicing schools' principals on transformational leadership practices which are globally associated with successful schools, majority lack the knowledge.

### Universities and teachers' training colleges

Given that, transformational leadership practices (TLP) can be taught and learned across higher learning institutions, design curriculum and ensure that, they are comprehensively well structured and trained to all teacher trainees.

### Principals

There is need to attend workshops and training courses to be updated with the most competitive leadership practices. Further, ensure schools have well strategic planning on implementation of school curriculum to enhance quality teaching that leads to desired results at KCSE examinations.

## 8. Suggestions for Further Research

Future research should include larger sample sizes of principals and teachers from a variety of schools' settings. Thus, influence of principals' transformational leadership practices on teachers' commitment in public secondary schools.

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