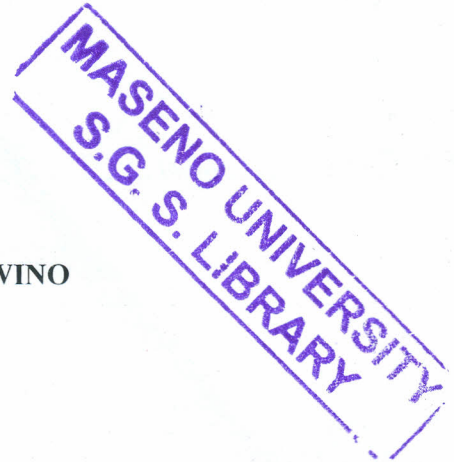


**PERCEPTIONS OF SELECTED STAKEHOLDERS ON INFLUENCE OF
PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP STYLES ON PARTICIPATION OF FEMALE
STUDENTS IN EDUCATION IN MIXED DAY SECONDARY SCHOOLS
IN RACHUONYO SOUTH SUB COUNTY, KENYA**

BY

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
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ABSTRACT

The principal has a responsibility of enhancing students' participation in terms of enrolment, attendance and completion in secondary education. Worldwide, studies have shown that principals use different leadership styles which are perceived to enhance student participation in secondary education. In USA, Pakistan and Uganda, studies have revealed that principals use democratic, autocratic and *laissez-faire* leadership styles to enhance student participation in education. Principals in Kenya, Rachuonyo South Sub-County inclusive, use the three leadership styles. However, girls' participation in Rachuonyo South was as low as 38.45% from 2006 to 2013 while boys' was 61.55%. The dropout rate for girls for the same period was 17.1% and boys' 8.93% yet both gender were under the administration of the same principals using the same leadership styles. Therefore, the purpose of the study was to establish the perceptions of selected stakeholders on influence of principals' leadership styles on participation of female students in mixed day secondary schools in Rachuonyo South Sub County. Objectives of the study were to; establish the perceptions of selected stakeholders on the influence of democratic leadership style, ascertain selected stakeholders' perceptions on the influence of autocratic leadership style and determine selected stakeholders' perceptions on the influence of *laissez-faire* leadership style on girls' participation in mixed public day secondary schools in Rachuonyo South Sub County. A conceptual framework was used to focus on the variables of the study; perceptions on principals' leadership styles as the independent variable and participation of female students as the dependent variable. The study adopted descriptive survey design. The study population comprised 62 principals, 640 teachers, 6588 female students and 1 Sub County Director of Education (SCDE). 31 principals, 64 teachers and 378 students were selected through simple random sampling and 1 SCDE using saturated sampling. Data collection instruments comprised questionnaire and interview schedule. Reliability of instruments was established through a test-retest method in 6 (10%) schools not involved in the main study. Pearson r was 0.74 for principals, 0.82 for teachers and 0.79 for students set at p-value of 0.05 which means they were reliable. Face and content validity of instruments was determined by including input from the experts in educational administration. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics in form of frequency counts, means and percentages. Qualitative data was transcribed and analyzed in emergent themes and sub themes. The study established that democratic leadership style had very high influence of 5.0 while Autocratic and *Laissez-faire* leadership styles had low influence of 3.0 and 3.3 respectively on participation of female students in secondary education in mixed day secondary schools. This means that democratic leadership style encouraged enrolment and reduced girls' drop out in secondary education participation. The study concluded that democratic leadership style was the most appropriate for enhancement of girls' participation in secondary education. The study recommended that principals should adopt democratic leadership practices and minimize use of autocratic or *laissez-faire* styles to improve on girls' participation. The study provides an insight to education stakeholders on dealing with the challenge of female students' participation in secondary education.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Through leadership styles, principals have a fundamental responsibility to ensure student academic achievement, motivation and participation in education. Pont, Nusche and Moorman (2008) and Price Waterhouse Coopers - PWC (2007) posit that school leadership is a priority in education policy internationally and plays a key role in improving school and student outcomes by influencing motivation, the school climate and equity. Fullan (2007) and Zame, Hope and Repress (2008) concur that the principal's leadership style is the key factor in determining success. Head teachers as implementers of government policies are well placed to enhance girl child participation in mixed day secondary schools (Dawo and Simatwa, 2010). Thus, their style of leadership is important since it affects the school's tone either positively or adversely.

The role of leadership in enhancing student attendance of school is supported by Ouma (2007) who assessed factors influencing enrolment and retention rates in public secondary schools in Rachuonyo South. Ogwara (2006) studied factors influencing enrolment and completion rates of students, particularly girls in public secondary schools in Rigoma Division of Kisii South District and established that the rates of form one enrolment and form four completion were very low due to among other things, school leadership. These views are replicated by Omare (2007) whose study that focused on challenges facing the girl child in attempts to access secondary education in Suneka, Kisii found that leadership contributed highly to enrolment and retention of girls in secondary schools. According to PWC (2007), student participation can be enhanced through principals' leadership styles.

Although there are a range of leadership styles, MOE (2008a) opines that probably one or two of them will be dominant for a particular head teacher who must be prepared to use various leadership styles in different situations in order to succeed. According to Oyetunji (2006), Pont *et. al.* (2008) and Samawati *et. al.* (2011), three leadership styles; democratic, autocratic and *laissez-faire* are mostly used in schools thus the need to find their impact on female student participation in secondary education. Therefore, this study aimed at establishing selected stakeholders perceptions on influence of principals' application of the three leadership styles on female student participation in education in mixed day secondary schools in Rachuonyo South Sub County. Perceptions were considered for the study because they lead to action thus are very important. The stakeholders were principals, teachers and students.

Davis (2006) who researched on democratic understanding in primary schools in England opines that democratic leadership is the style in which the leader has complete confidence and trust in the subordinates. Therefore, he allows subordinates to make decisions themselves. Likewise, he motivates by reward for achieving goals set by participants, shares ideas and opinions and is open to challenge. PWC (2007) did a study on school leadership in England and Wales using case study design to determine suitable leadership styles for improved school environments given that the role of school leaders had become more challenging and their behavior had great impact on student performance and found that democratic leadership style enhanced greater participation. These views are contradicted by Huka (2003) whose study on Head teachers' management styles in relation to student performance in K.C.S.E in South Tetu found that principals' use of democratic leadership style was not productive in examinations.

Olasoko (2012) studied the influence of various leadership styles on school performance in Osun state, Nigeria using a descriptive survey, by random sampling 50 secondary schools and fifty principals. Data was collected using questionnaires and analyzed using Chi square thus concluding that democratic leadership style affected student and school performance positively and motivated teachers to work with principals towards the achievement of school objectives. These studies are consistent with Mumbe's (2005) findings that democratic leadership style affected positively students' academic achievement and school performance and Odewumni (2008) who researched on the impact of principals' leadership styles on secondary school performance in Nigeria. The study by Olasoko (2012) used only one instrument which may not have been accurate hence its weakness. The reviewed studies by Davis (2006) addressed democratic leadership in relation to participation of pupils in primary schools while PWC (2007) related it to environment and Olasoko (2012) to performance.

Kuloba's (2010) study on leadership styles and teacher performance in secondary schools in Nakaseke district, Uganda revealed that head teachers' involvement of those they are in charge of in decision making, direct communication and delegation of duties enhanced performance and reduced turn over. This is consistent with Jebiwott (2014) who researched on effects of Head teachers' leadership styles on students discipline in secondary schools in Koibatek sub county, Kenya using a descriptive survey design which targeted Head teachers, teachers and students from all the 40 schools. The sample was selected through stratified proportionate random sampling for 5 single sex schools and 15 mixed schools with 10% of the students being in form 3. Sixty teachers and 20 head teachers were selected for interviews. Questionnaires, interview schedule and document analysis guide were used to collect data. Analysis employed descriptive statistics techniques with frequency tables and charts and chi square to test the hypothesis. The

strength of this study was triangulation applied in data collection which led to credible results. Huka (2003) whose study on Head teachers' management styles in relation to student performance in K.C.S.E in South Tetu and Wangui (2007) who investigated how leadership styles affected performance in public secondary schools in Mathioya Division, Muranga District, found that principals' use of democratic leadership style was not productive in examinations. These studies by Kuloba (2010) and Jebiwott (2014) addressed issues of teacher performance and student discipline.

Whereas the reviewed studies by Davis (2006) addressed democratic leadership in relation to primary school participation, PWC (2007) in relation to school environment and Olasoko (2012) to performance, Kuloba (2010) and Jebiwott (2014) addressed issues of teacher outcomes and student discipline. These studies did not address perceptions of selected stakeholders on influence of principals' democratic leadership style on female students' participation in education in mixed day secondary schools in Rachuonyo South Sub County. This is the knowledge gap this study attempted to fill.

On autocratic leadership, Yulk (2005) explains that it portrays the manager as an authoritarian leader who uses force to get things done, sets goals for the school, demands compliance without explaining the reason behind them and uses threats and punishment to instill fear in subjects. It is characterized with fear and mistrust. The study by Olasoko (2012) on the influence of leadership styles on academic achievement in Nigeria supported the findings that principals who use strict control measures are likely to face students and teachers resistance and indiscipline because teachers and students tend to protest against dictatorial measures, leading to exclusion from school. Autocratic leadership style had a negative influence on students' academic achievement.

Nsubuga (2008) analysed four leadership styles against secondary school performance in Uganda using a correlation design. The sample comprised of 625 respondents: 10 Education officials, 24 Head teachers, 40 parents, 200 teachers and 351 students using questionnaires, interviews and document review. Quantitative data was analyzed using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient while qualitative data done through semi structured interviews were tape recorded and transcribed according to themes and categorized. The study found that students hate harsh administrators which makes their academic records decline tremendously hence did not vouch for autocratic leadership style. These findings concur with Mbogori (2012) whose study on leadership and discipline found that autocratic leadership style led to indiscipline in secondary schools but are contradicted by Wangui (2007) who found that autocratic style produced better results. The strength of this study was in the use of different categories of respondents and triangulation of sampling, data collection and analysis techniques which validated the results.



Chege (2012) studied the influence of Head teachers' leadership style and discipline in public secondary schools in Nairobi County using descriptive survey. The study population was derived from 60 schools where 22 Head teachers, 66 teachers and 99 prefects were sampled to respond to questionnaires. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze data. It concluded that use of authoritarian leadership style which was dominant, had a positive influence on student discipline. This position is supported by Nyabanyaba (2010) who used a multiple case study design and sampled 2 districts in Lesotho and 103 participants using saturation and purposive non random sampling with interviews schedule for data collection. Muli (2005) and Karori, Mulewa, Ombuki and Migosi (2013) found that autocratic head teachers scored higher mean scores than democratic ones in

examinations. Chege (2012) missed out on views of the majority who are the students and could not corroborate the information on the questionnaires since it did not have another instrument while Nyabanyaba (2010) is not clear on the categories of respondents. The two studies by Chege(2012) and Nyabanyaba (2010) are consistent with Huka (2003) who emphasizes the need for control to achieve organizational aims thus vouching for the use of autocratic style to achieve school aims. However, Njagi (2012) who focused on the influence of Head teachers' leadership style on students' discipline found that autocratic style negatively influenced student discipline. The reviewed studies related leadership to discipline (Chege, 2012) and orphans and vulnerable children (Nyabanyaba, 2010).

The study by Olasoko (2012) and Odewumni (2008) addressed autocratic leadership in relation to students' academic achievement. Nsubuga (2008) studied democratic leadership in relation to school performance and Nyabanyaba (2010) access and retention of orphans and vulnerable children and the youth while Chege (2012) and Njagi (2012) related it to student discipline. What was unknown was the perceptions of selected stakeholders on influence of principals' autocratic leadership style on participation of female students in education in mixed day secondary schools in Rachuonyo Sub County. This is the knowledge gap this study tried to fill.

According to Yulk (2005) *laissez-faire* which is also known as free-rein leadership style empowers subordinates to work with freedom and free-will. The manager gives almost all authority to subordinates. There is no person of authority in the organization. The manager does not make decisions but abides by popular decisions and doesn't set goals and objectives which may lead to digression from broad organizational policy. *Laissez-faire* leadership style allows neglect and lack of follow up on activities, which may water down

concerns towards effective academic achievements. This position is supported by MacDonald (2007) in Ochiel (2010) who associated it with the highest rates of truancy, absence, turnover and slowest modifications in performance which leads to unproductive attitudes and disempowerment of subordinates.

Willian (2003) researched qualitatively on leadership influence on attendance and retention in primary schools in Petite parish, Grenada using a case study design with a sample of 10 schools and 1 Head teacher, 3 teachers, 3 parents and 25 students per school. Interviews were used to collect data which was analyzed in terms of themes and sub themes. The study concluded that *laissez-faire* style was most preferred since it improved attendance and retention by 43% and 39% respectively. Sadiq (2007) studied the effect of leadership styles on girls' attendance of secondary schools in Koulikoro, Mali using a descriptive survey design in 23 schools. The sample comprised of 19 Head teachers, 19 guidance and counseling teachers, 19 form 4 class teachers who responded to questionnaire items and 357 students whose responses were captured through focus group discussions. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze data besides coding and categorizing qualitative data into themes and sub themes. The study found that *laissez-faire* leadership style enhanced female student participation in a community that had little room for democratic and autocratic styles. Both Willian (2003) and Sadiq (2007) used only one instrument which denied room for corroboration of information. The single head teacher sampled by Willian (2003) was not adequate for research generalization. However, the studies are consistent with Wangui (2007), Ouya and Mwelesi (2010) and Chege (2012) who opine that this style may help to build team harmony, increase morale and results and improve communication or trust.

On the contrary, Olasoko (2012) who used descriptive survey design, questionnaires and random sampled 50 secondary schools and fifty principals with Chi square analyzed data concluded that *Laissez-faire* leadership style had no significant influence on student academic achievement. Principals who use this style tend to fail to follow up on those they have delegated tasks to and consequently performance declines. Thus it is not the best style to use in a school organization because complete delegation without follow up mechanisms may create achievement, discipline and attendance problems which are likely to affect the schools' effectiveness. The reviewed studies focused on achievement and attendance and had conflicting positions as some supported while others rejected use of *laissez-faire style*.

Karori, et, al. (2013) studied effects of head teachers' leadership styles on the performance of examinations in public primary schools in Kikuyu district using an ex-post facto design in all the 27 primary schools in the district. Twenty seven head teachers and 154 teachers were randomly sampled from the 27 primary schools. Responses were obtained using questionnaires. Descriptive, inferential statistics and ANOVA were used in data analysis. The findings revealed that there was a significant relationship between head teachers' leadership styles and students' academic performance. Specifically, they found that *laissez-faire* style contributed to indiscipline and poor performance in examinations. This study did not include students among the respondents yet they were the focus of the study hence results were not ascertained by the key beneficiaries of the head teachers' leadership styles.

The study by Willian (2008) addressed primary school attendance and retention; Sadiq (2007) addressed democratic leadership in relation to girls' attendance of secondary school, Olasoko (2012) and Karori, et.al (2013) on school performance in primary and

secondary schools while Chege (2012) and Njagi (2012) related *laissez-faire leadership* to student discipline. What was unknown was the selected stakeholders' perception on influence of *laissez-faire* principals' leadership style on female students' participation in education in mixed public day secondary schools in Rachuonyo South Sub County. The knowledge gap this study sought to fill.

In Kenya, girl child participation in secondary education is low. This is supported by Dawo and Simatwa (2010) who in their study on opportunities and challenges for mixed day secondary school head teachers in promoting girl-child education and Abwalaba (2011) who studied gender budgeting as an instrument for educational attainment in Kenya, noted that despite Government of Kenya's commitment to enhancement of girl child education and increased total enrollment, girls' participation rate at secondary level is very low and significant regional and gender disparities exist in favour of males. Shiundu (2008) notes that in Central and Western Kenya, female student enrolment surpasses or is equal to that of males.

In Rachuonyo South Sub County low girl child participation and high dropout prevail as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Rachuonyo South Mixed Day Secondary School: Enrolment, Completion and Dropout for the years 2006 to 2013

Cohort	Entry				Completion				Drop out	
	M	%	F	%	M	%	F	%	M%	F%
2006/2009	2436	60.67	1579	39.33	2192	63.13	1280	36.87	10	19
2007/2010	2549	62.40	1536	37.60	2380	64.80	1293	35.20	6.63	19
2008/2011	2575	61.65	1602	38.35	2333	65.02	1255	34.98	9.39	21.7
2009/2012	2613	61.23	1648	38.77	2513	62.98	1477	37.02	3.83	10.38
2010/2013	2724	61.68	1692	38.32	2327	60.005	1373	36.995	14.57	18.85
TOTAL	12897	61.55*	8057	39.45*	11745	63.75*	6678	36.25*	8.93*	17.11*

Source: SCDEs Office, Rachuonyo South, 2014

KEY: M= Male, F= Female, %= Percentage, * = Average percentage

As shown in Table 1, enrolment of girls at Form 1 is one third of the student population. Statistics at Rachuonyo South SCDE's office, 2014, indicate that for the years 2006 to 2010 population of boys to girls stood at a ratio of 2:1 (61.55% and 39.45% respectively). At the end of the four year cycle, fewer girls (36.25% or 6,678) completed Form 4 as compared to the boys (63.75% or 11,745). The average dropout percentage for girls was 17.11% while that for boys was 8.93% unlike in Rachuonyo North and Homa Bay Sub Counties where it was 12.73% and 9.08% for girls and 8.28% and 8.29% for boys respectively (SCDE, Rachuonyo South) hence the concern about girls' participation. Mixed public day secondary schools were used because they had the largest female population and comprised 62 out of the 74 schools in Rachuonyo South. Furthermore, there were only 4 pure public girls' boarding schools which were not sufficient for the study. This means that most girl students are enrolled in mixed day secondary schools. It was therefore necessary to conduct a study to establish the selected stakeholders' perceptions on the influence of principals' democratic, autocratic and *laissez faire* leadership styles on female student participation in secondary education in mixed day secondary schools in Rachuonyo South Sub County.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Low school enrolment is a global concern. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948 and Constitution of Kenya, 2010 uphold everyone's right to education. The Government of Kenya and Ministry of Education, Science and Technology policy is to ensure equal access to and completion of secondary education. The principals are empowered by the Ministry of Education Science and Technology to promote students' participation in secondary education. Principals do use democratic, autocratic and *laissez-faire* leadership styles to enhance the participation of students in secondary education. However, girls' participation in Rachuonyo South was as low as 38.45% from 2006 to 2013 while boys' was 61.55%. The dropout for girls for the same period was 17.1% and boys' 8.93% yet both gender were under the administration of the same principals using the same leadership styles. What was unknown was how principals' democratic, autocratic and *laissez-faire* leadership styles were perceived by principals, teachers and students as contributing to participation of girls 'in education in mixed day secondary schools of Rachuonyo South Sub County, Kenya.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to find out the perceptions of selected stakeholders on influence of principal's leadership styles on participation of female students in education in mixed day secondary schools in Rachuonyo South Sub County, Kenya.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study relating to mixed day secondary schools Rachuonyo South Sub County were to:

- i. Establish perceptions of selected stakeholders on influence of principals' democratic leadership style on participation of girls in education.

- ii. Ascertain perceptions of selected stakeholders on influence of principals' autocratic leadership style on participation of girls in education.
- iii. Determine perceptions of selected stakeholders on influence of principals' *laissez-faire* leadership style on participation of girls in education.

1.5 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following questions relating to secondary schools in Rachuonyo South Sub County:

- i. What are the perceptions selected stakeholders on the influence of principals' democratic leadership style on female students' participation in education in mixed public day secondary schools in Rachuonyo South Sub County?
- ii. What are the perceptions of selected stakeholders on the influence of principals' autocratic leadership style on female students' participation in education in mixed public day secondary schools in Rachuonyo South Sub County?
- iii. What are the perceptions of selected stakeholders on the influence of principals' *laissez-faire* leadership style on female students' participation in education in mixed public day secondary schools in Rachuonyo South Sub County?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study findings are useful:

- i. In providing an opportunity for assessment of the influence of principals' leadership styles on female students' participation in mixed secondary school education.
- ii. In exposing the leadership challenges principals face in enhancing girls' participation and providing suggestions on how principals can improve their leadership in schools.

- iii. In providing understanding regarding the principals' leadership behaviours and practices.
- iv. In enabling the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and teacher training institutions to develop and integrate leadership innovations in teacher training programmes.

1.7 Assumptions of the Study

The study was based on the following assumptions:

- i. Girls qualified to pursue secondary education up to completion.
- ii. Principals knew that leadership styles contribute towards enhancing a suitable environment for female students' participation in education.
- iii. All principals were experienced, trained, qualified and knowledgeable of various leadership styles.

1.8 Scope of the Study

The study covered mixed day secondary schools in Rachuonyo South Sub County in the period from 2006 to 2013, specifically the female student of 2006/2009, 2007/2010, 2008/2011, 2009/2012 and 2010/2013.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

Some respondents left out some information required in the questionnaire. To counter the repercussions of this, triangulation was applied by use of interview schedule and focus group discussions.

1.10 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework is based on the premise that the principal's leadership style is related to girls' participation in school. Yabash (2010) and Sekiwu (2011) opine that

leadership plays a key role in improving school climate and specifically, girls' access to secondary education. Fullan (2007) and MOE (1987) concur that the Principal has considerable responsibility being in charge of teachers and pupils who look to him for guidance and direction. According to Elizabeth (2008) in Shaharbi (2010), as schools become more complex and competitive, parents and students are guided by their success which is greatly determined by the school Principal. Zame, et al (2008) observe that principals draw on a number of leadership styles depending on the situation. Various principals use different leadership styles in their administration. Davies (2006) argues that democratic leadership style enhances girls' participation, Chege (2012) and Nyabanyaba (2010) vouch for autocratic while Willian (2003) and Sadiq (2007) believe that *laissez-faire* leadership best enhances girls' participation in secondary education.

Variables of the study are diagrammatically illustrated in Figure 1.

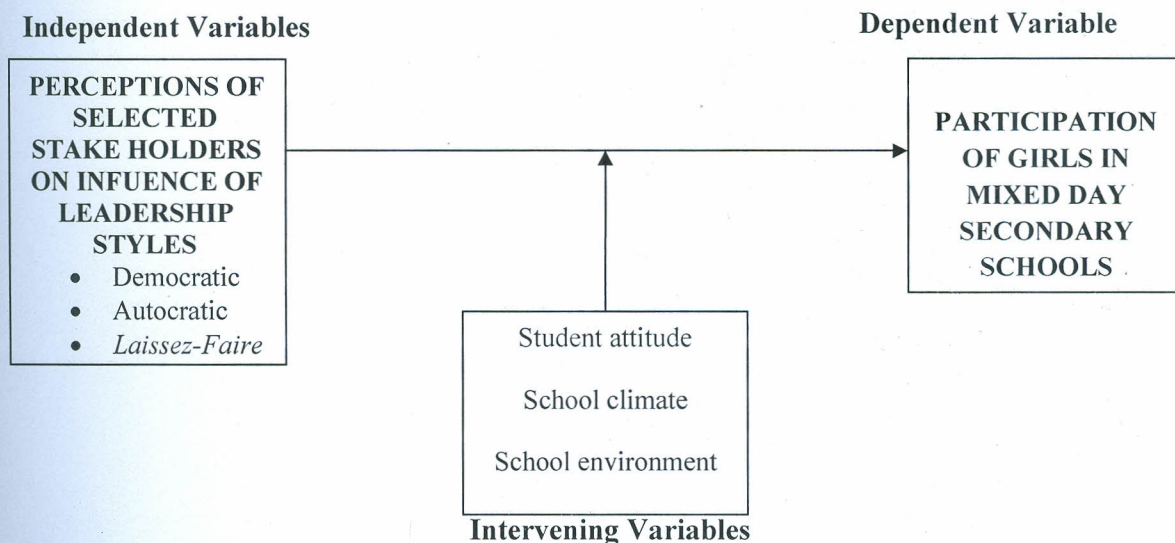


Figure 1: Conceptual framework showing Perceptions of Influence of Leadership Styles on Female Students' Participation in Secondary Education

The conceptual framework attempts to establish how the three leadership styles may influence participation of girls in mixed public day secondary schools through intervening variables whose outcome is participation. It is assumed that by using democratic

leadership style which allows participation in problem solving and decision making and distributes leadership, a conducive environment can be created that attracts girls to school; that autocratic style which involves a hands on policy by a principal, setting of strict norms and high standards of discipline, may give girls a befitting environment hence stay in school; *laissez faire* style which sets people free to determine their destiny, may raise girls' participation and reduce drop out. Therefore, the study assumed that leadership style (independent variable), determined the school climate that comprises of the principal's behaviour; relations with students, parents and staff, administrative approach, problem solving methods, nature of rules and students' attitudes (intervening variables) when dealing with students which eventually informs participation of girls in education.

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1.11 Operational Definition of Terms

- Autocratic Leadership Style** - A style in which the leader wields absolute authority, commands and is task oriented.
- Democratic Leadership Style** - A style in which the leader encourages everyone to participate in school affairs.
- Enrolment** - Total number of female students in a given school between 2006 and 2013 who enrolled at form 1 and exited at form 4.
- Laissez-faire Leadership Style** - A care free style of leadership. Decisions are made by individuals as they please not as per rules.
- Leadership styles** -The methods adopted by leaders in their administrative roles or ways of directing and coordinating the work and operations of staff and students.
- Leadership** - A process of influencing the activities of others towards achievement of goals.
- Participation** - Access, attendance and completion without dropping out.
- Perceptions** - What principals, teachers and students think, feel and do about influence of principals' leadership styles on participation of female students in mixed public day secondary school.
- Stakeholders** - Principals, teachers and students.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This section reviewed literature relevant to the study area thematically. Past studies done globally and in Kenya, journals, thesis, newspapers and books were examined and finally the gap in the literature considered under the following themes: (a) Perceptions of selected stakeholders on influence of principals' democratic leadership style on participation of girls in education, (b) Perceptions of selected stakeholders on influence of principals' autocratic leadership style on participation of girls in education, and (c) Perceptions of selected stakeholders on influence of principals' *laissez-faire* leadership style on participation of girls in education in mixed day secondary schools in Rachuonyo South Sub county, Kenya.

2.2 Perceptions of Selected Stakeholders on Influence of Principals' Democratic Leadership Style on Female Students' Participation in Secondary Education

School leadership plays a key role in improving school outcomes. It has strong influence on the school climate, culture, management and motivation of students. Head teachers are the ultimate leaders in a school. They have the capacity to influence issues and those under them positively or negatively, through their democratic leadership style, towards the achievement of educational goals and in particular, to ensure access, attendance and completion of school without dropping out, among other responsibilities.

According to Davis (2006) who researched on democratic understanding in primary schools in England, democratic-leadership is the style in which the leader has complete confidence and trust in the subordinates. Therefore, he allows subordinates to make decision themselves. Likewise, he motivates by reward for achieving goals set by

participants and shares ideas and opinions and is open to challenge. A democratic school thus endorses the rights enshrined in the UN convention of the Rights of the child to participate in the decisions that affect them. Haymon (2003) as cited in Muhammad, Khan and Maqbul (2010) found a positive relationship between leadership style and school climate in the elementary schools in Pakistan.

In the U.S, Hallam and Rogers (2008) case study on improving behaviour and attendance at school identified head teachers who operated non democratic leadership styles of administration as part of the reasons for exclusion of students from schools. They clearly identified the involvement of students, informed and honest discussions in the Behaviour Improvement Programme and effective visionary and transformational leadership as a reason for improved school attendance. Distributed leadership, shared beliefs, positive relations and good relationships between teachers and pupils based on mutual respect are key features of schools likely to have few behavioural problems (Kane et al, 2004 in Hallam & Rogers, 2008). Muhammad, et al (2010) concurred that democratic style is the most effective leadership style and an important resource input that plays its positive role in achieving academic goals. Wangui (2007) contradicts this as her study found that democratic style had lesser outcomes compared to autocratic style. The U.S study related leadership to behavior and attendance.

In a study done in Ghana and Tanzania on leadership and quality education, Oduro and Dachi (2008) found that democratic style enhanced the notion of instructional leadership as a means of supporting participation. Obondo, Nandago and Otiende (2005) studied school management in Ghana and found that participatory management was essential in order for stakeholders, students and children to play an effective role in jointly deciding priorities, designing interventions and monitoring the implementation of school plans and

budgets thereby improving the quality of education and attainment of Education for All (EFA) goals which includes girls' education hence greater participation. This position is supported by Kariuki (2012) whose study focused on the influence of head teachers' leadership styles on girl child achievement in primary schools in Kajiado North but contradicted by Huka (2003) who found in a study on head teachers' management style in relation to performance that democratic style was not as effective as autocratic leadership style. Obondo, et.al (2005) based their study on management practices and outcomes.

Nsubuga (2008) did a study on Analysis of Leadership Styles and secondary school performance using a correlation design. The sample comprised of 625 respondents: 10 Education officials, 24 Head teachers, 40 parents, 200 teachers and 351 students using questionnaires, interviews and document review. Quantitative data was analyzed using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient while qualitative data done through semi structured interviews were tape recorded according to themes and categorized. This study used different categories of respondents and triangulated sampling, data collection and analysis techniques which validated the results. The study found that democratic leadership style encourages everybody to participate in the affairs of the school as a whole. The findings are consistent with those of Uganda's Ministry of Education and Sports (2007b) that increase in demand for secondary education necessitates instituting responsible leadership in secondary schools which plays a major role in improving pupils' performance both in academic work and character. If the school teacher shows interest and commitment to involve parents and students, they are likely to come on board hence participate actively in school activities which help students realize their dreams. Nsubuga's (2008) focused on leadership styles and performance in Uganda.

Further, Okutu, Chumba, Saina and Kurgat (2011) researched on Head teacher's role in policy making in Kobujoi in Nandi County, Kenya using descriptive survey design with a population of 10 schools and a sample of 10 Head teachers chosen through purposive random sampling, 50 teachers and 300 students using questionnaires to collect data. The study revealed that there was a significant difference in respondents' perceptions of Head teachers' involvement of teachers, students and parents in policy making and performance. Ouya and Mwelesi (2010) whose study covered teacher management and curriculum in Kenya, concurred that democratic leadership involved inclusion of teachers and students' leaders in the decision making process. However, the Head teacher maintained the final decision making authority. Okutu, *et. al.* (2011) used a single instrument which was likely to miss out on some vital information. Though Huka's (2003) findings on head teachers' management styles in relation to performance in K.C.S.E contradict this, using this style allows mutual ownership and belongingness hence better decision making and participation.

Kariuki (2012) focused on the influence of head teachers' initiatives on girl child access to primary education in Kajiado North, Kenya using descriptive survey design with a sample of 70 Head teachers, 240 teachers and 384 students. Questionnaires were administered to the respondents and analyzed using descriptive statistics. It found that democratic style improved participation. Kuria (2012), who used an ex post facto design with interviews to determine the influence of democratic style using a sample of 20 schools, 20 principals and 80 teachers selected purposively, however, found that it had little influence on discipline. Muli (2005) also found that head teachers who used democratic leadership style produced lower results. However, Ochiel (2010) and Odewumni (2008) supported the findings of Kariuki (2012). This study did not triangulate instruments hence the

possibility of missing some vital information that respondents could not give easily but could be got through questionnaires.

The study by Hallam and Rogers (2008) in the US was on behaviour and attendance. Oduro and Dachi (2009) studied leadership in relation to quality education while Obondo, et.al (2011) related head teachers' leadership with participatory management. Okutu, et.al (2011) studied leadership in relation to policy making and Kuria (2012) to discipline. Kariuki (2012) related principals' leadership style to girl child access to primary schools. What was unknown was the selected stakeholders' perception on influence of democratic principals' leadership style on female students' participation in education in mixed public day secondary schools in Rachuonyo South Sub County. The knowledge gap this study sought to fill.

2.3 Perceptions of Selected Stakeholders on Influence of Principals' Autocratic Leadership Style on Female Students Participation in Secondary Education

Autocratic leadership style entails strict application of the law, rules and regulations as is given or written. According to Okumbe (1998) and Cherry (2009) in Omeke (2012), it is a style of leadership characterized by individual control over all decisions and little input from group members. Autocratic leaders typically make choices based on their own ideas and judgement, rarely accept advice from followers and issues express instructions.

Davies (2006) studied participation and behavior in primary schools in Liverpool and found that most girls felt that control was vital and discipline which included non-bullying, silence and improving concentration, was essential to their participation in school and their academics hence the value of autocratic leadership, an ingredient to student participation in school which McCrimmon (2007) concurred with. Muhammad, et

al, (2010) whose study was done in Punjab, Pakistan concluded that Autocratic leadership style may have some positive effects. The Head teacher who subscribes to this style of leadership determines school policy alone, gives directives and assigns duties to staff without consulting them. This style is acceptable in certain situations like in an emergency and when only the leader can make the decision. On the contrary, Hallam and Rogers (2008) did a study in US on improving behaviour and attendance at primary school and identified autocratic Head teachers as part of the reasons for exclusion of students from schools.

In Lesotho, Nyabanyaba (2010) used a multiple case study design to determine factors that influenced access and retention in secondary schooling for orphaned, vulnerable children and youths whose enrolment, attendance and retention were extremely low. The population was derived from 2 districts which also formed the study sample of 103 participants identified through saturation and purposive non-random sampling. In response to questionnaires, the participants indicated that though many strategies were in place, school interventions were greatly emphasized, particularly leadership. However, the study did not corroborate information gathered because it only used one instrument hence the possibility of bias. The study recommended use of hands on leadership style through which teachers and the administration would not only mark registers and determine absentees but also establish the cause, liaise with absentees' parents or guardians and resolve ways of making them return to and be present in school regularly. The method improved attendance. Kariuki (2012) contradicts this stand and encourages participation instead.

Omeke (2007) researched on the influence of school principals' leadership styles on secondary school teachers' job satisfaction in Nsuka, Nigeria using a descriptive survey

with a population of 280 class teachers identified through stratified random sampling. Questionnaires were used to acquire data which was analyzed using t-test for the hypothesis and descriptive statistics and cronbach alpha formula. This study found that principals adopted three leadership styles which was consistent with Mgobile's (2004) results. Both studies found that autocratic leadership had negative effects on satisfaction which is contradicted by Wangui (2007) who vouches for autocratic leadership as a way of achieving higher examination results. The limitation of Omeke's (2007) study is in the use of questionnaires alone which may not have given adequate and in depth information on the subject. An additional set of respondents should also have been used to confirm the position taken by the teachers.

In a study conducted in Ghana and Tanzania on leadership and quality education, Oduro and Dachi (2010) also rejected autocratic style which ensured that policies were respected and routines demonstrably observed hence did not attract people to organizations or enhance performance. Nsubuga (2008) as cited in Tarus (2009) argued that autocratic leaders were disliked by students who have low regard for them because they were domineering and less sensitive to their needs. It discouraged participation.

In Kenya, Maina (2012) investigated on the influence of principals' leadership style on discipline in secondary schools in South Tetu. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The target population was 1297 Form 3 students, 391 teachers and 23 school principals drawn from public secondary schools in the district. A sample of 13 schools was selected using simple stratified sampling technique, 67 teachers and 130 students from the sampled schools was selected using simple random sampling technique. Data was collected using questionnaires from teachers and students while data from the principals was collected using the interview method. The collected data was analyzed

using descriptive statistics and presented in percentages and frequency distribution tables using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 17.0. The study found that most secondary school principals in the district applied autocratic leadership style which was responsible for the discipline cases in the schools. Though the study had a wide array of respondents, use of form 3 students alone may have led to gathering biased information thus there was need to include other classes. Maina's (2012) view against autocracy is corroborated by Nkirote (2013) who found that autocratic style was the reason for poor performance in K.C.S.E in Nairobi County.

On the other hand, Kamurua (2012) researched on the influence of principals' leadership styles in establishing school climate in secondary schools in Malindi. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The target population was 17 public secondary schools, 202 teachers and 400 school prefects. A sample of 15 schools was selected using systematic random sampling technique, 15 Head teachers, 6 teachers per school totaling to 90 teachers and 150 prefects. Data was collected using questionnaires and interviews. The collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and presented in percentages and frequency distribution tables while qualitative data was transcribed into themes and sub themes and analyzed. The study found that in most of the secondary school principals in the district applied autocratic leadership style which Ouya and Mwelesi (2010) say may provide a degree of certainty for those beneath the leader who may feel safe because they do not have to be involved in solving problems. This study's strength was in the selection of a wide array of respondents and triangulation of instruments which validated the results of the study.

Chege (2012) studied the influence of Head teachers' leadership style and discipline in public secondary schools in Nairobi County using descriptive survey. The study population was derived from 60 schools where 22 Head teachers, 66 teachers and 99 prefects were sampled to respond to questionnaires. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze data. The study concluded that use of authoritarian leadership style which was dominant, had a positive influence on student discipline. While Nsubuga (2008) found that this style did not influence participation, Muli (2005) supported its use in enhancing higher performance in examinations. However, the study failed to capture other students who are the majority affected by disciplinary issues.

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Anyango (2007) studied the influence of Head teachers' leadership styles on academic performance in Mombasa using a descriptive survey design. The target population was all the 14 public secondary schools' head teachers and teachers. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 7 schools from which were selected 7 head teachers and 169 teachers who responded to questionnaires. Data was analyzed using t-test, correlations and descriptive statistics. The study found that Autocratic leadership style of school head teachers had an effect of 47.2% which was lower than 52.8% for democratic style on school performance in secondary schools. The undoing in this study was the use of questionnaires alone in gathering information which should have been corroborated using other instruments. The findings are consistent with those of MOE (2008b) which observed that where people are coerced, controlled, directed and threatened, individual initiative may be stifled and self-motivation may be discouraged. In schools, it may lead to low morale amongst both staff and pupils which may, in turn, become the root cause of strikes, riots, staff turnover and student exclusion. What was unknown was the perceptions of principals, teachers and students on influence of leadership styles on participation of

female students in mixed public day secondary school, the knowledge gap the study sought to fill.

The study by Davies (2006) addressed autocratic leadership in relation to pupils' participation in primary schools while Nyabanyaba (2010) was concerned with orphaned, vulnerable children and youths. Maina (2012) and Chege (2012) studied autocratic leadership in relation to student discipline as Kamurua researched on the climate it created in school and Anyango (2007), exam performance in secondary schools. What was unknown was the perceptions of principals, teachers and students on influence of leadership styles on participation of female students in mixed public day secondary school, the knowledge gap the study sought to fill.

2.4 Perceptions of Selected Stakeholders on Influence of *Laissez-faire* Leadership Style on Female Students' Participation in Secondary Education

According to Cherry (2009) in Omeke (2012), *Laissez-faire* leadership style refers to a system that is hands-off and carefree where the leader gives room to the subjects or subordinates to make own decisions as and when they wish. Researchers have found that this is the leadership style that leads to the lowest productivity among members. It is characterized by very little guidance from leaders, complete freedom for followers to make decisions and expectations that group members solve their problems on their own. KESI (2011) holds that a leader who uses this style of leadership believes that there should be no rules and regulations since everyone has an inborn sense of responsibility. Thus individuals have to think for themselves and individual initiative and hard work may be well rewarded.

Johnson, Fryer Smith, Phillips, Skowon, Sweet and Sweetman (2009) did case studies in the US on raising peoples aspirations using case study design and interview schedules for data collection. They sampled 17 case study schools and 6th form and 108 teachers. Data analysis was done by coding and categorizing qualitative information into themes and sub themes. The study found that among other things, many teachers used *laissez faire* style because they believed that it is largely up to the student to take initiative in choosing relevant progression routes. According to O'Hanlon and Clifton (2004) who investigated the relationship between *Laissez-faire* leadership behaviours of school principals in Australia public secondary schools and school learning environment, it had positive effects on a number of school learning climates. This study used only one instrument which could have failed to capture some information given that some respondents were likely to retain some information. Teachers' views should have been corroborated by using other categories of respondents.

According to a case study by Adengafi (2006) on pastoralist communities in Central Africa which sampled conveniently and purposively 10 head teachers, 30 teachers and 150 students using interviews for head teachers and students and Focus Group Discussions for female students, tolerance to students, especially girls and minorities is vital in attracting and retaining them in school. The transcribed results indicated that parents were reluctant to send their daughters to school and would use a simple excuse to deny them schooling opportunities hence only a *laissez-faire* system would give girls a chance to participate in education. The strength of the study was in the use of two instruments to verify facts. However, it was vital to use questionnaires to capture information that could not be given openly. The findings are consistent with those of Obondo, et al (2005) who concluded that *Laissez faire* leadership style gave people time to operate and was appropriate for mature, experienced and competent people in an empowered environment.

Sapiora (2006) in Ochiel (2010) adopted a case study design in a research in Mozambique where girls' participation by 2004 was at a low of 31.9% and found that to attract girls to school, they not only need to have a voice in discussions about their needs but also enjoy an environment that is free from the kind of parental patronage and restriction that the home environment imposes on them. According to Muhammad, et al. (2010) who did a study in Pakistan, *laissez-faire* leadership is ineffective, has the inverse impact on academic achievement and may lead to lawlessness and chaos which would hardly be conducive to the provision of quality education. Unknown was the perceptions of principals, teachers and students on influence of principals' *laissez-faire* leadership style on participation of female students in education in mixed public day secondary school, the knowledge gap the study sought to fill.

Muchiri (2013) used a descriptive design to establish the influence of Head teachers' leadership styles on discipline in public secondary schools in Nairobi County by random sampling 22 head teachers, 99 prefects and 66 teachers through a table of random numbers. Questionnaire was the instrument used to collect data which was analyzed using ANOVA. Muchiri (2013) did not include students who are directly affected by leadership. There was also need to get more information through other instruments. The findings that *laissez-faire* leadership style had a direct positive relationship with students' discipline is consistent with Girls' Education Unit- GEU (2008) which concluded that provisions could be made for girls with special needs so that they can care for themselves and become productive members of society. A *laissez-faire* environment may be more creative and fulfilling for those involved (MOE, 2008a). What was unknown was the perceptions of principals, teachers and students on influence of principals' *laissez-faire* leadership style on participation of female students in education in mixed public day secondary school, the knowledge gap the study sought to fill.

Ochiel (2010) whose study was done in Nyando, Kenya sees the *laissez faire* leader as one who does not participate in problems but leaves them to others to solve instead. Generally, this style is only used for delegation purposes to have a smooth running of school. Ochiel (2010) argues that the participation of girls is too delicate, sensitive and complex an issue to be left to nature. To keep girls in school, a conducive environment must be created which cannot happen in a *laissez faire* situation.

The study by Johnson, et.al. (2005) focused on raising people's aspirations in US schools while O'Hanlon (2004) studied about effective principals at work. Adengafi (2006) studied *laissez-faire* leadership in relation to attendance in pastoralist communities while Muchiri (2013) was concerned with its influence on student discipline. Ochiel (2010) studied about enhancing girls' performance in mixed secondary schools. What was unknown was the perceptions of principals, teachers and students on influence of principals' *laissez-faire* leadership on participation of female students in mixed public day secondary school, the knowledge gap the study sought to fill.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section contains research design, description of the study area, the study population, sample and sampling technique, data collection instruments, data collection procedure and methods of data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

Descriptive survey design was used for this study. It is a method of collecting information by administering a questionnaire to a sample of individuals (Orodho & Njeru, 2003 as cited in Kombo & Tromp, 2006). It can be used when collecting information about people's attitudes, opinions, habits or any of the variety of education or social issues (Orodho & Kombo, 2002 as cited in Kombo & Tromp, 2006). According to Kombo and Tromp (2006): Bogdad and Tayloy (1984) as cited in Oriwa (2010), if questions raised require collection of information by interviewing or questionnaires, the researcher will use a survey design. Thus, descriptive survey design is considered appropriate in this study as it is concerned with conditions that already exist. It explored principals, teachers, SCDE's and students' opinions on the influence of principal's leadership styles on participation of female students in mixed day secondary schools. Grinnel and Unrau (2010) say its primary advantage is that you can gather quickly a great amount of data in a short time. It is also flexible since it allows the researcher to get a wide range of information.

3.2 Area of Study

The study was conducted in Rachuonyo South Sub County in Homa Bay County, Kenya (Appendix E and F) curved out of the greater Rachuonyo District in 2009. It is located between longitudes 34⁰25' East and 35⁰0' East and latitudes 0⁰15' South and 0⁰45' South.

It borders Rachuonyo North to the North West, Nyakach to the North, Bureti to the East, Nyamira to the South East, Manga and Kisii Central sub counties to the South and Homa Bay sub counties to the South West. It is subdivided into two administrative regions being Kasipul and Kabondo divisions which have a total population of 397,730 (Gichana, 2012) with a female to male sex ratio of 110:100.

The Northern parts of the sub counties are known for sand harvesting, the Central and Eastern parts for brick manufacturing and farming while the major towns, Oyugis and Kadongo are trade centers. The eastern divide is quite fertile and produces a lot of potatoes, sugarcane, maize, beans and tea which, according to M.O.E (2007a), contributes 70% of its income. However, according to M.O.E (2007a), 77% of the population still lives in absolute poverty, a reason why paying school fee has been a challenge to many parents. In educational matters, female enrollment rate is 15% and 20% drop out unlike 39% male enrolment and 15% male drop out. According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2012) and the SCDE in 2013 there were 74 secondary schools, 62 being mixed public day schools yet student enrolment, retention and completion, particularly for girls, has suffered.

3.3 Study Population

The study population according to data at the Sub County Director of Education's office comprised 62 principals, 640 teachers, 6588 female students from mixed public day secondary schools and 1 SCDE from Rachuonyo South Sub County. Mixed public day secondary schools were used because they had the largest female population and comprised 62 out of the 74 schools in Rachuonyo South. Furthermore, there were only 4 pure public girls' boarding schools which were not sufficient for the study. These schools also helped to draw a contrast between the male and female student population. Principals

were chosen being the ones directly involved in leadership issues thus would give the real position. Teachers and students would provide opinions to check biases arising from principals' assessment of the influence of their own leadership styles on female student participation.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Techniques

According to Kothari (2004) and Mugenda and Mugenda (2008), a sample enables a researcher to gain information about a population. Fischer's model ($nf = \frac{n}{1+n} / N$) was used to select 378 students, an additional 16 students used to cater for respondents who declined to participate or return questionnaires. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2008), nf means desired sample size when the population is less than 10,000 while N is the estimate of the population size. 64 teachers were selected according to Gay (1992) who posits that at least 10% of the population is a good representation. Further, 31 principals were selected according to Mugenda and Mugenda's (2008) recommendation of 50% of the population which Kothari (2004) considers flexible, sufficient, reliable and representative enough. Therefore, the sample consisted of 31 Principals, 64 teachers and 378 female students. Apart from the SCDE who was selected using saturated sampling, simple random sampling was used to select the rest. Principals were coded and 31 identified using the pick and replace method while teachers and students were coded then 64 and 378 respectively selected using table of random numbers. Where a number was picked or appeared a second time, it was discarded and the next one considered. The number of students selected per school was proportional to the total female population in each school. Table 3.1 shows the sample frame.

Table 3.1**Sample Frame**

Category	Population	Sample Size	
	N	n	%
Principals	62	31	50
Teachers	640	64	10
Students	6588	378	5.74
SCDE	1	1	100

3.5 Instruments of Data Collection

Questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions were used in this study. According to Kombo and Tromp (2006) interviews are flexible, provide opportunity to observe the subject in the response situation and provide data that is not obtainable using a questionnaire while the questionnaire guarantees confidentiality and limits bias. Interviews help to clarify questions that are unclear in the interview schedule. Questionnaires can be used to collect data from a large sample, diverse regions and save time. They were developed by the researcher and used to collect information from Principals, teachers and students. Focus group discussions were used to collect information from students while interviews were used to collect information from the SCDE, teachers and principals on the influence of principals' leadership styles in girls' participation in secondary education. The reason for using interviews besides the questionnaires was to probe further and corroborate the positions taken on the questionnaires. Interview schedules make it possible to obtain data required to meet specific objectives of the study Mugenda and Mugenda (2008). It also helps to standardize the interview such that the interviewer can ask the same questions in the same manner.

3.5.1 Principals, Teachers and Students' Questionnaire (PTSQ)

The PTSQ (Appendix A) comprised closed ended and structured questions used to collect information on perceptions on influence of principal's leadership styles (Democratic, Autocratic and *Laissez-faire*) on the participation of female students in secondary education in Rachuonyo South Sub County. It was divided into three parts and a rating scale applied to establish head teachers' responses towards the statements. Each statement was followed by six responses: Extremely Low (EL), Very Low (VL), Low (L), High (H), Very High (VH) and Extremely High (EH) scored from 1 – 6. Respondents were expected to express their opinions towards each of the items by ticking only one response. The same questionnaire was used for Principals, teachers and students use in order to corroborate information from the respondents.

3.5.2 Focus Group Discussion Guide

A few guiding questions (Appendix B) were used to verify from the same students who participated in questionnaire surveys per school the information they gave in the questionnaires. Focus group discussions were conducted in the schools to collect information on the influence of principal's leadership styles (Democratic, Autocratic and *Laissez-faire*) on participation of female students in education.

3.5.3 Interview Schedule for the Sub County Director of Education (SCDE)

An interview (Appendix C) was conducted through discussion with the SCDE at the Director's office. A few guiding questions were used to collect and probe more information on the influence of principal's leadership styles (Democratic, Autocratic and *Laissez-faire*) on participation of female students in secondary education.

3.5.4 Interview Schedule for Principals and Teachers

An interview (Appendix D) was conducted through discussion with the principals in their offices to establish rapport with them in order to gauge reliability of their responses in questionnaires on the influence of principal's leadership styles (Democratic, Autocratic and *Laissez-faire*) on participation of female students in secondary education. A few unstructured guiding questions were used to probe more information on the influence of the same. Respondents were interviewed after completing the questionnaires.

3.6 Reliability of Instruments

To establish the reliability of the instruments, test-retest method was used in piloting which was done in 6 (10%) schools, where questionnaires were administered twice within a fortnight and responses analyzed. All responses were assigned numerical scores ranging from "Extremely Low - EL" to "Extremely High - EH" influence scored from 1 to 6 respectively. The principals, teachers and students who participated were selected from the population of the remaining 31 schools that were not used in the actual sample. Three principals, 6 teachers and 378 students were selected using the pick and replace method. The Pearson's r for Principals' Questionnaire was 0.74, Teachers' Questionnaire 0.82 and Students' Questionnaire 0.79 set at a p -value of 0.05. This means that the instruments were reliable according to Kothari (2004) who say $r=0.7$ is adequate for social sciences.

3.7 Validity of Instruments

Validity refers to the appropriateness, meaningfulness, correctness and usefulness of inferences a researcher makes (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). To establish the face validity of instruments, the questionnaire was presented, according to Kothari (2004), to experts of the School of Education, Department of Education Management and Foundations at Maseno University for their expert judgment on the content and to ascertain that the

measure assessed the intended construct. Their input was incorporated in the final copies. Piloting was also done as captured in section 3.6 to ensure the wording was clear, interpretation was the same, to check on and correct any bias, note the response provoked and make needed changes.

3.8 Data Collection Procedures

Permission was sought from the School of Graduate Studies at Maseno University and the Sub County Director of Education before proceeding to the field to collect data. The sampled schools were visited thrice each; the first visit being for introduction and familiarization, the second for distribution and collection of questionnaires and the third to interview the Principal, teachers and students. The researcher distributed 31 questionnaires to the principals, 64 to teachers and 378 to students. The researcher explained the main intention of the study and clarified any other issues with the respondents. The researcher collected the questionnaires after the respondents had completed filling them. The SCDE was also visited for an interview. All interviews lasted for 30 to 40 minutes and data was recorded in a note book.

3.9 Data Analysis Techniques

Bryman and Cramer (2009) opine that data analysis is used to fulfill research objectives and provide answers to research questions. Choice of technique depends on its suitability, the study objectives and scale of measurement of variables of study. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics in form of frequency counts, means and percentages as shown in Table 3.2. A rating scale was used to determine the extent of influence. Qualitative data was transcribed and organized into categories and themes. The themes included: Influence of democratic leadership style on female student participation in mixed day secondary schools; Influence of autocratic leadership style on female student

participation in mixed day secondary schools; Influence of *laissez-faire* leadership style on female student participation in mixed day secondary schools. The sub themes were: a democratic principal who allows participatory decision making influences girls to stay in school; a militant principal encourages girls to attend school and a *laissez-faire* principal who doesn't encourage guidance and counseling encourages girls to attend school. Thus, a result above 3.5 meant that there was a high score on the influence of democratic, autocratic or *laissez-faire* leadership style on female student participation in mixed public day schools in Rachuonyo South Sub County, Kenya.

Table 3.2 Analytical Tools

Methods of Data Analysis	Independent variables	Dependent variable	Statistical method
Research questions			
To what extent does democratic leadership style influence participation of female students in education in mixed day secondary schools in Rachuonyo South Sub County?	Democratic Leadership Style	Participation	Percentage Means
To what extent does autocratic leadership style influence participation of female students in education in mixed day secondary schools in Rachuonyo South Sub County?	Autocratic Leadership Style	Participation	Percentage Means
To what extent does <i>laissez-faire</i> leadership style influence participation of female students in education in mixed day secondary schools in Rachuonyo South Sub County?	<i>Laissez-faire</i> Leadership Style	Participation	Percentage Means

participation in mixed day secondary schools; Influence of *laissez-faire* leadership style on female student participation in mixed day secondary schools. The sub themes were: a democratic principal who allows participatory decision making influences girls to stay in school; a militant principal encourages girls to attend school and a *laissez-faire* principal who doesn't encourage guidance and counseling encourages girls to attend school. Thus, a result above 3.5 meant that there was a high score on the influence of democratic, autocratic or *laissez-faire* leadership style on female student participation in mixed public day schools in Rachuonyo South Sub County, Kenya.

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To what extent does autocratic leadership style influence participation of female students in education in mixed day secondary schools in Rachuonyo South Sub County?	Autocratic Leadership Style	Participation	Percentage Means
To what extent does <i>laissez-faire</i> leadership style influence participation of female students in education in mixed day secondary schools in Rachuonyo South Sub County?	<i>Laissez-faire</i> Leadership Style	Participation	Percentage Means

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents results and discussions of the findings of the study. The purpose of the study was to establish the influence of the principals' democratic, autocratic and *laissez faire* leadership styles on participation of female students in secondary education in Rachuonyo South Sub County, Kenya. The findings are presented according to the study objectives.

4.2 Return Rate of the Questionnaire

The return rate of the questionnaire is as shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Return Rate of Questionnaires

Categories of questionnaires	Issued (No)	Returned (No)	Percentage (%)
Students	378	378	100
Teachers	64	64	100
Principals	31	31	100
Total	473	473	100

Principals' response rate was 31 (100%), 64 (100%) for teachers and 378 (100%) for students. The response rate of 473 (100%) was due to the direct and immediate collection of the questionnaires which is acceptable for it is above what Nachmias and Nachmias (1996) assert that a response rate of 75% is adequate for a social research to proceed.

4.3 Influence of Principals' Democratic Leadership Style on Female Student Participation in Secondary Education

The research question responded to was, "To what extent does democratic leadership style influence participation of female students in mixed day secondary schools in Rachuonyo South Sub County?" The responses were as indicated in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Perceptions of Principals, Teachers and Students on the Influence of Principals' Democratic Leadership Style on Female Student Participation in Secondary Education

Aspects Of Principals' Democratic Leadership Style	R	RATINGS						T	M	OM	
		1	2	3	4	5	6				
		EL	VL	L	H	VH	EH				
A democratic principal who allows participatory decision making influences girls to stay in school	P	F	0	1	1	3	22	4	31	4.9	4.8
		%	0	3	3	1	71	12	100		
	T	SC	0	2	3	12	110	24	151		
		F	2	3	3	12	37	7	64		
	S	%	3	5	5	19	58	10	100		
		SC	2	6	9	48	185	46	296		
A democratic principal who discusses adherence to rules and regulations enhances girls' attendance of school.	P	F	2	10	15	46	251	54	378	4.8	4.9
		%	1	3	4	12	66	14	100		
	T	SC	2	2	45	184	1255	324	1830		
		F	0	1	2	2	23	3	31		
	S	%	0	3	6.5	6.5	74	10	100		
		SC	0	2	6	8	115	18	149		
A democratic principal who involves students in addressing administrative issues influences girls to attend school	P	F	1	2	3	9	42	7	64	4.7	4.8
		%	2	3	4	14	66	11	100		
	T	SC	1	4	9	36	210	42	302		
		F	2	6	16	41	256	57	378		
	S	%	1	2	4	11	68	14	100		
		SC	2	12	48	164	1280	342	1848		
A democratic principal who allows freedom of expression encourages girls to participate in education to completion.	P	F	0	1	2	2	22	4	31	4.8	4.8
		%	0	3	6.5	6.5	71	13	100		
	T	SC	0	2	6	8	110	24	150		
		F	1	1	4	7	41	10	64		
	S	%	1.5	1.5	6	11	65	15	100		
		SC	1	2	12	28	205	60	308		
A democratic principal who involves teachers and students in addressing girls' issues motivates	P	F	2	7	19	44	253	53	378	4.9	5.5
		%	1	2	5	11	67	14	100		
	T	SC	2	14	57	176	1265	318	1832		
		F	0	157	11	2	5	22	31		
	S	%	0	3	3	7	16	71	100		
		SC	0	2	3	8	25	132	170		
A democratic principal who involves teachers and students in addressing girls' issues motivates	P	F	1	2	4	8	40	9	64	4.7	4.9
		%	1.5	3	6	12.5	63	14	100		
	T	SC	1	4	12	32	200	54	303		
		F	2	2	8	56	261	49	378		
	S	%	1	1	2	14	69	13	100		
		SC	2	4	24	224	1305	294	1853		

girls to participate in education to completion.	S	F	1	5	10	53	256	53	378	4.9	
		%	0	1	3	14	68	14	100		
	SC	1	10	30	212	1280	318	1851			
A democratic principal who consults regularly enables girls to develop self esteem and confidence to stay in school	P	F	0	0	0	1	6	24	31	5.7	
		%	0	0	0	3	19.5	77.5	100		
	SC	0	0	0	4	30	144	178			
	T	F	2	1	1	10	14	36	64	5.2	4.8
		%	3	1.5	1.5	16	22	56	100		
	SC	2	2	3	40	70	216	333			
	S	F	2	20	26	45	242	43	378	4.7	
		%	1	5	7	12	64	11	100		
	SC	2	40	78	180	1210	258	1768			
A democratic principal who is friendly to girls motivates them to participate in education.	P	F	0	0	1	2	7	21	31	5.5	
		%	0	0	3	6	23	68	100		
	SC	0	0	3	8	35	126	172			
	T	F	0	1	1	5	16	41	64	5.5	5.2
		%	0	1.5	1.5	8	25	64	100		
	SC	0	2	3	20	80	246	351			
	S	F	1	1	5	29	264	78	378	5.1	
		%	0	0	1	8	70	21	100		
	SC	1	2	15	116	1320	468	1922			
A democratic principal who encourages guidance and counselling may influence participation of girls in secondary education.	P	F	0	0	0	2	24	5	31	5.1	
		%	0	0	0	6.5	77.5	16	100		
	SC	0	0	0	8	120	30	158			
	T	F	1	1	1	4	43	14	64	5.0	5.0
		%	1.5	1.5	1.5	6	67.5	22	100		
	SC	1	2	3	16	215	84	321			
	S	F	0	2	8	43	256	69	378	5.0	
		%	0	1	2	11	68	18	100		
	SC	0	4	24	172	1280	414	1894			
Average percentage on EL, VL, L, H, VH and EH	%		3	2	3	11	58	25		5.0	

Key: P – Principals T – Teachers S – Students Res – Respondents T – Total
 F – Frequency SC – Score M – Mean OM – Overall Mean

Interpretation of Mean Ratings

EL – Extremely Low = 0.5-1.4

VL - Very Low = 1.5-2.4

L – Low = 2.5-3.4 H - High = 3.5-4.4

VH- Very High = 4.5-5.5

EH – Extremely High = 5.5-6.4

From Table 4.2, twenty two (71%) principals indicated that a democratic principal who allowed participatory decision making had very high influence, four (13%) extremely high influence, 3(10%) high influence, 1(3%) low influence, 1(3%) very low influence. The overall mean of 4.9 means that a democratic principal who allowed participatory decision making highly influenced girls to be in school. During the interviews, principals emphasized that in cases where the girls were involved, they saw no reason to feel restricted and so were happy hence fewer complaints, reduced absenteeism and fewer drop

out cases were recorded. Thirty seven (58%) teachers indicated that allowing girls to participate in decision making had very high influence, 12(19%) high influence, 7 (11%) of the teachers agreed that it had extremely high influence, 3(5%) low influence, 3(5%) very low influence and 2(3%) stated that it had extremely low influence. The overall mean of 4.6 means that a democratic principal who allowed participatory decision making highly influenced girls to stay in school. Two hundred and fifty one (66%) students indicated that a democratic principal who allowed participatory decision making had very high influence on girls' stay in school. Fifty four (14%) students indicated that it was extremely high, 46(12%) high, 15(4%) low, 10(3%) very low and 2(1%) recorded extremely low influence. The overall mean of 4.8 means that a democratic principal who allowed participatory decision making had a very high influence on girls' participation in secondary education.

According to the students' responses during the focus group discussions, involving them in making decisions is a way of attracting them. That way they also feel a sense of belonging thus are comfortable and have no reason to take leave from the school. During interviews with the principals and discussions with the students, it emerged that allowing girls to make proposals before decisions were arrived at made them feel they owned the decisions and were part and parcel of the eventual events hence felt comfortable. As one remarked:

In fact, students easily get convinced that they are cared for and that principals are concerned about them if the latter simply show that concern by listening to them. When they return home, they give very positive reports to their parents about their principals whom some say are the reason why they still wish to be in schools where they feel they are cared for.

Another student said,

When we are given room to contribute towards decision making, we become part of the decision and so we voluntarily accept to follow these decisions. In fact, this enables us to work together towards a common goal, since nothing can really be done about us without considering our views.

The SCDE supported the view of the students indicating that without involving them participation would be curtailed. These findings are consistent with those of Yusof (2011) whose study revealed that the climate a leader created contributed to turn over either positively or negatively. Oyetunji (2006) found that the influence of democratic leadership style was so high when students were allowed to participate in decision making. This is supported by Ochiel (2010) and Nkirote (2013) who also cite positive involvement as a way of enhancing inclusion in schools. Students in schools need to be involved in the school's administration and in the implementation of decisions because these affect them directly (Nsubuga, 2008).

Allowing girls to participate in decision making had a very high influence on female student participation in secondary education as the mean rating by the principals, teachers and students was 4.8 which was very high. These findings mean that a democratic principal who allowed participatory decision making influenced female students to participate in secondary education very highly. It was thus important to involve them in deciding about themselves, their activities and schedule, which obliged them to follow the agreed upon resolutions hence could not drop out from school due to any action against them.

Regarding the item that a democratic principal who discussed adherence to rules and regulations enhanced girls' attendance of school regularly, 23(74%) principals indicated that the influence was very high, 3 (10%) indicated it was extremely high, 2 (6.5%) each recorded high and low influence while 1(3%) noted that it was very low. The overall mean of 4.8 means that a democratic principal who discussed adherence to rules and regulations influenced girls to be in school. Teachers held similar views as supported by the fact that 42 (66%) indicated that it was very high, 9(14%) high while 7 (11%) recorded extremely

high influence. 3 (4%), 2 (3%) teachers and another 1 (2%) recorded low, very low or extremely low influence from this item. The overall mean of 4.7 means that a democratic principal who discussed rules and regulations with girls before enforcing them influenced them to be in school. Two hundred and fifty six (68%) students indicated that a principal who discussed adherence to rules and regulations had very high influence on girls' participation in secondary education, 57(14%) indicated that such action had extremely high influence, 41(11%) high, 16(4%) low, 6(2%) very low and 2(1%) extremely low influence. The overall mean of 4.9 implies that where a principal discussed formulation and enforcement of rules and regulations with the students, the action had a very high influence in attracting girls to school.

Most respondents indicated that the influence was very high as corroborated by their explanations during the principals' and teachers' interviews. In the opinion of one teacher:

I have been in this school for close to 10 years under three different regimes. During the era of the previous two, the leadership style was totalitarian and little room was given for students', parents' and teachers' views particularly on issues of discipline and finances. Many were disenchanted and students and parents kept complaining. Under the current regime, the rules and regulations governing both staff and students and some financial issues like fee payments and trip charges are agreed upon after consultations, and where parents, students and staff held divergent opinions from the principal whose opinion had to prevail, they understood and took it positively. As a result, both students and staff are willingly participating in the formulation of rules and regulations and observe them. They have made them part of themselves and need little or no reminders or supervision. The advantage is that female students have become their own keepers, enjoy the school environment and attend school regularly.

During FGD students said that whenever they were involved in formulation of rules and regulations, they were attracted to participate in secondary education. It was necessary that rules and regulations that were obviously meant for them be formulated with their

input so that the rules are not only understood by them but also be enforced by them enthusiastically without a feeling that they were imposed on them. One of them remarked:

If the rules are for us and are meant to make our stay in school better, we should be involved in formulating them then ask us why we cannot follow what we made. It will be hard to claim we were not aware yet we participated. Another reason why we don't want rules made without involving us is because they are not made with girls in mind. In fact, there should be separate rules for girls and boys and the language used should reflect who they are meant for. Why can't girls be involved so that when they make mistakes and disciplinary action is taken against them, they don't complain that they were not aware or are being discriminated against? If you don't involve them, you will be chasing them away into the hands of some conservative parents who might end up punishing them so severely for doing bad things and even chase them away from home.

This view is supported by Oyetunji (2006) and Sekiwu (2011) who found that engaging students in formulation of rules and regulations enabled them to develop positive attitudes towards school hence were highly influenced to participate in school. Laureen (2005) explains that it is important to let students have a voice in school if you wish to keep them and avoid rebellion from them and eventual exclusion. In so doing they feel part of the school community to which they are obliged to remain faithful, concerned and responsible.

Discussing adherence to rules and regulations had a very high influence on female student participation in secondary education as the mean rating by the principals, teachers and students was 4.9 which is very high. These findings mean that a democratic principal who discussed adherence to rules and regulations enhances girls' education very highly. Students' views are valuable and will play an important role in the formulation of rules that concern and affect them. Since the rules are meant for the students, they should not only be exposed to them but they be involved in their formulation and execution including addressing the possible consequences. This enables them to understand issues fully and

voluntarily decide to follow the rules without blaming others for their misdeeds which may determine and enhance their stay in school. It could also help in peer guidance.

Twenty two (71%) principals indicated that a democratic principal who involved students in addressing administrative issues had a very high influence in enhancing girls' attendance of school. Four (13%) indicated that it had extremely high influence, 2 (6.5%) each recorded high and low influence, 1 (3%) indicated that it was low while none indicated that there was extremely low influence. The overall mean of 4.8 means that where a democratic principal involved girls in handling issues that were administrative in nature, they would find the school to be a comfortable environment that attracted and encouraged them to participate in secondary education to completion. Forty one (65%) teacher respondents indicated that involvement of students in addressing administrative issues had a very high influence on girls' attendance of school, 10(15%) extremely high and 7(11%) high. The overall mean of 4.8 means that a democratic principal who incorporated students in determining administrative issues of their concern elicited very high attraction of girls to participate in secondary education.

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Two hundred and fifty three (67%) students indicated that the influence of a democratic principal who involved students in addressing administrative issues was very high, 53(14%) indicated that it was extremely high, 44(11%) high, 19(5%) low, 7(2%) very low and 2(1%) extremely low. The overall mean of 4.9 means that if a democratic principal involved students in addressing administrative issues, the action elicited a very high influence in enhancing female students' attendance of secondary school.

During the focus group discussions, girls similarly gave positive views regarding their involvement in administrative issues and its influence on participation. Where and when they were involved, they enjoyed being part of the school thus regularly attended unlike where they were only given orders and instructions, some of which didn't augur well with them. One student remarked that:

Girls always have challenges that require a lot of understanding. Giving them a chance to be part of the administrative planning gives them an opportunity to present their issues regarding what suits them and is for their own good making them happier and to cooperate even if their needs are not fully addressed hence have no reason to run away, transfer or drop out due to intimidation.

Students wished they were consulted on daily school programming at the beginning or end of the term, half term dates and fee breaks among other issues. The respondents' views corroborated with those of Oyetunji (2006), Kythreotis (2009) in Cheruiyot (2012) and Muhammad *et. al.* (2010) who found that there existed a positive relationship between leadership style and school climate which eventually informed participation. Kuria (2012) and Hallam and Rogers (2008) on their part found that democratic or participatory leadership prompted inclusion and participation of students in schooling.

Involving students in addressing administrative issues had a very high influence on female student participation in secondary education as the mean rating by the principals, teachers and students was 4.8 which is very high. These findings mean that a democratic principal who involves students in addressing administrative issues influences girls to be in school. When students are allowed to engage in school planning, they can make further contributions that will enhance the conditions of individual and social life thus improve participation. In so doing, they feel they are not treated like strangers and neither are they strangers to their school. Such a move could elicit positive feelings about the school hence improve participation.

Twenty two (71%) principals indicated that allowing freedom of expression by a democratic principal had an extremely high influence on girls' participation in education. Five (16%) felt it was very high, 2(7%) high, 1(3%) each low and very low. The overall mean of 5.5 means that where a democratic principal allowed female students to have freedom of expression, girls would be influenced to participate in secondary education. Forty (63%) teachers indicated that the influence on girls' participation by a democratic principal who allowed girls to have freedom of expression was very high, 9(14%) indicated it was extremely high, 8(12.5%) high, 4(6%), 2(3%) and 1(1.5%) each indicated that it was low, very low or extremely low respectively. The overall mean of 4.7 means that a democratic principal who allowed female students to have freedom of expression, highly influenced girls' participation in secondary education. Two hundred and sixty one (69%) students indicated that by allowing freedom of expression, the influence on girls' participation in secondary education was very high, 49(13%) extremely high, 56(14%) noted that it was high, 8(2%) low and 2(1%) each very low and extremely low influence. The overall mean of 4.9 means that a democratic principal who allowed freedom of expression encouraged girls to participate in secondary education to completion.

During focus group discussions, girls said they found a principal who allowed them to express themselves freely to be so caring and concerned since having that freedom did not only enable them to say what they felt was wrong or right about their school and events around them but also gave them a way of expressing their feelings and releasing the many tensions and stress they had accumulated for long. Freedom of expression was also good for it enabled them to develop confidence and high self-esteem. A school or principal who enhanced such a climate attracted girls to participate in secondary education.

A principal remarked that:

Freedom of expression is a right enshrined in the constitution which students are equally aware of. By allowing them to express their feelings, needs, aspirations, appreciations and challenges freely, they develop a sense of belonging as the climate becomes conducive to them. They also therefore believe that their issues are presented even if they are not immediately addressed. This reduces tension and discontent which are likely to lead to self-exclusion or engaging in activities like strikes which may force the school administration to dismiss some students hence impact negatively on female students' participation.

As was stated by one of the teachers interviewed:

Allowing freedom of expression even in the most subtle of ways through suggestion boxes has proved to have positive effects on students' views regarding the suitability of their schools in terms of how well they offer accommodative space to female students. This in turn influences their response particularly on attendance and retention hence affects participation.

Mbatari (2009) and Cheruiyot (2012) don't support excessive freedom of expression which they believe doesn't provide direction and may be harmful to students. However, MOE (2008) and Nkirote (2013) say a democratic style of leadership allows freedom of thought and action. Weiser (2009) in Ochiel (2010) says it reduces tension that can lead to the absenteeism or departure of some students thus instead enhances regular attendance of school. According to Okutu, *et. al*, (2011) and Oduru and Dachi (2010) where democratic leadership embraces freedom of expression, behavior, attendance and also school climate improves. This is evident in the findings of ROK (2001) which reveals that denying students freedom of expression leads to disillusionment which causes indiscipline and unrest which is a leading cause of dropout and exclusion from school in Kenya.

Allowing freedom of expression had a very high influence on female student participation in secondary education as the mean rating by the principals, teachers and students was 4.9 which is very high. These findings mean that a democratic principal who allowed freedom of expression had a very high positive influence on girls' participation in secondary education. Students who lack opportunities to present themselves may lack avenues

through which they can air their grievances or seek solace especially if the home is not conducive and parents are harsh. They end up being frustrated and may choose to be heard and attended to through violence, being indisciplined or rebellious which is highly likely to terminate or stall their education for a while or forever.

Twenty two (71%) principals indicated that there was a very high influence when girls were involved in addressing issues affecting them. Four (13%) principals each noted that the influence was extremely high or 4(13%) high and 1(3%) low. The overall mean of 4.9 means that a democratic principal who involves teachers and students in addressing girls' issues motivated them to participate in secondary education. Forty three (68%) teachers indicated that involving girls in addressing their own issues had very high influence; 8(13%) noted it was high, 6(9%) extremely high, 3(4%) and 2(3%) each that it was low, very low or extremely low respectively. The overall mean of 4.7 means that a democratic principal who involved teachers and students in addressing girls' issues highly motivated them to participate in secondary education. Two hundred and fifty six (68%) students indicated that a democratic principal who involved students in addressing girls' issues had an extremely high influence in motivating girls to participate in secondary education; 53(14%) very high, 53(14%) high, 10(3%) low, 5(1%) very low and 1(0%) extremely low influence. The overall mean of 4.9 means that where a principal involved students and staff in determining issues that affected the girls, there was a very high influence in motivating them to participate in secondary education to completion. This action encouraged students to come to and stay in school upto the end of the four year cycle.

Students stated that involving teachers and themselves in issues that affected them was a sure attraction to girls. Some students lacked the confidence to face the principal in order

to express their needs or issues of concern. Where teachers were involved, some were free to seek redress by the principal through them. In cases where the principals were accessible, students were free to talk to them and that alone gave them a surety and confidence which made them feel comfortable in school. In any case, they were able to suggest how they thought their issues should be resolved which is only possible when they are involved.

In this regard, one teacher said:

When girls are involved in addressing matters affecting them, they develop trust and commitment because they have a say in their own matters. They don't fear and see hope even where there is none and so they attend school happily. This in itself is a sure way of influencing girls to attend and remain in school rather than when they are isolated or considered unable to contribute to resolving their issues, which disenchant and can scare them off.

Though Bakita (2010) indicated that policy formulation is top bottom and does not require much consultation, especially with students and subordinates, Fudga (2012) and Okutu, et.al (2011) concur that the head teacher has to create a conducive environment for policy formulation and implementation by involving stakeholders. As argued by Ouya and Mwelesi (2011) and KESI (2011), stakeholders include students who are both beneficiaries and consumers of all policies and programmes in a school hence cannot be ignored if they are expected to consume without complaint. After all, they are capable of making their own choices regarding what is good for them, right or wrong, though under guidance. As the saying goes, "there is nothing about us without us!"

When students find their school environment to be supportive and caring, they are less likely to be involved in substance abuse, violence and other problem behaviors (Shaharbi, 2010) but instead, according to Tarus (2009) and Kariuki (2012) develop positive attitudes towards themselves and others thus enhancing attendance.

Involving teachers and students in addressing issues that affected girls had a very high influence on female student participation in secondary education as the mean rating by the principals, teachers and students was 4.9 which is very high. These findings mean that a democratic principal who involved teachers and students in addressing girls' issues encouraged them to participate in secondary education to completion. Since girls have many challenges, it is only prudent that they be allowed to participate in addressing matters affecting them to know that they will be listened to and their views acted upon and that they are assured room and security. They wouldn't want to be regarded as weak fellows who cannot resolve their own issues for it denies them self-esteem leading to hopelessness which when unbearable leads to irrational acts like suicide, eloping, engaging in unhealthy love affairs, drug and substance abuse and even lesbianism and theft whose outcome is self or forced exclusion from school hence low or reduced participation.

On the issue of a democratic principal who consults regularly enabling girls to develop self confidence and self-esteem to stay in school, 24(77.5%) principals indicated that the influence was extremely high, 6(19.5%) very high and 1(3%) high. The overall mean of 5.7 means that a democratic principal who consulted regularly enabled girls to develop self-esteem and confidence to stay in school to completion. Thirty six (56%) teachers indicated that the influence of a democratic principal who consulted regularly was extremely high on girls' participation, 14(22%) and 10(16%) very high and high respectively, 2(3%) extremely low while 1(1.5%) each noted that it had either low or very low influence. The overall mean of 5.2 means that if a democratic principal consulted regularly, girls were able to develop self-esteem and confidence to stay in school to completion. Two hundred and forty two (64%) students indicated that if a democratic principal consulted regularly the influence on girls developing confidence and self-esteem

to stay in school was very high. Forty five (12%) noted that the influence was high, 43(11%) extremely high, 26(7%) low, 20(5%) very low and 2(1%) extremely low. The overall mean of 4.7 means that by allowing consultations between the administration and students, girls developed confidence and self-esteem that motivated them to stay in school thus increased their participation.

Students were of the opinion that the system of consulting regularly was suitable as it not only enabled them to develop high self-esteem but also ensured that they got the best out of a variety of suggestions that if properly considered, would improve their lot. In that case, they were encouraged to stay in school. One student said:

I was in a school where both teachers and students were always surprised by certain announcements made by the principal, deputy or may be the teacher on duty, at the assembly. Since we were the target, most of those statements affected us very negatively. We were not consulted and there was nothing we could do but this affected us and some students started talking negatively even to the point of saying they were going to change school.

The need for consultations has been supported by Okutu, *et. al* (2011) and Mwongera (2012) who found out that good policy making and implementation was a result of extensive consultation and participation of key stakeholders among them being students. Female students expressed optimism that consultations with them led to incorporation of their views while allowing their participation enhanced confidence hence greater inclusion. This view is supported by Lockhead (2010) who regards failure to consult subordinates as an injustice that leads to social exclusion. As the SCDE noted:

Consulting with girls on issues that are relevant to their stay in school and learning opens up room for better service provision which in turn motivates them and helps them to not only enjoy a sense of belonging but also awareness that the outcome of any policy is a direct result of their proposals. This has motivated the female students to remain in school.

According to Cheruiyot (2012) and Fugda (2011), no policy should be decided on by any representative without the full and direct participation of members of the groups affected by the policy. Though Nyabanyaba (2010) and Obondo, *et. al* (2005) see no role for students in serious policy formulation, Autistichoya (2012) details the dissatisfaction of a group of autism suffering students on realizing that a seminar had been planned for them without involving someone with their condition who did not only have a clear grasp of the issues at hand but could also help them develop confidence that they were not only participants but part of the search for solutions to the issues afflicting them.

Consulting regularly had a very high influence on female student participation in secondary education as the mean rating by the principals, teachers and students was 4.8 which is very high. These findings mean that a democratic principal who consults regularly enabled girls to develop self-esteem and confidence to stay in school to completion. An environment bereft of opportunities that allowed emotional and personality growth was likely to stifle the confidence of the students and hence lower participation. In addition, excluding them made them feel belittled and ignored or incapable hence lowered their self-esteem and attendance. Thus to influence them to stay in school, girls should be consulted regularly.

On the aspect of a democratic principal who is friendly motivating girls to participate in secondary education, 21(68%) principals indicated that the influence was extremely high, 7(23%) very high, 2(6%) high and 1(3%) low. The overall mean of 5.5 means that where a democratic principal was friendly to girls they were really motivated and attracted to stay in school. Forty one (64%) teachers indicated that the influence elicited by a democratic principal who is friendly to girls was extremely high; 16(25%) very high, 5(8%) high and 1(1.5%) each low and very low. The overall mean of 5.5 implies that a democratic

principal who is friendly to girls motivates them to participate in education. Two hundred and sixty four (70%) students indicated that a principal who is friendly to girls had a very high influence in motivating girls to participate in secondary education. Seventy eight (21%) noted it was extremely high, 29(8%) high, 5(1%) low, 1(0%) each, very low and extremely low. The overall mean of 5.1 means that a democratic principal who was friendly to female students had a very high influence that motivated girls to participate in secondary education to completion.

Most students who were interviewed through focus group discussions had an extremely positive response on this. Friendliness by principals, according to them, created a great bond which made them behave as a family and develop positive attitudes towards school, staff and one another. In turn, this enhanced discipline, peace and tranquility, cohesiveness and confidence which enhanced continuity and retention to completion.

During interviews, one of the principals remarked:

Going by their nature, girls value relations and trust those who relate with them positively. They value friendship. Those that befriend them positively and genuinely are likely to win their trust and confidence.

Another principal remarked that;

Friendliness with students produced gains in students' academic ability while reducing behavioral problems thus enabling them to stay longer in the same school on their own volition or by observing school regulations.

These results are consistent with other researchers' views. Shaharbi (2010) asserts that a caring, supportive school environment which is the product of the head's deliberate leadership trends has an influence not only on students' academic success and attitudes, but also on their motivation, engagements, goal setting and staying in school to graduation. In addition, he holds that one of the most important issues in determining a school environment conducive for students' learning, growth and attendance is the quality

of students' relationship with other students and staff on the one hand and principals' leadership with other students and staff on the other.

Autistichoya (2012) found that supportive schools foster positive outcomes by promoting students' sense of connectedness and belongingness which enhances closeness and respectfulness with peers and adults at school. Kariuki (2012) says that this in turn satisfies students' psychological basic needs for safety, belonging, autonomy and competence which if fulfilled, students are likely to become engaged in and committed to school. On the contrary, among other things, Lockhead (2010) says when students' need for belongingness is not satisfied, they are likely to be more alienated. Having a democratic principal who is friendly to girls had a very high influence on female student participation in secondary education as the mean rating by the principals, teachers and students was 4.8 which is very high. These findings mean that a democratic principal who is friendly to girls motivates them to participate in secondary education. This may be due to the fact that they will be able to feel they are safe and secure in an environment where they have a friend in the name of a principal or by extension, teachers who are friendly and not monsters that scare them.

Twenty four (77.5%) principals indicated that a democratic principal who encouraged guidance and counselling had a very high influence on participation of girls in secondary education; 5(16%) extremely high, 2(6.5%) high. The overall mean of 5.1 means that a democratic principal who encouraged guidance and counselling had a very high influence in enhancing female students' participation in secondary education. That is to say girls were very comfortable with guidance and counselling hence their very high attraction to school. No principal concurred with the opinion that this item had low influence on girls' education. Forty three (67.5%) teachers indicated that a democratic principal who

encouraged guidance and counselling had very high influence on female student participation in secondary education; 14(22%) and 4(6%) noted it was extremely high and high while 1(1.5%) each indicated that it was low, very low or extremely low. The overall mean of 5.0 means that a democratic principal who encouraged guidance and counselling had a very high influence in the participation of girls in secondary education.

Two hundred and fifty six (68%) students indicated that the influence of a democratic principal who encouraged guidance and counselling was very high on female student participation in secondary education; 69(18%) extremely high, 43(11%) high, 8(2%) low and 2(1%) very low. The overall mean of 5.0 means that a democratic principal who embraced guidance and counselling was capable of influencing girls to participate in secondary education. Students who were interviewed through the focus group discussions gave similar views. They agreed that guidance and counseling encouraged by a democratic principal contributed greatly to girls' participation in secondary education since it fostered a climate that attracted them to school.

Use of guidance and counselling by a democratic principal is supported highly as a way of improving participation of female students in secondary education. As Abwalabwa (2011) opines, building in school community, giving room for expression and belongingness and bonding together fosters academic success which in turn boosts confidence and self-esteem that results in high enrolment, retention and completion. These views are consistent with those of Lockhead (2010) who avers that students who experience their principals' leadership styles as caring and inclusive consistently become more motivated, ambitious, positive and engaged. According to Shaharbi (2010) democratic leadership style can promote social, emotional and ethical growth and the prevention of problem behaviours thus enhancing participation through provision of pivotal support needed by

students. Kariuki (2012) concluded that the provision of guidance and counselling services influenced girl- child access to education.

Use of guidance and counselling had a very high influence on female student participation in secondary education as the mean rating by the principals, teachers and students was 4.8 which is very high. These findings mean that a democratic principal who encouraged guidance and counselling highly influenced girls' participation in secondary education. Putting students first, cooperating, taking a problem solving orientation and engaging in consensus decision making creates an enabling environment which students admire hence are willing to participate in education. The goal is to change the relationship of students to school, building up the positive aspects of that relationship and supportive school environment which makes students effectively involved and attached to their school, teachers and peers, a bond that creates a positive social influence hence better participation. When students have positive connections with their teachers and principal, they feel that they are cared for hence develop a liking for school. On the other hand, staff and principal can also develop a liking for open and well behaved students who they can retain in school and help through even if they are from poor backgrounds. This enhances a direct liking for school. It is therefore prudent that principals embrace democratic leadership in order to attract more female students to participate in education.

From the findings, it is evident that Democratic leadership style had high influence on female students' participation in secondary education as is indicated by the overall percentages from the responses of the three respondents: principals, teachers and students. 58% indicated that the influence was very high, 25% extremely high and 11% high. Thus 94% were of the view that use of Democratic leadership style had high influence on female students' participation in secondary education which is corroborated by the overall

mean of 5.0. This means that democratic leadership style was perceived to be able to help improve participation of girls in education in mixed day secondary schools and reduce drop out.

4.4 Influence of Principals' Autocratic Leadership Style on Participation of Female Students in Secondary Education

The research question responded to was "How does Autocratic Leadership Style Influence Female Students' Participation in Secondary Education in Rachuonyo South Sub - County?" The responses were as indicated in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Perceptions of Principals, Teachers and Students on the Influence of Principals' Autocratic leadership style on female student participation in secondary education

ASPECTS OF PRINCIPALS' AUTOCRATIC LEADERSHIP STYLE	R	RATINGS										
		1	2	3	4	5	6	T	M	OM		
	E	EL	VL	L	H	VH	EH					
An autocratic principal who does not involve teachers and students in addressing challenges facing girls enhances girls' participation in secondary education	P	F	1	2	8	10	7	3	31			
		%	3	6	26	32	23	10	100	3.9		
		SC	1	4	24	40	35	18	122			
	T	F	8	6	9	25	10	6	64			
		%	13	9	14	39	16	9	100	3.6	3.5	
		SC	8	12	27	100	50	36	233			
	S	F	13	48	138	130	40	9	378			
		%	3	13	37	34	11	2	100	3.4		
		SC	3	96	414	520	200	54	1297			
	An autocratic principal who ensures strict adherence to rules and regulations enhances girls attendance of school	P	F	1	6	8	10	4	2	31		
			%	3	19.5	26	32	13	6.5	100	3.5	
			SC	3	12	24	40	20	12	110		
T		F	1	4	11	36	8	4	64			
		%	3	6	17	60.5	12	6	100	3.9	3.8	
		SC	1	8	33	156	40	24	264			
S		F	13	48	115	156	41	10	378			
		%	3	11	30	42	11	3	100	3.8		
		SC	13	96	345	624	205	144	1427			
An autocratic principal with a clear chain of command that must be followed in addressing issues enhances girls attendance of school		P	F	0	1	6	18	4	2	31		
			%	0	3	19.5	58	13	6.5	100	4.1	
			SC	0	2	18	72	20	12	124		
	T	F	2	2	22	27	8	3	64			
		%	3	3	35	42	12	5	100	3.7	3.6	
		SC	2	4	66	108	40	18	238			
	S	F	20	60	60	180	50	8	378			
		%	5	16	16	48	13	2	100	3.5		
		SC	20	120	180	720	250	48	1338			
	A militant principal encourages girls to attend school.	P	F	10	9	7	3	1	1	31		
			%	32	29	23	10	3	3	100	2.3	
			SC	10	18	21	12	5	6	72		
T		F	36	10	10	5	3	0	64			
		%	56	15.5	15.5	8	5	0	100	1.9	2.1	
		SC	31	20	30	25	15	0	121			

Use of physical punishment enhances girls' participation in secondary school	S	F	76	195	107	0	0	0	378	2.1	
		%	20	52	28	0	0	0	100		
	P	SC	76	390	321	0	0	0	787	2.2	
		F	11	8	8	4	0	0	31		
	T	%	35	26	26	13	0	0	100	1.7	2.3
		SC	11	16	24	16	0	0	67		
An autocratic principal who focuses on accomplishment of goals as set out without listening to students' excuses or opinions influences girls' participation in education.	S	F	39	12	8	3	2	0	64	2.4	
		%	60.	19	12.5	5	3	0	100		
	P	SC	39	24	24	12	10	0	109	2.1	
		F	92	127	106	34	16	3	378		
	T	%	24	34	28	9	4	1	100	2.6	2.6
		SC	92	254	318	136	80	18	898		
An autocratic principal who does not embrace guidance and counselling may influence the participation of girls in secondary education.	P	F	9	13	5	4	0	0	31	3.2	
		%	29	42	16	13	0	0	100		
	T	SC	9	26	15	16	0	0	66	3.1	
		F	14	18	18	10	4	0	64		
	S	%	22	28	28	16	6	0	100	3.0	
		SC	14	36	54	40	30	0	164		
Average percentage on EL, VL, L, H, VH and EH	P	F	17	77	124	131	27	2	378	3.1	
		%	4	20	33	35	7	1	100		
	T	SC	17	154	162	524	135	12	1004	3.1	
		F	3	8	8	11	1	0	31		
	S	%	10	26	26	35	3	0	100	3.0	
		SC	3	16	24	44	5	0	92		
Key: P – Principals T – Teachers S – Students Res – Respondents F – Frequency SC – Score T – Total M – Mean OM – Overall Mean	P	F	3	8	8	11	1	0	31	2.9	
		%	10	26	26	35	3	0	100		
	T	SC	3	16	24	44	5	0	92	3.3	3.1
		F	3	15	15	26	4	1	64		
	S	%	5	16	16	56	6	1	100	3.1	
		SC	3	30	45	104	20	6	208		
S	F	25	80	131	126	9	7	378	3.1		
	%	7	21	35	33	2	2	100			
S	SC	25	160	393	504	45	42	1169	3.0		
	F	3	8	8	11	1	0	31			

Average percentage on EL, VL, L, H, VH and EH

16 20 24 30 8 3 3.0

Key: P – Principals T – Teachers S – Students Res – Respondents
F – Frequency SC – Score T – Total M – Mean OM – Overall Mean

Interpretation of Mean Ratings

EL – Extremely Low = 0.5-1.4

VL - Very Low = 1.5-2.4

L- Low = 2.5-3.4

H - High = 3.5-4.4

VH- Very High = 4.5-5.5

EH – Extremely High = 5.5-6.4

From Table 4.4, ten (32%) principals indicated that an autocratic principal who does not involve students in addressing challenges facing girls had a high influence on girls' participation in secondary education. Eight (26%) stated that the influence was low, 7(23%) very high, 3(10%) extremely high and 2(6%) very low but 1(3%) recorded extremely low influence. The overall mean of 3.6 means that an autocratic principal who did not involve students in decision making had a high influence on girls' participation in secondary education. Twenty five (39%) teachers stated that the influence was high; 10(16%) very high, 9(14%) and 8(13%) low and extremely low while 6(9%) each felt it

was extremely high and very low respectively. The overall mean of 3.6 means that failure to involve students in addressing challenges facing girls can highly influence their participation in secondary education.

One hundred and thirty eight (37%) students indicated that failure to involve students in addressing girls' challenges had low influence in enhancing student participation in secondary education. One hundred and thirty (34%) stated that it was high, 48(13%) very low, 40(11%) very high, 13(3%) extremely low and 9 (2%) extremely high. The overall mean of 3.4 means that an autocratic principal who did not involve teachers and students in addressing challenges facing girls had low influence in enhancing girls' participation in secondary education. Failure to engage them did not help in attracting them to school.

During interviews one of the teachers said;

Following my experience, I have realized that autocratic or authoritarian method is continuously and consistently being consigned to the annals of history. The current dispensation advocates directly or indirectly for the abolition of authoritarianism even at national political and governance levels and so it is at institutional level. However, since most of our students and staff are still not self-driven, a certain degree of push and command must be employed. If anything, the need to achieve certain goals within specific timelines cannot allow for continuous involvement of everyone before taking action.

From the FGD, students also didn't give responses that emerged in either extreme. Most of them only agreed either that the influence was high or low.

Though Sekiwu (2011) and Kuria (2012) do not think that this system is good for administration, Mbatari (2009) is of the view that it cannot be avoided if things are to move forward. According to Davis, (2006) who studied participation and behavior in primary schools in Liverpool, most girls felt that control was vital and discipline essential to their participation in education. Bakita (2010) indicated that teachers believed they and students must not be part of the team that looks for solutions but wait for solutions to be given to them because the onus of resolving issues is on the principal. Nkirote (2013)

disputes this though respondents indicated that failure to involve girls had a high influence on their participation in secondary education as the mean rating by the principals, teachers and students was 3.5 which is high. These findings mean that an autocratic principal who did not involve teachers and students in addressing challenges facing them was high. Since most students lacked the capacity to direct and resolve their own challenges and needed guidance from their teachers and principal, this position seems to be acceptable.

On the statement that an autocratic principal who ensured strict adherence to rules and regulations enhancing girls' attendance of school, 10 (32%) principals indicated that its influence was high, 8(26%) low, 6(19%) very low, 4(13%) very high and 2(6.5%) extremely high while 1 (3%) felt it was extremely low. The overall mean of 3.5 means that an autocratic principal who ensured strict adherence to rules and regulations had a high influence in enhancing girls' attendance of school. Thirty nine (60.5%) teachers stated that the influence was high; 11(17%) low, 5(8%) very high, 4(6%) extremely high, 4(6%) very low and 1(3%) extremely low. The overall mean of 3.9 means that an autocratic principal who ensured strict adherence to rules and regulations had a high influence on the participation of girls in secondary education. One hundred and fifty six (42%) students indicated that by ensuring strict adherence to rules and regulations, a principal had high influence on girls' attendance of school. Another 115(30%) noted it was low, 43(11%) very low, 41(11%) very high, 13(3%) extremely low and 10(3%) extremely high. The overall mean of 3.8 means that strict enforcement of rules and regulations was good for enhancing girls' participation in secondary education.

During the FGD, students had mixed feelings though most stated that the influence was high in cases where students were not self-driven. Such students needed continuous restriction to be able not only to reach their desired goals but also be present in school.

A student remarked that,

Since most students do not attach much value to their education and either waste time or engage in indiscipline to the extent of being expelled, teachers and the administration must formulate and enforce rules that are strictly followed to ensure that students remain committed to their studies. Although some few eventually run away to schools of less restriction, those who remain appreciate enforcement of rules and regulations.

Just like the above student, a teacher said:

Though it is not the most suitable style and may scare away students, principals have to sometimes resort to autocratic leadership when the staff and students don't appreciate the direction things should take, the urgency involved and the possible outcomes. Many times, the teachers abandon their professional ethics, miss lessons and absent themselves without informing their head teachers. That is the same case with students who end up disengaging themselves without knowing that they are the losers. If the principal doesn't enforce the rules, everyone will lose direction and many students will miss school hence resulting into their exclusion.

These views are consistent with those of Nyabanyaba (2010) who noted that a hands-on leadership style was useful in ensuring the successful achievements of the school's goals, improving performance, discipline and attendance. The study revealed that it was important for principals to institute follow up measures regarding students' behaviour, work ethics and school attendance if students were to enroll and be retained in school to completion. On the contrary, Hallam and Rodgers (2008) who did a study on improving school behavior and attendance and Mwongera (2012) identified use of non-democratic leadership styles by head teachers as part of the reason for student's exclusion from school. MOE (2008a) and Anyango (2007) found that autocratic leadership style had negative results from most students who dissent it and dislike the autocratic leaders whom they feel stifle their freedom, are too harsh and discourage them. However, autocratic leadership style, according to MOE (2007a) may also provide a degree of certainty for

those beneath the leader, hence its worth. They may feel safe because they don't have to be involved in solving problems and have a leader with a clear vision of what needs to be done and the political skills to get things done.

Ensuring strict adherence to rules and regulations had a high influence on female students' participation in secondary education as the mean rating by the principals, teachers and students was 3.8 which is high. These findings mean that an autocratic principal who ensured strict adherence to rules and regulations enhanced girls' attendance of school. Accordingly, enforcement of rules and regulations was important in ensuring law, order and a suitable climate prevailed thus enhancing female student participation in secondary education. However, there are situations that do not require strict regulations but moral and empathetic guidance which could attract students more to a principal and thus school.

Eighteen (58%) principals indicated that the influence of an autocratic principal with a clear chain of command that must be followed in addressing issues affecting girls was high; 6(19%) indicated it was low, 4(13%) and 2(6.5%) very high and extremely high while 1(3%) noted it was very low. The overall mean of 4.1 means that the influence of an autocratic principal with a clear chain of command that must be followed in addressing issues was high in terms of attracting girls to school. This implies that principals embrace bureaucracy which they believe, if followed properly, those subjected to it find no reason for discontent but rather appreciate its positive effects. Twenty seven (42%) teachers stated that the influence was high; 22(34%) agreed it was low, 8(12%) very high, 3(5%) extremely high and 2(3%) each very low and extremely low influence. The overall mean of 3.7 means that the influence of an autocratic principal with a clear chain of command that must be followed in addressing issues was high.

One hundred and eighty (48%) students indicated that using a clear chain of command by a principal in addressing issues affecting girls had high influence; 60(16%) each stated it was low and very low, 50(13%) very high, 20(5%) extremely low and 8(2%) extremely high influence. The overall mean of 3.5 implies that an autocratic principal with a clear chain of command that must be followed in addressing issues enhanced girls' attendance of school.

The SCDE, some principals and students remarked that an autocratic system with a clear direction influenced girls' participation in secondary education both positively and negatively. On some occasions, they felt there was some influence while in others, they didn't see any. Yet still, they noted that their participation in determining their academic social needs or interests contributed to improving school climate and effectiveness which also influence their participation. One student remarked that:

The principal is the leader of the school who must have a clear vision, strategies and command to enable the teachers and the students have direction. Since some teachers and parents don't even know how to attend to students' issues, particularly girls, only a strict principal with an interest in girls' education can enforce strategies that will ensure girls are not demoralised and discouraged from school. Certain circumstances require immediate interventions that cannot wait for those in line of command to address the issue or else things can really go wrong.

Similarly, a teacher said that;

Girls are very delicate and require a lot of understanding and continuous effort and follow up. This can only be enforced by a principal with a clear chain of command about who handles what lest students not be given the requisite service which can in turn lead to their dislike of school. To satisfy girls that they are receiving the best and there is dire concern for them, a clear chain of command is necessary. But this should be done with consideration of their immediate needs which should not be delayed.

These views are in tandem with Cheruiyot (2012) who holds that democratic leadership style must be tempered with autocratic in order to succeed. Ouya and Mwelesi (2010) opine that this style is good for those that need close supervision to perform tasks

especially those with low self-esteem and in schools where indiscipline reigns. Kamurua (2012) concurs that only an autocratic leader can succeed where fast action is needed and also be able to curb absenteeism. However, Obondo, et.al. (2005) who regard autocratic leadership style as management by intimidation where the head teacher makes decisions without consulting anyone leading to quick and immediate resolutions, say it needs a visionary leader who uses manipulative skills to achieve the desired outcome.

Use of a clear chain of command had a high influence on female students' participation in secondary education as the mean rating by the principals, teachers and students is 3.6 which is high. These findings mean that an autocratic principal with a clear chain of command that must be followed in addressing issues enhances girls' attendance of school. However, it must be noted that it is not always that issues require bureaucracy especially depending on the urgency. Should those in command be unreachable, failure to solve issues by those available may cause chaos which could cause drop outs hence exclusion.

On the view that a militant principal encourages girls to attend school, 10(32%) principals noted that the influence was extremely low; 9 (29%) very low, 7 (23%) low, 3 (10%) high and 1 (3%) each extremely high and very high influence. The overall mean of 2.3 implies that a militant principal had no influence in encouraging girls to attend school. The results are an indicator that militancy has got very little to do with attracting female students to school. It instead discourages them. Thirty six (56%) teachers stated that a militant principal had an extremely low influence on girls' attendance of school. 10(15.5%) each noted it was low and very low, 5(8%) high and 3(5%) very high. The overall mean of 1.9 means that a militant principal did not have any influence at all on girls' attendance of secondary school. One hundred and ninety five (52%) students stated that a militant principal had very low influence in encouraging girls' attendance; 107(28%) felt the

influence was low and 76(20%) extremely low. The overall mean of 2.1 means that a militant principal had very low influence on girls' attendance of school.

Students engaged in FGDs disagreed with its use in school citing both humane and constitutional reasons. Students felt that though they had their weaknesses, they were better off addressed politely and soberly rather than through militancy. According to those who had a stint in schools and homes where their teachers and parents were militant, this was a leading contributor to exclusion due to fear.

One student remarked that;

Use of militant methods has more often than not made students to run away from schools and even their own homes for fear of being injured. In any case, militancy by some staff members has even led to death of some students or maiming. One would therefore run away and even leave school completely and disappear or get married (elope) than risk injuries or death.

As one teacher concluded:

Militancy makes students insecure and afraid thus demoralizing and negating their willingness to attend school. However, sometimes you have to put your feet on the ground and act tough to get things moving.

There are proponents of militancy though majority of researchers and authors dealing with leadership issues are not for it. Ouya and Mwelesi (2010) say that it is good in potentially explosive and non-performing institutions but can result in passive resistance and hostility. Tarus (2009), R.O.K (2001) and Fugda (2011) disagree given that militancy and autocratic leadership styles or high handedness have resulted in strikes hence don't provide an attractive school environment that can enhance high enrolment, retention and completion of girls in secondary education.

A militant principal had a low influence on female students' participation in secondary education as the mean rating by the principals, teachers and students is 2.0 which is very

low. These findings mean that an autocratic principal who is militant cannot positively influence girls to attend school. Students loath and fear militancy which denies them room to access both teachers and principals for purposes of sharing their challenges and finding solutions and reassurance. Where they are kept afar due to militancy, they feel oppressed and uncomfortable hence are likely to drop out. Militancy did not attract them in any way but instead, drove them away hence must be avoided at all costs.

Regarding the use of physical punishment to enhance girls' participation, 11(35%) principals indicated that it had an extremely low influence, 8(26%) low or very low influence and 4(13%) high influence. The overall mean of 2.2 implies that use of physical punishment on girls has no positive influence on their participation in secondary education. Thirty nine (60.5%) teachers noted that use of physical punishment had extremely low influence on girls' participation; 12(19%) very low, 8 (12.5%) low, 3(5%) high and 2(3%) very high influence. The overall mean of 1.7 means that even if physical punishment was used on girls it did not have any positive influence on their attendance of secondary school. Instead, it scared them away from school. One hundred and twenty seven (34%) students noted that use of physical punishment had very low influence in enhancing girls' participation in secondary education. Another 106(28%) agreed it was low, 92(24%) extremely low, 34(9%) high, 16(4%) very high and 3(1%) extremely high. The overall mean of 2.4 means that use of physical punishment had very low influence on enhancing girls' participation in secondary education.

It was evident during FGDs that this item didn't augur well with the students. In fact, a majority of them remarked that it was a leading cause of school strikes and exclusion voluntarily or otherwise thus should be abolished and its abolition be effectively enforced.

One of them said:

More than even pregnancy, lack of fees and forced repeating, molesting students through use of physical punishment has widely led to the dropout of many girls from school. Most teachers don't know how delicate we are especially during menstruation. For girls, instead of accepting harmful physical punishment, they would rather leave school.

Similar views are replicated by Lockhead (2010) who notes that physical punishment is a first step towards creating a hostile environment in schools thus leading to truancy and exclusion. Kuloba (2010) is of the view that it is inappropriate and has negative influence on participation. Laureen (2005) and ROK (2001, 2009) concur and opine that use of physical punishment is not only a sure recipe for chaos but also a reason for excluding many students from school.

Use of physical punishment had a low influence on female students' participation in secondary education as the mean rating by the principals, teachers and students is 2.0 which is very low. These findings mean that an autocratic principal who uses physical punishment cannot positively influence girls to attend school. Use of corporal punishment is harmful. Lockhead (2010) avers that girls have been made to develop very negative attitudes towards principals, the teachers or schools that use physical punishment. It isn't surprising that affected girls leave school. Knowledge of child rights and the constitution have led some into reporting, to relevant authorities after seeking medication leading to animosity, hostility, discrimination, intimidation and eventually exclusion.

Nine (29%) principals indicated that the influence of an autocratic principal who focuses on accomplishment of goals without listening to students' excuses or opinions was extremely low. Thirteen (42%) and 5(16%) noted it had very low and low influence respectively while 4(13%) noted high influence. The overall mean of 2.1 implies that an autocratic principal who focused on accomplishment of goals without listening to

students' excuses or opinions had low influence on girls' participation in secondary education. Eighteen (28%) teacher respondents indicated that it had low and very low influence on girls' education. Fourteen (22%) noted extremely low influence, 10(16%) and 4(6%) high and very high influence. The overall mean of 2.6 means that strictly focusing on accomplishment of goals as set out without listening to students' excuses or opinions had low influence in enhancing girls' participation in secondary education. On this issue of accomplishment of goals, 131(35%) students indicated it had high influence, 124(33%) low influence and 77(20%) very low influence. 27(7%) agreed it had very high influence, 17(4%) extremely low and 2(1%) extremely high influence. The overall mean of 2.9 means that an autocratic principal who focuses on accomplishment of goals as set out without listening to students' excuses or opinions had a low influence on girls' participation in secondary education.

While students noted during their focus group discussions that it was important to focus on achievement of goals, they said that it was mainly their burden and not the principal's. They therefore felt that, if it is meant for their own good, they were supposed to be consulted and listened to even when their views required some correction or amendment, which they were not averse to. One student remarked;

Although we agree that the goals are meant for our own good, instead of reading them to us like the law or the Bible and insisting that we follow them, we should be given room to internalize and understand them. If they are set in school, we should be allowed to participate either directly or through our leaders. But where we only are forced to listen and toe the line without even understanding how the goals affect us positively or negatively, we are bound to say yes out of fear but not persuasion or opt out. Even the Education Ministry is currently appealing for inclusion of students in administration through the student councils.

Nyabanyaba (2010) differs with the position taken by the respondents by positing that when it comes to setting and implementing goals, one cannot take chances and therefore only a strong and level headed principal can chart the course. While Obondo et.al (2005)

agree, they note that intimidation must be discouraged because it creates immunity, resistance and defiance which according to Anyango (2007) can lead to indiscipline whose result is punishment. Eventually Lockhead (2010) says punitive measures will most likely lead to female students' exclusion or drop out. Wasonga (2014) found that students' views are valuable and play an essential role in the formulation of policies affecting them and their interests. Therefore, schools should provide means through which students can make useful contributions to decisions that are of special interest and relevance to their academic, cultural and social life.

Strictly focusing on accomplishment of goals had a low influence on female students' participation in secondary education as the mean rating by the principals, teachers and students was 2.6 which is low. These findings mean that to influence girls to stay in school, they must be allowed room to participate in determining their goals. Though those in authority can use their positions to determine the course and pace, students need to be involved and made to focus on those goals voluntarily. The principal should only facilitate the drive towards this and create an enabling environment towards this end but not assume to be the single person with all knowledge that enhances this achievement.

Eleven (35%) principals noted high influence on the participation of girls in secondary education as a result of an autocratic principal not embracing guidance and counselling. Eight (26%) each noted low and very low influence, 3(10%) extremely low influence as 1(3%) noted very high influence. The overall mean of 2.9 implies that an autocratic principal who didn't encourage guidance and counselling had low influence on girls' participation in secondary education. Twenty six (36%) teachers noted that such a principal had high influence on female student participation. Fifteen (16%) each noted it

had low and very low influence, 4(6%) very high influence and 3(53%) extremely low influence while 1(1%) agreed it was extremely high. The overall mean of 3.3 implies that the aspect lowly influenced girls' participation in secondary education. As for students, 131(35%) indicated it was low, 126(33%) high, 80(21%) very low, 25(4%) extremely low, 19(5%) very high and 7(2%) extremely high influence. The overall mean of 3.1 means that it was low.

During FGDs students took a middle ground, agreeing that an autocratic principal who did not embrace guidance and counselling had some influence on girls' participation both positively and negatively. One of them said:

There are situations that require the use of autocratic leadership style especially when tasks have to be accomplished well and within stipulated time, especially if the students are low achievers and have low morale. Teachers and the principal should also take charge fully to reduce room for indiscipline and absenteeism. Where students are self-driven, authoritarianism can contribute to their dropping out from school.

While Mbatari (2009) and Nyabanyaba (2010) didn't vouch for a soft style that embraced guidance and counselling, Kariuki (2012) concluded that guidance and counselling influenced girls' access to secondary education. Kariuki's (2012) views are consistent with Nsubuga's (2008) study which concluded that the more autocratic one become's the lower the performance of a school since such leaders adopt harsh leadership styles which demoralize and are highly resented by students. According to Anyango (2007), low morale breeds in- discipline, violence and truancy which MOE (2008a) has noted is a leading cause of drop out from school. Unlike them, Ouya and Mwelesi (2010) noted that depending on prevailing circumstances, autocratic leadership without guidance and counselling is both suitable and unsuitable in managing a school though where proper direction is required especially in order to achieve results, this style should be applied.

Avoiding guidance and counselling had a low influence on female students' participation in secondary education as the mean rating by the principals, teachers and students was 3.1 which was low. These findings mean that an authoritarian principal who abhors guidance and counselling should invoke powers with extreme caution, as in a crisis or genuine emergency in the school. If the leader doesn't use guidance, the long-term impact can be ruinous to a school's climate hence impact negatively on girls' participation. Students despise harsh administrators resulting in a decline in the school's performance, enrolment, retention and completion. This in the long run has a negative influence on female students' participation in secondary education. Therefore, even in autocratic situations, guidance and counselling need be embraced in order to attract girls to school and curb drop out.

The influence of an autocratic principal on female student participation in secondary education in Rachuonyo South Sub County was perceived to be low as signified by the overall mean of 3.0. That is to say that autocratic leadership was a major contributor to drop out instead of enhancing girl's attendance of school thus not worth using.

4.5 Influence of Principals' *Laissez-faire* Leadership Style on Female Student Participation in Secondary Education

The research question responded to was "How does *Laissez-faire* Leadership Style Influence Female Students' Participation in Secondary Education in Rachuonyo South Sub - County?" The responses were as indicated in Table 4.6.

Table 4.4 Perceptions of Principals, Teachers and Students on the Influence of Principals' *Laissez-faire* Leadership Style on Female Student Participation in Secondary Education

ASPECTS OF PRINCIPALS' LAISSEZ-FAIRE LEADERSHIP STYLE INFLUENCE	R	E	RATINGS								
			1	2	3	4	5	6	T	M	OM
	S		EL	VL	L	H	VH	EH			
A <i>laissez-faire</i> principal who allows female students to make their own decisions motivates them to attend school	P	F	3	5	9	9	4	1	31		
		%	10	16	29	29	13	3	100	3.3	
	T	SC	3	10	27	36	20	6	102		
		F	3	21	21	14	5	0	64		
	S	%	5	32.5	32.5	22	8	0	100	3.0	3.3
		SC	3	42	63	56	25	0	189		
	S	F	10	54	147	133	30	4	378		
		%	3	14	39	35	8	1	100	3.4	
		SC	10	108	441	532	150	24	1265		
A <i>laissez-faire</i> principal who allows girls to set their own goals without interference encourages them to develop self-esteem and confidence to participate in secondary education	P	F	5	6	9	6	3	2	31		
		%	16.5	19	29	19	10	6.5	100	3.1	
	T	SC	5	12	27	24	15	12	95		
		F	5	15	23	17	3	1	64		
	S	%	8	23	36	26.5	5	1.5	100	2.8	3.3
		SC	5	30	69	68	15	6	193		
	S	F	3	40	140	169	24	2	378		
		%	1	10	37	45	6	1	100	3.5	
		SC	3	80	420	676	120	12	1311		
A <i>laissez-faire</i> principal who does not use physical punishment enhances girls participation in secondary education	P	F	1	2	9	13	5	1	31		
		%	3	6.5	29	43	16	3	100	3.4	
	T	SC	1	4	27	52	25	6	115		
		F	1	4	18	23	11	7	64		
	S	%	1.5	6	28	36.5	17	11	100	3.9	4.0
		SC	1	8	54	92	55	42	252		
	S	F	2	8	110	148	73	37	38		
		%	1	2	29	39	19	10	100	4.0	
		SC	2	16	330	592	365	222	152		
A <i>laissez-faire</i> principal who allows girls to attend school when they feel like enhances their participation	P	F	4	12	13	2	0	0	31		
		%	13	39	42	6	0	0	100	2.4	
	T	SC	4	24	39	8	0	0	75		
		F	8	27	22	7	0	0	64		
	S	%	12.5	42	34.5	11	0	0	100	2.9	2.9
		SC	28	54	66	28	0	0	176		
	S	F	14	110	159	65	24	6	378		
		%	4	29	42	17	6	2	100	3.0	
		SC	14	220	477	260	120	36	1127		
A <i>laissez-faire</i> principal	P	F	3	7	11	7	2	1	31		

who doesn't ensure strict adherence to rules and regulations influences girls to participate in secondary education	T	%	10	23	35	23	6.5	3	100	3.0	2.8		
		SC	3	14	33	28	10	6	94				
		F	3	17	29	14	1	0	64				
	S	%	4.5	25	45	22	1.5	0	100	2.9			
		SC	3	34	87	56	5	0	185				
		F	7	180	107	64	16	4	378				
		%	2	48	28	17	4	1	100	2.8			
		SC	14	360	321	256	80	24	1055				
A <i>laissez-faire</i> principal who freely delegates duties and responsibilities to girls influences them to participate in secondary education	P	F	1	6	12	9	2	1	31		3.3		
		%	3	19.5	39	29	6.5	3	100	3.3			
		SC	1	12	36	36	10	6	101				
	T	F	2	4	21	29	7	1	64			3.6	
		%	3	6	33	45	11.5	1.5	100	3.6			
		SC	2	8	63	116	35	6	230				
	S	F	6	105	124	103	29	11	378				2.8
		%	2	28	33	27	7	3	100	2.8			
		SC	6	210	372	412	145	66	1211				
A <i>laissez-faire</i> principal who doesn't intimidate girls, encourages them to participate in secondary education	P	F	1	2	8	13	6	1	31		4.1		
		%	3	6	26	43	19	3	100	3.8			
		SC	1	4	24	52	30	6	117				
	T	F	1	4	18	23	11	7	64			3.9	
		%	1.5	6	28	36.5	17	11	100	3.9			
		SC	1	8	54	92	55	42	252				
	S	F	0	0	78	161	109	28	378				4.2
		%	0	0	21	43	29	7	100	4.2			
		SC	0	0	234	644	545	168	1591				
A <i>laissez faire</i> principal who doesn't encourage guidance and counselling services may influence the participation of girls in secondary education	P	F	1	4	14	12	0	0	31		3.3		
		%	3	13	45	39	0	0	100	3.2			
		SC	1	9	42	48	0	0	99				
	T	F	3	9	26	26	0	0	64			3.2	
		%	5	13	41	41	0	0	100	3.2			
		SC	3	18	78	104	0	0	203				
	S	F	4	120	123	103	28	10	31				3.2
		%	1	29	33	27	7	3	100	3.2			
		SC	4	240	369	412	140	60	1245				
Average percentage on EL, VL, L, H, VH and EH			5	19	39	29	9	3	3.3				

Key: P – Principals T – Teachers S – Students Res – Respondents
 F – Frequency SC – Score T – Total M – Mean
 OM – Overall Mean

Interpretation of Mean Ratings

EL – Extremely Low = 0.5-1.4

VL - Very Low = 1.5-2.4

L – Low = 2.5-3.4 H - High = 3.5-4.4

VH- Very High = 4.5-5.5

EH - Extremely High = 5.5-6.4

From Table 4.6, nine (29%) principals each indicated that by allowing girls to make their own decisions a *laissez-faire* principal both highly and lowly motivated girls to stay in school. Five (16%) stated that it had very high and very low influence, 3(10%) extremely high and 1(3%) extremely low influence. The overall mean of 3.3 means that a *laissez-faire* principal who allowed students to make their own decisions negatively influenced girls' attendance of school. According to the teachers, 21(32.5%) each noted that by allowing girls to make their own decisions there was low and very low influence in motivating them to stay in school though 14(22%) noted that it had high influence, 5(8%) very high influence and 3(5%) extremely low influence. The overall mean of 3.0 means that a *laissez-faire* principal who allowed students to make their own decisions had a low influence in motivating girls to be in school. One hundred and forty seven (39%) students indicated that the influence was low; 133(35%) high, 54(14%) very low, 30(8%) very high, 10(3%) extremely low and 4(1%) extremely high influence. The overall mean of 3.4 means that the influence made on students by allowing them to make their own decisions under a *laissez-faire* principal was low.



Students stated that allowing them to make their own decisions was good and attractive particularly for those who feared operating under restrictive environments but it only had moderate influence over their stay in school. One said that:

When girls are allowed to make certain decisions regarding their school life they feel free to join, continue and complete school. However, this trend is only good for a special group of girls particularly those who had already dropped out of school and needed to make a comeback.

Johnson et.al (2009) concur that allowing students to make their own decisions has enabled them to raise their aspirations and develop self-initiative for their educational progression hence can influence their participation in education. The Girls' Education Unit (2008) supports Sapiora's (2006) in Bakita (2010) views that girls especially those

with special needs should be allowed some freedom in order to be in school. However, Kariuki (2010), Mwongera (2012) and Wasonga (2014) hold that this can misdirect girls and cause chaos hence hamper their participation, especially in a *Laissez faire* situation.

Allowing girls to make their own decisions in a *laissez-faire* situation had low influence on female student participation in secondary education as the mean rating by principals, teachers and students was 3.3 which is low. These findings mean that a *laissez faire* principal who allowed girls to make their own decisions had low influence on their attendance of secondary education. This is because students need guidance, which if not provided may bring negative influence from others hence might lead to dropping out due to declining performance, indiscipline, pregnancy, and engagement in other non – educational activities. Those that are guided make right decisions and stay in school.

Nine (29%) principals indicated that allowing girls to set their own goals had low influence on female students' participation. Six (19%) each noted that the influence was high and very low, 5(13%) extremely low, 3(10%) very high and 2 (6.5%) extremely high influence. The overall mean of 3.1 implies that a *laissez-faire* principal who allows girls to set their own goals without interference didn't necessarily help them develop self-esteem and confidence hence had low influence in attracting them to participate in education. On this issue, 23(36%) teachers noted the influence was low, 17(26.5%) high, 15(23%) very low, 5(8%) extremely low, 3(5%) very high and 1(1.5%) extremely high. The overall mean of 2.8 implies that allowing girls to set their own goals had low influence on female students' participation. One hundred and sixty nine (45%) students indicated that it had a high influence on school attendance; 140 (37%) noted that the influence was low, 40(10%) very low, 24(6%) very high, 3(1%) extremely low and 2(1%) extremely high influence. The overall mean of 3.5 means that there was high influence on participation of

girls in secondary education when a *laissez-faire* principal allowed girls to set their own goals without interference which enabled them to develop self-esteem and confidence.

During the Focus Group Discussions, students noted that girls should be allowed to set their own goals though with direction and moderation from their principals and teachers since they still need guidance in order not to make mistakes. One of them said:

By allowing students to set their own goals, they are encouraged to develop self-esteem but since they are not yet mature, skilled, knowledgeable and exposed enough, they should only do so under guidance and not on their own lest they loose direction.

These views are consistent with those of Adengafi (2006) who while advocating for tolerance to students especially girls, the marginalized and minorities in order to attract and retain them in school, however, warns that it must not wholly be left to them without proper observation of what they do and direction by school heads and teachers in order to help them handle themselves responsibly. Obama (2009) and Mwongera (2012) who vouch for participatory goal setting opine that in schools it must be guided democracy which is consistent with Nkirote's (2013) position that *laissez-faire* style has no room in enhancing performance and so should be avoided.

Allowing girls to freely set their own goals had low influence on female student participation in secondary education as the mean rating by principals, teachers and students was 3.3 which is low. These findings mean that a *laissez faire* principal who allowed girls to set their own goals in order to influence them to be in school had only low influence. Only a section of students were for this aspect since they hoped it enabled them have their freedom. However, this would lead to loss of direction which would be more harmful to female student attendance. Thus it did not influence girls' school attendance.

Thirteen (43%) principals indicated that a *laissez-faire* principal who does not use physical punishment had a high influence on girls' participation in secondary education. Nine (29%) noted that the influence is low, 5(16%) very high, 2(6.5%) very low yet 1(3%) each felt it had extremely high and extremely low influence. The overall mean of 3.4 means that a *laissez-faire* principal who does not use physical punishment had a low influence on girls' participation. Twenty three (36.5%) teachers noted that it had a high influence in enhancing female student attendance of secondary school. Eighteen (28%) noted it had low influence, 11(17%) very high, 7(11%) extremely high, 4(6%) very low and 1(1.5%) extremely low influence. The overall mean of 3.9 implies that a *laissez-faire* principal who does not use physical punishment has a high influence on girls' participation. On this issue, 148(39%) students indicated that the influence was high, 110(29%) low, 73(19%) very high, 37(10%) extremely high, 8(2%) low, and 2(1%) extremely low. The overall mean of 4.0 means that avoidance of physical punishment by a *laissez-faire* principal could enhance girls' participation in secondary education. Student took this position from the fear of being injured by teachers as they meted physical punishment on them.

The students recorded high influence and supported the avoidance of physical punishment. According to them use of non-punitive measures contributed towards attracting female students to stay and remain in school though they were not averse to some other kinds of punishments for wrong doers. One of them said:

Use of physical punishment has contributed to the drop out of many students from schools for fear of being harmed. Where it is abolished or avoided, fear among girls is low and this motivates them to participate in secondary education through regular attendance, consultation and involvement in school activities.

These views are in tandem with those of the MOE (2008a) which does not vouch for both *laissez-faire* leadership style and use of physical punishment because it serves to alienate rather than attract students to secondary schools. ROK (2001) and Otula (2007) record use of corporal punishment as one of the causes of agitation, strikes in schools and students' exclusion thus should be avoided and instead students with disruptive behaviour be offered professional guidance and counselling services in schools and disciplinary measures be taken under an inclusive umbrella.

Avoidance of physical punishment had high influence on female student participation in secondary education as the mean rating by principals, teachers and students was 4.0 which is high. These findings mean that a *laissez faire* leadership style principal who doesn't use physical punishment could influence girls to attend school. Though the free reign is unsuitable in a learning environment, avoidance of physical punishment makes both parents and students feel safe and secure to engage in a school. Therefore, both *laissez-faire* and physical punishment should be used minimally.

Thirteen (42%) principals indicated that the influence caused by a *laissez-faire* principal who allows girls to attend school when they liked was low; 12(39%) recorded very low, 4(13%) extremely low while 2(6%) noted it was high. The overall mean of 2.4 means that a *laissez-faire* principal who allowed girls to attend school when they liked had low influence on their participation in secondary education. Twenty seven (42%) teachers indicated that it had very low influence on girls' participation in secondary education; 22(34.5%) low, 8 (12.5%) extremely low, 7(11%) high and none extremely high or very high influence. The overall mean of 2.9 implies that a *laissez-faire* principal who allowed girls to attend school when they felt like had very low influence on their participation in secondary education.

On this item, 159(42%) students indicated that the influence was low, 110(29%) very low, 65(17%) high, 24(6%) very high, 14(4%) extremely low and 6(2%) extremely high. The overall mean of 3.0 implies that a *laissez-faire* principal who allowed girls to attend school as they felt like had low influence on their participation in secondary education.

Students who responded to focus group discussion questions did not see why female students needed to be given freedom to attend school as that would be discriminatory and tantamount to creating parallel rules in the same schools for different sexes. Apart from special groups, it was necessary that schools have universal rules otherwise it would be difficult to teach students of the same class together and at the same pace.

A student said:

Why should girls be allowed to come to school when they want? What if they are not ready yet the teachers have a syllabus to cover and time to do it? Without guidelines, freedom is not useful. It must be coupled with some element of responsibility. Even special cases should not be allowed this freedom.

Ochiel (2010) concurs that participation of girls is too delicate, complex and sensitive to be left to nature. He asserts that to keep girls in school, principals must create a conducive environment which is not possible in a *laissez-faire* situation. Contrary to Adengafi (2006) who vouches for tolerance to improve girls' education, the findings are consistent with MacDonald's (2007) and Fugda's (2011) study of *laissez-faire* leadership which shows that it is associated with the highest rates of truancy and delinquency and declining performance which could lead to giving up, absenteeism and exclusion from school.

Allowing girls to attend school when they liked had low influence on female student participation in secondary education as the mean rating by principals, teachers and students was 2.9 which is low. These findings mean that a *laissez faire* principal who allowed girls to attend school when they wanted could not really help improve their

attendance of secondary school as this would conflict with the purpose for which schools are established, school programmes and curriculum delivery hence a likelihood of clashes with school authorities which could cause exclusion. Since schools accommodate communities of students, regulations are necessary without which disorder could erupt hence drop out and reduced enrolment. Even in circumstances where the students were given very flexible arrangements, this still didn't attract most of them.

Regarding the influence of strict adherence to rules and regulations in enhancing girls' participation, 11(35%) principals recorded low influence, 7(23%) high and very low influence while 3(10%) recorded extremely low influence, 2(6.5%) very high influence as 1(3%) noted it had extremely high influence. The overall mean of 3.0 implies that a *laissez-faire* principal who did not ensure strict adherence to rules and regulations had low influence on girls' participation in secondary education. Twenty nine (45%) teachers indicated that it had low influence on girls' participation in secondary education; 17(25%) very low influence, 14(22%) high, 3(4.5 %) extremely low influence and 1(1.5%) very high influence. The overall low mean of 2.9 means it did not influence increased girls' participation in secondary education.

One hundred and eighty (48%) students indicated that avoiding strictness in enforcing rules and regulations had very low influence on girls' participation; 107(28%) low, 64(17%) high, 16(4%) very high, 7(2%) extremely low influence and 4(1%) extremely high. The overall mean of 2.8 means that a *laissez-faire* principal who relaxed enforcement of and adherence to rules and regulations elicited low influence on girls' attendance of school.

The SCDE and students supported this item partially since they believed it was more friendly and accommodative though they noted that a school must be guided by rules and regulations in order to achieve their goals and aspirations. They noted that in most cases heavy restrictions scared girls, no restrictions worried them while flexibility favored and attracted them. Their views are consistent with those of Obondo et al. (2005), Cheruiyot (2012) and Kuria (2012) who found that *laissez faire* style of leadership allowed people to operate freely but was only appropriate for mature, experienced and competent people in an appropriate environment. However, like Sushila (2004) in Musungu (2009), they opined that failure to adhere strictly to rules and regulations discouraged hard work, led to failure and could lead to lawlessness thus interrupting girls' participation in schools.

During the interviews one of the principals said:

As with love, freedom too has responsibilities. After being a student and also a teacher, I have come to learn that at no one point can society be without some rules given that human being is naturally lazy, unwilling, needy and greedy. To make the society, which schools are part of, a better place and to enhance a harmonious relationship, there must be rules. In schools, students also need direction in order to be able to achieve the goals for which they aspire. Otherwise there would be no time for learning but resolving disputes which if not handled well, definitely lead to exclusion.

A *laissez-faire* principal who didn't ensure strict adherence had low influence on female student participation in secondary education as the mean rating by principals, teachers and students was 2.8 which is very low. These findings mean that a *laissez faire* principal who didn't ensure strict adherence to rules and regulations did not directly attract girls to school. Principals, teachers, students and even their parents all abhor a lawless school which they all don't vouch for even as a way of attracting girls to school. That is to say that even where the rules were very flexible or not there at all to the extent that girls determined whatever they wanted to do, whenever and wherever, this freedom could still not attract them to participate in education. Therefore it was not worth providing.

The item of the influence of delegation of responsibilities on girls' participation posted the following results: 12(37%) principal recorded low influence, 9(29%) high, 6(19%) very low, 2(6.5%) very high while 1(3%) each recorded extremely high and extremely low influence. The overall mean of 3.3 implies that even if a *laissez-faire* principal freely delegated responsibilities to girls, they would not really be influenced to participate in secondary education. Teachers differed a bit as 29 (45%) noted that the influence was high; 21(33%) low, 7(11%) very high, 4(6%) very low while 2(3%) recorded extremely low and 1(1.5%) extremely high influence. The overall mean of 3.6 means that delegation of responsibilities could highly influence their participation in secondary education. As for students, (33%) indicated that delegation had low influence on their participation in secondary education; 105(28%) very low, 103(27%) high, 29(7%) very high, 11(3%) extremely high and 6(2%) extremely low influence. The overall mean of 2.8 means that a *laissez faire* principal who freely delegated duties and responsibilities to girls had a low influence on their participation in secondary education.

During FGDs, students agreed with this as long as the duties and responsibilities delegated to them were within their capacity to perform though they added that this was only perfectly possible with some degree of guidance or facilitation. However, what mattered most was what was delegated. As one student aptly remarked:

Delegating is one thing and being responsible is another. Although we appreciate when teachers delegate to us some duties, this action must be supervised in order to succeed. It has been done with little supervision before but we realized that only a few students could reason with themselves or their stubborn peers and perform things rightly. Some end up making greater mistakes that make them run away because of guilt. For us, we need some control because, you know, too much freedom is dangerous more so to young people who still don't know where they are heading to hence can loose direction and even leave school.

MoE (2008b) opines that a *laissez-faire* environment may be more fulfilling and creative for those involved. This position is consistent with that of Kuloba (2010) and Oyetunji

(2006) who indicated that the *laissez-faire* leadership style may work well when trying to build team harmony, increase morale, improve communication or repairing broken trust. In this case it can enhance attendance. However, Wasonga (2014) and MacDonald (2007) say this kind of delegation is associated with truancy, chaos and eventual dropping out from school hence not good for enhancing discipline and participation. *It is not the best leadership style to use in the school's organization because complete delegation without follow-up mechanisms may create performance problems, which are likely to affect the school's effectiveness (Oyetunji, 2006) hence impede student participation.*

Delegation of duties and responsibilities by a *laissez-faire* principal had low influence on female student participation in secondary education as the mean rating by principals, teachers and students was 3.3 which is low. These findings mean that a *laissez faire* leadership style principal who delegated all duties and responsibilities had low influence on girls' participation in secondary education. Though some element of delegation was necessary, they still needed direction. Letting them handle issues on their own was likely to have a negative backlash which could lead to drop out hence lower participation.

Thirteen (43%) principals concurred that a *laissez-faire* principal who did not intimidate girls had a high influence on their participation in secondary education; 8(26%) noted this had low influence, 6(19%) very high influence, 2(6%) low influence and 1(3%) each extremely low and extremely high influence. The overall mean of 3.8 implies that a *laissez-faire* principal who didn't intimidate girls had high influence on their participation.

Twenty three (36.5%) teachers indicated that a *laissez-faire* principal who did not intimidate girls had high influence on their participation in secondary education; 18(28%) low influence, 11(17%) very high, 7(11%) extremely high, 4(6%) very low and 1(1.5%)

extremely low influence. The overall mean of 3.9 implies that a *laissez-faire* principal who never intimidated girls had high influence on their participation in secondary education. On this issue, 161(43%) students noted that the influence was high; 109(29%) very high, 78(21%) low and 28(7%) extremely high. The overall mean of 4.2 means that a *laissez-faire* principal who didn't intimidate girls highly encouraged them to participate in education, like was the case with physical punishment which students loathed.

During the focus group discussions, students also agreed that a principal who did not intimidate them encouraged them to participate in secondary education to completion.

One of them said:

A principal who is friendly and tolerant encourages and motivates girls to attend school but when they become harsh, they scare us away. This does not mean that there are no rules to be followed or those who make mistakes are not corrected or punished but punishment should be moderate.

Like the students stated, the SCDE said that intimidation could not produce good results though the students still required some direction and control. He said that:

Some cases of indiscipline, truancy and delinquency require both guidance and discipline but students must not be intimidated lest they drop out of school. These are cases we have experienced, including at home where intimidation has led to disappearance of students, child labour, eloping, early marriages and drop out from schools. Handling these students require a middle ground of action, not being too hard or too soft. Even leaving them without being firm as in this *laissez-faire* situation is dangerous and cannot help encourage girls stay in school but spoil them. Today's students are well exposed, they know their rights, responsibilities and limits. You cannot be so harsh and expect them to be quiet while you cannot also give them a raw deal without experiencing complaints, even through parents.

These views concur with those of Kuloba (2010), Ochiel (2010) and Kythreotis (2009) in Cheruiyot (2012). In essence intimidation is likely to create resistance and apathy and so should be avoided at all costs. On the other hand, according to Fugda (2011) and Kariuki (2012), free reign which lacked common and consistent direction, might lead to confusion which doesn't provide adequate attraction to girls' participation in secondary education.

A *laissez-faire* principal who didn't intimidate girls had high influence on female student participation in secondary education as the mean rating by principals, teachers and students was 2.8 which is very low. These findings mean that a *laissez faire* principal who did not intimidate girls attracted them to attend secondary education. Thus it can be said that treating girls in a way that makes them feel they are safe, secure and comfortable is a sure way of attracting them to school. Where they feel that they are roughed up, principals are of the view that they are likely to be discouraged which may lead to dropping out. Thus, much as intimidation should be avoided, free reign should be used very sparingly.

Fourteen (45%) principals indicated that a *laissez-faire* principal who didn't encourage guidance and counselling had a low influence in enhancing female participation. Twelve (39%) noted that avoiding guidance had high influence, 4(13%) very low and 1(3%) extremely low influence. The overall mean of 3.2 means that a *laissez-faire* principal who didn't encourage guidance and counselling had low influence in enhancing female participation in secondary education. Twenty six (41%) teachers each indicated that avoiding guidance had low and high influence on girls' participation in secondary education while 9(13%) noted very low and 3(5%) extremely low influence. The overall mean of 3.2 means that a *laissez-faire* principal who didn't encourage guidance and counselling had a low influence in enhancing girls' attendance of secondary education. One hundred and twenty three (33%) students indicated that a *laissez-faire* style without guidance and counselling had low influence on girls' attendance of school. One hundred and twenty (29%) noted the influence was very low, 103(27%) high, 28(7%) very high, 10(3%) extremely high and 4(1%) extremely low. The overall mean of 3.2 means that a principal who did not encourage guidance and counselling had low influence on girls' participation in secondary education.

Use of *Laissez-faire* style without guidance and counselling resonates well with Sapiora's (2006) view in Bakita (2010) and Fira (2008) who assert that in order to attract girls to school, they did not only need space to determine their needs but also enjoy an environment that was devoid of restrictions imposed at home. In essence, provision could be made for girls with special needs in order to keep them glued to school. Pastoralist societies, child mothers and even those with difficulties like having to cover long distances to school could be given a say on how they should be led and the freedoms they should enjoy (Fira, 2008). However, Yabash (2010) says this is likely to require secluded schools for this lot since in a normal school system, it is impossible to operate without laws. According to Kuloba (2010) and Oyetunji (2006) the *laissez-faire* leadership style without guidance may work well only when trying to build team harmony, increase morale, improve communication or repairing broken trust. However, it should be used to a very limited extent.

Avoiding guidance and counseling had a low influence on female student participation in secondary education as the mean rating by principals, teachers and students was 3.3 which is low. These findings mean that a *laissez faire* principal who didn't encourage guidance and counselling services in school was unlikely to elicit any positive influence on girls' attendance of secondary education. This is due to the fact that at school going age, girls still required a lot of guidance and counselling in order to develop positively especially in the absence of corporal punishment. It could be used only where students were self-motivated and for girls who needed very special attention, in particular, drop outs that had returned to school or were being rehabilitated. This was to enable them get a conducive and flexible climate that would not put them under so much pressure as to be forced to drop out again. However, under normal circumstances, its use should be very limited. In

any case, a total or all round student or citizen is unlikely to emerge and fit in the out of school society if students have little or no exposure to systems that have values and regulations which are a must in any organization.

From the findings, it is evident that *laissez-faire* leadership style was perceived to have low influence on female student participation in secondary education as indicated by the overall percentages from the responses of the three groups of respondents: principals, teachers and students at 63% coupled with the overall mean rating of 3.3 which signified low influence in enhancing girls' participation in secondary education. This style was therefore a contributor to low girl child participation and high dropout so should be avoided.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter contains summary, conclusions and recommendations and suggestions for further research.

5.2 Summary

The findings of the study were summarized as follows:

5.2.1 Influence of Democratic Leadership Style on Participation of Female Students in Secondary Education

The study found that 29(84%) of the principals, 56(87%) of the teachers and 361(92%) of the students indicated that a democratic principal who allowed participatory decision making had very high influence on girls' participation in secondary education as depicted by the overall mean rating of the three groups of respondents which was 4.8 which is a very high influence. During FGDs and interviews, students and principals indicated that involving them in decision making highly influenced their participation in secondary education.

The study also established that 28(90.5%) of the principals, 58(91%) of the teachers and 354(93%) of the students indicated that a democratic principal who discussed adherence to rules and regulations had very high influence in enhancing girls' attendance of secondary school. This is depicted by the overall mean of 4.9 from the three groups which is a very high influence. Students in FGDs agreed that involving girls in formulation of rules and regulations attracted them to participate in secondary education.

The study also established that 28(90.5%) principals, 58(91%) teachers and 350(92%) students indicated that a democratic principal who involved students in addressing

administrative issues of their concern elicited very high influence in enhancing female student attendance of secondary education. This was supported by the overall mean of 4.8 which depicts a very high influence.

The study also found out that 29(94%) of the principals, 57(89.5%) teachers and 286(96%) students indicated that a democratic principal who allowed freedom of expression had a very high influence on girls participation in secondary education as depicted by the overall mean of 4.9 which is a very high influence.

The study further established that 30(97%) principals, 57(90%) teachers and 362(96%) students indicated that a democratic principal who involved students in addressing girls' issues had an extremely high influence in enhancing girls' participation in secondary education. This is further espoused by the overall mean of 4.9 which is a very high influence.

Regarding the influence of consultations, it emerged that majority of the principals 31(100%), teachers 60(94%) and students 330(87%) indicated that a principal who allowed regular consultations between the administration and female students enabled the latter to develop confidence and self-esteem that motivated them to stay in school thus enhancing their participation. This aspect is supported by the mean score of 4.8 from the three groups which is very high.

Majority of the principals,30(97%), teachers 62 (97%) and students 371(99%) indicated that a democratic principal who is friendly to girls motivated them to attend and stay in school. This aspect is supported by the mean score of 5.2 from the three groups which is very high.

It was also established that a democratic principal who encouraged guidance and counseling in school elicited very high influence on female student participation in secondary education as indicated by the majority of principals 31(100%), teachers 61(95.5%) and students 365(97%). Their overall mean was 5.0 which depicts a very high influence.

The overall mean for the three groups from all these items was 5.0 which is a very high influence. This is supported by the fact that 94% of the respondents: principals, teachers and students noted that the influence was high. Thus, a principal who embraced democratic leadership style highly influenced girls to attend secondary school education.

5.2.2 Influence of Autocratic Leadership Style on Participation of Female Students in Secondary Education

The study found that majority of the principals 20(65%) and teachers 36(64%) indicated that an autocratic principal who did not involve teachers and students in addressing challenges facing girls had high influence. Students differed as 197(53%) indicated that this had low influence on female student participation. The combined mean score (3.5) for the three groups of respondents: principals, teachers and students, however, indicated that the influence was high.

On the item of an autocratic principal who ensured strict adherence to rules and regulations influencing girls to attend school, majority of the principals 16(51.5%), teachers 48(74%) and students 220(74%) indicated that the influence was high. This is supported by the overall mean of 3.8 which is high.

On the aspect of an autocratic principal with a clear chain of command that must be followed in addressing issues enhancing girls' attendance of school, majority of the principals 24(77.5%), teachers 38(59%) and students 238(63%) indicated that the

influence was high. This position is corroborated by the overall mean score of 3.6 which is high.

Majority of the principals 26(84%), teachers 56 (87%) and students 378(100%) indicated that a militant autocratic principal had low influence on girls' attendance of secondary education as supported by the overall mean of 2.1 from the three groups. Only 16% principals and 13% teachers indicated that such action favored girl child participation in education.

Majority of the principals 27(87%), teachers 69 (92%) and students 335(86%) indicated that use of physical punishment by an autocratic principal had low influence on female student participation in secondary education. This position is corroborated by the overall rating of 2.3 mean score which is a very low influence.

It was established that 27(87%) of the principals, 50(78%) teachers and 218(78%) students indicated that an autocratic principal who focused on accomplishment of goals as set without listening to students' excuses or opinions had a low influence on girls' participation in secondary education. The combined mean score (2.6) for the three groups of respondents: principals, teachers and students indicated that the influence was low.

On the issue of an autocratic principal who doesn't embrace guidance and counseling influencing female students to participate in secondary education, majority of the principals 19(62%), teachers 33(63%) and students 236(60%) indicated that its influence was low. The overall mean from the three groups of respondent was 3.1 which is a low influence.

The overall mean for the three groups for all the items was 3.0 which is a low influence. This is supported by the fact that 60% of the respondents: principals, teachers and students

noted that the influence was low. Thus the respondents indicated that an autocratic principal's leadership style had low influence on girls' attendance of secondary school education.

5.2.3 Influence of *laissez-faire* Leadership Style on Participation of Female Students in Secondary Education

The study established that majority of the principals 17(55%), teachers 45(70%) and students 211(56%) indicated that a *laissez-faire* principal who allowed female students to make their own decisions had a low influence on girls' participation in secondary education. This position is corroborated by the overall mean of 3.3 which is low. However, 45% principals, 30% teachers and (44%) students indicated that the influence was high.

The study also established that majority of the principals 20(64.5%) and teachers 43(67%) indicated that a *laissez-faire* principal who allowed girls to set their own goals had low influence on their attendance of secondary education while 195(52%) of the students indicated that the influence was high as 48% students indicated that it was low. However, the overall position resulting from the combined responses of the three groups is that the influence is low as corroborated by the overall mean of 3.3 which is low.

On the issue of a *laissez-faire* principal who never used physical punishment enhancing girls' attendance of secondary education majority of the principals 19(64.5%), teachers 41(64.5%) and students 258(68%) indicated that the influence was high. The overall mean rating was 4.0 which is high. None use of physical punishment by a *laissez-faire* principal was thus an attraction to girls to attend school.

It also established that for a *laissez-faire* principal who allowed girls to attend school when they liked, majority of the principals 29(94%), teachers 26(89%) and students 283(75%) indicated that the influence was low. This position is supported by the overall low mean of 2.9.

The study established that for a *laissez-faire* principal who didn't ensure strict adherence to rules and regulations, majority of the principals 21(68%, teachers 49(74.5%) and students 294(78%) indicated that the influence was low which is confirmed by the overall low mean of 2.8.

According to 19(61.5%) principals and 235(63%) students, the study established that a *laissez-faire* principal who freely delegated duties and responsibilities had low influence on female student participation in secondary education. Teachers differed given that the majority 37(58%) indicated that delegating duties by a *laissez-faire* principal had high influence on female student participation in secondary education. Generally, however, the aspect elicited low influence as confirmed by the overall low mean of 3.3.

It further established that majority of the principals 20(64.5%), teachers 41(44.5%) and students 298(79%) indicated that a *laissez-faire* principal who didn't intimidate girls highly encouraged them to participate in secondary education as confirmed by the overall high mean of 4.1.

Majority of the principals 19(52%), teachers 38(59%) and students 247(63%) also indicated that a *laissez-faire* principal who didn't encourage the use of guidance and counseling services in school had low influence on girls' participation in secondary education. The overall mean of 3.3 depicted a low influence.

Generally, the principals, teachers and students recorded a mean score of 3.3 which is a low influence. This is supported by the fact that 63% of all the respondents noted that the

influence was low. Thus *laissez-faire* leadership style was not suitable for enhancing female student participation in secondary education in mixed public day secondary schools in Rachuonyo South Sub County.

5.3 Conclusions

In light of the findings of this study, the following conclusions were made:

5.3.1 Influence of Democratic Leadership Style on Participation of Female Students in Secondary Education

Democratic leadership style was perceived to have very high influence on participation of girls in education in mixed secondary schools in Rachuonyo South Sub County. This means that it encourages enrolment and discourages drop out of girls in mixed day secondary schools in Rachuonyo South Sub County and thus should be used regularly.

5.3.2 Influence of Autocratic Leadership Style on Participation of Female Students in Secondary Education

Autocratic leadership style was perceived to have low influence on female student participation in mixed day secondary schools in Rachuonyo South Sub County. This does not mean that autocratic leadership style is not useful. In some areas like goal setting and achievement, ensuring that things are done right within the allocated time frame, space and by the right people without room for blame games, it can be applied. However, its influence on female student participation in secondary education is low because of its harsh and unfriendly nature which is a participation deterring factor detested by students hence discourages enrolment and encourages drop out.

5.3.3 Influence of *Laissez-faire* Leadership Style on Participation of Female Students in Secondary Education

Laissez-faire leadership style was perceived to have low influence on female student participation in mixed day secondary schools in Rachuonyo South Sub County. *Laissez-faire* leadership style had some influence like in enhancing self-esteem and confidence, developing creativity, opening up opportunities for the out of school cases that are undergoing rehabilitation and independence of mind. However, its influence in eliciting participation of female students in attendance of mixed public day secondary school was low.

5.4 Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings and conclusions of the study:

- i. Since the study established that democratic leadership style was perceived to have high influence on girls' participation in secondary education in Rachuonyo South Sub County, Kenya, and that the democratic leadership style is the most acceptable style used in schools, it recommended that:
 - a) Principals adopt it to enhance girls' participation.
 - b) The Ministry of Education and Kenya Education Management Institute should develop a guide, manual or code on leadership and include it as a style that principals should apply in order to enhance female student participation in mixed public day secondary schools.
 - c) The Ministry should also enforce its use in daily school administration.
- ii) In light of the finding that autocratic leadership style by school principals was perceived to be unfriendly and scaring to female students hence has low influence on their participation in mixed public day secondary schools, the study recommended

that principals should avoid using it in order to enhance the participation of more girls in secondary schools and reduce their drop out.

- iii) Since the study revealed that *laissez-faire* leadership style was perceived to have low influence on girls' participation in secondary education, it was recommended that it should not be used so as to encourage girls' enrolment and reduce their drop out.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

The study exposed the following knowledge gaps for further research:

- i. Influence of leadership styles on male students' participation in mixed public day secondary schools.
- ii. Influence of institutional factors on female students' participation in mixed public day secondary schools.
- iii. Influence of leadership styles on female students' achievement in curricula and co-curricular activities in mixed public day secondary schools.

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