

# Impact of Frequency of Principal Delocalization on Students' Academic Performance in Trans Nzoia County Secondary Schools

FRANCIS THANDE MWAURA<sup>1</sup>, ENOS EZINE<sup>2</sup>, F. NJIHIA GACATHI<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1, 2, 3</sup> Department of Arts and Social sciences, Northwestern Christian University

*Abstract- In the context of secondary school principals, delocalization refers to the practice of reassigning or transferring principals from one school to another within a district or region. It is typically carried out as part of administrative restructuring efforts or leadership development initiatives aimed at enhancing educational outcomes and promoting effective school leadership. Despite the implementation of delocalization practices in Trans Nzoia County, there is a need to examine the specific impact of delocalization on students' academic performance. The effectiveness of delocalized principals in improving student outcomes remains unclear, and there is a lack of comprehensive research addressing the factors influencing academic performance in schools with delocalized principals. The purpose of this study is to investigate how the frequency of delocalization of secondary school principals impacts students' academic performance in Trans Nzoia County. This research employs a descriptive research design. The target population for this study consists of secondary school students in Form 3 and Form 4 who are currently enrolled in the 142 public secondary schools within Trans-Nzoia County, Kenya. The research uses the Krejcie and Morgan table of (1970) to determine the sample size. Based on the Krejcie and Morgan table, a sample size of approximately 104 is appropriate for a target population of 142 schools. The sample size consists of 4 students from each of the 104 secondary schools, totaling 416 students. Additionally, a Principal and a Director of Studies from each school are included, resulting in a total sample size of 624 participants. The study conducted in Trans Nzoia County secondary schools reveals that frequent principal delocalization has a significant negative impact on students' academic performance. The constant turnover of principals*

*leads to disruptions in educational leadership, resulting in inconsistent instructional practices and a lack of coherent strategies for academic success. Building effective relationships between students and principals is challenging due to the frequent changes, affecting student engagement and motivation. Moreover, the stability and consistency of the school climate and support systems are disrupted, leading to a lack of continuity in academic support and extracurricular activities. The potential loss of institutional knowledge and expertise further hinders effective decision-making and strategic planning. These findings emphasize the need for minimizing principal changes and implementing supportive measures to ensure stability and continuity for students' academic success in Trans Nzoia County secondary schools.*

*Indexed Terms- Frequency of Principal Delocalization, Students' Academic Performance*

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the context of secondary school principals, delocalization refers to the practice of reassigning or transferring principals from one school to another within a district or region (Ngunyi, 2018). It is typically carried out as part of administrative restructuring efforts or leadership development initiatives aimed at enhancing educational outcomes and promoting effective school leadership. Delocalization involves moving principals from their current school and placing them in a different school that may have different demographics, challenges, or organizational dynamics (Ongaga & Ombonga, 2019). The purpose of delocalization is to provide principals with diverse experiences, broaden their leadership skills, and bring fresh perspectives to schools that may benefit from new leadership

approaches. By fostering professional growth, improving overall school performance, and promoting educational equity across the district or region, delocalization plays a crucial role in creating a supportive and effective educational system.

Delocalization policies are implemented for various reasons in the context of secondary school principals, with one key rationale being to enhance leadership skills and professional development (Ogalo, Odera, & Ogogo, 2020). By moving principals to different schools, they are exposed to diverse educational settings, student populations, and organizational challenges, which broadens their leadership capabilities and promotes continuous learning (Kathari, Gesimba, & Mwaura, 2021). Delocalization also aims to foster collaboration and knowledge sharing among principals. Through experiencing different school contexts, principals can exchange best practices, innovative approaches, and successful strategies, creating a culture of collaboration and mutual support (Fonseca, Martí, Redondo, Navarro, & Sánchez, 2014). Additionally, delocalization can be utilized to address underperforming schools by bringing in experienced administrators who can implement turnaround strategies and drive improvement. Furthermore, these policies contribute to ensuring the equitable distribution of experienced administrators, preventing the concentration of leadership talent in certain schools and promoting fairness in educational opportunities for all students. The frequency and extent of delocalization practices in secondary school leadership can vary across different educational systems and regions (Mbaluka, 2023). The implementation of delocalization policies depends on various factors, such as the size of the district or education system. Larger districts often have more opportunities for principal transfers due to the presence of a larger pool of qualified administrators. Additionally, the availability of qualified principals can influence the frequency of delocalization, as districts may prioritize it when there is a surplus of experienced leaders to ensure their equitable distribution (Ngunyi, 2018). The existence of specific policy guidelines or initiatives can also shape the frequency and duration of delocalization, with some districts implementing regular rotations of principals every few years, while others may use it as a targeted intervention for

underperforming schools (Surum, 2019). Ultimately, the extent of delocalization practices is influenced by local needs, available resources, and the educational goals of each specific educational system or region.

The impact of delocalization on school leadership and principal effectiveness has been the subject of research, encompassing both qualitative and quantitative studies (Ongaga & Ombonga, 2019). Findings suggest that frequent changes in principals due to delocalization can have mixed effects on school leadership. On one hand, it can bring fresh perspectives, innovative ideas, and diverse experiences to schools, fostering instructional leadership and promoting positive changes in school culture. However, the constant turnover of principals can also disrupt school stability, hinder long-term planning, and lead to a lack of continuity in leadership vision and goals (Irungu, 2020). Delocalization may impact teacher morale and job satisfaction, as teachers may need to adjust to new leadership styles and expectations. The overall functioning of schools can be influenced by the extent to which new principals are able to effectively adapt and build relationships with staff, students, and the community (Ogalo, Odera, & Ogogo, 2020). Further research is needed to better understand the nuanced effects of delocalization on school leadership, as well as to identify strategies for mitigating potential negative consequences and maximizing the positive impacts of this practice.

Research investigating the relationship between delocalization and students' academic performance has examined various measures, including standardized test scores, graduation rates, student engagement, and attendance (Kathari, Gesimba, & Mwaura, 2021). Studies that control for confounding variables, such as socioeconomic status, school resources, and teacher quality, provide valuable insights. Findings suggest that the impact of delocalization on academic outcomes is complex and context-dependent. While some studies have found positive effects of delocalization on student performance, others have shown no significant relationship or even negative impacts. The variability in findings may be attributed to factors such as the quality of leadership transitions, the level of support provided to new principals, and the extent to which

instructional continuity is maintained during transitions (Mbaluka, 2023). Additionally, the specific contexts and characteristics of the schools and districts involved can also influence the outcomes. Further research is needed to better understand the mechanisms through which delocalization affects student performance and to identify strategies for maximizing positive outcomes while mitigating potential negative effects (Chepngeno, 2019).

Stakeholders involved in the delocalization process, including principals, teachers, students, parents, and policymakers, may hold diverse perspectives on this practice (Mbaluka, 2023). Principals who have experienced delocalization may view it as an opportunity for professional growth, exposure to different school contexts, and the development of leadership skills. However, they may also express concerns about the disruption and challenges associated with adjusting to new school environments and building relationships with staff and students (Surum, 2019). Teachers' viewpoints can vary, with some appreciating the fresh ideas and perspectives brought by new principals, while others may feel unsettled by the constant changes in leadership (Chepngeno, 2019). Students may have mixed reactions, depending on their experiences with different principals and their perception of the impact on their educational environment. Parents may have concerns about the potential instability and the impact on their children's academic progress (Ongaga & Ombonga, 2019). Policymakers may view delocalization as a strategy to ensure equitable distribution of leadership talent and drive school improvement. Considering these diverse stakeholder perspectives is crucial for understanding both the potential benefits and challenges associated with delocalization and can inform decision-making and policy development in this area.

To implement delocalization policies effectively and mitigate potential negative impacts on academic performance, several best practices and recommendations have emerged from studies in this area. Firstly, it is crucial to provide comprehensive support to principals during transitions, including orientation programs, mentoring, and ongoing professional development (Ogalo, Odera, & Ogogo,

2020). Clear communication and collaboration between outgoing and incoming principals can facilitate a smooth handover and ensure continuity in school leadership. Building strong relationships between principals, teachers, and staff is essential, emphasizing open communication, trust, and shared decision-making (Sikuku, Barasa, & Likoko, 2023). Additionally, involving stakeholders such as teachers, students, and parents in the selection process of new principals can foster a sense of ownership and enhance buy-in for the changes (Fonseca, Martí, Redondo, Navarro, & Sánchez, 2014). Lastly, establishing structures for ongoing support and evaluation of delocalization policies can help monitor their impact, identify areas for improvement, and refine practices over time (Surum, 2019). By implementing these best practices and recommendations, educational institutions can maximize the potential benefits of delocalization while minimizing disruptions and promoting positive academic outcomes for students.

Despite the implementation of delocalization practices in Trans Nzoia County, there is a need to examine the specific impact of delocalization on students' academic performance. The effectiveness of delocalized principals in improving student outcomes remains unclear, and there is a lack of comprehensive research addressing the factors influencing academic performance in schools with delocalized principals. The purpose of this study was to investigate how the frequency of delocalization of secondary school principals impacts students' academic performance in Trans Nzoia County. The research employed a descriptive research design. The target population for this study consisted of secondary school students in Form 3 and Form 4 who were currently enrolled in the 142 public secondary schools within Trans-Nzoia County, Kenya. The research used the Krejcie and Morgan table of (1970) to determine the appropriate sample size. Based on the Krejcie and Morgan table, a sample size of around 104 was deemed appropriate for a target population of 142 schools. The sample size consisted of 4 students from each of the 104 secondary schools, totaling 416 students. Additionally, a Principal and a Director of Studies from each school were included, resulting in a total sample size of 624 participants.

II. DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS ON THE IMPACT OF FREQUENCY OF PRINCIPAL DELOCALIZATION ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN TRANS NZOIA COUNTY SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Upon completion of the data analysis, a summary of the responses for each statement on the Likert scale was obtained, shedding light on the impact of the frequency of principal delocalization on students' academic performance in Trans Nzoia County secondary schools. The results of the descriptive analysis yielded intriguing findings, which are presented in Table 4.3, showcasing the summarized responses for each statement on the Likert scale.

Table 4.3: Impact of Frequency of Principal Delocalization on Students' Academic Performance in Trans Nzoia County Secondary Schools

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
1. The frequency of delocalization of principals in my school is high.	112(28%)	147(36%)	81(20%)	48(12%)	16(4%)
2. The frequent delocalization of principals affects the stability of the school environment.	13(3%)	44(11%)	79(20%)	150(37%)	119(29%)
3. Frequent changes in principals due to	12(3%)	40(10%)	81(20%)	151(37%)	120(30%)

delocalization disrupt academic programs and initiatives.					
4. The frequency of delocalization impacts teacher-student relationships.	16(4%)	38(9%)	71(18%)	157(39%)	122(30%)
5. Frequent delocalization negatively affects students' academic performance.	10(2%)	42(10%)	81(20%)	153(38%)	118(29%)

When examining the initial statement, which evaluates the perception of the frequency of principal delocalization in schools, it becomes apparent that the majority of respondents held the view that the frequency of delocalization is not high. The largest percentage of participants (36%) indicated their disagreement by selecting the response option "4 - Disagree," while 28% chose "3 - Neutral." These findings suggest that a substantial portion of the respondents do not perceive a high frequency of principal delocalization in their respective schools.

In relation to the second statement, which explores the impact of frequent delocalization on the stability of the school environment, the responses reveal a significant number of participants strongly affirming the influence of this practice on school stability. The

largest percentage of responses (37%) expressed a strong agreement, categorized as "5 - Strongly Agree," while 29% selected "4 - Agree." These findings indicate a consensus among the respondents, highlighting their shared belief that the frequent changes in school leadership resulting from delocalization have a disruptive effect on the overall stability of the school environment.

Regarding the third statement, which investigates the disruption of academic programs and initiatives caused by frequent changes in principals due to delocalization, the responses indicate a noteworthy proportion of participants (37%) strongly expressing their agreement with this assertion. Furthermore, 30% of respondents selected "5 - Agree," signifying a substantial level of agreement with the statement. These findings underscore the challenges and disruptions posed by the continual turnover of principals resulting from delocalization, affecting the seamless functioning of academic programs and initiatives within the schools.

In terms of examining the impact of the frequency of delocalization on teacher-student relationships, the data indicates that a significant majority of participants (39%) strongly agree with the notion that these relationships are affected. Additionally, 30% of respondents expressed agreement with the statement. These responses emphasize the participants' shared belief that the ongoing changes in school leadership resulting from delocalization hinder the establishment of strong and meaningful connections between teachers and students, potentially influencing the quality of education and the overall learning experience.

Turning to the fifth statement, which explores the perceived impact of frequent delocalization on students' academic performance, the responses demonstrate that a substantial proportion of participants (38%) strongly agree with the notion that frequent delocalization has a negative effect on students' academic performance. Furthermore, 29% of respondents indicated agreement with the statement. These findings indicate a consensus among the participants, highlighting their shared belief that the disruptions caused by principal

delocalization have an adverse impact on students' academic achievements.

In conclusion, the descriptive analysis of the data offers valuable insights into the perceptions regarding the impact of frequent principal delocalization on various aspects of the educational environment in Trans Nzoia County secondary schools. The findings reveal a general disagreement regarding the perception of a high frequency of delocalization. However, there is a consensus among the participants that frequent delocalization adversely affects the stability of the school environment, disrupts academic programs and initiatives, hinders teacher-student relationships, and has a negative impact on students' academic performance. These findings underscore the importance of addressing the challenges associated with frequent principal delocalization to ensure a stable and conducive learning environment for students in Trans Nzoia County.

Ngunyi (2018) conducted a doctoral dissertation that explored the influence of principals' transformational leadership style on the academic performance of public secondary school students in Lari Sub-County, Kiambu County. The study focused on examining the leadership behaviors exhibited by principals and their impact on students' academic achievements. Through a thorough analysis, the research revealed that principals' adoption of a transformational leadership style had a positive effect on students' academic performance. The transformational leadership approach, characterized by inspiring and motivating followers, stimulating intellectual growth, providing individualized support, and demonstrating idealized influence, created a conducive learning environment that promoted student engagement, motivation, and achievement. These findings underscore the importance of effective leadership in schools and highlight the significant role of principals in shaping students' academic outcomes.

The study conducted by Ogalo, Odera, and Ogogo (2020) focused on the topic of principals' stress in public secondary schools in Kisumu County, Kenya. The research aimed to explore the factors contributing to stress among principals and its impact on their well-being and effectiveness as educational leaders. Through an analysis of the data collected, the

study revealed that principals in public secondary schools in Kisumu County experience significant levels of stress due to various factors such as heavy workload, administrative demands, limited resources, student discipline issues, and lack of support from stakeholders. The findings highlight the importance of addressing the well-being of principals and implementing support mechanisms to alleviate stress levels. By understanding the sources and implications of stress among principals, this study contributes to the broader conversation on enhancing the working conditions and overall effectiveness of educational leaders in Kisumu County.

The research conducted by Fonseca, Martí, Redondo, Navarro, and Sánchez (2014) explored the relationship between student profile, tool use, participation, and academic performance in the context of using Augmented Reality (AR) technology for visualized architecture models. The study aimed to understand how students' characteristics, including their prior knowledge, skills, and interests, influenced their engagement with AR technology and its impact on their academic performance. Through their analysis, the researchers found that students with higher levels of prior knowledge in architecture tended to utilize the AR tool more effectively, actively participate in learning activities, and achieve better academic performance. The study highlighted the significance of considering students' individual profiles when implementing AR technology in educational settings and emphasized the potential of AR as a tool for enhancing engagement and learning outcomes in architecture education.

### III. THE FREQUENCY OF DELOCALIZATION OF PRINCIPALS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

The frequency of delocalization of principals in secondary schools varies depending on the specific educational system, policies, and practices in place within a given region or country. Studies and interviews conducted on this topic have revealed several key findings. Firstly, regional and national policies play a significant role in determining the frequency of delocalization. Some educational systems have specific regulations that mandate the rotation of principals within a certain timeframe or

under certain conditions. These policies aim to ensure fairness, prevent favoritism, and promote a diverse range of leadership styles and experiences. Secondly, the goals and priorities of the educational system also influence the frequency of delocalization. If the focus is on fostering collaboration and knowledge-sharing among school leaders, delocalization tends to be more common. However, when stability and continuity are prioritized, the frequency of principal transfers may be lower. Additionally, delocalization is often observed in schools that are struggling academically or facing significant challenges. In such cases, transferring principals to these schools can bring fresh perspectives, expertise, and new strategies to improve school performance and promote effective educational practices. Delocalization is also considered a part of leadership development programs, as it exposes principals to different school environments, allowing them to gain broader experiences, enhance their skills, and develop a deeper understanding of various educational contexts. However, it is important to consider the local context and preferences of school boards, administrators, and communities. Some regions or schools prioritize stability and continuity in leadership, while others embrace a more dynamic approach by rotating principals more frequently. It is crucial to strike a balance between the benefits of delocalization and the need for stability, as frequent transfers can disrupt the stability of a school and impact relationships with staff, students, and the community. Overall, these studies and interviews provide valuable insights into the frequency of delocalization of principals in secondary schools, highlighting the complex factors at play and the need for thoughtful consideration of its implications.

### IV. FREQUENT PRINCIPAL DELOCALIZATION AND ITS IMPACT ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

The findings from interviews conducted on the topic of frequent principal delocalization and its impact on students' academic performance provide valuable insights. Participants, including principals, teachers, students, and parents, expressed their concerns and observations regarding the issue. The interviews revealed that frequent principal transfers disrupt leadership continuity within schools, hindering the

establishment of a clear vision and the implementation of long-term strategies. Participants emphasized the importance of stable leadership in building strong relationships with staff, students, and parents. Another significant finding was the loss of institutional knowledge resulting from frequent transfers. Principals who were moved frequently struggled to understand the unique needs and challenges of the school, which affected their decision-making and ability to address specific issues effectively. Teachers expressed concerns about the impact on their morale and stability, as frequent transfers created uncertainty and disrupted established relationships and routines. This instability among teachers was believed to have a direct influence on students' academic performance. Students, too, felt the negative effects of frequent principal delocalization, reporting a sense of disengagement and emotional impact. They struggled to adapt to new principals and felt that their voices were not heard or valued. This emotional impact contributed to decreased motivation, lower academic performance, and a lack of attachment to the school community. Overall, the interviews highlighted the need for stability and consistency in school leadership. Participants stressed the importance of allowing principals sufficient time to understand the school's unique context, build relationships, and implement long-term strategies for academic improvement. These findings underscore the significance of considering the detrimental effects of excessive principal transfers and developing strategies that balance the benefits of delocalization with the need for stability and continuity within schools.

#### V. SPECIFIC CHALLENGES OR DISRUPTIONS CAUSED BY FREQUENT CHANGES IN PRINCIPALS DUE TO DELOCALIZATION

The results obtained from the interview schedule provided valuable insights into the challenges and disruptions caused by frequent principal delocalization. Stakeholders, including teachers, students, parents, and administrators, highlighted several key concerns. These included the lack of continuity in leadership, resulting in difficulties in decision-making and communication. The disrupted

school culture and climate were identified as major issues, leading to feelings of instability and inconsistency. Building relationships and effective collaboration were hindered by the constant turnover of principals. Strategic planning and implementation were also affected, causing a lack of coherence in educational programs. The loss of institutional knowledge and expertise, as well as the impact on staff morale and job satisfaction, were additional consequences. These findings emphasize the need to address these challenges in order to establish a stable and conducive learning environment, foster effective collaboration, and improve long-term academic outcomes.

#### VI. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRINCIPAL DELOCALIZATION AND STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

The results from the interview schedule provided valuable insights into the relationship between principal delocalization and students' academic performance. Participants, including teachers, students, parents, and administrators, shared their perspectives and observations on this topic. The findings revealed several key points regarding this relationship. Firstly, participants expressed concerns about the disruption in educational continuity caused by frequent principal changes. They noted that the lack of consistency in instructional approaches, curriculum implementation, and academic support systems hindered students' ability to adapt and make progress academically.

Secondly, the interviews highlighted the impact of inconsistent leadership and direction resulting from principal delocalization. With each new principal bringing their own vision, goals, and strategies, the frequent turnover made it challenging to establish a coherent and unified approach to education. Students experienced shifts in expectations, teaching methods, and assessment practices, which could lead to confusion and potentially affect their academic performance. Furthermore, participants emphasized the influence of principal delocalization on the overall school climate and support systems. The constant changes disrupted the establishment of a positive and nurturing learning environment. Relationships, a sense of belonging, and access to

academic and emotional support for students were affected. As a result, students may experience decreased motivation and disengagement, ultimately impacting their academic performance.

The loss of continuity and personalized attention was also noted as a consequence of frequent principal changes. Participants highlighted that principals need time to develop a deep understanding of individual students' strengths, weaknesses, and learning needs. The lack of continuity in this regard can limit the effectiveness of academic interventions and support, potentially impeding students' academic progress. While concerns mainly focused on the negative effects, some participants acknowledged potential positive outcomes of principal delocalization. They mentioned that new principals with fresh perspectives and innovative ideas could bring positive changes to teaching and learning practices. However, it was stressed that these potential benefits should be carefully balanced with the negative consequences and disruptions caused by frequent principal changes.

#### VII. FREQUENCY OF PRINCIPAL DELOCALIZATION AND STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

The analysis of the interview schedule yielded valuable insights into how the frequency of principal delocalization affects students' academic performance. The participants, consisting of teachers, students, parents, and administrators, provided their perspectives and observations on this matter. The findings shed light on important aspects concerning the frequency of principal delocalization and its impact on students' academic performance.

To begin with, participants expressed apprehensions regarding the adverse effects caused by frequent principal delocalization on students' academic performance. They emphasized that the continuous rotation of principals disrupted the consistency of educational leadership, leading to a lack of stability in instructional practices. As a consequence, students had to adapt to different leadership styles, expectations, and teaching approaches, which could disrupt their academic progress and overall achievement. Furthermore, participants underscored the challenges encountered in forging effective

relationships between students and principals as a result of frequent delocalization. Establishing a strong bond and trust between students and principals requires time, and the constant turnover of principals posed difficulties in developing meaningful connections. Consequently, students may experience a sense of detachment, reduced engagement, and diminished motivation to excel academically.

In addition, the interviews conducted highlighted concerns regarding the consequences of frequent principal delocalization on the overall school climate and support systems. Participants expressed that the regular changes in principals disrupted the stability and consistency of the school environment. This, in turn, resulted in a lack of continuity in crucial areas such as academic support, counseling services, and extracurricular activities, thereby adversely impacting students' academic performance. Furthermore, participants discussed the potential negative effects stemming from the loss of institutional knowledge and expertise caused by frequent principal changes. Principals who have a longer tenure in a school develop a deep understanding of its specific context, challenges, and strengths. The continuous relocation of principals leads to the erosion of this institutional knowledge and expertise, impeding effective decision-making and strategic planning, ultimately influencing students' academic outcomes.

#### CONCLUSION

The research conducted in secondary schools within Trans Nzoia County demonstrated that the repeated relocation of principals had a significant detrimental effect on the academic performance of students. The frequent turnover of principals resulted in a disruption of educational leadership, causing inconsistent teaching practices and a lack of cohesive strategies for achieving academic success. Establishing strong connections between students and principals became challenging due to the constant changes, impacting student engagement and motivation. Furthermore, the stability and consistency of the school environment and support systems were compromised, leading to a lack of continuity in academic assistance and extracurricular activities. Additionally, the potential loss of institutional knowledge and expertise further



hindered effective decision-making and long-term planning. These findings underscore the importance of minimizing principal changes and implementing supportive measures to ensure stability and continuity for the academic achievement of students in secondary schools within Trans Nzoia County.

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