ABSTRACT
The purpose of this study was to establish the factors that influence head teachers competence in financial management, in public primary schools, Mbeere District Kenya. Specifically the study sought to determine the extent to which Head teacher’s competence in financial management is influenced by administrative experience, academic qualification, exposure to financial management training and the challenges they experienced in management of finances.
This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The target population was 95 public primary school head teachers and 5 Zonal Quality Assurance and Standard Officers in the District. Random sampling technique was used to select 60 schools, 12 schools from each of the 5 zones in the district. A sample size of 60 public primary school head teachers and 5 zonal quality assurance and standard officers was used as respondents. Data was collected using two sets questionnaires which had a reliability coefficient of 0.81. The data was analyzed and presented in tables, charts and bar graphs. Various descriptive statistics tools like frequencies, percentages, tables, pie-charts and bar graphs were used to arrive at conclusions.
The findings indicated that majority of the head teachers (88.3%) lacked the basic skills in financial management since they could not make statements for preparing bank reconciliation. In view of the findings (78.3%) established that exposure to management training, academic qualification, and administrative experience influenced public primary school head teachers competence in financial management in Mbeere District. The findings led to the conclusion that majority (60%) of the head teacher had not attended even a single course in financial management. This implies that most of the Head teachers are managing the public funds /resources on trial and error muddling through and this is very dangerous as it may lead to wastage of resources and legal implications on the part of head teacher who may unintentionally mismanage the funds.
The study recommends that head teachers be required to take mandatory training in financial management at Kenya Educational Management Institute (KEMI) to enable them to manage schools more effectively and efficiently. Teacher Training colleges (TTCs) should revise their curriculum with a view to including courses on financial management aspects in schools and the ministry should set aside funds for in-service training.