THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHER SUPERVISION AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

Kenya has made significant gains in reduction of illiteracy by increasing enrollment in primary schools' in recent years. Literacy levels have increased considerably from 10 % in 1960 to 60% in 1998 for women and from 30 % to 82 % for men. Demand for provision of education has also increased at all levels. This has led to a high competition for schools. The choice between a joining private and a public school is one of the hard decisions that families and individuals have to make in Kenya today. Parents and pupils consider many factors in making these choices some of them being management and performance of the school. The purpose of the study was, therefore, to establish the relationship between teacher supervision and quality of teaching in primary schools. The study used descriptive survey with ex-post facto research design. The research was carried out in Imenti South District of Eastern provinces, Kenya. The main objective of the study was to determine the relationship between teacher supervision and quality of teaching in primary schools. Data was collected from the teachers, head teachers and zonal education officers using Questionnaires. The study found out that there was a significant correlation between teacher supervision and performance of pupils in primary schools. It is recommended that the Ministry of Education steps up teacher supervision to enhance performance in Imenti South District in Kenya.

Keywords: teacher supervision, quality of teaching, primary schools

INTRODUCTION

Educating a nation remains the most vital strategy for the development of the society throughout the developing world (Aikaman & Unterhalter, 2005). Lack of vision in the management of schools often leads to imbalance in the allocation and use of resources. This is why Ayot & Briggs (1992) point out that, poor results in education are related to the resources allocated to it. If this parameter is not recognized, it becomes very difficult to understand why a school continues to perform poorly in national examinations. For example in schools where parents are doing their best in providing school facilities, such as science equipment, textbooks and physical structures, the blame for poor performance is shifted to teachers.

There are two categories of primary schools in Kenya, namely public and private schools. The public primary schools are funded by the Government or communities and are managed through Parent Teacher Associations. The private schools, on the other hand, are established and managed by private individuals or organizations. Before 2003, primary schooling was a big burden to many parents leading to many children of school-going age out of school. This is part of the reason Government of Kenya swept into power by promising to make primary education free. True to their promise primary education was made free. However, no other infrastructure was put in place to facilitate the implementation.

This gave rise to many problems that the Government had not anticipated. First, over 2 million children joined the primary schools. The schools were overwhelmed by the numbers since the classrooms were not expanded or added (Too, 2004). Teachers were few and there were no desks or chairs for the newly enrolled pupils. Some classes still have over 100 pupils to date yet the average number expected in a class is 40. The teacher-student ratio was too big it did not make sense. The problems have never been solved to date. After realizing that the quality offered in the public schools was low, some parents transferred their children to private schools. As of now these private schools

have more children than they did before the free education. This is where people can find uncompromised quality education for their children. In the public schools, pupils in some schools still sit on the floor or learn under trees. In other schools the teachers cannot master all their faces due to their great numbers. Maybe the situation will come to improve when the government expands the facilities and employs more teachers, though as to when is highly debatable (Aduda, 2005).

Education reform efforts in less industrialized countries have aimed at making education an effective vehicle for national development. Governments, policy makers, and civil society have emphasized that developing countries need to invest more in education and ensure that systems of education are efficiently managed, that limited funds allocated to sector have maximum impact, and that cost-recovery measures are adopted (GoK, 1996; 1997; Inter-Agency Commission, 1990, UNESCO, 2008; World Bank, 1988; 1996). The introduction of free primary education in 2003 was received with mixed reactions across the country. The government's task force reported that the implementation of the program was faced with a number of glaring challenges that required to be addressed. In an attempt to implement the free education policy the head teachers found themselves in conflict with the parents, Education officials, and the sponsors. The program also faced some resistance; people are usually driven by fear of unknown and uncertainty of the effects of change hence some want to cling to that which they know best and what they belief to be good.

There is a considerable degree of interaction between interdependent elements in any organization and this has to be recognized. As (Koontz, 2001) puts it 'the structure of the organization, the technology which is applied and the people working in it are highly interdependent and all the three have to be involved in the change process'. An effective and efficient manager must possess the technical, human and conceptual skills in order to be a good organizer. Technical knowledge and skill include understanding and being proficient in using specific activity such as a process, technique, or procedure. The school managers should be equipped with relevant knowledge and skill to perform administrative duties which include planning daily routine, among other duties. This implies that school managers need to be trained to equip them with the relevant skills and techniques to prepare them to be effective in implementation of educational policies. A school manager, who accepts that people are the key to successful implementation of policies and changes, is cognizant of the barriers that people place between themselves and the changes required (Franklin, 2002).

Although Free Primary Education (FPE) has thoroughly measured access to primary education there is no question that FPE has also brought public primary school addition problem to deal with. The government, parents, non-governmental organizations, and donors recognize that although major strides have been made in education in quantitative terms, there are serious shortcomings in Kenya's education system. Despite heavy investment in the 8-4-4 system of education, enrolment at various levels of education is characterized by regional and gender disparities and rate of completion is also affected to great extent. Similarly, the quality and relevancy of education at all levels have been questioned. Equally, the education system experiences high wastage as a result of repetition and drop-out rates (Abagi, 1997; GoK, 1995; 1996; MoE, 1996). Private schools in Meru central district have been performing well as compared to their counter parts public schools. The study could uncover management factor responsible for the difference in performance between private and public primary school. Teacher supervision would play an important role in this scenario. Availability of this supervision in Imenti South District is in doubt. The purpose of the study was , therefore , to establish the relationship between teacher supervision and quality of teaching in primary schools. The main objective of the study was to determine the relationship between teacher supervision and quality of teaching in primary schools.

HYPOTHESIS

The study also used the following hypothesis;

Hypothesis 1

There is no statistically significant relationship between adequacy of teacher supervision and quality of teaching and learning in primary schools in Imenti South District.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was a comparative survey research which employed the *expost-facto* design. According to Mathooko, Mathooko & Mathooko (2007), an *expost-facto* design explores and clarifies relationship between two or more variables. This design was found to be most appropriate for this study because while the independent variables may be defined, they cannot be manipulated since they had occurred. The independent variable cannot be manipulated because the data for both independent and dependent variables is all gathered at the same time. A correlation describes how, as one variable changes (the independent variable) another variable also changes (the dependent variable) in a somehow predictable way. The study was carried out in selected schools in Imenti south District in Eastern Province of Kenya. Imenti South has five Academic zones namely: Igoki- kithara, Kionjo- kanyakine, Igoji Nkubu, and Mitunguu. The district was selected for the study because the performances at KCPE showed worrying trend compared to others. The District has a good cluster of primary schools that helped save time yet gave optimum results.

Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

The sample size selected for the study from the target population of 600 respondents was 87. Similarly 30 schools were sampled out. The figure of respondents was arrived at by using the formula provided by Krejcie & Morgan (1970) as cited by Kathuri & Pals (1993). In this formula:

$$S = \frac{X2NP(1-P)}{d2 (N\text{-}l) + X2\ P\ (1-P)}$$

Where

S= Required Sample Size.
N= Teachers and A.E.O.s
P= Population proportion of individual that yield maximum possible sample size (Assumed to be 0.5).
d= Degree of accuracy as reflected by amount of error that can be tolerated (taken as 0.5).
X2=Table value of chi-square for one degree of freedom taken as 3.841 for 0.95.

The study used all primary schools to ensure that students with comparable academic abilities formed the subjects of the study. A list of all schools in Imenti South District was used as initial sampling frame. Respondents were randomly selected. Stratified random sampling method was employed for sampling schools. The schools were sub-divided into strata based on whether they are public or private school. A proportionate number of respondents were selected from each stratum in order to obtain a sample which could typically reflect the respondents' characteristics. Teachers' sample was obtained using simple random sampling method as recommended by Sarantakos (2005). Data was collected from the teachers, head teachers and zonal education officers using Questionnaires. Data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The results were presented in tables of counts and correlations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main objective of this study was to determine the relationship between teacher supervision and quality of teaching and learning in primary schools in Imenti South District. The results obtained are as shown in the Table 1.

Table 1. Cross tabulation of Supervision of Curriculum Implementation and Quality of Learning and Teaching, N=87

		Quality of Learning and Teaching				Total
		Insignificant	Indifferent	Significant	Very Significant	
Supervision of Curriculum Implementation	Adequate	0	0	0	1	1
	Less Adequate	0	1	3	5	9
	Adequate	1	3	27	14	45
	Very Adequate	1	2	11	17	32
Total		2	6	41	37	87

From Table 1, 27 of the respondent indicated that there was adequate supervision which translated into significant quality of learning and teaching in primary schools. Similarly 17 respondents reported that supervision of curriculum was very adequate and this translated into very significant quality of learning and teaching in primary schools. The table further shows that 47 out of 87 respondents feel that there is a significant quality of teaching and 45 out 87 felt that there was adequate supervision of curriculum. In both cases there is slightly over 50% respondents who are of the opinion that adequate supervision of curriculum has a relationship with the significances of quality of learning and teaching. To find out the significance of these relationships the hypothesis 1 was tested using Pearson's product moment Correlation.

The result obtained was as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Pearson's' Correlation between the Supervision of Curriculum Implementation and Quality of Learning and Teaching in Primary Schools in Imenti South District, N=87

		Quality of Learning and Teaching
Supervision of Curriculum Implementation	Pearson Correlation	.112
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.301*
	N	87

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 2 shows Pearson's Correlation (r) value of .12. The positive value means that the more adequate the supervision of the curriculum the higher the quality of learning and teaching in primary schools in Imenti south district. The table also shows that the value is significant at $P<.05$. It then follows that the null hypothesis 1 is rejected and concluded that there is a statistically significant relationship between the supervision of curriculum implementation and quality of learning and teaching in primary schools in Imenti south district.

The result agrees with Gershberg & Winkler (2004) who argued that institutional problems can be partially addressed through parental and community involvement in school activities. The two suggested that commitment and support are vital to ensuring that school performance remains a priority for the society. Evidence from around the world suggests that greater school autonomy, that is, greater parental and community control of schools leads to higher teacher attendance and higher performance. Studies in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, and a number of Indian states link reduced absenteeism to parental, community, or school leader involvement and supervision (Gershberg & Winkler, op.cit)

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The following conclusions were reached based on the stated objective:

To determine the relationship between adequacy of teacher supervision and quality of teaching and learning in primary schools in Imenti South District. There was a positive correlation meaning that the more adequate the supervision of the curriculum the higher the quality of learning and teaching in primary schools in Imenti south district in Kenya.

Based on this finding, the following recommendation is made:

The ministry of Education should step up the rate of supervision to improve performance.

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