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Original Article

Influence of Principal's Resource Utilization Skills on Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Kisii South Sub County

Benedina Ogeto^{1*} & Dr. Charles Ocharo Momanyi, PhD¹

¹ Mount Kenya University, P. O. Box 4441-40200, Kisii, Kenya.

* Author for Correspondence Email: benedinakemunto@gmail.com

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There is evidence of poor students' academic performance in Kisii South Sub-County, which could be associated with the administrative skills of school principals. Several reports from the Ministry of Education (MOE) have indicated that principals' administrative skills have a direct bearing on the overall effectiveness of the school because both the teacher and student perform under the leadership of the school principal. This was a mixed-method approach that depended upon concurrent triangulation design. Survey designs are normally used to systematically gather factual quantifiable information necessary for decision-making about the characteristics of populations. The target population for the study were 11,932 respondents composed of 33 head teachers, 33 deputy head teachers, 95 heads of departments, 320 assistant teachers and 11,451 students from 33 secondary schools in Kisii South Sub-County. The sample size for this study was 701 respondents comprised of 30 head teachers, 30 deputy head teachers, 78 heads of departments, 178 assistant teachers and 386 students from the 30 sampled public secondary schools in Kisii South Sub-County. The study employed Slovin's formula. The main research instruments that were used in this study were a questionnaire and an interview schedule. Piloting was done in Kisii Central to test the reliability, validity, dependability, and credibility. Quantitative data was analysed by use of descriptive and inferential statistics employing the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 23) and presented in tables and frequencies. Qualitative data was analysed in themes and presented in narrative form. From the findings, the majority of the respondents indicated that much needs to be done by principals to ensure that they manage discipline financial resources, be innovative and practical in the teaching approaches implemented and ensure that they overlook all areas with high levels of precision. Additionally, it was found that the government should also find ways to ensure they equip school heads with administrative skills by enrolling them on workshops, among other seminars.

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INTRODUCTION

Education has been regarded as an end in itself and as a means for individual and societal growth. It is not only the key to sustainable development but also a fundamental human right (Theunynck, 2003). As a result, various efforts have been made towards achieving Education for All. Education is a means of overcoming poverty, increasing income, improving nutrition and health, reducing family size, raising people's self-confidence, and enriching the quality of their lives (Clifton, 2004). Thus, educating a nation is the most important strategy for the development of society in the developing world (Aikaman & Unterhalter, 2005).

Ross and Gray (2006) and Mulford (2003) indicate that in the global world, effective leaders develop school climates and cultures that help motivate both students and teachers, leading to the creation of better teaching and learning environments more conducive for students to achieve higher educational standards. According to Cotton & Savard (2000), World governments found principals' behaviour to have significant impacts on student's performance. Observations by Harris (2005) show that the quality of the school in any given nation is affected by how the internal processes work to constantly improve its performance. He states that the leadership of the principal is central to the school, continuously articulating the school's mission and vision to the

school's staff and community. The principal's decisions depend on these three leadership styles, which are democratic, autocratic, and laissez-faire (Yulk, 2005). In line with these, school principals and aspiring administrators need to become familiar with leadership as a discipline to practice, learn their strengths and weaknesses, infuse themselves with best practices so they can provide leadership that best fits their circumstances, and work diligently to perfect and implement the behaviours that will enable deep sustained improvement in schools.

Most educational experts consider administrators as the driving force and main source of the school's development and academic growth of students (Dinham, 2005). This means that the successes of an administrator are thought to be due to the various methods that he/she uses. Kruger, Witziers and Slegers (2007) argued that the principal's administrative skills influence the efficiency and effectiveness of the school. This is because academic performance is ultimately determined by the impact of the principals on student learning as he/she takes care of the final arrangements for the education of students in a school.

Kisii South sub-county has been underperforming for the last four years. This may be attributed to the principals' skills application. *Table 1* shows the KCSE result mean score for the last four years.

Table 1: KCSE academic performance of Kisii South Sub County

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018
MSS Score	4.95	3.38	3.29	3.53

Source: Sub-county Education Office; Kisii South Sub County (2019).

The highest mean grade of 4.95 was attained in 2015, and since then, the mean score has been declining. This study will investigate the influence of principals' administrative skills on the academic performance of public secondary schools in Kisii South Sub County, Kenya.

EMPIRICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

The utilisation of resources in education brings about fruitful learning outcomes. Resources are vital factors that make a system function. Teaching and learning resources comprise three components: physical facilities and material resources (DFID, 2007), and some of the resources that enhance the effectiveness of schools include government financial support, trained teachers' classrooms, laboratories, and libraries (Olatunde, 2010). Material resources include textbooks, maps charts, audiovisual and electronic instructional materials such as radio, tape recorders, televisions, video tape recorders and computer accessories. Other categories of material resources include paper supplies and writing materials (Atkinson 2000)

The adequacy of teaching-learning resources determines the success or failure of the education system. Teacher adequacy can be determined through the student-teacher ratio, which is the number of students assigned to teachers for teaching. The student-teacher ratio shows the workload of teachers at a particular level of education, which helps in determining the number of teaching manpower needed for a projected student enrolment. This is used to determine whether teachers are overutilised or underutilised (Afolabi, 2005). Examining the utilisation of education resources can be done by analysing school expenditure. This is because school expenditure constitutes the bulk of all resources devoted to schooling (Meghir, 2002).

The provision of resources into the system and effective utilisation of these resources determine

the success of the achievement of the goals of the system (Olabinji, 2010). Ekundayo's (2010) research has shown that inadequacy of resources in secondary schools leads to poor performance (Legotto, 2002); Olatunde 2010; Olabinji 2010; Ekundayo 2010.

Studies done in the past with regard to the availability of teaching-learning resources in education reveal that teaching-learning resources are available in most countries in Africa, and this has been a serious concern to educators. The relationship between teachers' means score, and the availability of teaching-learning resources shows that in schools where resources are adequate, teachers' score is higher than in schools with inadequate resources (Aphric, 2010). The availability of teaching-learning resources, therefore, enhances the effectiveness of schools as they are the basic resources that bring about good academic performance in students.

In Sri Lanka, school principals are increasingly held accountable for the quality of learning outcomes of schools, resources mobilisation and utilisation of school quality monitoring and associated staff development programmes (Lekerege, 2010); for these responsibilities to be fulfilled, school principals work collaboratively and effectively with students, teachers, school management committees and school communities. The principal is therefore, considered the vision setter, resource provider and instructional supervisor, without which high student academic performance cannot be achieved.

A number of students in several African countries show a strong relationship between teaching-learning resources and student achievement. (Momoh, 2010) conducted research on the effects of instructional resources on student performance in the West African School Certificate Examination (WASCE). The achievements of the students of WASCE were related to the resources

available for teaching. He says that material resources have a significant effect on student achievement since they facilitate the learning of abstract concepts and ideas. When teaching-learning resources are inadequate, education is compromised, which is reflected in academic achievement. In addition, studies done in other developed countries such as Ghana and Uganda indicate that access to textbooks availability is positively related to student's achievements (Mutua, 2011).

In Kenya, since the inception of the free day secondary education (FDSE) policy, access to secondary education has gone up, leading to overcrowded classrooms and over-utilisation of existing teaching learning resources (KESSP, 2010). Teaching learning resources are inadequate in most secondary schools, and this is reflected in poor performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE). Principals influence classroom instruction by providing teachers with necessary resources, which include more than just monetary resources and materials. Lineburg (2010) says that providing resources includes scheduling, developing the school calendar, hiring and placing teachers, adopting textbooks, and purchasing necessary materials to support instruction. Principals influence student academic performance by providing teachers with the necessary resources required for instruction.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Study Area and Study Sites

This study was carried out in public secondary schools in Kisii South Sub-County of Kisii County. The Sub County has 33 public secondary schools comprising 2 girls' boarding schools, 2 boys' boarding schools, 11 mixed day and boarding schools and 18 mixed day schools.

Research Methodology and Design

The study applied concurrent triangulation design since it is a single-phase design in which the

researcher implemented the quantitative and qualitative methods during the same timeframe and with equal weight. The target population for the study was 11,932, composed of 33 head teachers, 33 deputy head teachers, 95 heads of departments, 296 teachers and 11,451 students from 33 secondary schools in Kisii South Sub-County. The sample size for this study was 701 respondents comprising 30 head teachers, 30 deputy head teachers, 78 heads of departments, 178 assistant teachers and 386 students from the 30 sampled public secondary schools in Kisii South Sub-County. Slovin's formula (Cochran, 1977) given below was used to determine the sample size from the total population. The main research instruments that were used in this study were a questionnaire and an interview schedule. Questionnaires were administered to deputy head teachers, heads of departments, teachers, and students. Quantitative data was analysed by use of descriptive and inferential statistics employing the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 23) and presented in tables and frequencies. Qualitative data was analysed in themes and presented in narrative form. Data was analysed by use of descriptive statistics.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Response Rate

The study had a sample size of 701 respondents. Out of the total respondents, 671 filled out questionnaires, and the remaining 30 were interviewed. The researcher picked the filled questionnaires after three weeks. Six hundred eighteen respondents had filled in the questionnaire, giving a response rate of 92.16%. The researcher continued with the analysis since, according to Best and Khan (2006), a response rate of 50% is considered adequate, 60% good and above 70% very good. Therefore, in view of this, the response rate was considered very good and exceeded the threshold postulated by Best and Khan. The summary of the response rate is shown in the following *Table 2*:

Table 2: Response rate

Sample Size		Participants		Non-participants		Response Rate	
Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
701	100	618	92.16	83	7.84	618	92.16

Source: The researcher, 2020

Principals' Resource Utilisation Skills on Academic Performance

The principal provides resources for the professional development of teachers. The findings obtained are shown in *Table 3*.

Provision of Resources for the Teachers' Professional Development

From *Table 3*, 46.6% of the respondents disagreed that the principal provides resources for the professional development of teachers. 53.4% of the respondents agreed that the principal provides resources for the professional development of teachers (see *Table 3*). The majority of the respondents agreed that the principal provides resources for the professional development of teachers. According to Gorton (2011), in promoting students' performance, principals should not only provide teaching and learning resources but should also offer teachers opportunities for professional development by sponsoring them to attend seminars and academic workshops. Managing a school is a collaborative effort, and the principal cannot accomplish it on their own without the help of their teaching and supporting staff. In improving academic performance, it was important for the principal to ensure that the teachers are knowledgeable in both their careers and capacity building to ensure that they can aid in the overall achievement of increased academic performance.

Adequacy of Teachers

The findings obtained are shown in *Table 3*. From *Table 3*, 57.4% of the respondents disagreed that the school has enough teachers. 42.6% of the respondents agreed that the school has enough teachers. The majority of the respondents agreed that the school has enough teachers. According to Afolabi (2011), teacher adequacy can be determined through the student-teacher ratio, which is the number of students assigned to

teachers for teaching. Schools are supposed to have enough teachers as a way to ensure that teachers are not overloaded and that they can efficiently distribute their time to the students during a lesson. Additionally, when dealing with assignments, they will be able to go through the jobs with ease and without being rushed.

Adequacy of Learning Facilities

The findings obtained are shown in *Table 3*. From *Table 3*, 49.8% of the respondents disagreed that the school has well-equipped facilities like labs, library, and ICT accessories. 24.9% of the respondents were undecided on whether the school has well-equipped facilities like labs, a library, and ICT accessories. 25.2% of the respondents agreed that the school has well-equipped facilities like labs, a library, and ICT accessories. The majority of the respondents disagreed that the school has well-equipped facilities like labs, a library, and ICT accessories. According to a report by DFID (2010), the availability and proper utilisation of resources bring fruitful learning outcomes and are vital for the functionality of the system. From the findings, it was evident that facilities and accessories were fundamental in the process of learning due to the utility value derived from them in aiding and enhancing the learning process.

Adequacy of Teaching and Learning Resources.

The findings obtained are shown in *Table 3*. From *Table 3*, 68.4% of the respondents disagreed that the school had adequate teaching and learning resources. 12.2% of the respondents were undecided on whether the school had adequate teaching and learning resources. 19.4% of the respondents agreed that the school had adequate teaching and learning resources. The majority of the respondents disagree that the school had adequate teaching and learning resources. According to Aphric (2010), the availability of

teaching and learning resources enhanced the effectiveness of schools as they are the basic resources that bring about good performance in students. Teaching and learning resources are the requirements that are needed by teachers and

students to cover the curriculum of every class. Lack of these commodities hindered the progression of the completing the curriculum, thus leading to low academic achievement.

Table 3: Principal provides resources for the professional development of teachers

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Provision of resources for the professional development of teachers	Strongly Disagree	112	18.1	18.1
	Disagree	176	28.5	46.6
	Agree	120	19.4	66.0
	Strongly Agree	210	34.0	100.0
	Total	618	100.0	
The school has enough teachers	Strongly Disagree	90	14.6	14.6
	Disagree	265	42.9	57.5
	Agree	188	30.4	87.9
	Strongly Agree	75	12.1	100.0
	Total	618	100.0	
The school has well-equipped facilities like labs, library, and ICT accessories	Strongly Disagree	105	17.0	17.0
	Disagree	203	32.8	49.8
	Undecided	154	24.9	74.8
	Agree	156	25.2	100.0
	Total	618	100.0	
School has adequate teaching and learning resources	Strongly Disagree	156	25.2	25.2
	Disagree	267	43.2	68.4
	Undecided	75	12.2	80.6
	Agree	120	19.4	100.0
	Total	618	100.0	

Source: The researcher, 2020

In regard to the qualitative responses from interviews, one of the interviewed principals stated the following:

“School activities cannot be conducted without the existence of financial resources. Money is needed to build schools, purchase equipment, and pay supporting staff, among other functions. At times, the resources may be scarce, which forces principals to prioritise the primary things. Deciding on what to purchase and what to postpone is more than a trade-off. The responsibility of deciding to choose what to take and leave out is too tasking. The government must set aside a dedicated budget that backs up the initiative of free secondary education, increased enrolment, and scalability of schools. Otherwise, schools will continue to suffer, and there will be no room for positive academic performance”.

Mixing and Interpretation of Data

Managing a school is a collaborative effort, and the principal cannot accomplish it on their own without the help of their teaching and supporting staff. In improving academic performance, it was important for the principal to ensure that the teachers are knowledgeable in both their careers and capacity building to ensure that they can aid in the overall achievement of increased academic performance. Schools are supposed to have a sufficient number of teachers as a way to ensure that teachers are not overloaded and that they can efficiently distribute their time to the students during a lesson. Additionally, when dealing with assignments, they will be able to go through the jobs with ease and without being rushed. From the findings, it was evident that facilities and accessories were fundamental in the process of learning due to the utility value derived from them in aiding and enhancing the learning process.

Teaching and learning resources are the requirements that are needed by teachers and students to cover the curriculum of every class. Lack of these commodities hindered the progression of the completing the curriculum, thus leading to low academic achievement.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Managing a school is a collaborative effort, and the principal cannot accomplish it on their own without the help of their teaching and supporting staff. Schools are supposed to have a sufficient number of teachers as a way to ensure that teachers are not overloaded and that they can efficiently distribute their time to the students during a lesson. Additionally, when dealing with assignments, they will be able to go through the jobs with ease and without being rushed. From the findings, it was evident that facilities and accessories were fundamental in the process of learning due to the utility value derived from them in aiding and enhancing the learning process. Teaching and learning resources are the requirements that are needed by teachers and students to cover the curriculum of every class. Lack of these commodities hindered the progression of the completing the curriculum, thus leading to low academic achievement.

Conclusions

In determining the influence of principals' resource utilisation skills on academic performance in public secondary schools in the Kisii sub-county, managing a school is a collaborative effort, and the principal cannot accomplish it on their own without the help of their teaching and supporting staff. In improving academic performance, it was important for the principal to ensure that the teachers are knowledgeable in both their careers and capacity building to ensure that they can aid in the overall achievement of increased academic performance. Schools are supposed to have a sufficient number of teachers as a way to ensure that teachers are not overloaded and that they can efficiently distribute

their time to the students during a lesson. Additionally, when dealing with assignments, they will be able to go through the jobs with ease and without being rushed. From the findings, it was evident that facilities and accessories were fundamental in the process of learning due to the utility value derived from them in aiding and enhancing the learning process. Teaching and learning resources are the requirements that are needed by teachers and students to cover the curriculum of every class. Lack of these commodities hindered the progression of the completing the curriculum, thus leading to low academic achievement.

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