

Teachers' Perception On Endorsing Of Professional Records And Assignment Of Duties By The Head Teacher On Performance Of Duty In Primary Schools In Nakuru North District, Kenya

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Abstract: The study sought to establish teacher's perception of endorsing of professional records by the head teacher and how it influences teachers' perceptions in the preparation of schemes of work, lesson plans and records of work; and head teachers' assignment of duties to teachers and how it affects their perceptions towards formation of team work. The research design employed was descriptive survey. A total of 20 head teachers and 94 teachers participated in the study. The study revealed that most of the head teachers endorsed and helped the teachers to prepare professional documents. The head teachers agreed that they do assign them to teachers according to qualifications and merit which they reported helped in the formation of teamwork. Teachers on their part reported that even though head teachers assigned duties and responsibilities to them, they felt that it was not done according to teachers' qualifications and merit. The study concluded that school heads are making efforts towards embracing collaborative and democratic approaches in supervision. Recommendations were made to improve on the effectiveness supervision by school heads.

Keywords: supervision, head teacher, teachers, perception, professional documents, duties, responsibilities, promotion, teamwork

I. INTRODUCTION

One widely held aim of education is to equip students with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and competencies that enable them to render useful services to themselves and to the society at large. Todaro (2003), for example, notes that the formal education system of a nation is the principal institutional mechanism used for developing human skills and knowledge. Education is, therefore, viewed as an indispensable catalyst that strongly influences the development and economic fortunes of a nation and the quality of life of its people.

In this context, nations, organizations and individuals spend huge sums on the provision and consumption of education for the citizenry. In many developing countries formal education is the largest industry and greatest consumer of public revenues (Todaro, 2003). In Kenya, for example, a great deal of human and financial resources is expended to

support the public school system. As part of its expenditure, the government of Kenya invests significantly in designing and implementing policies, including the training of personnel, to supervise instruction in the schools.

The priority of all countries, especially the developing ones, is to improve the quality of schools and the achievement of students (De Grauwe, 2001) since learning outcomes depend largely on the quality of education being offered (Barro, 2006). Barro further notes that higher quality education fosters economic growth and development. But quality education partly depends on how well teachers are trained and supervised since they are one of the key inputs to education delivery (Lockheed & Verspoor, 1991). De Grauwe (2001) posits that national authorities rely strongly on the school supervision system to monitor both the quality of schools and key measures of its success, such as student achievement.

In Kenya, immediately after the attainment of independence, the government took a bold step to restructure the education system so as to relate it to national needs and aspirations. One of the major concerns was the training of more human resources to enhance economic development (MoEST Handbook, 1994). However, provision of quality education to increasing number of students as expected and using the available resources is a challenge. It calls for effective supervision of curriculum and instruction in all schools at all levels (Wango, 2009).

One of the most important functions of a school head in any school is that of being an instructional leader (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2004). The school head oversees teaching and learning in the school to ensure that quality instruction takes place. The school head should be a distinguished teacher so as to be able to offer appropriate instructional leadership. Effective instructional leadership affects the quality of teaching and student learning (Leithwood et al. 2004).

Although the government of Kenya is focused on improving the supervision of instruction in schools, much still needs to be done. Informal discussion among people in the community and related research findings (Oduro, 2008) suggest that poor pupil performance in public schools, in part, is the result of ineffective supervision of teachers and teachers' negative perception of supervision. Yet, there is no empirical evidence about the nature or quality of supervision of instruction in Kenyan public schools. Generally, the claim that there is negative perception of teachers towards supervision in public schools in Kenya is based on anecdotes and assumptions.

A study was carried out by Nzile (2008) to investigate the roles head teachers play in instructional supervision in order to improve on students' academic achievement in Kitui District Secondary Schools as it is perceived by their teachers. However, the study failed to establish the teachers' perception of the specific supervisory practices employed by the head teachers on performance of duty.

Another study was carried out by Wanzare (2013) focusing on skills and attributes of instructional supervisors in Kenya. The study revealed the perceptions of teachers, head teachers and senior government education officers regarding skills and attributes of internal instructional supervisors in public secondary schools in Kenya. Just like the Nzile's study, this one too failed to establish the perceptions of teachers regarding various supervisory practices by the head teachers on performance of duty.

The nature and quality of instructional supervision within a school is presumed to have effects on the expertise, practice and job satisfaction of teachers and, by extension ultimately, on student outcomes such as achievement. But very little is known about the perception of teachers regarding the supervisory practices by the head teachers in Kenya. This study will contribute to the body of knowledge about the teachers' perceptions of head teachers' supervisory practices on performance of duty in public primary schools in Nakuru North district; ultimately, through better understanding and improved practice, the study is seen as having the potential to improve Kenyan students' schooling outcomes.

II. STUDY OBJECTIVES

The study was guided by the following objectives:

- ✓ To determine how endorsing of professional records by the head teacher influence teachers' perceptions in the preparation of schemes of work, lesson plans and records of work.
- ✓ To examine how head teachers' assignment of duties to teachers affect their perceptions towards formation of team work.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Supervision was initially described as inspection, which has the connotation of direct control of teachers by school inspectors. The term supervision has gradually taken over inspection, but both terms are sometimes used together. But Musaaazi (1982) posits that school supervision which began as inspection has been replaced by that of supervision. The concept and practice of supervision of instruction has evolved over the years (Glickman, Gordon & Ross-Gordon, 2004; Musaaazi, 1982; Oliva & Pawlas, 1997). Early supervisors in the 19th century set strict requirements for their teachers and visited classrooms to observe how closely the teachers complied with stipulated instructions; departure from these instructions was cause for dismissal (Oliva & Pawlas, 1997). Oliva and Pawlas bemoan that some school supervisors or inspectors, as they are called in other countries, continue to fulfill their tasks with an authoritarian approach. They note, however, that superintendents (supervisors) have changed their focus from looking for deficiencies that would merit dismissal of teachers to helping teachers overcome their difficulties.

Supervision is a service provided to teachers, both individually and in groups, for the purpose of improving instruction, with the student as the ultimate beneficiary (Oliva & Pawlas (1997). Oliva and Pawlas note that it is a means of offering to teachers specialized help in improving instruction. They argue that supervisors should remember that teachers want specific help and suggestions, and they want supervisors to address specific points that can help them to improve.

Similarly, supervision of instruction is seen as a set of activities designed to improve the teaching and learning process. Hoy and Forsyth (1986) contend that the purpose of supervision of instruction is not to judge the competencies of teachers, nor is it to control them but rather to work cooperatively with them. They believe that evaluation, rating, assessment, and appraisal are all used to describe what supervisors do, yet none of them accurately reflects the process of supervision of instruction. To them, such terms are a source of suspicion, fear and misunderstanding among teachers.

Depending on how head teachers carry out their instructional supervision, teachers may not perceive supervision in exactly the same way. This is because the way teachers see the head teachers behave conditions their responses to his actions. Teachers' perception of the head teacher is important as it determines the extent to which they can co-operate with him or her in meeting the school

objectives (Ogunsaju, 2006). Wango (2009) asserts that supervision may dwell on strengths or weaknesses and appear biased. Teachers take comments from supervisors as criticisms and therefore do not improve and that supervision is stressful to some teachers who feel that it could expose their areas of weaknesses, cause unnecessary fear and even make some teachers fake illness.

For a long time, inspection has been regarded by many teachers and students as a fault-finding, harshly judgmental activity. The arrival of an inspector to a school system has, in many instances, provoked fear among the personnel, including pupils. It is not unusual even today, to hear teachers confess their fears at the presence of the headmaster in the classroom for purposes of lesson observation, even if it is done with the best of intentions. Unfortunately, such fears usually spread to the supervision of teaching practice, rendering supervisory endeavors, designed to promote growth on the part of the students, actually nugatory.

According to Musungu and Nasongo (2009), teachers' instructional work include preparation and utilization of professional records such as lesson books, schemes of work, records of work covered and class attendance register. Mabonga (2009) in a study aimed at examining the perceptions held by head teachers of their role in the management of school – based change in Western Kenya, indicates that teachers' instructional duties entail preparation of schemes of work and development of appropriate instructional materials especially teaching aids; regular marking and checking appropriately pupils' exercise books, projects, practical work, assignments and continuous assessment scripts; teaching lessons on the school timetable; keeping records to learning sessions in classrooms, laboratories and workshops; and ensuring that students are adequately prepared, and presented for internal assessments and national examinations.

Ayeni (2012) carried out a study on assessment of principals' supervisory roles for quality assurance in secondary schools in Ondo State, Nigeria. The findings of the study indicated that teachers performed instructional roles such as ensuring preparation of lesson notes, scheme of work, and monitoring of students' attendance. A study conducted by Yunus, Yunus & Ishak, (2011) on the school principals' roles in teaching supervision in selected schools in Perak Malaysia found out that the head teachers' instructional supervisory roles were correlated with curriculum implementation, teaching material preparation and the improvement of teachers' professionalism.

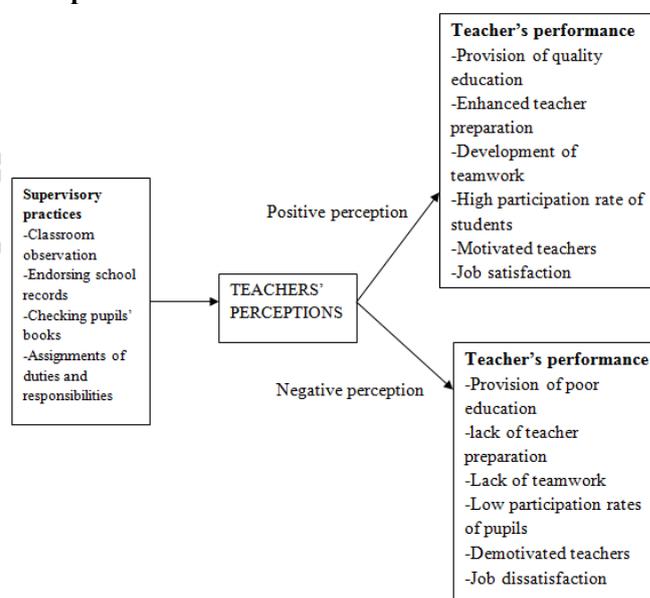
Mwasindo (2010) conducted a study entitled effect of head teachers' instructional supervision practices on pupils' performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education in Kilifi District, Kenya. Findings of the study also revealed that checking of teachers records of work did not have an effect on pupils' academic achievement. Mogire (2010) conducted a study to investigate the role of head teachers' instructional supervision on KCPE performance in public primary schools in Dagoretti District. The study found that checking teachers' schemes of work, lesson plans and records of work was used by head teachers to a large extent as indicated by majority of the respondents. The study also found that teachers viewed instructional supervision positively.

However, from the empirical literature reviewed, a gap existed to establish teachers' perceptions of head teachers' supervisory practices on performance of duty. Hence, the need to fill this knowledge gap by looking at teachers' perception on head teachers supervisory practices on performance of duty in primary schools in Nakuru North District, Kenya.

IV. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The study was based on a conceptual framework that shows the relationship between teachers' perception of head teachers' supervisory practices and performance of duty. According to the Expectancy Theory of Human Motivation as used in this study, teachers who perceive the head teachers' instructional supervisory practices positively end up being motivated. This leads to good performance in subjects which is an indication of effective teaching. Teachers, whose perception on the head teachers' instructional supervisory practices is negative, usually feel demotivated resulting in poor performance in their subject areas. This explanation is as illustrated in the conceptual framework shown in Figure 1.

Conceptual Framework



Source: Watende (2007)

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive survey design. The study population consisted of 941 teachers, 40 principals in Nakuru North Sub County. Stratified random sampling was used to select 20 principals and 94 teachers. Two sets of questionnaires were used to collect data. Face and content validity was ascertained by presenting the instruments to three experts in the educational research whose input was incorporated. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained by test re-test method whereby pearson's coefficient of 0.7 and above at a p-value of 0.05 was considered reliable. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics

such as means, frequency counts and percentages while qualitative data was transcribed, analyzed and systematically organized into themes and sub-themes as they emerged.

VI. FINDINGS

A. RESEARCH QUESTION ONE

The research question responded to was, “How does endorsing of professional records by the head teacher influence teachers’ perceptions in the preparation of schemes of work, lesson plans and records of work?” The respondents were asked questions pertaining to the checking and endorsing of teacher’ professional documents and records and the head teachers gave the responses shown in table 1. Findings show that most of the head teachers 11(91.7%) help teachers prepare professional documents and endorse them. This implied that the head teachers are concerned with teacher’s performance in classrooms. This is in agreement with Olembo, Wanga, and Karagu (1992) who submitted that the head teacher together with his staff, is responsible for keeping records of work done, updating the schemes of work and designing a balanced and relevant curriculum. They further argue that the development of teaching involves developing supervisory strategies and this requires intense attention to the goals and purposes of education. In addition, all (100%) the head teachers agreed that professional documents prepared by teachers help to improve the quality of teaching and learning in their schools. This is in agreement with Yunus, Yunus and Ishak (2011) who found out that the head teachers’ instructional supervisory roles were correlated with curriculum implementation, teaching material preparation and the improvement of teachers’ professionalism. However, if quality in this context was understood as the students’ academic achievement, then the findings of this study contradict those of Mwasindo (2010) who conclude that checking of teachers’ records of work did not have an effect on pupils’ academic achievement.

Professional documents	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Helps teachers in preparation	6	50	5	41.7	1	8.3	-	-
Helps improve quality of teaching and learning	6	50	6	50	-	-	-	-

Table 1: Head Teachers’ Response on Teachers’ Professional Documents

The teachers also gave their views concerning the preparation of professional documents and the findings are as presented in table 2. When teachers were asked whether preparation of professional documents helped them improve their teaching and pupils’ learning, the majority (80.8%) agreed. The study also revealed that most of the head teachers supervised and endorsed teachers’ professional documents and records and as a result the teachers prepared them. This concurred with the findings of Fritz and Miller (2003) that supervisors expressed significant positive feelings that clinical supervision objectives were being met by teachers. MoEST (2010) report also indicated that school records were one of the indicators which have a direct and indirect effect on the quality of teaching and learning and educational achievement.

Professional documents	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Preparation improves teaching and learning	33	39.3	35	41.7	9	10.7	7	8.3
No supervision of documents	4	4.8	3	3.6	21	25.0	56	66.7

Table 2: Teachers’ response on checking of professional documents

B. RESEARCH QUESTION TWO

The research question responded to was, “To what extent does the head teachers’ assignment of duties to teachers affect their perceptions towards the formation of team work?” The research sought to establish teachers’ perception on whether the policy used in promoting and placing teachers was fair and if they were comfortable with the criteria used in delegation and assigning of duties by head teachers in their schools. The head teachers were supposed to respond to a question so as to establish whether they assign duties and responsibilities to teachers according to their qualifications and whether this helped in the formation of teamwork. The response they gave is as presented in table 3. The findings revealed that all head teachers (100%) agreed that they assign duties to teachers according to their qualifications. The head teachers further agreed that this helped in formation of teamwork. These findings concur with those of Mungai (2002) who also found out that if head teachers delegate some of their responsibilities to teachers, the teachers feel motivated and identify themselves with the school often owning school decisions. Delegation is the dynamics of management and it is the process a head teacher follows in dividing the work assigned to him/her so that one performs that part which only he/she can perform effectively (Jain & Saakshi, 2005).

Assignment of duties and responsibilities	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Assign duties acc. to qualifications	4	33.3	8	66.7	-	-	-	-
Helps improve teamwork	4	33.3	8	66.7	-	-	-	-

Table 3: Head teachers’ response on assignment of duties and responsibilities as per the teacher’s qualifications

The teachers were required to respond to various items so as to rate their views as pertaining to the assignment of duties and policy used in promotion and placing of teachers. The responses they gave are as summarized in table 4. The findings show that a majority of the teachers (76.2%) felt that the policy used in promoting and placing of teachers was not fair at all. In addition 61.9% disagreed with the proposition that head teachers delegate duties as per qualifications and merit. This definitely affected teamwork as Wango (2009) asserts that the head teachers should encourage leadership in others through shared responsibility and commitments which should be to the right person and by merit. According to the Expectancy Theory of Human Motivation as used in this study, teachers who perceive the head teachers’ instructional supervisory practices positively end up being motivated. This leads to good performance in subjects which is an indication

of effective teaching. Teachers, whose perception on the head teachers' instructional supervisory practices is negative, usually feel demotivated resulting in poor performance in their subject areas. In addition, Olemba, Wanga, and Karagu (1992) observes that the head teacher is the liaison between the staff members and the inspectorate and should therefore provide relevant and objective information about individual teachers' performance on which the inspectorate basis its evaluation of the teacher's overall competence for promotion and other purposes. The head teacher is therefore responsible for placement and promotion in accordance with the Teachers Service Commission rules and regulations (MoEST, 2010).

Placing and promoting policy	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Policy used is fair to all	5	5.9	15	17.9	18	21.4	46	54.8
Head teachers delegate all their work	13	15.5	7	8.3	33	39.3	31	36.9
Delegate duties as per qualifications and merit	11	13.1	21	25.0	34	40.5	18	21.4
No assignment of duties hence no team work	3	3.6	5	6.0	22	26.2	54	64.3

Table 4: Teachers response on policy used in assignment of duties and promoting teachers

VII. CONCLUSION

Based on the study findings, the head teachers agreed that they help teachers prepare professional documents and then they endorse them. Teachers too agreed that preparation of professional records help them improve their teaching and pupils learning. On assignment of duties and responsibilities, the head teachers agreed that they do assign them to teachers according to qualifications and merit which they said helped in the formation of teamwork. Teachers on their part said that even though head teachers assigned duties and responsibilities to them, they felt that it was not done according to teachers' qualifications and merit. They therefore expressed the need for the existence of a policy for promoting and placing teachers in primary schools and if at all one existed, it was not followed. To teachers, they felt it was a question of who knows who and how individual teachers related to the heads of the institutions.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the research findings the researcher wishes to make the following recommendations:

- ✓ KICD to organize on how the head teachers should be trained in order to administer best supervisory practices. In-services courses to be organized in order for the practicing supervisors to be equipped with the best supervisory methods
- ✓ The Ministry of Education and Teachers Service Commission should ensure that there are transparent laid down policies governing promotion and placing of teachers based on qualifications and merits.

- ✓ The school administration and the staff should openly discuss issues pertaining to required standards in performance of duties and be up dated on what is required of them.

IX. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Taking the limitations and delimitations of the study the researcher makes the following suggestions for further research:

- ✓ Investigate the causes of great gender disparity in the primary schools in the district.
- ✓ Studies on perceptions of teachers on instructional supervision should be undertaken in other parts of the country.
- ✓ Causes of great dissatisfaction on the policy used in placing and promoting teachers in primary schools.

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