

The Influence Of Head Teachers' Competence In Management Of Finances On Pupils' Academic Performance In Kenya Certificate Of Primary Education Examination In Marigat And Koibatek Sub-Counties, Baringo County, Kenya.

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Abstract: The study was undertaken in Marigat and Koibatek Sub – Counties both within Baringo County in Kenya. This study sought to investigate the Influence of head teachers' competence in financial management on pupil's academic performance in Kenya certificate of primary education in Marigat Sub-Counties? The study adopted the system theory as its theoretical framework. Descriptive research design was used to carry out the research. The target population consisted of 160 primary school head teachers, 180 standard eight teachers and 3600 standard eight pupils who were the candidates for the year 2013. The sample population comprised of 114 head teachers, 124 standard eight class teachers and 360 standard eight pupils. Stratified and simple random sampling techniques were employed to select the respondents for the study. The data was analyzed using statistical package for social science (SPSS) and the findings presented in tables and charts for ease of interpretation. The findings of the study was low competence among majority of the head teachers in financial management such as budgeting, procurement and preparation of books of accounts and hence impacting negatively on the pupil's academic performance at primary school level.

Keywords: Competence, management of school finances, books of accounts, Audit, Vote heads.

I. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

School finances are one of the vital resources which are of great importance as far as pupils academic performance is concern. Finances are used to purchase teaching and learning materials, physical facilities and motivation of the human resources. Education is one of the effective instruments a nation has at its disposal for promoting sustainable social and economic development (Republic of Kenya 1999). The growing demand for education has led to increased expenditure on education (world bank, 2003) estimated that the proportion of gross national product (GNP) devoted to education in the developing countries, particularly in Africa, Latin America and Africa rose on average from 2.3% in 1989 to 4.5% in 1984. For most free primary education (FPE) programs to succeed large sums of money are required to cater

for instructional materials and for the general purposes (Mondoh, 2004). Under performance of head teachers in financial management may result from employing less qualified accounting staff that maintain poor records and who fail to adhere to accounting procedures (MOE, 2007). It is important for the school administration to realize that business management goes beyond allocating cash items, but has to look at the school as an investment which would eventually pay dividends to the government (Alomba, 2003). Reeder (2008) maintained that educational investment should be well handled to ensure maximum production from it and that the little funds available be well expended to ensure careful financial planning, control and administration in order to have maximum production in the institution in terms of academic achievement. Opondo (2003) posits that the head teachers have financial constraints especially in keeping the cash

books. He concluded that most head teachers have a shortage of accounting personnel have proper financial management skills to able them carry out the work effectively. Onyango (2001) observed that head teachers must ensure the budget is properly administered especially when incurring different form of expenditure. He argued that the head teacher is held responsible for financial accounting and auditing. This accounting is useful in order to control the already approved budget. It is the responsibility of the head teacher to ensure proper documentation of all financial transaction in the different books of accounts e.g. the ledger, journal, inventories and cashbooks. This, the head teacher can do with the assistance of the bursar and the accounts clerk. The expenditures and receipts should also be clearly shown.

According to Olembo, Wanga & Koragu (2001), head teachers are vested with the responsibility of managing and controlling finance. As a financial controller, the head teachers must ensure proper budgeting and accounting is done with the school bursar and accounts clerk. The head teacher must be accountable for all the expenditures and should ensure that books of accounts are kept up to date and are audited professionally. Financial constraints are experience by both government aided and private schools. Finances are needed for capital development and recurrent costs such as for constructions and staff salaries. Troy (2002) reported that most successful schools in Mukono (Uganda) put more emphasis on teachers and financial resources that can be used for meeting all the capital and recurrent expenditures and enhance performance.

Ward *et al* (2005) revealed that government financial support for aided secondary schools in form of salaries, maintenance grants and development grants was merely 30% of the annual operational budget. Parents fund most of the operational and development costs in aided and private schools as the fee levels are similar. Adjumani being a rural district, parents' contributions are limited; fee defaulters are common so most schools prioritize their budgets for tuition costs and boarding, excluding textbooks and libraries. Nsubuga (2003) affirms that textbooks account for less than two percentage of total expenditure for most secondary schools.

II. RESEARCH DESIGN

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. According to Merriam (1998) descriptive research is used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena to describe what exists with respect to variables. The descriptive design is a useful tool for collecting information regarding people's attitudes, opinions, habits, or any of the variety of education or social issues (Orodho, 2002). The target population consisted of 160 public primary schools from Marigat and Koibatek Sub-Counties which had presented candidates for Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) between 2008 and 2012. The study targeted 160 Head teachers, 180 standard eight class teachers and 3600 class eight pupils.

III. SAMPLING PROCEDURES

The mathematical formula developed by Yamane (2008) was used to calculate the sample size as follows. $n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$. Where n = population sample, N = total population, e = desired margin error i.e 0.05. Total primary schools = 160. Therefore the sample $n = \frac{160}{1 + 160(0.05)^2}$. $n = \frac{160}{1.4} = 114$. Simple random sampling was used to ensure that each member of the target population has an equal and independent chance of being included in the sample. Therefore, the study sampled 114 head teachers, 124 standard eight class teachers and 360 standard eight pupils by employing stratified and simple random sampling techniques respectively.

IV. DATA GATHERING PROCEDURES

The study used four sets of self -designed questionnaires for the head teachers, Standard eight class teachers and class eight pupils. Each questionnaire comprised of section A and B. Section A contained items aimed at obtaining general information about the respondents and schools, while section B consisted of specific questions related to the objectives of the study. A pilot study was conducted in two Sub-Counties (Marigat and Koibatek Sub Counties) for the purpose of refining the research instruments. It was done to ensure that the subsequent data collected using the research instruments were accurate.

V. MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The head teachers were asked to rate themselves on their levels of competence in management of school finances especially proper book keeping, adherence to procurement policies, competency in preparing the school budget, competency in preparing books for auditing and the adherence to vote heads. The responses were as presented in table 1 below.

	Variables	Rating		Years mean marks				
		Freq	%	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
account	Low	96	96	253.56	255.53	258.92	257.54	264.19
	High	4	4	269.26	271.04	277.25	273.88	285.58
Procurement	Low	98	98	253.71	255.85	259.38	257.99	265.00
	High	2	2	277.95	271.02	272.99	267.98	267.09
Budget	Low	96	96	253.20	255.65	258.61	257.49	264.02
	High	4	4	277.88	268.27	284.66	274.91	289.66
Audit	Low	99	99	253.99	256.05	259.54	257.94	264.77
	High	1	1	274.15	266.73	270.33	283.02	292.05
Vote heads	Low	85	85	252.40	255.12	258.35	257.16	263.99
	High	15	15	264.36	261.99	267.03	264.02	271.02

Table 1: Head Teachers, self-rating on competence in management of finance

Inadequate finances need to be properly managed for effective performance. Itaaga (2005) stated there are many variations in the nature of financial management in grant aided secondary schools such that set plans cannot be implemented because of inflation, inadequate funds, and inefficiency of

budgetary control agents that result into most secondary schools running in financial deficits at the end of the year. Higwira (2003) concurs with Itaaga (2005) that most head teachers operate within tight budgetary controls, which influence the pattern of delegation, participation and accountability by heads of departments. Higwira (2003) further advocated for a clear system for reaching decisions over priorities, methods of distribution, responsibility for ordering, the keeping of stock records and the justification of expenditure. This brings about transparency and accountability that enhances good performance.

The researcher sought to determine whether management of school finances had any influence on pupils' academic performance. Orlosky (2004) posits that financial management determines the way the school is managed and whether or not the school is bound to meet its objectives. The findings indicate that 96 percent of the head teachers had low competence in financial record keeping. Only four (4) percent were able to keep proper financial records. This demonstrated that most head teachers could not account well on financial expenses. The finding also reveals a gradual increase in mean scores from 2008 to 2009. Head teachers who had kept books of accounts were able to post higher mean scores as compared to those who had low competence in record keeping. Poor record keeping may be due to lack of knowledge on managerial skills. Therefore head teachers were not able to account for all the monies allocated to them hence could be a loophole for misappropriation of school finances leading to minimal mean scores in pupil's academic performance as a result of insufficient teaching and learning resources. The study also revealed that 98 percent of the head teachers had low levels of competence in adherence to procurement policies. This may imply that they were involved in financial embezzlement leading to insufficient learning resources hence poor academic performance. The results reveals that head teachers whose responds were low and very low in adherence to procurement policy had a mean cores of 253.56 in Kenya certificate of primary examination for the last five years while those whose responds were high had a mean scores of 269.26 in Kenya certificate of primary examination.

The finding revealed that 96 percent of the head teachers were not able to prepare a comprehensive budget for their school's management committee for endorsement. They reported that they once attended a two day seminar when free primary education program started way back in 2003 and they were not well equipped with financial skills and therefore they needed more training on how to prepare and present a school budget. Four per cent of the head teachers reported to have been marking their school budget. The study further reveals that head teachers who drew budgets for their expenditures had their school performance improve as shown in table 4.5 above. In the years 2008-2012, schools with low mean scores demonstrates that head teachers had little emphasis on making school budgets. The findings concludes that failure to prepare school budgets by head teachers have a negative influence on academic performance of the school through poor management of finances. This is because the head teachers are not in a position to estimate well all the learning resources required and may not be in a position to purchase them due to poor financial management.

The findings also show that 99 percent of the head teachers were not able to present their books for audit to the sub-county auditor. One percent of the head teacher made an attempt of presenting their books of accounts for audit. They argue that they had no competence of preparing them and therefore they were fearing victimization if their case was not valid. It was also reported that over 10 head teachers had been demoted and disciplined for not adhering to the financial policies. The study found out that most head teachers, who did not audit their school finances, had their school performance in national exams at all-time low. This may be have been related. Except for the year 2012, all preceding years had a lower mean score of below 260. From table 1, this confirms that auditing of school finances would positively improves academic performance. According to table 1 above, head teachers who were rated low in adherence to vote heads procedures had low mean scores in their academic performance between the year 2008 and 2012 ,while those who were rated fairly high and high in adherence to vote heads had high mean scores in academic performance. The implication is that proper adherence to the vote heads by the head teachers means that there was high chances by the head teachers to purchase the learning resources as per the amount allocated by the ministry of education and therefore no items will be left even though they may be in small quantities. Availability of the learning resource has positive impact to academic performance.

In comparing this variable with the results of table1, the low performance in national examinations is observable in schools where the head teachers themselves did not keep proper books of account. The schools which rated low and very low in financial records keeping had also posted low mean score in their academic performance between the years 2008 and 2012. The implication of this objective was that head teachers who had high levels of competence in financial management were able to utilize finances well and could be able to buy all the necessary resources for teaching and learning .They could spend some money to purchase enough course books for teaching and learning construct enough classrooms, creating a conducive learning environment for both teachers and pupils saving some coins to spend for resource persons invited to guide the students as well as having enough money for motivation. This could lead to high academic achievements by the students.

Variables	Rating	Years mean marks						
		Freq	%	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
account	Low	65		254.21	253.78	257.20	256.20	265.18
	High	35		256.33	253.48	258.47	255.77	266.42
Procurement	Low	68		245.34	244.31	262.30	262.00	269.76
	High	32		254.56	256.65	259.54	258.03	264.85
Budget	Low	81		253.24	255.96	259.67	258.76	264.98
	High	19		258.25	256.96	259.58	255.76	265.31
Audit	Low	89		253.95	256.33	260.00	258.36	264.93
	High	11		256.17	254.69	256.81	256.79	265.95
Vote heads	Low	84		254.92	256.68	259.60	258.13	265.35
	High	16		254.11	252.86	323.86	260.10	268.90

Table 2: Teacher's rating on head teacher's competence on management of Finances

Table 2 above indicates that a majority (65%) of then teachers found the head teachers competence on management of accounts to be low. Another majority (68%) found the head

teachers competence on management procurement to also be low. Similarly, 81% of the teachers felt that the head teachers competence in management budget to be low. More significantly, 89 per cent and 84 per cent of the teachers found that the head teacher's competences in audit and vote head respectively to be low. These in competences are seen to be consistent with poor academic mean score spread through the academic year 2008 to 2012.

Rating	Freq	Percent	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
low	94	94.80	252.33	253.41	259.75	258.69	266.04
high	5	5.20	255.88	254.93	271.65	257.29	266.29

Table 3: Teachers comments on head teachers competence in financial management

The data in table 3 above results show a poor attitude of teachers to their fellow head teacher in handling finances.

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