

Effect of Supervision of Instructional Practices on Teaching and Learning in Secondary Schools in Kenya

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Abstract- Despite the government strengthening capacities of education managers, inducting subject teachers and funding day secondary education, many secondary schools still perform poorly in KCSE. The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of supervision of instructional practices on teaching and learning in sub-county secondary schools in Bungoma County. The study adopted a mixed methods approach and a descriptive survey design. The study was based on Glatthorn's theory of differentiated supervision which advocates for use of different supervision approaches for different circumstances. Using purposive and simple random sampling techniques, a sample size of 44 principals, 369 class teachers and 369 class prefects was selected to participate in this study, giving a sample size of 782 respondents. Data was collected by using questionnaire and interview. Data was analyzed using percentages, Pearson correlation coefficient and by describing emerging content from the respondents in relation to the study objective. The study established that there was significant relationship between supervision of instructional practices at $p = 0.000 < 0.05$. Therefore, it was concluded that supervision of instructional practices significantly influenced teaching and learning in secondary schools in Bungoma County. From the results it is concluded that academic performance could be improved if instructional supervision is enhanced. The following recommendations were made: Ministry of Education (MoE) to induct school managers on more effective managerial skills, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to be embraced in school administration to enhance communication skills, Teachers Service Commission (TSC) to employ more teachers and MoE to increase funding to enhance teaching and learning.

Index Terms- Instructional supervision, practices, teaching and learning

I. INTRODUCTION

Education forms the basis upon which economic, social and political development of any nation is founded. Investment in education can help to foster economic growth, enhance productivity, contribute to national and social development and reduce social inequality (World Bank, 1998). Provision of quality secondary education generates the opportunities and benefits of social and economic development (Onsumu, Muthaka, Ngware and Kosembei, 2006).

UNESCO (2005) argues that the level of a country's education is one of the key indicators of its level of development. Globally, education is recognized as a basic human right. The

human rights charter treats education as one of the human rights. Bishop (1989) indicates that in 1948 the Universal Declaration of Human Rights laid down Article 26, that everyone had the right to education and that education would be free at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. According to Boit, Njoki and Chang'ach (2012), the purpose of education is to equip the citizenry to reshape the society and eliminate inequality.

Secondary school education is regarded as the most important point in the education system, which could help in solving the manpower constraints of the nation by creating a country's human resource base at a level higher than primary education (Institute of Policy Analysis and Research, 2007). According to the Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005 on Education, Training and Research, Secondary education serves as a link between primary and higher education, and subsequent world of work (Republic of Kenya, 2005)

The education system in Kenya is examination-oriented. The quality of education is seen in terms of the number of students passing national examinations (Eshiwani, 1993). Tirop (2011) says that:

Our curriculum has been wanting. It has veered off track. It has condemned our children to a life of books, and more books. It is a pity to see a standard one child waking up at 5.00am to attend to morning preps, heading to school carrying reading and writing materials, attend class the whole day with barely enough time to play, go back home in the evening with a mountain of home work to finish, and inevitably going to bed at 10.00pm. The curriculum over emphasizes on grades and marks in examinations at the expense of character development and other attributes of learning. (P.6)

Yusuf and Adigun (2010) and Lydia and Nasongo (2009) note that the performance of students in any academic task has always been of special interest to the government, educators, parents and society at large. Therefore, good performance of a student in K.C.S.E is critical in his or her future life as it determines further learning and career placement.

However, the performance of students in national examinations in Kenya is considered as below average standards (Ongiri and Abdi, 2004; Musungu and Nasongo, 2008). Ongiri and Abdi (2004) report that many of the country's 4000 secondary schools post bad examinations results every year and that there are only about 600 schools that excel and if a student is not in any of those schools, he or she is not expected to get a credible grade. Tirop (2009) says that half of the students sitting K.C.S.E get grade D+ and below. He says that in the years 2004-2006, 45% got grade D+ and below, in 2007, 43% got D+ and below and in 2008, 50% scored D+ and below.

According to the information obtained from the county education office, performance by secondary schools in KCSE in

Bungoma County is not any better as shown in Table 1 where it was always in the last position except 2010 when it was second last.

Table 1 Western region K.C.S.E performance per county for the period 2008 -2012

County	Mean score for				
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Bungoma	4.397	4.989	5.318	5.322	3.816
Kakamega	4.662	4.996	5.431	5.390	3.969
Vihiga	4.859	5.282	5.511	5.534	4.097
Busia	4.854	5.088	5.28	5.494	4.015

Undoubtedly, the reasons of poor performance in the county can not be easily discerned without focused investigation. Surveys on examination performance have shown that majority of schools which display good results each year have adequate curriculum implementation supervision. Certainly, the same can not be said of Bungoma County because it has consistently posted poor examination results in the previous years.

The issue of poor academic performance in examination signifies a critical impediment in any Country since education is a major contributor to economic growth (Atkinson, 1987).

However, previous researchers have suggested that a number of factors contribute to the establishment of quality education in schools. For example, Digolo (2003) and Eshiwani (1993) observe that the maintenance of factors such as curriculum, instructional materials, equipment, school management, teacher training and resources are some of the indicators of quality education. In addition, Digolo (2003) reports that low performance could be attributed to inadequate finance which results into inadequate supply of teaching and learning materials and equipment. Olemba (1992) also suggests that provision of quality education requires that head teachers be involved in translation of education policies into viable programs within the school; while Shiundu and Omulando (1992) emphasizes that on a daily basis head teachers have the responsibility to ensure that teachers implement the set curriculum and that learning activities take place. This study therefore focused on the influence of supervision of instructional practices on teaching and learning.

Supervision of instruction is a process of inspecting both what the teachers were teaching and what the students were learning. Those involved in instructional supervision include; Principals, deputy principals, departmental chairs, lead teachers, mentors, curriculum specialists, trainers, programme evaluators and educational officers or administrators.

Through the effective supervision of instruction the administrators can reinforce and enhance teaching practices that contribute to improved student learning. By skillfully analyzing performance and appropriate data, administrators can provide meaningful feedback and direction to teachers that can have a profound effect on teaching that occurs in each classroom. If schools are to provide equal access to quality educational programmes for all students, administrators must hold teachers accountable for providing an appropriate and well planned programme. These programmes include a variety of teaching strategies designed to meet the diverse needs of all students in our complex society. This process may lead to a restructuring of practices and procedures that could result in the enhancement of

student teaching (Fischer, 1995). According to Fischer (1995), supervision of instruction involves: teacher evaluation, assessing pupil progress, analyzing instructional strategies, planning, preparing and presenting the lesson and conducting practice sessions. This management practice evolved after it was realized that there was little that could be achieved by grouping employees together without a leader (Okumbe, 1998). It is through supervision that the head teacher gets a clear framework of activities and responsibilities of each member of staff in the school. It enables head teachers to evaluate the extent to which policies, objectives, activities and events are successfully carried out (Too, Kimutai and Zachariah, 2012).

Research on effective schools has provided characteristics which successful schools share. These characteristics have come to be known as the correlates of an effective school (Lezotte , 2010) or the effective school model. The model is seen as a means to achieving high levels of student learning in which students are expected to learn essential skills, knowledge and concepts needed to be successful.

According to Nyagosia et al. (2013), the correlates of an effective school are: Strong instructional leadership, clear and focused mission, safe and orderly schools, climate of higher expectation for success, frequent monitoring of student progress, positive home-school relationship and opportunity to learn/student time on task. The findings of Nyagosia et al. (2013), confirm that the effective schools' model is applicable in Kenyan schools, which is in line with other studies in South Saharan Africa by Verspoor (2006), ADEA (2006) and Yu (2007). Their results revealed that indeed the seven correlates of effective schools do account for improvement in academic achievement. Lezotte (2010) argues that these correlates are powerful indicators of successful schools where all children learn, regardless of social economic status or ethnicity.

Glickman (1985) and Wiles and Bondi (1996) emphasize instructional supervision as a fundamental component of instructional leadership, viewing this role as imperative to improved instruction and student achievement. Wiles and Bondi (1996) define supervision as a "general leadership function that coordinates and managed these school activities concerned with learning" (p. 10). Sergiovanni (1987) presented a reflective model of supervision in which he proposed that since teachers vary in their goals and learning styles, supervisors should be responsive to these differences in the ways they supervise (pp. 105-106).

School leaders need to be knowledgeable of curriculum and other school matters. They must link staff improvement to instructional improvement. As school leaders, they must be

“teachers of teachers”, constantly diagnosing educational problems, counseling teachers, and evaluating and remediating the pedagogical work of teachers. Leadership in this sense is multidimensional, involving managerial human and educational skills (Wiles and Bondi, 1996). The quality of leadership makes the difference between the success and failure of a school (Millette, 1988). In highly effective schools as well as schools which have reversed a trend of poor performance and declining achievement, it is the head teacher who sets the pace, leading and motivating pupils and staff to perform to their fullest potential. The head teacher is therefore a key person in any education system.

More effective schools have a shared vision and a strong instructional leader is responsible for establishing and communicating that vision. According to Manasse (1986), vision includes the development, transmission, and implementation of an image of a desirable future (P. 150). Lezotte (1991) proposes that in effective schools “there is a clearly articulated school mission through which the staff shares an understanding of and commitment to instructional goals, practices, assessment procedures and accountability” (P.6). Schools require good leaders to organize the process of teaching and learning to ensure that the mission of the school is achieved (Lydiah & Nasongo, 2009). Joyce and Showers (1982) found that in effective schools there is a coaching environment where teachers work as one another’s coaches, a situation Glatthorn (1984) in his theory of differentiated supervision calls *peer supervision or collegial supervision*.

Research by Lezotte (2001; 2010) revealed that in the effective school there is a climate of high expectation in which the staff believes and demonstrates that all students can obtain mastery of the school’s essential curriculum. Students are given challenging and demanding tasks and each child is considered to possess a unique gift to offer to the society (Bauer, 1997).

Glatthorn (1984) in his theory of differentiated supervision recognizes that some situations call for a more direct approach to supervision by school administrators. He refers to this as administrative monitoring. Visible presence of the principal in school is correlated with higher student achievement (Water et al., 2004). Studies conducted by Musungu and Nasongo (2008) and Reche Bundi, Riungu and Mbugua (2012) reveal that head teachers in high performing schools checked lesson books, schemes of work, records of work covered, attendance registers, class attendance records and clock-in clock out books more frequently than those in average and low performing schools. This study established that head teachers’ frequency of internal supervision contributed towards better performance. This involved proper tuition and revision, thorough supervision of teachers’ and students’ work, proper testing policy, syllabus coverage, teacher induction courses and team building.

Similar findings have emerged from various Kenyan studies, all of which reveal that poor performance in secondary school examinations is a function of poor administration and leadership practices (Ackers & Hardman, 2003; Githua & Nyabwa, 2008). Nyagosia et al. (2013), did a research in Central Kenya on factors influencing academic achievement in secondary schools and found out that top performing schools are characterized by teachers keeping updated professional documents, a climate conducive to teaching and learning,

keeping students focused on their core business in school, giving students a high expectation for high performance, involving parents in students discipline and teacher commitment characterized by regular attendance and punctuality. From their findings of t-test and Pearson Correlation Coefficient analysis, they concluded that top performing schools put more emphasis on instructional leadership, focus on school mission and vision, safety and orderliness of schools, expectations for success, home-school relations and opportunity to learn for students. According to them, frequent monitoring of students progress is not significant in determining school performance.

From the literature that was reviewed, no research on quality education had been conducted in Bungoma County to find out why the performance of schools in K.C.S.E was still low. With the persistent poor academic performance in the county, this research came in handy. This current study therefore attempts to verify these findings and conduct further research in this area to investigate the influence of instructional leadership on academic achievement.

II. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a concurrent mixed methods approach and its research design was descriptive survey. Orodho (2003) and Fraenkel and Wallen (1993) describe descriptive survey as a method of collecting information by interviewing or administering a questionnaire to a sample of individuals. A survey, according to Kodhari (2003), is a method of securing information concerning an existing phenomenon from all or a selected number of respondents of the concerned universe. From the sample results the researcher generalizes or makes claims about the population (Cresswell, 2003). The study was descriptive because it looked at the various aspects of a phenomenon that already existed, namely supervision of instructional practices influencing teaching and learning in sub-county secondary schools in Bungoma County. Class teachers and class prefects of Form I-IV each responded to a questionnaire and the principals were interviewed to get their views on the role of curriculum practices on teaching and learning. However, Kodhari (2003) says the main weakness of descriptive survey is that it may give low response rates especially in mailed questionnaire

The target population was 175 principals, 1433 class teachers and 2865 class prefects of the 175 sub-county secondary schools. The sample size selected for this research from the study population was 782. Using purposive and simple random sampling, a sample of 44 principals, 369 class prefects and 369 class teachers was chosen to participate in the study as respondents.

This study used questionnaires and interview schedules to elicit responses from the study subjects. The questionnaire titled class teachers and class prefects was used to gather data for this study. Interviews were scheduled for the principal to get qualitative data. Gay (1992) maintains that questionnaires give respondents freedom to express their views and their opinions and also make suggestions. According to Nzubuga (2000), qualitative data gives the researcher much information and helps them identify significant factors to measure.

The researcher conducted a pilot study in the neighbouring county using 2 schools to establish reliability of research instruments through the test re-test method. To validate the research instruments the researcher used the technique of content validity which showed whether the test items represented the content that the test intended to measure (Borg and Gall, 1989). Content validity ensured that the instruments covered all the areas to be examined. Two supervisors from the department of curriculum, instruction and Educational Media, and colleagues, Moi University scrutinized the instruments and made necessary adjustments so that the instruments were adequate and able to elicit adequate data. Validity was also further ascertained through the results of the pilot study.

Descriptive statistics was used to analyse data. Results from quantitative data were presented by use of percentages and correlation coefficient while qualitative data were recorded, grouped in themes and findings reported. Data were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS v. 20) for easy interpretation.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main objective of this study was to determine the influence of supervision of instructional practices on teaching and learning in secondary schools in Bungoma County.

In order to determine the relationship between the independent variable (supervision of instructional practices) and the dependent variable (teaching and learning expressed in terms of KCSE mean scores 2008-2012), Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) was used at the 0.05 level of significance. The results obtained are as shown in table 2. Their results were summarized as follows in table 2. According to results as shown in table 2, 42.0% and 23.8% of the class teachers and 46.6% and 31.7% of the class prefects respectively strongly disagreed and disagreed that **teachers and students have not been observed in the classroom**, 1.6% of the class teachers and 7.0% of the class prefects were undecided about teachers and students having not been seen in the class room, while 22.0% and 10.6% of the class teachers and 10.0% and 4.6% of the class prefects respectively agreed and strongly agreed that teachers and students have not been seen in the classroom.

Table 2 Cross tabulation of supervision of curriculum implementation and quality of learning and teaching N= 369 N = 369

Statement	Respondents	SD		D		UD		A		SA		TOTAL		MEAN RATE
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
		Teachers and students have not been observed in the classroom	CTRS	155	42.0	88	23.8	6	1.6	81	22.0	39	10.6	
	C.PRE	172	46.6	117	31.7	26	7.0	37	10.0	17	4.6	369	100	1.94
My input in meetings after observing me teach and learn in class is valued	C.TRS	27	7.3	137	37.1	16	4.3	134	36.3	55	14.9	369	100	3.14
	C.PRE	67	18.2	51	13.8	39	10.6	134	36.3	78	21.1	369	100	3.28
Teachers' professional documents and students notes are frequently checked	C.TRS	80	21.7	116	31.4	6	1.6	142	38.5	25	6.8	369	100	2.77
	C.PRE	117	31.7	106	28.7	52	14.1	58	15.7	36	9.8	369	100	2.43
Our suggestions made during meetings are implemented	C.TRS	81	22	110	29.8	12	3.3	95	25.7	71	19.2	369	100	2.91
	C.PRE	106	28.7	133	36	34	9.2	63	17.1	33	8.9	369	100	2.41
We receive suggestions following observations in class	C.TRS	45	12.2	87	23.6	12	3.3	156	42.3	69	18.7	369	100	3.32
	C.PRE	44	11.9	48	13.0	43	11.7	137	37.1	97	26.3	369	100	3.53
I am frequently observed when in class.	C.TRS	82	22.2	110	29.8	16	4.3	120	2.5	41	11.1	369	100	2.80

C.PRE	35	9.5	52	14.1	40	10.8	139	37.7	103	27.9	369	100	3.60
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The response categories were: 1=strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3=Undecided, 4 = Agree and 5=strongly Agree.

The findings indicate that teachers and students are visited in the classes as agreed by 65.8% and 78.3% of the class teachers and class prefects respectively.

My input is valued in meetings after observing me teach and learn in class was supported by 51.2% class teachers and 57.4% class prefects. 44.4% of the class teachers and 32% of the class prefects refuted the statement. 4.3% of the class teachers and 10.6% of the class prefects were undecided on the statement that my input is valued in meetings after observing me teach and learn in class.

On checking teachers' professional documents, the statement was rejected by 53.1% of the teachers, and checking of students notes was rejected by 60.4% of the class prefects. 1.6% of the class teachers and 14.1% of the class prefects were undecided. 45.3% of the teachers and 25.5% of the class prefects agreed and strongly agreed with the statement.

Our suggestions made during meetings were not implemented was supported by 51.8% of the class teachers and 64.7% of the class prefects. 3.3% of the teachers and 9.2% of the class prefects were undecided. 44.9% of the class teachers and 26% of the class prefects say that suggestions made during meetings are implemented.

Respondents who agreed and strongly agreed that **they were given suggestions of improvement after being observed in the class** were 61% of the class teachers and 63.4% of the class prefects. 3.3% of the class teaches and 11.7% of the class prefects were undecided. 35.8% of the class teachers and 24.9% of the class prefects rejected the statement.

According to the results in table 20, 43.6% of the class teachers and 65.6% of the class prefects say that they are **frequently observed in the class rooms**. 4.35% of the class teachers and 10.8% of the class prefects were undecided. 52% of the class teachers and 23.6% of the class prefects rejected the statement.

Pearson Product correlation coefficient for supervision of instructional practices and teaching and learning (KCSE 2008-2012 performance)

The study sought to determine the influence of curriculum practices namely: Supervision of instructional practices on teaching and learning in sub-county secondary schools in Bungoma County. To accomplish this, a correlation analysis was conducted to determine whether there was a significant correlation between KCSE means scores and the mean scores obtained from the perceptions of respondents (class teachers and class prefects) on the curriculum practices. The results are presented in table 3 and 4 for the class teachers and class prefects respectively. The results in table 3 revealed that there were significant correlations, at $p < 0.05$ between the KCSE mean scores and supervision of instructional practices. The correlation coefficient was positive, meaning they influence teaching and learning as expressed in terms of KCSE performance. The positive value means that the more adequate the supervision of the curriculum the higher the quality of learning and teaching in sub-county secondary schools in Bungoma County. The findings in table 3 imply that schools putting more emphasis on this variable could record more improved KCSE mean scores than those putting less emphasis on them, again this confirmed that effective schools were characterized by strong instructional leadership, clear and focused communication, adequate provision and management of teaching and learning resources and appropriate motivation of teachers and students as was also noted by Lezotte (2010). However, it should be noted that the correlation coefficients, r , was low, meaning that although significant, the relationships was weak.

The results in table 4 shows that there was significant correlations at $P < 0.05$ between KCSE mean scores and supervision of instructional practices. The correlation coefficient was positive, meaning that it influences teaching and learning in sub-county secondary schools in Bungoma County. The positive value means that the more adequate the supervision of the curriculum the higher the quality of learning and teaching. However, the correlation coefficients, r , was low, meaning that although significant, the relationships was weak.

Table 3 correlation coefficient of the curriculum practices for the class teachers' responses

		Supervision of instructional practices
Supervision of instructional practices	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	369
School mean	Pearson Correlation	.153**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003
	N	369

Table 4 correlation coefficient of the curriculum practices for the class prefects' responses

		Supervision of instructional practices
Supervision of instructional practices	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.020
	N	369
School mean	Pearson Correlation	.121*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.020
	N	369

Interacting in class meetings was mentioned by 30 (68.2%) of the principals. These principals said that they went to class during class meetings and to observe teachers teach during lessons. Visiting classes enabled principals to observe lesson attendance by students and teachers, observe students discipline, check physical state of classes, get class issues/requirements, discuss syllabus coverage with teachers and students, assess teachers preparation and delivery of content, assess students level of concentration and observe teachers class control.

These principals said that class meetings enhanced content delivery, boosted teachers and students' interaction, acted as an induction for new teachers and sharing teaching skills. Musungu and Nasongo (2008) said that internal supervision ensured that work in the school was done effectively. One principal felt that he promoted the sharing of classroom management strategies by having teachers observe two other teachers, one in their content area and one outside of it. He further said that instructional conferences held after class observations improve teaching and learning.

A few of the principals interacted with teachers during official release of internal of examinations. These principals said that official release of examinations brought all teachers and students together to reward best performers; both teachers and students, get report on academic performance of the school, subjects and students, analyze factors affecting performance and identify and counsel weak students and even invite their parents to school. One principal remarked:

“official release of examinations greatly motivated and created competition among teachers and students and helped to improve performance in the school”

However these results show that is only a few principals release officially examination results despite the exercise being a motivator for competition and hard work.

Interacting with teachers when checking professional documents; schemes of work, record of work covered, progress records and lesson notes was mentioned by a few of the principals. These principals said that they checked and endorsed schemes of work, record of work covered and lesson notes and used these documents to ascertain teachers' preparedness for class work, syllabus coverage and corrective measures put in place, students performance, adequacy in teaching and methodology of teaching

However these results indicate that a few checked and endorsed professional documents. These data concur with results from the quantitative study where 53.1% of the class teachers and 60.4% of the class prefects said that principals do not check professional documents and students' class notes respectively. Too et al. (2002) reveal that checking of professional documents and class notes had a positive relationship with the schools' overall mean scores in KCSE examinations.

Interacting on education day of principals and teachers was mentioned by a few of the principals. They said that on education day, teachers, students and parents came together to discuss teaching and learning in the school. Each parent met subject teacher to inquire about academic progress for his or her child. They all discussed the academic performance of the school and the way forward for even performing better. The forum is used by teachers and students to ask parents to buy the required instructional materials and create unity between teachers,

students and parents. According to Ubogu, (2004), schools where parents are actively involved in school development, pupils do well in examinations as they are encouraged by both teachers and parents.

Induction of especially new members of staff was mentioned by few principals. They said that they used induction to orientate new members of staff especially beginning teachers and teachers employed by Board of Management (BOM) about their professional conduct and ethics and Ministry of Education policies. Induction according to these principals ensured implementation of school goals and appropriate methods of teaching.

IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Basing on the results of the frequency table of respondents perceptions, correlation coefficient and qualitative data analysis it is concluded that despite having a significant relationship between the supervision of instructional practices and teaching and learning, the low r values indicated a weak relationship, meaning schools were not carrying out this role effectively according to the class teachers and class prefects. The class teachers and class prefects also perceived the supervision of instructional practices to be average. Therefore this could be contributing to the poor performance of most sub-county secondary schools in KCSE.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, it was therefore recommended that:

1. MoE to improve on induction of teachers on more effective managerial skills.
2. ICT to be embraced in all schools' administration to enhance teachers communication skills.
3. MoE to increase educational funding to enhance provision and management of teaching and learning resources.
4. Schools to increase the material and or verbal reward of all forms of academic achievement to create both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.
5. The local community to enhance teaching and learning by improving on their attendance of school functions, serving on school committees and providing teaching and learning resources.

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