A STUDY OF MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND THEIR
IMPLICATIONS FOR IN-SERVICE TRAINING OF HEAD TEACHERS: A SURVEY OF
KITUI AND MACHAKOS DISTRICTS, KENYA.

AN ABSTRACT OF A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE
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1.0 Research Abstract

Scholars, policy makers and practitioners in education unanimously recognise the dire need for effective and efficient management of educational institutions. Effective management becomes a necessity if most of the developing countries are to realise their national goals of education. Translating the foregoing goals of education into a reality calls for planning at both the policy level and institutional level. Planning and educational standards at both institutional and national level have been unsatisfactory in majority of the cases as attested to by a number of studies. Morumbasi (1993), Koech (1994), Wachira (1996), Kalai (1998), Koech report (1999), Onyango (2001) and Irungu (2002) attributed worsening professional underperformance in secondary schools to appointment of head teachers without systematic preparation for their managerial roles, rapidly changing management environment, dwindling resources among other factors. Given the foregoing scenario, a need exists to determine trends in educational management practices in secondary schools.

1.2 Statement of the problem:


1.3 Objectives of the study:

The study formulated the following objectives to identify various strengths and weakness in educational management practices in secondary schools:

1. To find out whether significant differences existed in secondary schools’ educational management practices’ mean scores in:

   a) Curricular Design and Planning and School categories;
   b) Curricular Transaction and Evaluation and School categories;
   c) Research, Development and Extension and School categories;
   d) Infrastructure and Learning Resources and School categories;
e) Students’ support and progression and School categories
f) School Management and Organisation and School categories.

2. (b). To find out whether significant differences existed in secondary schools’ educational management practices’ mean scores in schools under head teachers exposed to management training and those who lacked such exposure by Kenya Education Staff Institute (KESI) in:
   a) Curricular Design and Planning
   b) Curricular Transaction and Evaluation
   c) Research, Development and Extension
   d) Infrastructure and Learning Resources
   e) Students’ support and progression
   f) School Management and Organisation

1.3 Significance of the Study:
1. Identify strengths and weaknesses in the management practices that secondary schools engage in, with a view to highlighting the best practices for adoption by different educational institutions
2. The information will be invaluable for Kenya Education Staff Institute and universities that offer Post Graduate programmes in Educational Administration and Management for curriculum review in order to have programmes tailor-made to suit their clienteles’ professional development needs.
3. The current study adopts a holistic approach covering all the management task areas rather than taking a piece-meal approach. This has been the trend in most of the previous studies, the and therefore current study aimed at going beyond.

1.4 Research Design:
This study used the descriptive survey design. The survey design was used because there were many aspects of the study that were explored that had not been explored under a single study in the Kenyan setting.

1.5 Target Population:
The study focused on 168 secondary schools in Machakos and Kitui districts that had candidate classes in twelfth grade (form four) for the previous three years before the research was conducted, that is the year 2001 to 2003.
1.6 **Sampling procedure and study sample:**

A stratified random sampling was used to obtain representative samples from three school categories of schools (private, district and provincials schools). Twenty schools chosen out of the 30 private secondary schools, the rest left out due to having not done twelfth grade examinations for three years consecutively, a requirement in the study. Forty-five district and 45 provincial schools selected for this study, hence 110 secondary schools.

This study contacted 88 schools under head teachers exposed to management training by Kenya Education Staff Institute (KESI) and 22 schools under head teachers not exposed to management training by Kenya Education Staff Institute (KESI).

1.7 **Research Instruments and Data collection procedure:**

This study used a Self-appraisal report, validated through a pilot study. (b) Teachers’ Service Commission Form “A” (S) was used to authenticate information obtained through self-appraisal questionnaire, (c) Observation of school plant and interaction with students in counselling sessions.

1.8 **Statistical Analysis of Data:**

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 11.5) was used to generate frequency tables, percentages, group means, test results and case summaries as per the rating norms of National Assessment and Accreditation Council, with minor modifications. The tests used were:

   (i) One-way Analysis of variance used to determine differences of group means between school categories. (ii) T-test was used to compare Educational Management practices in secondary schools in the six management task areas between schools under head teachers exposed to management training by KESI and those schools under head teachers not exposed to such training. (iii) By use of descriptive statistics, used frequencies tabulated and compared to indicate strengths and weaknesses of various practices. By adding the weight-ages of the six criteria, the institutional score was obtained. Schools that scored 55 percent were rated as satisfactory in management practices.

1.9 **Discussion and interpretation of the major findings from the study objectives:**

1. The computation of all the quantitative items in (I) Curricular Design and Planning (ii) Curriculum Transaction and Evaluation (iii) Research, Development and Extension (iv) Infrastructure and Learning Resources (v) Students’ support and progression and School Organisation and Management showed that the
obtained F values were greater than the degrees of freedom at 5 percent level of significance since the critical point is 3.07. As such, it is held there is significant difference in secondary schools’ educational management practices in all the six criteria based on school categories. Such differences were also evident even in pairwise comparison of group means among school categories.

(2) A Subsidiary objective sought to find out whether significant differences existed between: (I) Curricular Design and Planning (ii) Curriculum Transaction and Evaluation (iii) Research, Development and Extension (iv) Infrastructure and Learning Resources (v) Students’ support and progression and School Organisation and Management. Scores between schools under head teachers exposed to management training by Kenya Education Staff Institute (KESI) and those who lacked such management training. The calculated t values were greater than the tabulated t values hence it was held that a significant differences exist in schools under head teachers exposed to management training compared to those schools whose head teachers lacked such exposure in all the six management criteria.

3. (a) When the six Management Task areas were computed based on ratings of management practices, the scores showed the following order of ratings from the highest to the lowest: (I) Student Support and progression (II) Curriculum Transaction and evaluation (III) School Organisation and Management (IV) Curriculum Design and Planning (V) Research, Development and Extension and (VI) Infrastructure and Learning Resources.

3(b) The summary of the ratings of the 110 schools showed that none of the schools scored below 55 percent in overall rating. Two schools (1.8 percent) scored 55-59. In addition, 15 schools (13.6 percent) scored 60-64 (C+). Thirty-four schools (30.9 percent) scored 65-69 (C++), while 21 (19.1 percent) had scores from 70 to 74 (B). Twenty-six schools (23.6 percent) had 75-79 percent (B+). Only 12 schools (10.9 percent) had scores from 80-84 (B++) and none of the schools contacted scored over 85 percent.

1.9.1 Conclusions in summary:

1) This study found significant differences in all aspects of educational management practices in the six management task areas based on school categories. It was therefore concluded that categorisation of schools influenced the practices engaged in by schools. This was also evident from the F ratio as well as the sample means of all the three categories of schools compared.
2) The comparison of the t-test in all the six criteria showed significant differences between schools under head teachers exposed to management training by Kenya Education Staff Institute (KESI) and those who lacked such exposure.

1.9.2: Some Professional and Policy Recommendations:

1) Based on very few of existence of inclusive education to deal with students’ individual differences, this study recommends that all schools make provision for including students with non-conventional abilities (gifted students, students with hearing, sight impairments, and physically challenged) by having the necessary physical infrastructure as well as adopting the right attitudes towards such students.

2) To nurture gifted students in areas of their giftedness, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (Kenya) needs to appoint trained officers in Guidance and counselling to coordinate and streamline counselling services from the school level to the national level.

3) This study found that the existent appraisal and supervision practices were irregular and erratic in many schools. Consequently, professional laxity abounded and some teachers kept their records perfunctorily just to fill their professional obligations. Head teachers therefore need to develop appropriate professional enhancement interactions that can make teachers to be prepared for future responsibilities. This requires head teachers to play roles of being professional mentors as well as giving departmental heads the mandate to induct and guide their professional colleagues. This because in some cases, some heads of departments are presumed to be creating alternative centres of power when they begin being aggressive in their roles.

4) This study noted lack of all-round evaluation of school programmes and educational practices with an exception of Teachers’ Service Commission Staff (returns) forms. In light of this, this study recommends
formulation of comprehensive Quality Education Services Guidelines (QESG) for assessing the quality of educational programmes on a regular basis by Ministry of Education. The assessment can adopt a Self-Appraisal Report approach, validated by a team of external assessors, preferably practising head teachers who are in charge of schools that are highly reputed for their high quality educational programmes. The Ministry of Education can use such guidelines for registration of new schools as well as being a yardstick for constant appraisal. The Quality Education Services Guidelines formulated can serve as a basis for determining School Excellence Index (SEI) for use by head teachers as the school-based inspectors as well as by officers on routine and other inspections.

5) In-service training for head teachers should incorporate among other aspects school-based planning, financial management, dealing with giftedness among students, management of human resources, school-community relations and labour legislation in relation to educational institutions. Such sensitisation and training should seek to empower educational personnel at school levels to adopt pro-active approaches to their operations rather than being over-dependent on external supervision by Ministry of Education officials.

6) This study sought to establish the challenges that face in management of their task areas. It emerged that management tasks related to technical management in areas like management of finances, personnel, and resource mobilisation from different sectors and interpreting legal aspects in relation to management of education posed the greatest challenges. This study therefore recommends that Kenya Education Staff Institute (KESI) and universities that have departments of Educational Administration, Planning and Curriculum Development consider offering advanced courses in financial management and organisational behaviour and dynamics. This among other things should focus resource mobilisation, entrepreneurial
1.9.3 Recommendations for Further Research:

1. This study was confined to only two districts of the country owing to limited funds and its nature of examining schools from a holistic view. In light of this, the efficacy of this study’s findings can be tested by replicating it on a broader sample that cuts across different parts of the country or any other part of the world. Such a study can examine principals across the different regions of the country and include all categories of schools for a holistic and a more representative study that can give a true reflection of the situation in the whole of Kenya. Including of national schools would further shed light on the Management practices in a broad spectrum of variables.

2. Moreover, a study can be conducted to compare school organisational climates of schools based on schools:
   (a) Under head teachers exposed to management training by Kenya Education compared with schools whose head teachers have not had exposure to such training, (b) Head teachers’ and teachers’ levels of education (c) Head teachers’ administrative experience (d) School establishing authority (Sponsorship). (e) School location, (f) Model schools and lowly rated secondary schools, among other variables.

3. A study needs to be carried out to determine head teachers’ or college principals’ leadership styles and (a) Organisational climate in educational institutions (b) Overall institutional efficiency (c) Job satisfaction levels of teachers (d) Students’ aspiration levels and achievement.

4. This study also recommends a research to determine the efficacy of various staff development programmes, performance management and improvement strategies in both primary and secondary schools. This stems from the need to avoid making schools experimental grounds of all manner of educational management
Selected references:


Basic Education and Research Centre, Basic Education Forum Vol. 2. (1993).Kenyatta University, Nairobi: BERC.


