



MANAGERIAL SKILLS THAT PRIMARY SCHOOL HEAD TEACHERS IN MARAKWET WEST SUB-COUNTY REQUIRED IN-SERVICE TRAINING BEFORE ENROLLING FOR THE KEMI DIPLOMA IN EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT COURSE

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ABSTRACT

Management, administrative and leadership competence is critical for the educational goals of primary education to be realized. Primary school head teachers are faced with enormous changing managerial environments which has sometimes rendered them ineffective in their widening roles. Provision of targeted in-service training, therefore, has never been crucial. This study investigated the managerial skills that primary school head teachers in Marakwet West Sub-county required in-service training before enrolling for the KEMI Diploma in Educational Management Course. Descriptive survey research design was used. 38 head teachers selected using stratified random sampling from 57 schools whose head teachers undertook the KEMI Diploma in Education Management, 42 teachers randomly sampled and 13 chairpersons of the Board of Management purposively sampled from the same schools formed the sample. Questionnaires and interview schedule were used to collect data. The data collected was summarized, analyzed and presented using descriptive statistics such as mean, and standard deviation and inferential statistics such as paired sample T-test and correlation. The analysis was done using Microsoft Excel and Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 19.0. The data was summarized and presented using frequency tables, graphs and percentages. The findings of the study indicated that there was a significant improvement in leadership, administrative and managerial competence of primary school head teachers after undertaking the KEMI diploma in educational management. Head teachers were motivated by the need to upgrade their skills, salary increment and promotion in job grade. The KEMI diploma was however inadequate in advancing head teacher skill in ICT, Infusion of Emerging Issues and Financial management apart from the challenges associated with open and distance learning programmes. The study recommended for the job evaluation of head teachers to take an audit of skill requirements, continuous short term refresher courses in areas studied, decentralization of training and recognition of the academic attainment by head teachers through promotion and salary increment to motivate teachers pursue useful professional development programmes. The study identified gaps between the course content and the actual management skills required by the school managers, this include ICT skills and book keeping in financial management. The study further recommended policy review on the selection, promotion and deployment of Primary school head teachers by the TSC.

INTRODUCTION

The problem of ineffective school leadership has been of great concern to policy makers (Budiharso & Tarman, 2020). The government's agenda to drive school improvement through implementation of education reforms coupled with increasing primary school enrolment as a result of Free Primary education (FPE) in 2003, urgently requires informed managers at the school level. It was perhaps with this realization that the GoK established the Kenya Education Staff Institute (KESI) in 1981 to serve as an instrument for the development of managerial staff of the Ministry of Education including head teachers of all schools. To address the problem of few effective school managers, KESI expanded its mandate for enhancing capacity for education. According to GoK (2011), it

was, therefore, deemed necessary to amend the institution's name from KESI to the Kenya Education Management Institute (KEMI) in 2011. KEMI liaises with various sub-sectors in the education sector to assess staff development needs and in-service training requirements. KEMI coordinates the preparation and publication of instructional materials for professional and administrative staff in the education sector (Ongori, 2021).

KEMI, through legal notice number 19 of 2010, was re-established as a corporate body with an expanded mandate this included conducting examination and awarding diplomas and certificates to successful candidates (Holmes, Parker & Gibson, 2019). The main role of the institute is to build the



capacity of education personnel to enable them deliver education services efficiently and effectively. It is now a premier educational capacity building institute that offers short courses and workshops for secondary school principals and primary school head teachers in curriculum supervision and implementation, accounting, office administration and record keeping. The institute also provides consultancy services and conducts research in education management, policy analysis and community development education.

Owiti (2010) identified lack of managerial and administrative skills among head teachers as a factor hindering effective implementation of Free Primary Education. He further recommended the need to in-service head teachers and other school managers through KESI. To underscore the importance of effective school management, the MoE through KESI (now KEMI), in collaboration with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) rolled out a diploma in education management course via distance learning in 2011. This programme targeted secondary school principals and primary school head teachers together with their deputies.

Little is known about the managerial skills that primary school head teachers in Marakwet West Sub-county required in-service training before enrolling for the KEMI Diploma in Educational Management Course.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The study was guided by the following specific objective:

- i. To identify managerial skills that primary school head teachers in Marakwet West Sub-county required in-service training before enrolling for the KEMI Diploma in Educational Management Course

METHODOLOGY

The research was descriptive in nature. The study's focus was on 57 public primary schools in Marakwet West Sub County whose principals had completed the KEMI diploma in Education Management program. The sub county of Marakwet West was broken up into seven educational zones; each with distinctive features. The Aror zone, for instance, could be classified as Arid and Semi-Arid Land (ASAL). The remaining six zones had a reasonable amount of economic

potential. There were 93 respondents, which included 38 head teachers, 42 teachers, and 13 chairpersons of the school board of management.

38 head teachers were chosen using proportionate sampling from each of the seven educational zones. The BoM's 42 teachers and 13 chairpersons were selected using simple random sampling, which ensured that each member of the defined population had an equal and independent chance of being included in the sample.

The questionnaires and interview schedules used in the study were used to collect data. Due to their literacy, questionnaires were developed for teachers and head teachers. The schedules of interviews were used to collect data from the BoM chairpersons.

GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

The study was carried out in Marakwet West Sub County which is in the Rift Valley region of Kenya.

RESULTS

Head teachers in Marakwet West sub County were asked to state training courses in education management attended prior to KEMI diploma in Educational Management. They were asked to rate their competence in handling leadership, management and administrative roles in their schools. Their responses were converted to frequencies and reported in percentages as discussed in the following sections.

Prior Training in Educational Management

Head teachers were asked to either YES if they had any previous training in educational management or NO if they had not attended any previous training in education management prior to the KEMI Diploma in Educational Management. Where prior training was implied, head teachers were asked to state the name of the sponsoring institution and the nature of training. From Table 1, 81% of respondents claimed to have had prior training in education management while close to 19% had no prior training in Education management. This implied that a high number of head teachers had some training relevant to their administrative, managerial and leadership roles.

Table 1: Prior Training in Educational Management

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	26	63.4	81.3	81.3
No	6	14.6	18.8	100.0
Total	32	78.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data

To determine the nature of training, head teachers were asked to state whether previous training was pre-service or in-service, short term or long term. Pre-service management training is part of the ordinary course undertaken during teacher training either at college or university. What constituted to prior education management training in the

study was the in-service teacher training courses exclusively for head teacher's capacity building. From Table 2, 26 head teachers who had prior training in education management were asked to state the training institution. 8% indicated KEMI, 64% indicated MOEST/DEO's office while 24% had college or university training.

**Table 2: Institutions Involved in Head Teacher Training**

Sponsoring Institution	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
KEMI	2	4.9	8.0	8.0
MOEST/DEO's Office	16	39.0	64.0	72.0
College/University	6	14.6	24.0	96.0
Total	25	61.0	100.0	

Source: Field data

It is clarified that no primary school head teacher had trained with KEMI before. The 2 head teachers could have misunderstood the item since they were asked to state courses attended prior to the KEMI diploma. The six who indicated

having trained in college or university may have meant the ordinary units in education management taken during the teacher training programme.

Table 3: Nature of Training

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Pre-Service Short Term	5	12.2	20.8	20.8
Pre-Service Long Term	3	7.3	12.5	33.3
In-Service Short Term	9	22.0	37.5	70.8
In-service Long Term	6	14.6	25.0	95.8
Missing	1	2.4	4.2	100.0
Total	24	58.5	100.0	

Source: Field data

College or university pre-service coursework does not amount to the specialized capacity building education management training exclusively for head teachers and aspiring ones such as the KEMI diploma in educational management. Therefore, the 16 head teachers with short term in-service MOEST/ DEO institutional training could be treated as having had prior training in educational management. Findings on the nature of training indicated that 21% was through pre-service short term, 13% through pre-service long term, 71% through in-service short term and 25% through in-service long term. Thus 80% of the training for head teachers with prior training in education management was through in-service short term. 50% of 32 head teachers, who responded to this questionnaire item, could be considered to have had prior management training. It appeared that the best delivery mode for capacity building tailored to enhance head teacher expertise, know-how and skills would be through short courses.

Level of Competence of Head Teachers before KEMI Training

The level of competence in carrying out managerial functions requires pre-requisite skills. Prior to training in the KEMI Diploma in education management, head teachers were carrying out their managerial duties. They were asked how competent they were when handling management, leadership and administrative roles. The rating was done on a four point Likert scale starting from 1 (Poor), 2 (Fair), 3 (Good) to 4 (Very Good). Table 4.6 is a summary of analyses carried out on their responses and expressed as a percentage of valid scores. The self-rating exercise was done to determine and control for previous training in evaluating the effectiveness of the KEMI diploma in educational management programme. From the self-evaluation exercise, a score of 3 (Good) and 4 (very good) cumulatively indicated a high competence in handling the administrative roles.

Table 4: Head Teachers' Level in Managerial Competence

Managerial, Administrative and Leadership Skill		Level of Competence					Statistic	
		Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Total Valid	Mean	Std. Dev.
Skills in Strategic Leadership	Frequency	6	21	9	2	38		
	Valid Percent	15.8	55.3	23.7	5.3	100.0	2.18	.77
Skills in curriculum supervision and implementation	Frequency	1	15	21	1	38		
	Valid percent	2.6	39.5	55.3	2.6	100.0	2.58	.60
Skills in Project Planning and Management	Frequency	11	14	12	1	38		
	Valid percent	26.8	36.8	31.6	2.6	100.0	2.08	.85
Skills in Conflict Resolution	Frequency	10	22	5	1	38		
	Valid percent	26.3	57.9	13.2	2.6	100.0	1.92	.71
Skills in Physical Resource Management	Frequency	1	18	16	3	38		
	Valid percent	2.6	47.4	42.1	7.9	100.0	2.55	.69
Skills in Integration of ICT in Educational management	Frequency	26	10	2	0	38		
	Valid percent	68.4	26.3	5.3	0.0	100.0	1.37	.59



Skills in Policy Formulation and Implementation	Frequency	8	22	5	3	38		
	Valid percent	21.1	57.9	13.2	7.9	100.0	2.08	.82
Skills in Fraud and credit Management	Frequency	4	17	14	1	36		
	Valid percent	11.1	47.2	38.9	2.6	100.0	2.33	.72
Skills in Infusion of Emerging Issues	Frequency	5	15	18	0	38		
	Valid percent	13.2	39.5	47.4	0.0	100.0	2.53	.80
Skills in Procurement and Stores Management	Frequency	3	18	17	0	38		
	Valid percent	7.9	47.4	44.7	0.0	100.0	2.37	.63
Skills in Results Based Management	Frequency	2	19	12	5	38		
	Valid percent	5.3	50.0	31.6	13.2	100.0	2.34	.71

Source: Field data

Findings of the study indicated that only 29% of head teachers had above average competence in strategic management, 58% had above average competence in curriculum supervision and implementation, 34% had above average competence in project planning and management, only 16% had above average competence in conflict resolution and management, 50% had above average competence in physical resource management, a paltry 5% had above average competence in integration of ICT in education management, 21% had above average competence in policy planning and management, 41% had above average competence in fraud management, 45% were effective in results based management while 47% were effective in infusion of emerging issues, procurement and stores management.

The overall rating was mainly in the 2nd level (fair). Thus continuous training was required in many areas of management. Especially weak areas included strategic management, project planning and management, conflict resolution and management, integration of ICT in education management and policy planning and management.

CONCLUSION

The following summary findings were made:

1. It was established that only 29% of head teachers had above average competence in strategic management. 16% scored below average competence.
2. In curriculum supervision and implementation, 58% had above average competence while only 3% were below average.
3. While 27% of the head teachers had below average competence in project planning and management, 34% scored above average.
4. Only 16% had above average competence in conflict resolution and management. However, 26% rated below average in the same.
5. While 50% had above average competence in physical resource management, a paltry 3% were below average.
6. A paltry 5% had above average competence in integration of ICT in education management, as a whopping 68% scored below average.
7. Policy planning and management had similar number of 21% rating above and below average competence
8. As 11% rated below average 41% had above average competence in fraud management,

9. 45% of the heads were effective in results based management with only 5% being below average.
10. While 47% were effective in infusion of emerging issues, procurement and stores management, 10% and 13% respectively rated poorly.
11. The overall rating was mainly in the 2nd level (fair).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Continuous training was required in many areas of management. Weak areas included strategic management, project planning and management, conflict resolution and policy planning and management. Since integration of ICT in education management is critical in the realization of e-learning in primary schools, deliberate efforts should be made to ensure that all head teachers are computer literate.

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