

EFFICACIES OF THE KENYA EDUCATION MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE INDUCTION COURSE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KENYA

Ongoto N. Joel
PhD Student, Kenyatta University

Dr. Martin Ogola
Lecturer, Kenyatta University
Department of Educational Management Policy and Curriculum Studies

Prof. Joseph Malusu
Associate Professor of Education
Mwenge Catholic University

Abstract

In order to address performance gaps in management of public primary schools and provision of quality education, the Ministry of Education periodically supports head teachers of primary schools to undertake induction courses in education management. One of the many induction courses supported and organised by the Ministry of Education (MoE) is the Induction Course in Educational Management (ICEM). ICEM is organised by Kenya Education Management Institute (KEMI) for head teachers of public primary schools where they are taken through best management practices to be adopted and implemented in schools. Despite the head teachers undertaking this induction courses, poor management of public primary schools is a perennial problem in many schools. Despite the enormous resources set aside by the Government of Kenya (GoK) for induction courses, poor management of primary schools affects the provision of quality education. The purpose of this study was to investigate the efficacies of ICEM in-service training in order to establish its impact on management of public primary schools in Nairobi County. The specific objective of this study was to assess the head teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of ICEM training on the management of public primary schools. The study was anchored on Quality Management System's theory. The study employed a descriptive research design. The target population for the study were public primary schools head teachers, chairpersons of Boards of Management (BOM), senior teachers, subordinate staff members, school prefects and KEMI staff trainers. Stratified random sampling was used to select the target population for this study. Data for the study was collected using structured questionnaires and was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software. This study found out that head teachers had a strong positive perception of ICEM training because the training had highly influenced their management of schools' financial, human resource, and plant management practices. The study concludes that despite the fact that head teachers had positive perceptions about in-service trainings, to a larger extent measurement of the effectiveness of the trainings in performance of public primary was a challenging task. Therefore, this study recommends that the Ministry of Education (MoE) should ensure that public primary schools in Kenya are given the necessary support in terms of financial resources, human resources and infrastructural facilities to facilitate implementation of new policies thus enhanced performance of public schools in Kenya.

Key Words: Efficacy, Education Management and Induction

1.1 Introduction

The need to improve the quality of management in schools remains high on the agenda of governments all over the world (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2013). The agenda of improving management practices of schools has been triggered by turbulent environments which compels modern organizations, including learning institutions to conform to such environmental changes hence calling for the managers of the schools to be responsive and innovative on organizational management practices (UNESCO, 2013; Pearce & Robinson, 1997). It is now widely accepted that managers in education require specific preparation if they are to be successful in leading schools and colleges. The development of effective leaders and managers requires a range of strategies, including high-quality courses and training (Foskettand, 2002). According to Kenney and Reid (1988), training which impacts on management is an integral part of the work and development of an organization. This is because an organization's human resources are among its most important assets that drive management. Training leads to motivation of workers which is very crucial to the success of any organization.

Lynton and Pareek (2000) acknowledge that training has become the most important and urgent task in modern management. They observe that dissatisfaction with training is growing and that there is reluctance to send staff for training because of lack of positive impact. Globally, Brundrett (2013) in the United States and Cowie and Crawford (2007) in Canada and Ontario Principal's Council (2013) in Canada assert that the drastic decline in performance of institutions of higher learning and more specifically in public primary schools was attributed with inappropriate formal trainings which were tailored towards transactional administration but not transformational administration and management. Regionally, Theobald, et al (2007) in Nigeria opine that trainings of head teachers in public primary schools had a significant positive effect on performance of the schools in terms of resource management such as funds, employees, information and technology. Subsequently in Uganda, Kayiwa (2011) acknowledges that despite the minimum entry requirement of teachers in the service, deteriorating performance of public primary school was an issue of concern. By extension, KEMI (2012), MoE (2007), Omote (2005), Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development, 1999 point out that despite the effort of the government to improve the quality of education in public primary schools in Kenya though induction trainings for head teachers, still issues of school management were of great concern which need to be investigated.

Despite the mandate of KEMI to offered induction Course in Educational Management (ICEM), Senior Management Induction Course for Educational Personnel (SICEM), a Professional Certificate Course in Educational Management (PCEM) and a Training of Trainers in Educational Management course (TOTEM), it is noted by the KEMI (2012) that there was little impact on management primary schools in Kenya. Relevance and effectiveness of the induction trainings of schools' head teachers is still an area that need to be relooked into to establish a sustainable training model that can match skills and challenges experienced in public primary schools. With increased expenditure by the government on annually for the period between 2006-2018 on in-service training of head teachers, little has been achieved in terms of effective management of schools (KEM, 2012). Similarly, Kalai (2012) attests that with changes in the educational sector, development of capacity is considered to be the pertinent factor that can promote transformational change in public schools in Kenya. Transformational changes can be attributed to effective utilization of financial resources, minimal cases of unrest or strikes and improved academic performance of students (MoE, 2013).

Based on the proposed changes of the curriculum, in-service trainings are conceptualized to facilitate effective implementation of the new policies of the ministry of education. Without appropriate skills and knowledge among head teachers of public schools in Kenya, it will be an

uphill task to achieve objectives of the new system of education in primary schools in Kenya (Githu, 2014). Therefore, it is on this background this study was motivated to establish efficacies of ICEM on the management practices of head teachers of public primary schools in Nairobi County.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Effective execution of management function is viewed to be a function of appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes among heads of public schools in Kenya though there exist deficiencies in evidence on the link between efficacies of ICEM on the management practices of head teachers of public primary schools in Kenya (MoE, 2009). Effective management in public primary schools in Kenya is demonstrated by participatory leadership, effective utilization of schools resources such as money, employee development, time management, parent and student involvement in key decisions (Kalai, 2012). Despite the fact that the Government of Kenya made it mandatory that all head teachers in public primary schools undertake ICEM in-service training in order to improve their efficacy in the management of their schools, it is noted that by the MoE (2014) that majority (81%) of the primary schools in Kenya are underperforming despite in-service trainings attended by school head teachers.

Similarly, it is acknowledging by Githu (2014) that despite mandatory ICEM trainings attended by head teachers, most the public primary schools in Kenya are experiencing deteriorating performance. Challenges such as inability to implement new policies of the ministry of education, resource utilization, capacity development, unsatisfactory academic performance pupils and inability to engage key stakeholders in decisions are some of the factors which have hampered public primary schools from achieving the intended objectives of the ministry of education in Kenya. Even though extensive studies have been conducted by MoE (2014), Githu (2014), Kalai (2012), International Monetary Fund (IMF) (2012), Wachira (1996) Wambua (2004), Ngure (2007) and Kalai (1999), it is noted that there was no clear understanding on the link between efficacies of ICEM on the management practices of head teachers of public primary schools thus the need to focus on Nairobi City County to bridge the knowledge gaps in this area.

1.3 Objective of the Study

To assess the head teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of ICEM training on the management of public primary schools.

2.1 Literature Review

International Monetary Fund (IMF) (2012) in a study on educational reforms and situation in Africa ranked Kenya's educational management among the lowest in the African region. It was noted from the study that most school heads in Kenya, especially those from primary schools had not undergone any management training course to prepare them for managerial posts like heading a school. There were little efforts, however, noted in the MoE's KEMI programme that aimed at training school heads on management. KEMI offered short induction courses to some of the school heads as noted but still much needed to be done Wekhuyi (2014). United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (2013) argues that owing to the importance of education in national development, governments as well as the public should have an interest in the way schools are managed. To safeguard the interests of the stakeholders, it is recommended that the head teacher is included in the board of management committees. Besides, in order that the school heads might relate and work effectively with the board of management of the schools, the heads must cultivate a favourable relationship with the governing board. This will include a thorough knowledge of the powers and mandates of the governing board and the board of management. The thorough

knowledge will aid the school heads in working effectively towards ensuring the success of the schools they lead.

Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2013) observes that the head teacher of a public primary school is expected to understand what is meant by the curriculum. The head teacher must ensure that set standards are maintained through regular supervision of curriculum delivery. The head teacher must be familiar with the stakeholders that provide the legal framework for educational policy and structure. Head teachers of primary schools must display a grasp of all the subjects in the curriculum and their place within the general curriculum. The head teacher must be able to organize and plan for staff development through INSET and advice on optimum use of resources to achieve effective teaching and learning. The leadership role of a head teacher in curriculum delivery must be geared towards guiding teachers to promote effective classroom practices that provide pupils with education that is useful for life and further advancement. Pupils that require special attention because of their various physical, mental or educational needs have to be attended to by the head teacher. Gender issues have to be addressed, monitored and evaluated by the head teacher. The head teacher must frequently delegate tasks to the deputy head teacher, the senior teacher or subject panel teachers. The head teacher must be conversant with current thinking and information about education and to implement a range of activities that require careful monitoring. These are the tenets any effective in-service training programme must aim to inculcate in the trainees.

Derek (1999) further gives competencies required for school managers and lists them as; vision, persistence, planning skill, critical thinking, stress tolerance, leadership skills, influence skill, a confident self-image, interpersonal relationships, empathy, capacity for self-development. A study as this was necessary to ascertain these management competencies derived from ICEM for head teachers. This study intended to find out whether ICEM trained head teachers possessed requisite competencies after the in-service training and in performance of their work. A school manager must possess interpersonal competency, the ability to get others involved in solving problems, the ability to recognize when a group requires direction and to interact with a group effectively. Morrison (2013) while writing an article in the Forbes Magazine posited that a good school head ought to offer guidance towards the accomplishment of tasks. He must possess thoughtfulness which is the ability to observe the needs, concerns and personal challenges of those he manages. He should possess conflict resolution skills, which is a useful tact in dealing with persons from diverse upbringings, and the ability to deal with people with emotive issues, knowing what information to communicate and to whom. A school manager must possess skills in stress tolerance which is the ability to perform under pressure and the ability to think on one's feet (Morrison, 2013).

Okumbe (2001) further postulates that any training requires a Training Needs Assessment (TNA) to find out what employees need and what to acquire and the conditions which are needed to ensure that the training is useful. Okumbe notes that all training is intended to improve competence and performance and that the first step is training needs assessment to identify the performance gap. This performance gap must be measured against organizational objectives. This requires detailed information about the organization, its objectives, operations and standards. According to Okumbe, job analyses, performance appraisal, interviews, with supervisors, and job holders, and analyses of operating problems provide important inputs to the analysis of training needs. Nguta (2006) revealed that training needs of head teachers emanated from inappropriate training methods.

Cole (2004) acknowledges that training-centred evaluation aims to assess the inputs to training that is if the right tools for training are being used. Reaction-centred evaluation seeks to obtain and assess the reaction of trainers to the learning experiences they have been put through.

Learning-centred evaluation seeks to measure the degree of learning that has been achieved. Job-related evaluation is aimed at assessing the degree of behaviour change which has taken place on-the-job after returning from a period of training.

3.1 Methodology

Descriptive research design was adopted to establish the problem under investigation. Descriptive research design was considered appropriate based on the fact that it facilitated discovery of new knowledge, data was analysed and presented quantitatively, data was collected from a sizeable population with homogenous characteristics.

The target population of this study were 96 ICEM in-service trained public primary school head teachers, and their respective senior teachers, heads of support staff, head prefects, Board of Management (BOM) chairpersons as well as KEMI ICEM staff trainers.

Stratified random sampling technique was used to select respondents. The sample size of this study comprised 149. The sample size was determined using Watson (2001) formula. The specific respondents of the study were Public primary head teachers, Senior teachers BOM chairpersons, head prefects, heads of support staff and KEMI full-time staff trainers.

Structured questionnaires were used for data collection in this study. Further, document analysis method was used to review published documents such as ICEM modules, KEMI policy guidelines, training materials and MoE guidelines.

Data was analysed descriptively with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 19 software was used. Qualitative data obtained from open ended questions and published content was reviewed using document analysis method.

4.1 Research Findings and Discussions

The researcher distributed a total of 379 questionnaires to respondents drawn from the 72 schools whose head teachers had undergone ICEM in-service training and was able to receive 374 questionnaires. Apart from head teachers, questionnaires were also distributed to senior teachers, BOM chairpersons, heads of support staff and school head prefects.

Table 4.1: Head teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of ICEM training on their management practices

Comment about KEMI Courses	N	Excellent %	Good %	Satisfactory %	Poor %	Very poor %
Extent course objectives were met	72	22	41	27	10	-
Relevance of courses to head teachers	72	37	36	17	7	3
Session management	72	26	47	21	7	-
Inter-activeness of sessions	72	31	27	32	10	-
Use of varied training methodologies	72	26	35	23	7	9
Use of teaching aids	72	26	28	36	10	-

Enhancement of performance	72	17	44	29	10	-
Relevance of topics	72	20	38	32	10	-
Course facilitation	72	31	36	23	10	-
Invitation for courses	72	26	43	16	15	-
Course durations	72	14	36	34	16	-
Course venues	72	20	29	39	9	3
Boarding facilities	72	11	32	41	16	-
Dining facilities	72	14	38	41	7	-

Findings in table 4.1 indicate that the head teachers perceive the ICEM in-service training to be highly effective on their management practices. Majority of the head teachers lauded variations in training methodologies (61%), use of teaching aids (54%), management of the training sessions (70%), interactions during the sessions (58%) and relevancy of the courses (73%). Based on these, majority (63%) of the head teachers perceived that the objectives for KEMI in-service course for public primary school heads were met with 61% of them pointing out that ICEM in-service training enhanced their job performance. These findings are in tandem with those of Rebores (2012) who avers that head teachers perceive in-service training on school management as being of great importance to their duties as this will assist them in school management as well as achieving better results in their school. The study further sought to determine the head teachers' perception of ICEM in-service training on particular management practices such as financial, human resource, and plant management. Head teachers' perceptions of ICEM training on aspects of financial management were tabulated in table 4.2

Table 4.2: Head teachers' perceptions of ICEM training on financial management

Response	N	Excellent %	Good %	Satisfactory %	Poor %	Very poor %
Budget Control	72	22	41	27	10	-
Book Keeping	72	37	36	17	7	3
Keeping Inventories	72	26	47	21	7	-
Sourcing of funds	72	31	27	32	10	-
Auditing Books of Account	72	26	35	23	7	9
Budget Preparation	72	26	28	36	10	-
Income Generating Activities	72	17	44	29	10	-
Maintenance of school records	72	14	38	41	7	-

Gross mismanagement of finances is one of the key problems facing public schools in Kenya (Koech, 2004). The Ministry of Education, through in-service training, has moved to avert this situation by taking head teachers through best financial practices to be adopted in their schools. Findings in table 4.2 shows that head teachers perceive financial management practices that they are trained on in ICEM training as being very effective in their day to day running of the schools. The findings show that majority of the head teachers have gained knowledge and skills in budget preparation (54%), budget control (63%), auditing books (61%), keeping inventories (73%) and sourcing for funds (58%) among other financial aspects. These findings are in tandem with Kiio (2016) who observes that competence in financial management enables head teachers to carry out financial task and enforces transparency and accountability with regard to public finance. Thus, financial management courses equip school heads with knowledge and skills to handle school finances efficiently and effectively.

Head teachers play a critical role in managing human resource in their respective institutions. In a school environment and setup, the head teacher has teaching staff, parents, non-teaching staff, and pupils as human resources to be managed. As managers, head teachers should therefore have skills in recruitment, selection, orientation, induction, appraisals, team work, delegation, training and teacher motivation. Thus, this study sought to establish the head teachers' perceptions of ICEM training on various aspects of human resource management. The findings were tabulated in table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Head teachers' perception of ICEM training on human resource management

Response	N	Excellent %	Good %	Neutral %	Fair %	Bad %
Staff appraisal	72	16	60	10	14	-
Team work	72	24	60	14	2	-
Staff motivation	72	17	65	11	7	-
Delegation	72	10	64	17	9	-
Staff welfare	72	10	60	14	16	-

Findings from table 4.3 indicate that the head teachers highly rated the effectiveness of ICEM training on various aspects of human resource management. This implies that after ICEM training, head teachers found the training useful in handling various human resource aspects such as staff appraisals (76%), team work (84%), motivation (92%), delegation (84%) and staff welfare (70%) among others. Competence in human resource management leads to effective human resource management which is reflected in the school's performance, discipline among teachers and learners, time management, good rapport between parents and teachers and good teacher working surroundings.

It cannot be gainsaid that head teachers are responsible for the day to day running of their respective schools. This means that they are expected to be competent in school plant management because this leads to a well-planned school which stimulates learning and enhances good teaching practices (Ajayi, 2007). The study sought to establish the head teachers' perception of ICEM training on school plant management and the responses obtained were analysed in table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Head teachers' perception of ICEM training on school plant management

School Management Task	Plant N	Very Effective %	Effective %	Fairly Effective %	Ineffective %	Very Ineffective %
Resource Mobilisation	72	20	60	10	10	-
Waste Management	72	20	50	5	25	-
Renovation	72	24	60	2	14	-
Maintenance of school facilities	72	11	65	17	7	-
Maintenance of school library	72	34	24	23	13	6
Ground maintenance	72	10	60	14	16	-

Table 4.4 shows that the head teachers rate highly the effectiveness of ICEM training on school plant management. This shows that majority of the head teachers gained knowledge and skills which will competently enable them to handle various school plant tasks such as resource mobilization (80%), waste management (70%), renovations (84%) and ground maintenance (70%) among others. The findings concur with Wekhuyi (2014) who, in a study on influence of in-service training on public secondary schools' management of finances and human resources in Busia County, avers that KEMI courses are effective in addressing school plant management tasks especially on resources mobilization and the general running of the school. From this findings, it is evident that head teachers positively perceive ICEM training on various management practices. This is in agreement with the findings of Muthini (2004) who, in a study on secondary school principals' perception of KEMI programmes in Nairobi Province, found out that the principals appreciated relevance of KEMI programmes. Like the principals, the head teachers appreciate and highly perceive KEMI's ICEM in-service training.

5.1 Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1.1 Conclusions

From the findings, the study concludes that even though head teachers perceived that the ICEM training had a significant positive effects on performance of public primary schools, to a larger extent there were variations in performance from one public primary school to another in terms managing school financial resources, human resources, and infrastructural facilities thus pertinence of this study in public primary schools to bridge the knowledge gaps.

5.1.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study the following recommendations were made: the MoE should come up with policy guidelines on the selection and preparation of head teachers for in-service training. More information should be disseminated by KEMI about their training programmes to the targeted groups. KEMI should publish the ICEM instructional materials in education management for public primary head teachers. KEMI should improve on tracking of its ICEM trainees for proper evaluation of courses for public primary head teachers. KEMI should ensure that ICEM is relevant and tailored to address the needs of public primary head teachers. KEMI should relook and revise the duration of the ICEM. KEMI needs to carry out ICEM evaluation to determine the worth of some of the course for public primary head teachers and more resources should be set aside by KEMI for research on staff training and development for public primary schools.

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