

INFLUENCE OF GENDER OF HEAD TEACHERS IN MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOL FACILITIES ON PUPILS' PERFORMANCE IN KENYA

CERTIFICATE OF PRIMARY EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the influence of head teachers' gender in management of facilities on pupils' performance in KCPE. The objectives were: to determine the gender of the head teachers' and to establish the extent to which the gender of the head teachers in management of school facilities influence pupils' performance in KCPE. The study utilized descriptive survey design to collect data on the gender of the head teachers in management of school facilities. The sample size was 41 head teachers. The schools selected were 14 from Dagoretti and Westlands districts and 13 from Lang'ata district through simple random sampling. The 41 head teachers from Dagoretti and Westlands and Lang'ata districts were selected randomly. The research instrument used was the head teachers' questionnaire. Validation of the instrument was done by the expert judgment of the supervisors who read through it. The reliability coefficient of the research instrument was determined by split-half method and was found to be 0.73. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data which was presented in tables. The findings were: The majority (63.0%) of the head teachers who participated in the survey were females while male head teachers were 37.0% and the schools managed by female head teachers had better mean scores in KCPE than those of their male counterparts. Therefore, the gender of head teachers in management of school facilities enhanced pupils' performance in KCPE. It was recommended that: Kenya Education Management Institute should continue to support head teachers in education-leadership in management training

KEYWORDS: Gender, Management, Performance and Primary Education

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Gender refers to the socially determined power relations, roles, responsibilities and entitlements for women and men, girls and boys (Republic of Kenya, 2007).

Gender influences people's attitudes social roles and responses to situations. Females are understanding, kind, soft but firm in nature. Their male counterparts are more often aggressive. Females are decisive and quick in decision-making (Garbe & Garbe, 2000). Therefore, these characteristics of females may enhance their management of school facilities than their male counterparts.

Experiences from India indicate that women's collective action can have a positive impact in the development of women's capabilities as well as contribute to changes in the intergenerational reproduction of values and norms relating to

gender equality (Jain, 2004). The overall situation in the education sector in Sub-Saharan Africa as a whole, reveals that females are disadvantaged at all levels of education in terms of access, participation and performance (Ministry of Education, 2007).

A study done in Ethiopia found that when women are empowered economically, they increase asset acquisition, improve their well-being and decision-making in the households (Rakia, 2007). In Uganda President Yoweri K. Museveni in 1999 promoted women in the economic activities through the mainstreaming of governance and representation of women at all Levels-Local Council up to parliament (Wangalachi, 2007)

Educating women is beneficial to the individual, family, community and nation in Kenya. With even a basic education, individual women effectively engage in economic activities and thus contribute to greater national productivity. At the family level educated women have reduced fertility rates, bring up healthier children, better educated children and families, and reduced infant and maternal mortality rates. At community or national levels, educated women participate more in development activities as well as in political and economic decision-making processes. These enable women attain financial independence, reduce poverty and enhance gender equity (Republic of Kenya, 2007).

A study on the analysis of the relationship between leadership and gender in schools revealed men as more directive and bureaucratic while women are more collaborative and rational (Limerick & Anderson, 1999).

Educated women may enter the labour market as head teachers. This enables them to carry out management of school facilities that influences pupils' performance in KCPE (Ministry of Education, 2007). The Government of Kenya recognizes the role of gender in development and has a programme to eliminate regional and gender disparities in primary, secondary and in all level (Ministry of Education, 2010)

Most of the differences women are perceived at work are due to stereotyping (assuming that particular groups of people have particular sets of characteristics, which are unchangeable) and past precedents in work types and patterns. The stereotyping of women that they are only suited to certain, specific, types of work and roles have been a fact of working life (Cole, 2005). According to feminism theory women and environment occupy a disadvantaged position by associating female and nature. Since the male dominating human culture has continued to oppose both, one could expect women head teachers to be more concerned more about the environment hence, positively fostering positive attitudes among pupils (Waswa, 2007)

A careful consideration of the statistics of gender in Nigeria reveals that contribution of women in the improvisation of instructional materials for effective teaching is significantly low. Evidence abounds in every science and technology based organization to this effect (Asiabaka, 2008). Some studies have found gender disparity achievement in favour of males (Awoniyi, 1999). It has been found that females are more democratic or participate in their leadership styles while male are autocratic/directive (Eagly & Johnson, 1990).

The KCPE serves as a feedback to the education planners, Kenya National Examinations Council, teachers, pupils, parents and other stakeholders. The planners can use it to modify, introduce or drop a topic or subject and also the next level of education can use it for screening/selection, for further studies or training; research work and certification (Ministry of Education, 2009)

Acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills are conditions for a better life. Better life is attributed to awareness to good life and access to basic needs, change for income generating and good health. Literacy and numeracy are important for human development index (UNDP, 2001). Literacy and numeracy are key skills that primary education is supposed to achieve as indicated in the primary education objectives. The national goals of education in Kenya and the primary education level objectives reflect the importance of primary education. In particular, the objectives of primary education are carried out in producing Kenyans who have knowledge and skills that enable them to fit in the society. This is reflected in many key Government documents. Key among them is the National Development Plan of 2002-2008 in which the Government has identified education as key to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals and Education For All (Republic of Kenya, 2002).

The pupils' performance in KCPE (Years 2008 to 2012) in Nairobi County and nationally is shown in Table 1

Table 1: Pupils' Performance in KCPE (Years 2008 To 2012) in Nairobi County and Nationally

Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Nairobi County's KCPE mean (%)	45.94	46.00	46.78	46.66	47.72
National's KCPE mean (%)	51.23	53.84	54.12	41.31	53.02

Source: The year 2012 KCPE examination report (Kenya National Examinations Council, 2013; Mbunde, Nyagah, Okoth & Obae, 2015)

The data in Table 1 indicates a lower mean score in KCPE in Nairobi County compared to National performance. This may have been caused by head teachers' poor management of school facilities influencing pupils; performance in KCPE.

Despite the heavy investment in education, management capacity of head teachers remains ineffectively developed (Maranga, 1992). Just as societal and school demographics have changed in recent decades, so has the type of leadership needed to successfully head the rapidly changing schools of this century (Meleod, 2008).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It is undisputed that the head teacher is the most significant factor in enhancing academic performance (Janerrete & Sherrete, 2007). Successful and dynamic schools can quickly slide backwards with the departure of a successful head teacher (Hargreaves & Fink, 2004). Head teachers are critical in ensuring that school management efforts are successful (Rutledge, 2009). Head teachers serve as key factors in the academic achievement of the schools and success of its pupils (Cotton, 2003)

Although the Kenyan constitution and even the education legislative enactment Give evidence of the Government's commitment to gender balance at all levels of education, there are still great disparities between men's and women's' participation in education (Davidson, 1993). Research has shown contradicting findings on the gender differences in leadership characteristics. Some studies indicate that there is no significant difference in the manner in which men and women lead (Carless, 1998). Gender does not have an effect on the perceptions of transformational leadership in regard to mandated school reform (Reichanadter, 2005). Therefore, there was the need for the study to establish the influence of gender of head teachers in management of school facilities on pupils' performance in KCPE.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study addressed the following objectives:

- To determine the gender of head teachers' in management of school facilities influencing pupils' performance in KCPE
- To establish the extent to which the gender of head teachers in management of school facilities influences pupils' performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employed descriptive survey design because it solicited data on gender of the head teachers. The target population was 204 head teachers in Nairobi County. The sample size was 41 head teachers. Three districts from Nairobi County were selected by simple random sampling. The 41 schools were selected from Dagoretti (14), Westlands (14) and Langa'ta (13) districts through simple random sampling. The 41 head teachers were selected from Dagoretti, Westlands and Langa'ta districts by purposive sampling method. The research instrument used was the head teachers' questionnaire. Validation of the instrument was done by expert judgment by the supervisors. The reliability coefficient of the research instrument was determined by split-half method and was found to be 0.73. Descriptive statistics and distribution techniques were used to analyze the data. The data was presented in tables.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Research Question 1: What is the gender of the head teachers in management of school facilities?

The head teachers were asked to state their gender and the results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Distribution of the Head Teachers by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Female	26	63.0
Male	15	37.0
Total	41	100.0

The findings in Table 2 show that majority (63.0%) of the head teachers who participated in the survey were females while male head teachers were 37.0%. This may have been caused by the Government policy which allows wives to join their spouses in their working stations and Nairobi being the capital city could attract more females. There are inequitable gender disparities. More pronounced disparities exist in arid, semi-arid and deprived areas in urban conglomeration (Republic of Kenya, 2012). Some of the schools involved in the study were found in urban conglomeration.

The high sounding policies, laws and enactments have not translated into gender equity in education at all levels (Abagi, Olweya & Otieno, 2000). Gender disparity at all levels of education continues to be the greatest challenge to the Government (Ministry of Education, 2001). This is reflected in this study.

Research Question 2: To what extent does the gender of the head teachers in Management of school facilities influences pupils' performance in KCPE?

The head teachers were asked to indicate the pupils' performance in KCPE and the results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Head Teachers' Response on Pupils' Performance in KCPE

Gender of Head Teachers KCPE Mean Grade (%)	Year				
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Females' Pupils' KCPE Mean	49.1	50.6	48.0	50.1	46.7
Males' Pupils' KCPE Mean	45.6	45.1	45.0	31.7	43.4

The data in Table 3 indicates that the pupils' performance in KCPE in the schools managed by female head teachers had better mean scores than those of their male counterparts. Male teachers tend to be competitive and individualistic (Daft, 2008). These attributes of the head teachers have an influence in management of school facilities and pupils' performance in KCPE.

In contrast, an individual's sex seems to make very little difference to job performance, except perhaps where brute strength is involved. Studies have shown consistently that there are few differences between men and women in such key areas such as problem-solving ability, analytical skills, learning ability and motivation. The one feature of working life where differences are likely is in respect of absenteeism, where women consistently have higher rates than men, due mainly to their primary role in caring for the children of the family (Cole, 2005)

CONCLUSIONS

In light of the findings of the study it was concluded that: The majority (63.0%) of the head teachers who participated in the survey were females while male head teachers were 37.0%.

The schools managed by female head teachers had better mean scores in KCPE than those of their male counterparts. Therefore, the gender of head teachers in management of school facilities enhanced pupils' performance in KCPE.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering the findings of the study, it was recommended that

- Kenya Education Management Institute should continue to support head teachers in education-leadership in management training.

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