



CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRINCIPALS' MANAGEMENT SKILLS AND TEAM WORK IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KENYA

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Abstract:

The main aim of the article was to study the secondary school principals' management skills and how they affect team work in Kenya. Most of the principals in secondary schools in Kenya lack the proper management that they require to create effective teams among the staff members and students. The purpose of the study was to build a simple theoretical framework where efficiency of the management skills in education was studied to discover their effect on improving teamwork and the teachers' productivity in the school. Most of the principals in secondary schools in Kenya lack the prerequisite management skills that they require so that they can be able to supervise and translate the educational policies and objectives into school programs. The management skills include delegation of duties to other teachers with the rightful talents and abilities. There should be set proper mechanism that encourages open dialogue among the staff members and students. The staff members and students should be motivated to perform to their highest potential. The teachers should be involved in early timely planning of the school programs. All the teachers and students should be treated fairly and impartially regardless of their gender, religion or ethnic background. The study was guided by Bass transformational leadership theory which states that leaders acquire the leadership skills through learning. The study used a qualitative analysis with a non-interactive research design. The study critically analyzed the literature with an outlook of identifying the key management skills that principals and teachers should use to encourage functioning teams in their schools. Team work encourages learning

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that occurs through dialogue, motivation, delegation of duties, timely planning and impartiality. When the principals have the proper management skills, they are able to organize the teachers and the students to work as a team. This prompts effective implementation of the school programs which leads to improved performance in the set targets. If the management skills are effectively utilized, there may be a clear performance management system and cooperative environment in the school. This may promote the efficiency of the teachers in enhancing schools' productivity as well as improving its overall performance. The study established the following key recommendations to the government, principals and teachers. The government to ensure that there is a comprehensive policy to equip principals with the proper management skills before being appointed to the leadership posts. It also recommends that principals and teachers should promote teamwork in their schools. This is through delegating duties to the staff members with different talents, allow open dialogue and encourage positive feedback from teachers and students, motivate teachers and students through recognition and physical rewarding and exercise impartiality to all regardless of their age, gender, religion or ethnic background.

Keywords: management skills, team work, stakeholders, performance

1. Introduction

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology has the mandate to formulate and implement educational policies throughout the country. At school levels, principals are charged with the responsibility to supervise and translate the educational policies and objectives into school programs. Principals play a pivotal role in any school setup. The leadership and management skills of school administrator contribute a lot to its effectiveness. The principals are appointed from among the teachers who have undergone the same training and have the same experience. Lack of an effective way to appoint and recruit the school principals eventually undermines the performance of the school.

The principals are expected to offer leadership, administration and management skills that will lead to provision of quality education. The current Schools require a principal who holds a multidimensional style of management that may lead to improvements and success in the school. Educators and stakeholders have expressed a worry over the factors that influence student's performance. The most outstanding factor is the organizational management of the school.

Lydiah & Nasongo (2009) cited that to increase the performance of students, principals should acquire the management skills that will enable them to lead the rest of the teachers. The leadership of the principal has a significant influence on engagement of teachers with students which results to improved students' performance.

As Ayiro (2014) mention, without consideration principals in unindustrialized countries are put in the headship positions without being trained first. The effectiveness of any school can critically impact on its viability. Studies indicate that in Kenya guidelines specifying the abilities a teacher should have to qualify for promotion as a principal have not been established. As cited by Ayiro (2014), training of school principals to acquire the management skills can lead to the improvement of the students' performance in the schools.

Research carried out on principals in African countries focus mainly on challenges facing principals due to lack of management skills. In these studies, training of the principals is recommended as one of the solutions to these challenges. This may empower them to get knowledge and skills that may assist them to run the schools in an expertise and efficient way. This ensures good performance.

2. Statement of the Problem

According to Scholarlink Research Institute Journals (2012), Due to the poor quality of education and high dropout rates in schools in Kenya, lots of the students drop out of schools before they obtain elementary education. One of the causes is the principals' inadequate capacity to create effective teams among the staff members and students. Principals are given an obligation to set clear goals and talk about them with the teachers and students. Successful schools are organized so that the staff member and students can collaborate. Teamwork provides the staff members and students with chances to develop collective understanding about teaching and learning.

When the principal lack the proper management skills, they are not able to create cohesive teams in a school setup. When the staff members and students don't work as a team, it adversely affects the smooth learning of a school and its performance. According to Scholarlink Research Institute (2012), schools are as good as the head teachers and the success of the schools depends on the head teachers. Principals may not give actual directions since they don't possess the management skills that they require. The purpose of the critical analysis was to evaluate the capability of principals in a school to create teams that may provide quality education. The emphasis of the study was on the management skills a principal should have so that he can be able to organize the programs of the school effectively.

3. Purpose of the Study

The critical analyses scrutinized the connection amid the principal's management skills and their influence on teamwork in secondary schools in Kenya. This may help in analyzing the effect of the management skills of principal's prerequisite knowledge and skills on supervision, delegation of duties and contribution of staff members and students in decision making. The study was to establish if the management skills of principals such as supervision, decision making and delegation of duties had an impact on teamwork hence performance.

4. Research Objectives

1. To critically analyze the relationship of delegation of duties and teamwork in secondary schools in Kenya.
2. To critically analyze the relationship of dialogue and teamwork in secondary schools in Kenya.
3. To critically investigate the relationship of motivation and teamwork in secondary schools in Kenya.
4. To critically analyze the relationship of timely planning and teamwork in secondary schools in Kenya
5. To critically analyze the relationship of impartiality on teamwork in Kenyan secondary schools.

5. Research Questions

1. What is the relationship of delegation of duties and teamwork in secondary schools in Kenya?
2. What is the relationship of dialogue and teamwork in secondary schools in Kenya?
3. What is the relationship of motivation and teamwork in secondary schools in Kenya?
4. What is the relationship of timely planning and teamwork in secondary schools in Kenya?
5. What is the relationship of impartiality on teamwork in secondary schools in Kenya?

6. Significance of the Study

The critical analysis is significant to all stakeholders in the education sector. They include principals, teachers, students, parents and the community. For the school principals, the study may help them to improve their management processes for improved academic performance. By identifying the management skills employed by principals of well performing schools, they may learn lessons that may enable them to improve the management structures. The outcomes of the study analyzes may benefit the ministry of education. The Kenya education management institute (KEMI may be able to identify the training needs on management skills for principals and address them appropriately.

The study may benefit the students in that when the administrators and teachers work as a team, there may be an appropriate environment for learning. This may lead to a students improved performance in the examinations. The study may help the principals to work very collaboratively with the parents and community so that there can be improved participation in decision making, dialogue and early timely planning of the school programs. This may make the school principal to be more answerable to the parents. When the parents monitors the school programs, there may be improved results in the quality of education. The parents and the community should be limited in deciding some of the school programs since some of them may make decisions that don't have the interest of the student.

7. Research Methodology

The study was a critical analysis of the relationship between the head teachers management skills and teamwork in secondary schools. The study used a qualitative research methodology that was used to capture all the findings of the study. The research plan was not collaborative and its design was based on analysis of the content. The study did not involve any statistical data.

The method clearly analyzed the management skills required by the secondary school principals in order to create team work which leads to achievement of the set goals. The research design indicated the plan of action and the roadmap towards accomplishing the objectives of the study. Working on the critical analyzes granted me an opportunity to find out how the management skills of the principals affect teamwork in secondary schools in Kenya.

8. Theoretical Framework

According to Bass Transformational Leadership Theory, people become leaders by learning the skills in leadership that they require. The managers should develop the management skills through training. This may enable them to inspire the workers into high level performing teams. The hypothetical structure applied in my article indicates that principals should acquire the proper management skills that they require so that they may organize the teachers and students into strong effective teams before they are elevated into the managerial positions.

The structure of the study has been planned such that the determinants of the independent and dependent variables are critically considered. The self-determining variable is the secondary school principal's management skills which include delegation of duties, dialogue, motivation, early timely planning and impartiality whereas the dependent variable is teamwork. If the principals exercise and apply their management skills effectively, there may be development of teamwork. This may create an environment where the set targets are achieved.

9. Literature Review Critique

9.1 Critical Analysis of School Principal Management Skills

As cited by Hermosilla (2014), Management refers to organization of the internal parts of a group so as to implement systems and coordinate resources to produce consistent performance. As cited by Otieno (2015), the system of education in Kenya emphasis a lot on exam based results. The quality of education is assessed depending on the students who pass the exams. Teachers, parents and the government have raised concern over the issues which affect performance of the students in the national examinations. The greatest factor is the organizational management of the school principal.

When the school principal involves the staff members and students in drawing the school programs and in decision making, they own the program .This enables them to work positively towards achieving the set goals. Dialogue and communication are very vital in a school. When the principal engages the staff members in dialogue, they are able to clear any misunderstanding that could have occurred and develop a transparent performance management system. The principals are therefore required to have the management skills needed for effective leadership and management.

As cited in Ayiro (2014), the relationship between management and effectiveness of a school depends on the principal whose duty is to make sure that the school

programs are well implemented. A way of making sure that the principals carry out duties effectively is by training them before assigning them the duty and constantly equipping them with the right management skills. As cited by Ayiro (2014), analysis on principals in African countries emphasize on attainment of skills in workers management, financial management, syllabus delivery and the interpersonal skills. Literature has indicated several variables that work hand in hand with the leadership for proper functioning of the schools and the attainment of the set objectives. They include teamwork, communication and morale of work.

9.2 Critical Analysis of Teamwork

As cited by Tarricone (N.D) Teamwork is defined as process that allows ordinary people to achieve extra-ordinary results when they cooperate. In a functional team, all the team members have a common objective and they progressively relate with each other to attain the team goals. When teachers and students work together as a team in a school, they are able to share knowledge and skills so that they can attain the common team goals. A successful team depends on the input of all the team members to create an environment where they are all willing to contribute freely. The team members must be willing to adjust to a cooperative working environment where the set targets are achieved through collaborations rather than individualization.

Effective teamwork and collaborations helps in efficiently completing the tasks. Teamwork helps one to have relational skills which enable members to work with others to harmonize schedules and make decisions that will strengthen the relation. Teamwork helps to improve the performance of the school because teachers are able to use each other's unique strength. In order for the team to be successful, all the teachers need to be accountable for their contributions to the team and to the performance of the school. Therefore effective management skills are essential for the success of the team including shared decision making, dialogue and motivation, delegation of duties, impartiality and timely planning. If the management skills of the principals are well established and applied effectively in a school, this may help to promote and develop the commitment and performance of the staff members and students. This may create an environment where the set goals are achieved.

9.3 Critical Analysis of the Relationship of Delegation of Duties and Teamwork

Delegation refers to the concentration of the workforce depending on the skills individuals have to create specific personal and specialized development within the school. This leads to increased productivity and efficiency. As cited by Phalane (2011),

although schools are administrative, the teachers who are not given the head ship posts could be higher in terms of the level of education. They should be involved effectively in making decisions in their schools since they may be having expertized training in the management skills.

Scholarlink Research Institute (2012) records that today in Kenya talents, skills and responsibilities of workers in any organization are underutilized due to lack of insufficient participation of the members of staff in the performance of the task and in making of decisions. When the principal fails to delegate duties to the teachers, it may lead to lack of teamwork that consequently leads to poor performance. Good delegation helps to save on time while poor delegation results to frustration and demotivation of teachers which may result to failure to achieve the task. When the principal is delegating a task to one of the staff members there is need to define the task assigned to the individual, assess the ability of the person delegating to, explain why delegating, state the required results and set the deadline when the task should be completed.

At times when the principals have so many tasks to complete, they should learn to delegate the work to other teachers who are able to meet the demands. When the administrative and educative matters in a school are decentralized, teachers feel a sense of belonging and believe they are contributing to the achievement of the goals. For leadership to be effective in a school, the authority can be dispersed among the teachers with relevant knowledge and skills.

9.4 Critical Analysis of the Relationship of Dialogue and Teamwork

Dialogue plays an important role in all the activities of the school. The principal, staff members and students should create time to talk about matters related to teaching and learning. What teachers and the principal talk about, how they communicate reflect importantly on processes and activities that may lead to improved performance. As cited by Abebe (2012), the principal should be good in listening, transmitting information, making decisions and leading in dialogue so as to increase the cohesiveness in teachers.

Principals open communication and positive reaction to contributions of teachers, students and non-teaching staff determines the success of a team. This involves active listening to the concerns and need for teachers and valuing their contributions. Teachers should be willing to receive and give a positive criticism and provide realistic feedback. When the principal encourages dialogue, the teachers are able to give ideas on what needs to be improved for the smooth learning of the school.

The principals should organize meetings where they inform, share the reflections and the challenges the teachers and students are facing. The principal's way of

listening, transmitting information, making decisions and leading in dialogue may affect the dialogue and communication processes and ultimately the outcome.

9.5 Critical Analysis of the Relationship between Motivation and Teamwork

Operational teams can affect the successful delivery and implementation of teaching and learning in a school. The principals should therefore motivate the staff members and students to work extra time so that they can attain the goals set for the school. As cited by Lydiah & Nasongo (2009), the quality of management skills displayed by the principal creates the difference between the failure and the success of the school. The quality of management is critical to creating functional teams which leads to improvement. In the highly performing schools, the principal set the pace, leads and motivates the staff members to perform to their highest potential. The principal should motivate the teachers to perform further than what is expected of them. This is through motivating them to keep aside their self-interest for a shared purpose.

The principal should reward the staff members and students for their achievement. This can be done through recognition and giving of physical rewards. When the teachers in a school are all motivated, they are able to work as a team hence improved performance. The behavior of teachers in a school depends on how they are treated by the administrator. Every school may require teachers who are committed and dedicated for it to achieve its goals. As cited by Otieno (2015), the objectives of the school may be attained if the skills and knowledge of its teachers are progressed through training. This can cause an increased motivation to the teachers and it may drive them to contribute towards the achievement of the set objectives.

9.6 Critical Analysis of the Relationship between Timely Planning and Teamwork

The principals should lead the staff members and students to achieve the set targets in the school. The principal requires skills that are essential for the effective management. At the beginning of every term, the principals should involve all the teachers in drawing up the programs of the school. The principal should guide the teachers to collaboratively develop the schemes of work and lesson plans. The teachers may together set goals for a given class, design work schedule together and evaluate results together. This allows team teaching where teachers get an opportunity to argue and decide on the best approach. The teachers select common materials such as text books and develop examinations for all learners. They set the sequence of the topic and when they agree on common objectives and interests, the teaching will be more coordinated.

As cited by Phalane (2011), team teaching answers all the problems of educators, learners and administrators. Team teaching requires planning, skillful management and

creativity. Teamwork increases the quality of teaching since teachers teach the same concept differently enhancing the strengths of the teachers to be combined and their weaknesses remedied.

The principal should also allocate duties to the various teachers depending on their talents and specialization. This may enable the teachers to plan themselves in advance to execute these programs adequately. When there is early timely planning of programs and involvement of teachers in the planning, they are able to perform them effectively. When there is effective teamwork in a school, there may be successful delivery and implementation of programs

9.7 Critical Analysis of the Relationship between Impartiality and Teamwork

The behavior of teachers in a school depends on how they are treated by the principals. When the principal is fully skilled with official procedures, delegation of duties, communication skills and human relations he is able to organize the teachers in the syllabus coverage and executing school programs. The principals require self-understanding, acceptance, empathy and consideration for others. The school principal should exercise impartiality and fairness when handling teachers from different departments or ethnic backgrounds. The principal should not exercise favoritism. This may enable the teachers to work as a team.

The principal should discourage gender inequality. The principal should ensure that decisions on hiring of staff members and admission of students are not influenced by gender. As cited by Scheuer (2013), Pay differences among participants matter little but dependent team reward may deter cooperation by some participants. The principal should ensure that teachers and students get the same pay for the same task performed regardless of race, religion, gender and age.

10. Conclusions

A school requires to be managed efficiently so that it can achieve the set goals. Principals in Kenya nowadays are given the responsibility of being the administration officers in charge of all the school operations. Therefore, the school principals should develop a need to improve the morale of the teachers in the workplace individually and communally. This promotes team spirit which develops an environment where the principal and the teachers create mutual trust and understanding. This can be used to speed up the process of change, organization, decision making and management skills. The principals must fully delegate duties, communicate, motivate, plan on time and

treat all the teachers equally so as to lead their teams successfully in attaining the objectives.

11. Recommendations

The study established the key management skills that principals in secondary schools in Kenya should possess in order to activate teamwork among teachers, students and non-teaching staff. The following areas need to be considered for efficient management in a school setup:

1. The government should develop a comprehensive policy equipping principals with leadership, management and administrative skills before they appoint them into leadership posts.
2. The principals in secondary schools should promote teamwork in their schools. This is through delegation of duties to other members of staff. This is because different teachers have different talents, skills and abilities adequate in performance of different tasks
3. The principals should motivate the teachers, students and non-teaching staff to perform beyond what is expected of them by inspiring and stimulating them to transcend their own self interest for a common goal.
4. The principals should open communication and encourage positive feedback from the teachers, students and non-teaching staff. This is through listening to the needs of the teachers and students, and valuing their contributions. The teachers, students and staff members should be willing to give and receive positive criticism and provide the necessary feedback.
5. The school principals should not favor some teachers but should always strive to be impartial regardless of gender, religion, age or ethnic background.

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