



A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TEAMWORK MANAGEMENT ON A WORKING RELATIONSHIP IN KENYAN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

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Abstract:

The teachers of a school and the administrators have the sole responsibility to make sure that all is well within the school environment. The school, been an institution of learning and making future leaders should be favourable and conducive for the learning to take place. Children have a right to be attended to and given their share of the cake. The teachers who are also human beings need to have a good working relationship so that they can meet the objectives set. Sometimes, the teachers' morale is on the ground, or there are other things that are disturbing their concentration. At this time, one needs a shoulder to lean on, a person who can listen patiently and someone who can step in for him/her in that class where one was supposed to be and the children are jumping up and down like small monkeys. The model of team stages theory by Bruce Tuckman, (1965) which is also known as the origin for successful teambuilding, gave the researcher the insight that it's one thing to create a team and another to create teamwork. To have a performing team is not a one day process and it takes real hearts to accomplish the task. Teething problems are many but Bruce Tuckman says that with time most of the problems resolve themselves. The key areas discussed included effective communication, effective administration and importance of teambuilding. These aspects are the foundation of a lasting and effective teamwork. The research design-Qualitative methodology was used to critique the effectiveness of a teamwork management in a working relationship in Kenyan primary schools.

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Keywords: teamwork management, working relationship, teambuilding critical analysis, effective communication, effective administration

1. Introduction

The teachers are a resource in themselves. They can be able to work and live stress free if only they can realize how rich they are in terms of talents and support and be able to exploit all that they have for their common good. This can only materialize if only the teachers can be ready and willing to work as a team. This would help them to discuss their work, consult and share roles which would result in professional growth Gerlach (2002). Having worked for over twenty years, the researchers yearn for that time when teachers will realize what they miss when they work alone. It is said that if you want to go quickly go alone and if you want to go far go with a friend. As indicated By Glaze, (2015). Teamwork is not optional but mandatory in all institutions if they are to succeed. Teaching is a very sensitive and highly delicate with lots of stress and then ...and then the mean scores that seem to be better than bringing up that child holistically. Many times, we live a solitary life at home and then at school. Imagine, all those things that stress and put us down, the answers are around us, with those people... teachers around us!

In order to succeed as a group and enjoy excellence in performance, the teachers, lawyers, doctors and other professionals need others to share ideas, share a light moment and lean on in tough times and thus, secrecy is counter-productive as discussed by Fine (2010). According to the Metlife Report (2009), schools that are collaborative are better placed in maintaining their morale as they can share their success, laughter, fears and responsibilities. The teachers can enjoy their career than those who opt to do it individually. They only need to set a goal to aim at and that everybody is committed to it.

As the teachers build meaningful connections, they will value themselves and feel as important people in the society .They will contribute to the society positively and prepare the future leaders adequately meaning a better society. Remember, you give what you have, so explore and practice teamwork for yourself and fellow teachers first.

2. Statement of the Problem

The researcher, being a teacher for over twenty years, really wonders and asks what problem many of us teachers have. Some can never take a lesson or a task that belongs to another person irrespective of where the other teacher is. Provided this group covers

their part of the bargain, they can never go an extra mile even as small as sorting out why some children are fighting or have an issue in their class. When it comes to many administrators, their style of leadership is divide and rule. It really bothers me why they cannot be part of the team. Remember in a football match, a team can never see through the goal of an opponent unless they work as a team and express their teamwork openly to themselves and the outside the world. As stated by Edutopia (2015). It is discussed under school leadership; for effective schools, teamwork is not optional. Under this, the researchers discussed variables such as: Commitment to succeed; Effective communication; Effective administration; self-control; Importance of team building

3. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to critically analyse the effectiveness of teamwork management in a working relationship in Kenyan primary schools.

4. Research Objectives

1. To critically analyze the effectiveness of administrative skills in a working relationship in Kenyan primary schools.
2. To critically analyze effectiveness communication in a working relationship in Kenyan primary schools.
3. To critically analyze the effectiveness of team building in a working relationship in Kenyan primary schools.
4. To critically analyze the effectiveness of commitment to succeed in a working relationship in Kenyan primary schools.
5. To critically analyze the effectiveness of self-control in a working relationship in Kenyan primary schools.

5. Research Questions

1. What is the effectiveness of communication and what is its role in a working relationship in Kenyan primary schools?
2. To what extent do the effectiveness of commitment to succeed boost teamwork in a working relationship in Kenyan primary schools?
3. How can the effectiveness of team building improve teamwork in a working relationship in Kenyan primary schools?

4. What is the role of effective administrative skills in a working relationship in Kenyan primary schools?
5. What is the relationship between effectiveness of self-control and teamwork in a working relationship in Kenyan primary schools?

6. Significance of the Study

In teamwork, a group of people work towards achieving a set goal. In order to work as a team, we must set a target of which everybody is struggling to achieve. Imagine a football team that cannot do the team working! They are going to kick the ball aimlessly into their own goalpost instead of their opponent's goalposts. There are numerous benefits when people work together as a team instead of in isolation. Some of the benefits as discussed in <http://www.sandler.com> are; it makes people to move out the box and get opportunity to learn. Remember, what you know is not what the other person knows. Therefore, when we share we get more knowledge.

People have different talents. One is good at creative thinking and the other in organization and planning. When working as a team, people rely on each other to better their performance. Teamwork helps people to build trust and establish strong relationships not only in the workplace but also outside. Remember, unity is strength and what seems to be difficult becomes easy when shared among several people, in this case the team members. Teamwork helps people to own up what is rightfully theirs. They work collaboratively, and also they share the joy or sorrows when fruits come around. For example, if a school performs well, everybody is happy and celebrating. This helps people to work tirelessly in order to achieve.

In a working relationship, we should be our brothers' keepers. When you value another you are able to resolve any issues arising with ease. In teamwork, we should have a conflict management team put in place as we are all human beings with feelings hence susceptible to err. Though teamwork is so important, there are times when it fails. There are times when people are out there to make it fail. They refuse to co-operate completely and some may influence even those who were positive to change their minds.

When there is lack of organization, no continuity and momentum due to high turnover or change of office bearers, many times whatever you had started collapses. It is easier to bring down plans than to build them. Lack of interpersonal team building skills may make it fail as it's not a priority. Some individuals tend to be too selfish that their own businesses always come first and not contributions to the team. As

Mainwaring (2014) says, *“teamwork is a very important aspect in creating a better world where partnership and collaboration become the first step towards success”*.

7. Research Methodology

The researchers chose the qualitative research methodology. This is because the researcher needed to observe the behaviour of respondents and record them severally before making any conclusions. The researchers needed to immerse into their environment and the target populations so as to observe and interview them hence understand their goals, challenges, motivation and other things that may emerge (Saura, (2015). Qualitative research method is a method of inquiry employed in many different scenarios and social academic disciplines. It explains human behaviour and phenomenon that cannot be investigated by direct observation. Issues such as attitudes and emotions are best studied using qualitative methods (family health international-qualitative research method, a data collector’s field guide).

8. Literature Review

8.1 Effectiveness of Effective Administrative Skills in a Working Relationship

A good manager needs to have human relation skills. This is the ability to work with and for the people, to communicate with others and to understand the needs of those people working under him/her Reece (1999). A good administrator should have interpersonal skills and should direct the day to day activities. He/she is the mediator between the employees and the community and also a link between the employees themselves.

Effective leaders should consider and try out the following important communication practices. Mind the say do gap as actions speak louder than words. This means that whatever you say should be accompanied with actions. The administrator should always be in the forefront in accomplishing the target. For example, if you insist that we report for duty early and observe time during the day, be number one.

The teachers should be themselves and let their voice be heard. The administrator should never watch things go wrong just because you have said something a number of times. Say it even louder than before. Be independent and not a copycat to do things because someone said they should be done. Listen to suggestions and weigh them before adopting them.

Some situations can be very difficult but it’s the duty of the administrator to simplify them for the juniors. Remember you are the leader of the group and you must

give direction. There is nothing new in this world, so be calm as you sort out things to avoid panic. Be seen all the time as you walk around your territory as discussed by Mind tools Editorial Team. Your work is not only in the office but also outside. Go and see what is happening and through this everybody will be alert in whatever they are doing and you would be able to solve some problems from the source. Interact with the people around to be part of the team. .

Be an active listener- with your eyes and ears (www.forbes.com/sites). This would increase approachability, trust, knowledge, morale and productivity. Have some time to listen to those who want to see you and if you are busy give them an appointment when you are relaxed. Dennis Sparks suggests that high quality work in schools require that school Stake holders especially the administrators and teachers should have mutual respect for the views of the other, high levels of integrity and unquestionable trust. A collective sense of purpose is the secret behind any success and in fact the school leaders determine the emotional tone of a school.

High degree of trust is an essential ingredient in making successful schools as stated by Anriq. (2015). This was a time when education in New York City's schools was almost collapsing about year 2013, Bill de Blasio tried team working and it worked wonders. Fullan (2013). Said that if people work together, even the ordinary people will do extraordinary things as it generates commitment and knowledge is shared by all. Effective administrators will promote teamwork by encouraging all concerned to consult and air their views freely without intimidation as they clear the play field for democracy. According to Webinar (2009), leaders should lead by example and model good business behaviour first for others to emulate. Teamwork should be a top priority at all times.

8.2 Effective Communication in a Working Relationship

This is letting people know what is expected of them. It should be open so that all involved can conduct when need be (Kreitner and Reece, (1999). It is healthy to consult one another when making important decisions as they affect all concerned. This help all to own up the decisions made and thus are able to work towards their success.

Effective communication puts into account verbal and non-verbal active and listening and you are able to communicate even negative feelings without causing any conflict (www.helpguide.org). In effective communication, new friendship is formed, a sense of group accomplishment is felt, distribution of responsibility is possible and elimination of stress and negative feelings can take place Gluck (2014). There are a number of bottlenecks to effective communication like stress, not knowing what you want, divided attention, conflicting body language and hardness of some individuals as

stated by Rosande, Orien, Oonyu and etl(2013). Remember, two heads are better than one and a problem shared is a problem half solved as it was said by people of old.

When communication channels are open, the staff members are able to relate and interact more efficiently and it is easier to learn the strengths and weaknesses of one another. Once this is clear, the weak points can be collected and strong points maximized. The entire team is kept updated with new information which will help them to be better workers. Poor communication leads to misunderstandings which brings internal conflict. Teamwork at the place of work is fully dependent on effective communication and that all should learn the art and skills of effective communication. Root (1985).

8.3 Effectiveness of Team Building in a Working Relationship

Team building is a part and parcel of teamwork. It enables individuals and groups to achieve personal and team goals as they have fun and communicate they manage stress by just blowing off some steam. It is a matter of getting out of your chair, office and gets everyone involved at the same time. (www.witsteambuilding.com, 2016).

According to Vogt (2005), team activities are vital as they allow employees to depend more on one another, thus building trust. People must work very closely together and wear many hats to get tasks done so as to remain afloat strong. Team building helps ease conflicts as people bond and know one another better on personal level. We learn of the Tower of Babel from the Bible (Genesis 11) where people wanted to reach God and all what He did, He made sure nobody would understand the other and the tower came tumbling down. Thus, effective communication is the key in team building and consequently teamwork.

8.4 Effectiveness of Commitment to Succeed and Teamwork In A Working Relationship

According to Mackay (2014), commitment to succeed is the inner drive that pushes one to look for excellence. If you want to succeed, commitment is a must. You need not tell anyone that you are committed it can be seen from your actions. To get the desired results, you must put an honest effort towards it. You are responsible for your success for it is your commitment that matters. You must be willing to give the attempt everything you have, money, time, yourself and all that. www.committedtosucceed.com advises us never to give up our dreams. Always listen to yourself and the inner voice that is telling you to continue and pursue your dreams. Many times we try and fail but it does not matter how many times you try and fail. All that matter is how many times you wipe off the dust and keep going. It is not failure to

fall short of realizing all that we might dream. The failure is to fall short of dreaming all that we might realize, by Hock and Founder (2002).

Motivation make people behave in a certain way. It gives us the energy to work even harder for success Kreitner and Reece, (1999). Commitment to succeed is itself a motivation to work even harder so that you can get what you are fighting for .In a school situation, where all concerned are for team work , they go far beyond what we can see for it to work. Even when they fail they believe there is some light at the end of the tunnel.

From www.m.staples.com, we learn of some signs to look for when considering commitment to succeed. There should be no blame game when things go wrong and failure should be our starting point. The teachers should concentrate on what they set their eyes on and all others to wait and are ready to work even for longer time without complaining and observe time all the time.

8.5 Effectiveness of Self Control and Teamwork in a Working Relationship

This is the ability to control oneself when faced with situations not desirable to him/her .It is a quality one has to work on so that he/she may not do things that might be regretted for life. Waking up early in the morning for work, being on time where you are supposed to be and doing your duties unsupervised takes a lot of self-discipline, self-control, self-mastery and self-conquering sum up to self-discipline. (www.vocabulary.com)

Self-control is a cognitive process which is necessary for regulating our behaviour so that we can achieve our goals according to Wikipedia the free encyclopedia. From the African Holy Bible, in the book of Galatians 5:22_23, self-control is a fruit of the Holy Spirit. It helps us to cope with people of different backgrounds, work and relate as if we have known one another for ages. Self-control helps us to develop emotional competency such as empathy and self-discipline which are key in relating with others in teamwork. Do unto others what you would like them to do unto you (Revised standard Version Bible, Mathew 7:12)

There are some people who are very difficult to relate with and are hard stones to crack. Self-control helps us to maintain our integrity and self-esteem and know when to let it go. Dr. Bramson suggests some four steps in dealing with this hard people namely; first assess the situation at hand. Ask yourself, 'What is this person up to? Can you go on without him/her? How was it the other time you met? Maybe this person is just stressed or just out there to hurt you as he/she sabotages whatever project you have.

Remember these hard people cannot be different as they are unique individuals. We all have our weaknesses and our strengths. Try to capitalize on their strong sides and what they can do best and willingly if only they can settle down and be part of the team. At some point you may be forced to stay away or detach yourself from these people. Having tolerated them for so long, and instead of improving everything is deteriorating, you can leave them and give them space until a later date.

Detachment may not be forever. When the air is clear you can test their reaction but time your response carefully. Time heals and you might be lucky and they have reflected on own actions and are ready to turn over a new leaf. If they are positive, well and good, if not, go on with your life. According to Rouble (2013), Self-control is a very valuable skill which can solve almost 98% of all workplace conflicts. It will help the manager not to make counter remarks that could betray whatever trust there is. The employees will think twice before engaging themselves in any conflicting comments.

9. Recommendations

1. Team work cannot succeed without effective communication. The teachers need to work on effective communication so that they can be able to consult when need be, they can share duties fairly, they can be role models for the children and they can share their fears which would bring stress in their lives. Communication is very important in and outside school, so embrace it. A problem shared is a problem half solved and unless you express yourself, nobody would know what is killing you.
2. Follow your dreams and never lose hope. The teachers must be committed to their work in order to succeed. Commitment is a part and parcel of team work. When you set your goals, whatever you do must be a step towards achieving them. The students' achievement is the goal, and then all that is done in schools should be aimed at achieving best results. The focus here is the work that must be done if juicy fruits are to ripen and be harvested in time.
3. The mirror of any institution is effective administrators. They should encourage those under them to work as a team as they cannot work alone. They cannot be in class and be in the office. They need to cultivate the team spirit and their work would be very simple. They need to delegate duties to the people they trust so that they can attend to other matters. Effective administrators should be trustworthy, good listeners, effective communicators, fair, empathetic and good role models at work and even outside. They need to be skilled and knowledgeable in matters related to their work as they are the link between the

school and outside world. They are answerable for all things that go round the school.

4. The researchers recommend that the teacher struggle to work as a team, to cover one another at all times and complement the efforts of others for the benefit of all. It is worth it that the teachers be there for one another in team building spirit because it is hard to stand all alone and be a team all by yourself, to play a match and win against the other group. (Mainstrong, 2014). According to Stepanek, (2014), "Unity is strength". If we agree to do something, we can do it and even do much more. Everybody has a talent and if talents are shared we can go a thousand miles.
5. Individuals are unique in their own way. Everybody is created differently with strengths and weaknesses. The lives led by all of us are stressing and many times you can get a teacher who is moody and you wonder what wrong you have done. Ups and downs of life are normal and what teachers need to know is that all have the strength to control themselves and not extend their problems to others as they also have their own. Teachers should understand that they deal with very innocent children and that extending their negative issues to them can be counterproductive.

10. Conclusions

In conclusion, the researchers would like to encourage all people working in the same institution to try team work. Effective communication is a catalyst and there are benefits as the teachers share knowledge, skills, the talents, our fears and also support of colleagues. It is good to know that there are people around them all the time. Team building helps people to know one another and you can be able to choose who you can approach if in crisis. In learning institutions, you can consult and ask questions because there is no one man who is the custodian of knowledge.

When teachers are committed to succeed, they can practice team teaching for better presentation and consequently better understanding by pupils and students. They will help one another to improve their scores as they must own up whatever comes around.

The administrators should keep in mind that the institutions are not their own. They should bring all the stake holders on board especially when making decisions concerning the schools. The teachers, parents and community should be treated with respect as school is part of community.

Lastly, all people big or small, young or old, teachers or students, teaching staff or subordinates, face difficulties both at school and at home. All are human beings and thus prone to err. Let us learn to forgive one another and practice self-control in order to live in harmony.

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