

The Effect of Strategic Administrative Initiatives on Academic Performance in Kisii County's Public Secondary Schools, Kenya

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Abstract

Strategic administrative initiatives in schools helps in identifying emerging trends and anticipate future challenges, allowing them to prepare and respond proactively so as to bring change in students' academic performance. For three consecutive years (2016 -2018), Kisii County's mean standard score in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education declined resulting to an average mean standard score of 3.765 (D+) which was still below the National Mean Standard Score of 3.962. The purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which strategic administrative initiatives influence academic performance. Education Production Function theory was applied. The study employed a descriptive survey design. Target population of 353 principals and 4354 teachers were considered from 353 public secondary schools in Kisii County. Slovin's formula with a margin error of 0.05 was used to sample 28 principals and 341 teachers as respondents. Stratified random sampling was used to get school categories. Instruments for this research included: questionnaire for teachers and interview schedule for principals. Validity of research instruments was ascertained by supervisors' inputs from the School of Education Kisii University. Questionnaires were considered reliable since Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha 0.998 obtained was higher than the critical Cronbach alpha of 0.7 on a scale of -1 to +1 by use of test re-test method. Data was analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively. Qualitative data on interview schedules were organized based on research objective and themes of study. Data was presented using percentages, means, frequency distribution tables and bar graphs for easier interpretation. This study's findings were: The strategic administrative initiatives have a positive influence on academic performance. This study is significant as it indicates that county and sub-county secondary schools need to improve on the application of the strategic administrative initiatives in the academic activities/programs for them to do better academically. In conclusion, National and Extra- County secondary schools' strategic administrative initiatives have a high positive influence on academic performance compared to county and sub-county secondary schools.

Keywords: Strategic, Administrative initiatives, Academic Performance, Public secondary schools.

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1. INTRODUCTION

According to Ayen and Akifolarin (2014), there are several administrative initiatives which influence student academic performance especially in secondary schools. These initiatives include a school setting its vision and mission statements, developing adequate school work plans and analysing the jobs, proper and effective monitoring of the workforce especially teachers, having regular meeting with the staff, effective delegation of duty especially from the senior to the junior members of staff, involving teachers in decision making, bench-marking, having active committee systems and being effective in communicating matters in the school.

Ayeni and Akifolarin noted that when principals use various administrative initiatives in their schools, they do improve the academic achievements of their students.

In an educational institution, there should be visionary administration. For systems to run well, there should be excellent teachers, principals, and an ambitious, collaborative, and innovative school culture. Paget (2019), says that effective administration in a school set up is important that goes beyond imparting knowledge. There is need for sustained, targeted, and integrated staff development in both technology and pedagogy. This gives rise to the need for studying the

influence of strategic administrative initiatives on academic performance.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Performance appraisal is also one of the initiatives used in administration to enhance student academic performance. According to Aguinis (2009), performance appraisal is the ongoing process used for identifying, measuring and developing an individual's performance in accordance with an organization's strategic goals. It involves formative aspects which focus on performance, these aspects include: professional learning, feedback and career development. Performance appraisal can be an ideal quality assurance mechanism which can enhance quality teaching if used as both accountability and instructional improvement; Danielson & McGreal, (2000). OECD (2009), acknowledges that improving the teaching performance, may be a policy leading to substantial improvement in the learning of student. Administrators should understand the strength and aspects of their teachers which need to be developed. This improves the effectiveness of teachers in their teaching and as a result it improves education standards of students.

Since the world is dynamic, schools are required to compete favorably in the global economic growth; (Day, 2013). A performance appraisal system which is effective will meet the demands by making teachers accountable, address underperformance and enhance performance and practice, Zbar, Marshall, & Power, (2007). Such an initiative makes academic performance to revive thus the need to assess the influence of strategic administrative initiatives on academic performance in Kisii County.

To provide students with qualitative schooling, Ministerial Council for Education (2008) says that, it is not easy to access right teachers who have 'right' course from university or who has the 'right' behaviours. According to (Elliot, 2015), teaching which can make a student to get the right result requires different methods of teaching which are developed through a range of related initiatives comprising of professional learning, personal development and performance appraisal Goe (2013). It is important to assess from available evidences that systemic, significant and sustained appraisal processes, are developed which may result to good outcomes from students. What influence would such initiatives have on academic performance in Kisii County? This was the gap which was filled.

Elliot (2015) bases his argument on Value Added Measures (VAM) in which Elliot says that, it measures the contribution of the teacher to the outcome of the student by comparing current test scores with previous year test scores of the same student in the previous years, as well as the scores of other students who were in the same grade level. The Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) study; Gates Foundation

(2010), shows a significant progress in the use of VAM with other sources of data whereby VAM can show the effectiveness of a teacher in teaching and might give, "a more accurate and nuanced view of the relationship among teacher qualifications, characteristics, practices, and student achievement growth" Goe (2013). Would such initiative influence on academics in Kisii County?

A performance appraisal system which develops and recognizes quality teaching through voluntary certification of teachers in the US was carried out by National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). Evidence show that students taught by teachers certified by this system do much well on standardized tests, compared to students taught by non-certified teachers, (Goldhaber & Anthony, 2007; Smith, Gordon, Colby & Wang, 2005). This shows that the process of NBPTS has a greater effect in teaching. A meta-analysis of the NBPTS system, gives a conclusion that, a student taught by a certified teacher perform better than a student taught by a non-certified teacher (Compensation Technical Working Group, 2012). However, evidence reveals that teacher appraisal is linked to student outcome and these vary as asserted by (Isore, 2009). The variance can be explained by inconsistency in the rating of teachers in different schools and different years or shortcomings of linking student outcome entirely to the teacher; (Darling-Hammond, Amrein-Beardsley, Haertelz, & Rothstein, 2013). In Kisii County would such initiative influence on academics in Kisii County? The researcher wanted to fill that gap.

According to (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007; Sujewa, 2010), in developing countries, there is teacher crisis in most schools. Poor working conditions, declining social status for teachers and poor teachers' pay are common characteristics in these schools (Sujewa, 2010). Because of these, underteaching, teacher absenteeism and migration of teachers to good professions arises, [Basil, (2013); Sujewa, (2010)]. In Sri Lanka, a study done by Sujewa about the motivation of teachers revealed there is a correlation between motivation of teachers and student achievement. Sujewa revealed that in Sri Lanka teachers experience poor pay, lack of school moral support and increased work load hence low student achievement in academic. The findings are similar with the research done by Basil (2013) in Tanzania on motivation of teacher in public secondary schools in Namagana District. The current study's aim was to find out the influence of strategic administrative initiatives on students' academic performance.

In Non-governmental schools in India-Rajastian, a study done by Daffo, Ryan and Hanna (2010), results showed that effective monitoring of teachers and giving them financial incentives directly basing on their school attendance daily, made them do much better. This was because this initiative reduced

absenteeism by a half from 42% to 21% and students gained 30% more of instruction time. Further after one year, the students' exam scores increased by 0.17 Standard Deviation. This necessitated the researcher to find the extent to which administrative initiatives influence academic performance.

According to Adangabe (2020), in India, Community-school relationship is one of the most serious factors to ensure enrolment of out-of-school children, more especially girls, and to make children stay in school so as to complete elementary education. When there is strong and sustained community participation in the management of schools, transparency and accountability in the education system is enhanced and it promotes a sense of ownership, agency and responsibility for positive change in the education system. School functioning has significantly improved because of active involvement of communities. The active participation of the local governing agencies in the day-to-day functioning of schools and decision making reduces the educational problems more so educational exclusion (Govinda & Bandyopadhyay, 2010). Could this initiative influence academic performance in Kisii County? This was the gap filled.

In addition, according to MHRD report on SSA Framework for Implementation, the main and central factor in planning, monitoring and implementation interventions for universal elementary education is community participation. The report has also highly regarded the role of people and especially the community as important to the success of these initiatives and School Management committee was considered a vital area in this regard (MHRD, 2011). Further, according to Dnyandeo & Bawane, (2020) collaborative management is important among parents, teachers and other key local stakeholders to help in proper functioning of the school. When the members from the school community are included in the school management committee, they feel part and parcel of the school and most activities will succeed thus student academic performance will be enhanced. In Nepal, when schools failed to provide quality education, the community decided to manage schools where it controlled more than 8000 schools and results achieved were the best. The active participation and support from all the stakeholders made the programmes to succeed (Dhungel, Shreeram, Lamichane & Pokharel, 2013). A similar initiative was tested in Kisii county. The findings revealed that participatory decision-making influence on academic performance was below average at subcounty schools. This was contrary to the reviewed study.

The utilization of grants and good working of schools has been left to be under the control of the School Management committee. These committees should know their responsibilities for them to perform well on managing and regulating a village school [Dwivedi & Naithani, (2015), Sele, 2020)]. The

achievement level of students and retention are improved by the School Management Committee (Ed. CIL (2002), Okendu (2012), and Rout (2014). However, lack of information on management course and orientation among the SMDC members about their responsibilities and roles made them to be unaware about making decisions, raising and managing funds, and budget preparation (Nyandro, Mapfamo and Makoni, 2013). What could be the influence of such management committees on academic performance in Kisii County? This was the gap filled.

A study on the impact of in-service training and staff development on workers' job performance and optimal productivity in public secondary schools in Osun State, Nigeria was done by Fejoh and Faniran (2016). In this study ex-post-facto research design was used and 152 respondents were sampled using purposive sampling. 132 questionnaires were returned out of the 152 respondents. Multiple Regression and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were the methods used to analyse data using 0.05 as the level of significance. The study revealed that in-service training and staff development had significant relative effects on the workers' optimal job productivity. The study recommendations were that schools should come up with proper programmes on in-service training and staff development for the workers' morale to be boosted to enhance their performance. This reviewed study focused on the impact of staff development and in-service training on the workers' job performance whereas this study looked at strategic administrative initiatives' influence on academic performance in secondary schools.

Students' academic achievement is influenced by principal's leadership practices. This was confirmed by Kormla (2012) in Ghana when he conducted research on principals' strategies for improving the academic achievement of students of disadvantaged rural junior schools. It was further established that poor-quality leadership in schools brings about programmes which are ill-adapted hence lowering students' achievement. This makes students to have a negative attitude towards the school; the school becomes unstable especially on the issues of staffing, uncondusive climate sets in plus non-co-operative parents and community members (Duke, 2006 & Leithwood, 2004). Therefore, there was need for the researcher to assess the extent to which strategic administrative initiatives influence performance.

A study done on motivation of teachers, related a high teacher motivation to higher student performance (Save the Children Organization, 2011). The study confirmed that teachers in developing countries need extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. To sustain teacher effort and professionalism, intrinsic motivation supports such as career development and recognition were seen to be effective and readily enhanced student academic performance. When the teacher's intrinsic needs are met, student needs are also realized but after the teacher's

extrinsic needs are met through conducive learning environment, performance-based bonuses and incentive, good remunerations and enough educational materials. This in the long run leads to better student academic performance.

According to Matovu (2001), in his study on the influence of social amenities on job satisfaction indicated that schools where the staff is allowed by the Heads of Department to express themselves freely in staff meetings, their team work and mutual understanding was found to sound good. His study revealed that staff meetings and teamwork have got a significant relationship. That in the staff meetings, heads of department are able to know what are the hidden ideas of staff that may affect school activities during their participation and as a team they can sort them out. This study sought to find out strategic administrative initiatives and their influences on academic performance while Matovu (2001) studied the effect of meetings on staff participation.

A study by Mainey and Crimmens (2006) confirmed that teamwork is a critical ingredient for academic staff performance to be effective. That its practice should be thorough in any work. The result of the research stated that "Teamwork is a crucial component of the effective staff performance. This concurs with other respondents from the United Kingdom (Wales, Northern Ireland, Scotland and England) who said that teamwork is so key to the quality of care provided to young people and staff to get morale.

Teachers in third world countries face several challenges while discharging their duties. This has been revealed by Save the Children (2011) reports. The workload of teachers was not commensurate with their salaries. Heavy workload makes teachers resist applying new teaching methods to their learners because their morale is negatively affected as they tend to be learner unfriendly. In Africa, it was found that teachers' salaries were greatly low and not paid promptly. The study revealed how teachers resort to secondary jobs like private tuition and business because they do not earn good salary to sustain them this makes them be undermined as teachers since student academic performance might be low. The study established that there is no recognition and prestige for teachers in developing countries.

It was indicated by a large number of teachers that dignity for their profession had declined especially from parents, students and other education stakeholders. Compared to civil servants, teachers earned low salaries and could be assigned menial duties in nature like offering security services and serving meals when schools have functions. The profession of teaching has been seen as a job for the semi-killed or a last option for the skilled because students who join the profession come from academic tracks of a low performing

education system. Teaching has been viewed as an opener to school administration or good jobs elsewhere a case which is demoralizing most teachers. The teachers pursue other courses in anticipation for a green pasture, making them miss more classes, hence lowering student academic performance. How could the initiatives influence academic performance in Kisii County?

Teachers in the less developed countries hardly participated in the formation of education policies (The Save the Children, 2011). They were seen as members not active implementers of education reforms. There was need for the best performing teachers to be rewarded and a structure for in-service training programme for teachers as recommended by the report. The income generating activities to support teacher incentive programmes were recommended to be started by the school in partnership with the community. To restore the image of a teacher in the society, there was need to have an education public campaign on the significance of teachers. Through these the teachers could work well and hence better the student academic performance. Countries which were involved in the study included: Ethiopia, Uganda, Nepal, Egypt, Afghanistan, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Bolivia, Tajikistan, and Philippines. This research sought to establish the influence of strategic administrative initiatives on performance in Kisii county.

Research has shown that bench-marking as one of the administrative initiatives improves grades in subjects. In India, two state schools improved their Mathematics achievement out of bench-marking (Boscadin & Deepa Sankar, 2009). Additionally, in Nigeria, Ayeni and Akifolarin (2014) noted that when principals use various administrative initiatives in their schools, they do improve the academic achievements of their students. These initiatives include a school setting its vision and mission statements, developing adequate school work plans and analysing the jobs, proper and effective monitoring of the workforce especially teachers, having regular meeting with the staff, effective delegation of duty especially from the senior to the junior members of staff, involving teachers in decision making, bench-marking, having active committee systems and being effective in communicating matters in the school. Are these initiatives applied in secondary schools in Kisii County? Do they have an influence on academic performance? This was the gap filled.

According to Gabriel Pereira Nunes (2018), monitoring is a learning space for the student, favouring its personal, academic and professional growth. It tends to refine its abilities as a teacher and motivate it to follow this path, or helps it realize the hardships faced by the professionals in this area, for its own development. In this context, being a monitor propelled the student into an orientation about its professional future, directing it to pursue a carrier in teaching and it was a landmark for an

evaluation and personal conclusion to define its prosecution area; its ingress in post-graduation.

In Brazil, a study done by Nunes on the importance of student monitoring in academic learning: a two-year follow-up, it was possible to verify that the monitor had positive effects on the students learning, allowing also verifying that the formative assistance has positive effects in the students formation, ensuring the access to knowledge and it was indispensable to the subjects covered content systematization, since advising and monitoring the students made them acquire greater ease in studying. Furthermore, the presence of the monitor contributes deeply to the right performance of the students, for it enhances academic formation for both aided students and the monitor itself. Therefore, it would be viable to institute the monitor in all subjects, when possible; because this is also developed as a positive instrument in the process of facing learning difficulties. According to (Basil, 2013), in Tanzania, a motivated teacher feels satisfied with his/her job and is empowered to strive for excellence as well as growth in instructional practice. The school principal has the responsibility of establishing needs of teaching and non-teaching staff and give advice to the school stake holders on the best ways to help them work well.

The quality of any education system is equivalent to the quality of its teachers (OECD, 2011). According to OECD (2011) and Parsons (2011), to attract teachers, develop and retain them, world leaders have well-designed incentive system in provision of quality education. Teachers in Singapore and Finland are remunerated a remuneration closer to medical doctors, lawyers, engineers among other professions. This makes these teachers enjoy reinforcement and rewards based on their performance in the job. Teachers whose students perform sterlingly receive yearly bonuses equivalent to three times a month's salary and promotions, teams/ individuals performing best at peer support and creativity also get rewarded. Teachers in Singapore receive full sponsorship on leaves such as when on studies and their educational journals or buying of educational software is financially supported (OECD 2011). Schools support teachers in classroom observation Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF), teacher mentorship programmes and in-service teacher development courses as seen in Sclafani & Lim, (2008); Singapore Ministry of Education, (2010). In America, teachers have an established Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) which rewards principals and high performing teachers, and Finnish teachers do enjoy prestige, have autonomy in teaching and are recognized by the society (Humphrey, Gallagher, Yee & Campbell, 2012; OECD, 2011).

A study done by Mwaura, Mbugua, and Kagema (2017) in Kirinyaga Sub -county (Kenya)-assessing the secondary school teacher's participation in identified co-curricular activities in schools, found the challenges teachers encounter as they engage in co-

curricular activities. A descriptive survey design was used together with the use of random sampling, seven principals and one hundred and twenty-five teachers were respondents. Research methods used to collect data were: interview schedules and questionnaires. Data analysis was done using, frequency, mean and standard deviation. Research findings showed that: drama, music, sports, and science related curriculum activities included the common co-curricular activities. 77.7% of the teachers agreed that co-curricular activities contribute to the development of learners. A section of 60.3 per cent of teachers, confirmed to have no interest in participation in co-curricular activities since they were not valued as part of the teachers end year appraisal; further, they do not have any incentive attached to them at the end of formative and summative evaluation. Since the teachers concentrate on examinable subjects, the quality of education gets low. The researcher studied in Kirinyaga Central sub-county; Kirinyaga County in comparison to the current study, research was done in the whole of Kisii County implying varied findings.

According to Lauwerier and Akkari (2015), who carried out a study in Sub-Saharan Africa on the quality of basic education, they found that the quality of teachers determines the quality of primary education. That teachers's working conditions in Sub-Saharan Africa, influences a student's academic performance in the region. The study reveals that teachers in Sub-Saharan Africa work in environment which is not conducive. The class sizes are bigger than the normal 1:45. The schools in the region lack formal teacher incentives and teachers earn low salaries. With the exception of South Africa, most countries lack career prospects for teachers, also there is lack of societal respect with the teaching profession. The study dwelled on quality of education while the current study focused on the influence of strategic administrative initiatives on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kisii County.

In the Sub-Saharan region, school heads and other stakeholders in management play a vital role in the attainment and maintenance of good student academic performance. These managers bear a primary role to engage and ensure that parents, students, teachers, and school community have good working relations so that schools attain the required objectives of educational. When the working relationships are warm and good especially in these rural areas, teachers are kept in school for long, this increases contact hours and enhances student academic performance; as was opined by Lauwerier and Akkari (2015). The purpose of the current study was to find out the influence of strategic administrative initiatives on students' academic performance in Kisii County.

In Uganda, the role of staff meetings on teachers' situation in secondary schools in Butambala District was investigated by Musisi (2010). Musisi

focused on role played by meetings on improvement of teachers' regularity, remuneration and their level of organization. The study revealed that staff meetings play a great role checking teachers' regularity, teachers' level of organization, and remuneration of teachers is improved. Musisi (2010) did not look at communication of the school matters by the principal which was covered in this study. Qualitative method was the only method which Musisi used yet this study used both quantitative and qualitative methods in the analysis of data.

A study done by Kisaika (2021), found out that the significant performance indicators to secondary schools' education were resource allocation, decision making, strategic direction monitoring and evaluation. His research was based in Kenya in the Sub County of Narok North on Strategic Planning Practices and Performance of Secondary Schools. This study did not look at administrative initiatives such as communication of school matters by the principal which the researcher of this study looked at hence the gap for the current study.

In Nakuru County, a study carried out on how co-curricular activities influence a students's Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education academic performance was carried out by Okumu, Maithy, and Ronoh (2017). The findings of the study were: students who were doing drama performed better academically than those who did not. Further it was found out that inadequate funds in school led to 86% club patrons miss professional courses on how to coach students. The school administration rarely supported and motivated the teachers hence a small number of students participated in drama club. Due to this, schools won few rewards. The study looked at influence of co-curricular activities on academic performance while this current study aimed at finding out the administrative initiatives practiced in Kisii County and how they influence academic performance.

Research conducted by Nyagosia, Waweru, and Njuguna (2013) to determine the relationship between school effectiveness and academic performance of students in secondary schools of Central Kenya found that there was significant relationship between performance of schools and focus on school mission, instructional leadership, expectations for success, school safety and orderliness, home-school relations, and opportunity to learn respectively. However, frequent monitoring of students' progress did not provide significant results. There was need to find out whether monitoring as an administrative initiative contributed to better performance.

Waswa (2017) who did research in Kenya on Impact of Principals' Communication Skills on Students' Academic Performance in Kenya, found out that the perception of the class prefects and class teachers on the schools' communication was a mean of 3.47 and

3.54 respectively giving an average of 3.51, meaning that the sample of class prefects and class teachers perceived the schools' communication to be above average. According to the class teachers and class prefects, the communication roles schools mostly carried out were: communicating instructional goals during meetings, posting instructional goals throughout the school and communicating a clear vision for the school. The findings indicated that communication skills are important in the teaching and learning. The study used teachers and students as respondents while the current study used principals and teachers. The current study revealed that, communication of school matters by the principal had good influence on student academic performance more so in national and extra county schools.

A study on the effect of management functions on teacher performance in private secondary schools in Mbale Municipality was done by Ssekulima (2012). The study revealed that teachers' performance was improved by management functions in the schools of Mbale Municipality. His focus was on time management, lesson preparation, and content delivery while this study's focus on other administrative measures that were left out such bench marking, school working plans, staff meetings among others and their influence on academics.

Various stakeholders in education have expressed concern over the causes of low-quality grades in students' performance. According to Obura (2007), poor academic achievement in schools is caused by lack of teachers, indiscipline, lack of facilities in schools, absenteeism and repetition, low intelligence and unfavourable home environment. These might be the reasons contributing to poor academic performance in Kisii County. However, Obura (2007) looked at Changing Images Portrayal of Girls and Women in Kenyan Text books whereas the current study focused on the influence of strategic administrative initiatives on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kisii County.

To alleviate this problem of poor academic performance, Lydiah and Nasongo, (2009) assert that principals have to adapt strategies or apply administrative initiatives which are meant to nurture and produce students of high quality from the secondary school level. This supports Ayen and Akifolarin (2014) suggestions of improving academic performance of students. The chief executive officers of the schools who are the principals are supposed to manage the school well for it to be effective and efficient. Hence the responsibility of the principal in instructional supervision is very important this necessitated the researcher to assess the extent to which administrative initiatives influence academic performance.

In Kisii County, poor performance in academics has been witnessed greatly. The County mean standard

score dropped seriously in four consecutive years that is from year 2016 to 2018. Also, Abuga (2019) confirmed that in the year 2018 a principal of one of the secondary schools in Kisii County was evicted from school by parents. Had that principal attended any in-service course on how to carry out administrative issues in schools? In addition, another reason why Kisii County performs poorly in academics is that students indulge in drug abuse or join bad company (Brian, 2015). The question here is: do the parents and teachers collaborate to shape the behaviour of their children and stop them from engaging in drug abuse? These were the gaps which had to be filled in this research. The researcher assessed the influence of administrative initiatives on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kisii County.

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Studies have revealed that strategic administrative initiatives aim at helping educational institutions in identifying emergency trends and anticipated future challenges, which allows them to prepare and respond proactively. This will bring about quality education as supported by National Education Sector Strategic Plan (NEESP) 2018-2022. With all these in place, student academic performance has been so dismal for several years in Kisii County public secondary schools. Many kinds of research which have been done have shown that there is a significant relationship between strategic administrative initiative and academic performance in secondary schools leading to quality output. The contrary is that the mean deviation for Kisii County in the year 2016 and 2017 was very high ($3.420 - 3.950 = -0.53$) as compared to the national for the two years ($3.734 - 3.980 = -0.246$). The average mean standard score for Kisii County was 3.765 less than the average national mean standard score which was 3.962 (D+). This imply that most students did not do well and were locked out of University since the cutoff grade is a C+. Which initiatives can be adopted and what is their influence on student's academic performance? This study, therefore, aimed at determining the influence of

strategic administrative initiatives on academic performance in Kisii County public secondary schools - Kenya.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the descriptive survey design. Descriptive survey design was used because it describes what is contained at that time in a given context and builds a picture of the current situation. This method is designed so as to get current information or phenomena and help get valid general conclusions from facts discussed (Best & Khan, 2006). The study employed mixed method approach; both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used. The variable used for this research was strategic administrative initiative. Thus, descriptive survey was designed to explain, analyse and interpret the influence of strategic administrative initiatives on student academic performance in public secondary schools in Kisii County.

5. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Influence of Strategic Administrative Initiatives on Academic Performance

The research question was: To what extent do strategic administrative initiatives influence academic performance in Kisii County Public Secondary Schools, Kenya? The study sought to determine the extent to which the strategic administrative initiatives influence academic performance.

The result of the study on the strategic administrative initiatives implemented in secondary schools in Kisii County, is as illustrated in Table one. The statements on indicators of administrative initiatives were stated on a scale of 1-5 where: 1 – inadequate, 2 – below average, 3 – average, 4 – good and 5 – very good. Each statement rating was then averaged, and a mean and standard deviation was calculated for each category of school. The results were presented in Table one.

Table 1: Means and Standard Deviations of Strategic Administrative Initiatives on Academic Performance

| Statement | Sub-County | | County | | Extra-County | | National | |
|--|------------|------|--------|------|--------------|------|----------|-----|
| | Mean | Std | Mean | Std | Mean | Std | Mean | Std |
| Teacher motivation | 1.86 | .791 | 3.67 | .471 | 4.84 | .373 | 5.00 | .00 |
| Performance appraisal | 2.13 | .824 | 4.06 | .245 | 5.00 | .00 | 5.00 | .00 |
| Benchmarking | 1.85 | .792 | 3.67 | .471 | 4.84 | .373 | 5.00 | .00 |
| Committees in school | 1.72 | .770 | 3.55 | .500 | 4.62 | .489 | 5.00 | .00 |
| Monitoring of the workforce | 2.11 | .839 | 4.11 | .309 | 5.00 | .00 | 5.00 | .00 |
| Participatory decision making | 1.95 | .778 | 3.75 | .564 | 5.00 | .00 | 5.00 | .00 |
| Regular staff meeting | 1.95 | .778 | 3.75 | .564 | 5.00 | .000 | 5.00 | .00 |
| Monitoring of students by class teachers | 2.46 | .810 | 4.15 | .356 | 5.00 | .00 | 5.00 | .00 |
| Schoolwork plans | 2.19 | .836 | 4.22 | .417 | 5.00 | .00 | 5.00 | .00 |
| Communication of school matters by the principal | 2.19 | .836 | 4.22 | .417 | 5.00 | .000 | 5.00 | .00 |

Table 1 show monitoring of the workforce, participatory decision making, regular staff meeting,

monitoring of students by class teachers, performance appraisal, school work plans, and communication of

school matters by the principal strategic initiatives having very good (Mn = 5.00; STD = .00) influence on academic performance at extra-county and national schools. Equally, teacher motivation, benchmarking, and committees in school initiatives greatly influence academic performance at extra-county (Mn = 4.84, 4.84, 4.62; STD = .373, .373, .489) and national schools (Mn = 5.00, STD = 00).

At the county schools; teacher motivation, performance appraisal, benchmarking, committees in school, monitoring of the workforce, participatory decision making, regular staff meeting, monitoring of students by class teachers, school work plans, and communication of school matters by the principal initiatives have a good influence on academic performance (Mn = 3.67, 4.06, 3.67, 3.55, 4.11, 3.75,

3.75, 4.15, 4.22, 4.22; STD = .471, .245, .471, .500, .309, .564, .564, .356, .417, .417) respectively. On the other hand, in sub-county schools; teacher motivation, performance appraisal, benchmarking, committees in school, monitoring of the workforce, participatory decision making, regular staff meeting, monitoring of students by class teachers, school work plans, and communication of school matters by the principal initiatives, have a below-average influence on academic performance as indicated (Mn = 1.86, 2.13, 1.85, 1.72, 2.11, 1.95, 2.46, 2.19, 2.19; STD = .791, .824, .792, .770, .839, .778, .778, .810, .836, .836) respectively.

The researcher did the component factor analysis to determine whether all the strategic administrative initiatives contributed to academic performance. The results are in Table 2.

Table 2: Factor Component Analysis on Strategic Administrative Initiatives

| Variable | Component |
|--|-----------|
| D1 Teacher motivation | .981 |
| D2 Performance appraisal | .984 |
| D3 Benchmarking | .981 |
| D4 Committees in school | .968 |
| D5 Monitoring of the workforce | .985 |
| D6 Participatory decision making | .985 |
| D7 Regular staff meeting | .985 |
| D8 Monitoring of students by class teachers | .971 |
| D9 School work plans | .982 |
| D10 Communication of school matters by the principal | .982 |

All the ten variables have a correlation coefficient more than the recommended minimum 7. Therefore, can put the variables into one component; Administrative initiatives. Analysis of Variance of Administrative initiatives among schools at sub-county category, county category, extra -county and in the

category of national schools, results are illustrated in table 4.16 above.

The researcher further carried inferential analysis to test the hypothesis: H_{03} : There is no influence of strategic administrative initiatives on academic performance in secondary public schools in Kisii County. The results are as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Analysis of Variance of Strategic Administrative Initiatives

| | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------------|------------------|------------|-------------|---------|------|
| Between Groups | 35910.519 | 3 | 11970.173 | 454.908 | .000 |
| Within Groups | 7946.645 | 302 | 26.313 | | |
| Total | 43857.163 | 305 | | | |

Table three is the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of administrative initiatives. The strategic administrative initiatives have a statistically significant influence on academic performance in secondary public schools in the county of Kisii, Kenya. This was the alternative hypothesis which was adopted for this study. The null hypothesis; H_{03} : Strategic administrative initiatives do not influence academics performance in public secondary schools in the specified county, tested at $p < .05$ significance level ($p = .000 < p = .05$), was rejected. The calculated $F(3, 302) = 454.908$ is more

than the critical value ($F = 2.997$), thus, indicating differences in the influence of administrative initiatives in schools.

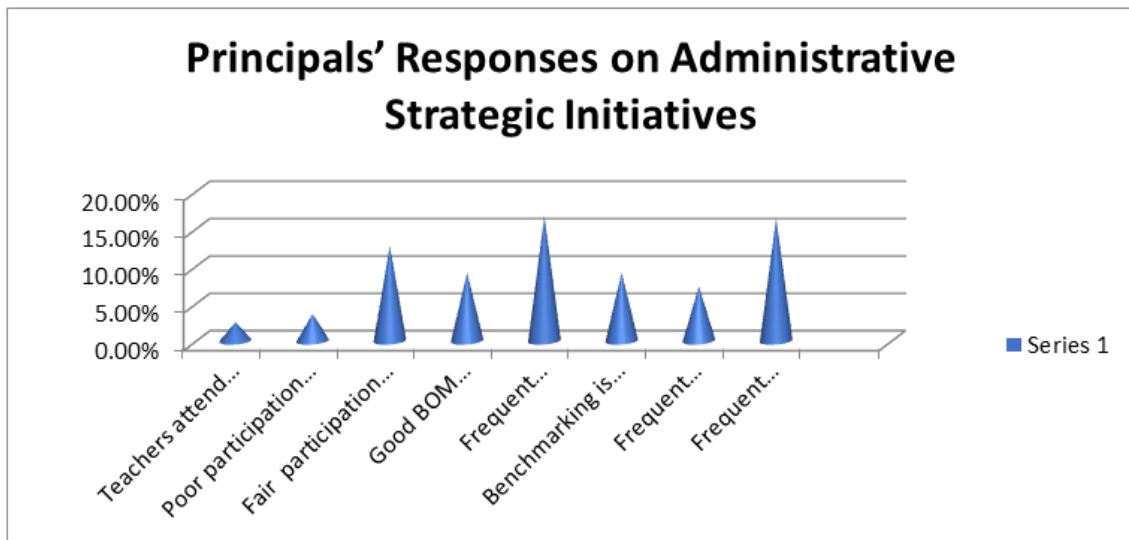
Principals of public secondary schools responded to open questionnaires on how they administratively ensure efficient school management. The researcher administered 28 questionnaires to 28 principals, analysed and reported the common themes as in Table 4.

Table 4: Principals' Responses on Strategic Administrative Initiatives

| S/No | Common Theme | Frequency | Percentage |
|------|--|-----------|------------|
| 1 | Teachers attend in-service training regularly | 28 | 100 |
| 2 | Poor participation of BOM in school academics | 4 | 14.3 |
| 3 | Fair participation of BOM in school academics | 14 | 50.0 |
| 4 | Good BOM participation in school academics | 10 | 35.7 |
| 5 | Frequent communication is incorporated in the school plan | 18 | 64.3 |
| 6 | Benchmarking is incorporated in the school plan | 10 | 35.7 |
| 7 | Frequent refresher courses are incorporated into the school plan | 8 | 28.6 |
| 8 | Frequent Monitoring is incorporated in the school plan | 18 | 64.3 |

Table four shows the responses of the principals to the open-ended questionnaire on administrative initiatives in the schools. All principals, 28 (100%) indicated their administration allowed teachers to attend in-service training regularly. When asked the rate of BOM's level of participation in schools' academic performance, 14 (50%) said there was fair participation of BOM in school academics, 10 (35.7%) said there was good participation of BOM members in school academics. In comparison, 4 (14.3%) said there was poor

participation of BOM members in the school academics. On the other hand, when the principals were asked which administrative initiatives have been incorporated in the school strategic plan, 18 (64.3%) of them said frequent communication by the principal, and 18 (64.3%) of the principals said monitoring of the work force are incorporated in the school plan, 10 (35.7%) said benchmarking has been incorporated, and 8 (28.6%) frequent refresher courses are incorporated in the school plan.

**Figure 1: Analysis of Variance of Administrative Initiatives**

All principals allowed teachers to attend in-service training regularly, half allowed BOM to participate in school academics fairly, less than half allowed good participation of BOM in school academics, and a minimal number allowed BOM to participate in school academics. A good number of principals had frequent communication and monitoring incorporated in the school plan. Less than half talked of benchmarking, and a relatively small number had regular refresher courses incorporated in the school plan. When the principals were asked the number of years it took to review the school strategic plan, a principal from a county school said;

It takes three years to review the school strategic plan. The role of reviewing the school strategic plan in the school's academic performance is to ensure the upcoming issues

are sorted out and the plan is followed as required.

A second principal from a sub-county school said that; It takes five years to review the school strategic plan, this is necessary since new changes are accommodated which embrace academic performance in a school set up.

A principal from a national school explained that when the teachers attended in-service courses, they are updated on the new trends on academics which they in turn share with students. The principal further explained that the teachers get motivated to assist the students to improve their academic standards. This principal said that the school strategic plan was reviewed

after five years so as to incorporate new trends in education. A principal from extra-county school said;

Teachers attend in-service courses on the students' academic performance to add new knowledge and skills required to improve their teaching methods and build their confidence thus improving student academic performance.

The study has revealed that monitoring of the workforce, participatory decision-making, regular staff meeting; monitoring students by class teachers, Performance appraisal, school work plans, and communication of school matters by the principal strategic initiatives' implementation has a very good influence on academic performance in extra-county and national schools. This conforms with (Kormla, 2012) in Ghana where students' academic achievement is influenced by principal's leadership practices. He confirmed this when he conducted research on principals' strategies for improving the academic achievement of students of disadvantaged rural junior schools. It was further established that poor-quality leadership in schools brings about programmes which are ill-adapted hence lowering students' achievement. This makes students to have a negative attitude towards the school, the school becomes unstable especially on the issues of staffing, uncondusive climate sets in plus non-co-operative parents and community members (Duke, 2006 & Leithwood, 2004). This was the gap filled in Kisii County; performance was poor and the researcher confirmed that strategic initiatives influenced performance.

The findings from the current research indicated that teacher motivation, benchmarking, and committees in school initiatives greatly influence academic performance at extra-county. At the county schools; teacher motivation, performance appraisal, benchmarking, committees in school, monitoring of the workforce, participatory decision making, regular staff meeting, monitoring of students by class teachers, school work plans, and communication of school matters by the principal initiatives have a good influence of academic performance. This agrees with other researches which have shown that bench-marking as one of the administrative initiatives improves grades in subjects. In India, two state schools improved their mathematics achievement out of bench-marking (Boscadin & DeepaSankar, 2009). Additionally, in Nigeria, Ayeni and Akifolarin (2014) noted that when principals use various administrative initiatives in their schools, they do improve the academic achievements of their students. These initiatives include a school setting its vision and mission statements, developing adequate school work plans and analyzing the jobs, proper and effective monitoring of the workforce especially teachers, having regular meeting with the staff, effective delegation of duty especially from the senior to the junior members of staff, involving teachers in decision making, bench-

marking, having active committee systems and being effective in communicating matters in the school.

On the other hand, the study revealed that teacher motivation, performance appraisal, benchmarking, committees in school, monitoring of the workforce, participatory decision making, regular staff meeting, monitoring of students by class teachers, school work plans, and communication of school matters by the principal initiatives, have a below-average influence of academic performance in sub-county schools. In these schools the initiates' influence on academic performance depends on the category of the school. This is similar to other researches; Monari (2007) whose work dealt with analysis of factors which contribute to students' poor performance in KCSE in Nyacheki Division in Kisii County; revealed how inadequate resources and facilities in schools compromised supervision. As per his study, lack of resources and facilities added up to a 71% of low academic performance in KCSE examinations in Gucha District. He further showed 51.2% of the principals checked professional tools of their teachers and this was done once in a term. National examinations results were poor and Monari (2007) associated it with negligence of the teachers in performance of their duties.

6. CONCLUSION

The strategic administrative initiatives have very good influence on academic performance at national and extra county schools, good at the County schools and below average at the subcounty schools.

7. RECOMMENDATION

The research findings have indicated that in sub-county schools; teacher motivation, performance appraisal, benchmarking, committees in school, monitoring of the workforce, participatory decision making, regular staff meeting, monitoring of students by class teachers, school work plans, and communication of school matters by the principal initiatives, have a below-average influence on academic performance, good at the county and very good at the extra county and national schools. There is therefore need for the school administrators in all categories of schools to be trained on the issues of administrative initiatives so that at least the influence on academics is good.

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