Headteachers' Staff Management Strategies On Pupils' Academic Performance In Private Primary Schools In Nyeri And Murang'a Counties, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

Headteachers use different staff management strategies to coordinate day to day running of schools and to develop an environment that helps motivate pupils. These management strategies may be responsible for the disparity in school performance. Studies on head teachers'staff management strategies have concentrated on public schools, leaving out private schools. This study aims to examine the influence of headteachers' staff management strategies on pupils' academic performance in private primary schools in Nyeri and Murang'a Counties in Kenya. The study was guided by Bertalanffy and Weihrich's Systems theory which claims that an organized enterprise does not exist in isolation but depends on the environment in which it's established. The study used a descriptive survey research design. The target population for the study is 2,630 head teachers and teachers from 259 private primary schools in the Murang'a and the Nyeri Counties. The schools considered had done KCPE for at least five years before the study period. The study employed Slovin's formula to determine the number of head teachers and teachers where 58 headteachers and 342 teachers were estimated to be representative samples for respective groups. The research also selected 15 SCQASOs using purposive sampling, while simple random sampling was adopted to select 158 schools from the two Counties. At the school level, the researcher recruited a headteacher using a purposive approach and two or three teachers using simple random sampling. A questionnaire was adopted to collect data from headteachers and teachers and interview schedules from SCQASOs. The researcher used Cronbach's alpha to compute the reliability of the study tools and determined at 0.7; all variables had an alpha coefficient above 0.7, which implies an internal consistency. The researcher also tested the content and the construct validity of the questionnaire by submitting the questionnaire. Data were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and presented using charts and tables. Qualitative data were analysed using Atlas.it, coded while quantitative data were analyzed in SPSS using descriptive and inferential statistics. The researcher used descriptive methods such as frequency distribution and correlation coefficient. The study found head teachers' staff management strategies accounted for 83.9% of variations in private schools' performance in Nyeri and Murang'a Counties. The study also found staff management had statistical significance influence on the performance of private primary schools in Nyeri and Murang'a Counties at α=0.05.

Key Word:*Staff management strategies, Academic Performance*

I.   Background of the Study

The impact of headteachers on school performance is a global issue that has been highlighted by Robertson (2012). The way in which headteachers manage the school is considered to be one of the key factors affecting pupils' academic achievements, as noted by Fullan (2005) and IIEP (2002). Therefore, it is important for schools to have managers who can take a short and long-term perspective on the organization and its performance. These managers should be responsible for developing a strategic plan, vision, objectives, strategies and implementing them effectively. Headteachers use various approaches to improve school performance, including motivating teachers and implementing performance-based pay systems. Atkinson et al. (2004) conducted a study which found that teachers who were part of an incentive payment program achieved significantly higher value-added GCE grades per pupil than those who were not part of the program.

Madhok (2014) and Huskisson (1999) suggest that strategic management focuses on the actions taken by organizations to achieve a competitive advantage and create value for both the organization and its stakeholders. Another definition of strategic management is the methodical process of identifying internal and external factors of an organization to formulate successful strategies and effectively implement long-term goals in a competitive environment.

In terms of school performance, headteachers play a crucial role globally. A study conducted by Marvel and Morton (2006) in the United States (US) revealed that the headteacher is the most influential individual in a school. They are responsible for all activities in and around the school, and their staff management strategies establish the tone of the school, the teaching climate, the level of professionalism, the morale of teachers, and the degree of concern for students' outcomes.

In 1990, the World Conference on Education for All (EFA) conference held in Jomtien, Thailand highlighted that the headteacher is responsible for creating an effective educational environment in schools by managing human and material resources, enhancing the welfare of teachers and pupils, developing and implementing educational programmes, maintaining school-community relations, providing proper instruction and discipline, and maintaining proper record-keeping. The productivity of schools varies within and between countries, and it is the skills and knowledge acquired that lead to higher earnings, not just the amount of time spent in school.

According to Armstrong, Allinson, and Hayes (2004), management involves acquiring influence, power, and legitimate authority to transform an organization by directing staff management, which is the most important organizational asset, towards the desired purpose. Ruskovaara, Hämäläinen, and Pihkala (2016) identified six administrative task areas in which the headteacher's staff management strategies should be captured, namely curriculum and instruction management, pupil management, staff management, physical facility management, financial management, and school-community relations. Headteachers are expected to be competent in executing their duties in these areas.

Hallinger and Heck (2010) emphasized that the effective execution of these task areas requires astute management, which greatly affects pupils' performance. To achieve effective management, the headteacher needs to create a school climate and culture that motivates pupils, teaching, and non-teaching staff, leading to a conducive teaching and learning environment that promotes higher levels of pupils' performance. Headteacher quality can be assessed based on their staff management strategies, as measured by the Bloom, Sadun, and Van Reenen (2015) and Lemos and Scur (2016) headteacher surveys.

In Nigeria, ineffective headteachers were found to be one of the primary reasons for poor academic performance among students, according to a study conducted by Ike-Obioha in 2009. Headteachers' management strategies, which include leading instruction and academic performance, were identified as important factors in this regard. Similarly, Akinola (2010) noted that both primary and secondary schools in Ghana struggled to achieve high learning outcomes due to inadequate instructional practices. Muthivhi and Yvonne (2008) highlighted that socio-political changes have placed new demands on teachers' and students' classroom practices in terms of institutional practices of teaching and learning. Uganda faces various challenges in education, including the need to assess the quality of education in the light of reforms in universal primary and secondary education programs and to improve student achievement through teacher professional development, as identified by Bouchamma et al. (2014). Teachers in different programs require support to enhance performance at all levels.

Education is highly valued in Kenya, as in other countries, because it provides both intrinsic and extrinsic benefits. Proper management by headteachers was found to be positively associated with academic performance, according to a study conducted by Ndinza (2015) in Kenya. However, the impact of headteachers' strategies on private primary schools' performance remains unclear. Private schools have consistently outperformed public schools in the last five years, according to data on the performance of both types of schools in Kenya.

II. Statement of the Problem

Education is an expensive endeavor that is a burden on both the government and families in Kenya. For several years, the most significant determinant of academic success has been performance in national examinations, leading many parents to choose private primary schools over public ones. Numerous scholars and education experts have sought to understand the factors that contribute to academic success, with most studies focusing on public primary schools. However, it is important to note that private schools in Kenya perform better than public schools, even though public schools receive substantial government support.

The way headteachers manage schools has a significant impact on academic performance. Over the last decade, parents have objected to the transfer of headteachers from public schools that have a good track record. As a result, both public and private schools have been observed to improve or decline academically following a change of headteacher. Despite public schools having more advantages, such as having more teachers with professional qualifications than private schools, private schools have consistently performed better academically (Zuilkowski, Piper, Ong'ele & Kiminza, 2018)

During 2017, there were only three private schools from Nyeri County that made it into the top 100 schools in Kenya, and similarly, two private schools from Murang'a were among the top 100 that year. In 2018,

out of the seven schools in Nyeri County, all were private schools, while in Murang'a, the first five top schools were private. In the 2019 KCPE, most of the pupils who scored over 400 marks were from private primary schools in both Nyeri and Murang'a counties, as reported by KNEC in 2020.

Although the government has put in place policies to regulate and monitor public schools, most of them still perform poorly. Conversely, private schools have managed to perform competitively, despite facing various challenges such as a shortage of experienced teachers. This study aims to investigate how the management strategies employed by headteachers affect the academic performance of private primary schools in Nyeri and Murang'a counties in Kenya.

III. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the influence of headteachers'staff management strategies on pupils' academic achievement in private primary schools in Nyeri and Murang'a Counties, in Kenya

Research Hypotheses
H_{40}: There is no statistical significantrelationship between Headteacher's Staff management operations andacademic performance in private primary schools in Nyeri and Murang'a Counties, Kenya

Significance of the Study
This research can have significant implications for various groups. The Ministry of Education can utilize the results to improve policy and regulation regarding the management of private primary schools. The findings can offer insight into the staff management strategies employed in private primary schools and their impact on academic outcomes for students. This study can also suggest positive ways to promote effective management in private primary schools. Private school headteachers can use the insights from the study to enhance education outcomes. Finally, the study can help address the information gap in the study area, and the conclusions and recommendations can contribute to the literature on managing private primary schools.

Scope of the Study
The study collected data on the effect of operations management on head teacher staff management strategies andtheperformance of private primary schools.

Limitations of the Study
The study faced a significant limitation as some participants were hesitant to provide truthful responses about the strategies they used as they felt that these strategies were their unique strengths. To address this limitation, the confidentiality of the respondents was guaranteed, and participants were assured that the data collected would only be used for academic purposes. Respondents were not obligated to provide the information, and their participation in the study was entirely voluntary.

Delimitations of the Study
The study was carried out in selected private primary schools in Nyeri and Murang'a Counties in Kenya. It focused on the staff management strategies ofheadteachers in private primary schools on academic performance in Nyeri and Murang'a Counties. The study was delimited to studying all aspects of headteachers' staff management strategies. Attempts were made to relate the findings tothe academic performance of the target schools.

Assumptions of the Study
The following assumptions were made while conducting the research:

i)   That the respondents would be willing to give honest information.
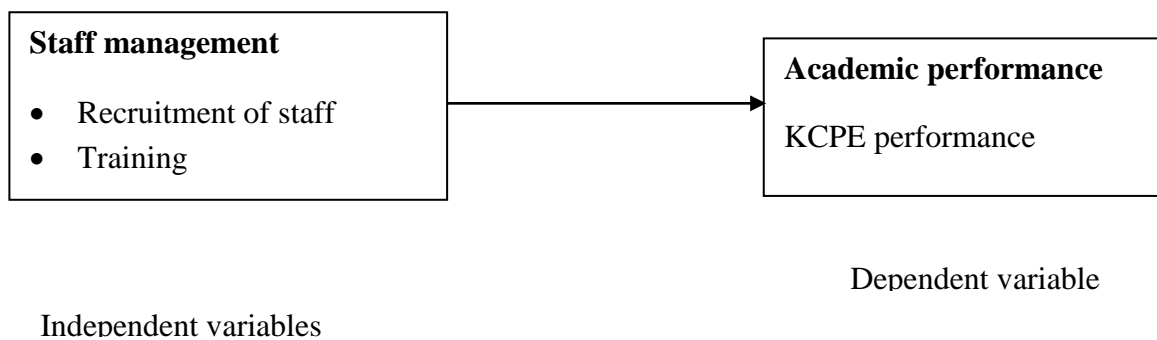ii)   Schools have adequate resources, which positively affect academic achievement.

Theoretical Framework
The theoretical framework used in this study is based on Bertalanffy and Weihrich's System's Theory Input-Output model (1988). This theory suggests that an organization is not self-sufficient and relies on its environment. The theory also suggests that an organization processes inputs from the environment and converts them into outputs. Robbins (1980) argued that organizations are composed of interdependent variables, and a change in one variable affects all others. Therefore, to achieve academic targets, private schools need to implement strategies such as curriculum supervision, financial control, infrastructure development, and staff motivation. Saleem (1997) agreed with Robbins and stated that all systems must work in harmony to achieve their goals. The input-output model suggests that a school with high predictor variables leads to better academic performance. Thus, academic success is dependent on the availability of basic school resources. Oso and Onen

(2005) highlighted the importance of understanding the interrelationships among the parts of a system to ensure its success.

Conceptual Framework
The conceptual framework in this study illustrates the relationship between the variables being examined (Orodho, 2009). According to Jabareen (2009), a variable is a measurable characteristic that takes on various values among subjects. It is the researcher's perspective on the problem that guides the study (Kaplan, 2002). A conceptual framework is a proposed model that categorizes the constructs used in a study and their relationships. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) emphasize that a conceptual framework serves as a guide for readers to quickly understand how the independent (predicting) and dependent (predicted) variables are related. Figure 1.1 provides an overview of the relationship between the variables being studied.

Staff management	Academic performance
• Recruitment of staff • Training	KCPE performance

Dependent variable

Independent variables

Figure 1. 1: Conceptual Framework

According to Nzuve (2010), staff management is a function within an organization that focuses on managing employees. The manager should have authority over all aspects of staff management, and this can be achieved by having well-written personnel policies that cover all areas. Khanka (2003) states that staff management is the most critical aspect of non-staff management, and people are the most valuable resource in an organization. People can make a significant difference in an organization. Staff members are diverse and have varying personalities, perceptions, emotions, values, attitudes, motives, and modes of thinking. Their responses to stimuli can be unpredictable and inconsistent, which means that a headteacher needs to be proactive, tactful, and innovative in their approach to managing staff.

IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

The primary objective of managing staff is to ensure that an organization can achieve success through its people, as stated by Armstrong (2003). Its purpose is to acquire and retain a skilled, dedicated, and motivated workforce necessary for the organization. This requires addressing and satisfying the needs of future staff members while enhancing and developing their inherent abilities, potential, and employability through learning and continuous development opportunities. Effective staff management should improve motivation and commitment by implementing policies and procedures that demonstrate the organization's appreciation for its employees and reward them for their accomplishments, skills, and competence levels.

According to Jordan and Lloyd (2017), the manager in charge of staff management should establish a positive work environment where effective communication and teamwork can thrive. They recommend implementing practices that show appreciation for employees, pupils, and parents, creating a culture of collaboration and trust within the organization. The manager should also ensure equal opportunities for all and adopt an ethical approach to managing employees, based on principles of fairness, transparency, and concern for people.

The motivation of teachers is essential to the academic success of students. Mendez (2011) found that teacher attitude was the primary factor affecting teacher and school performance in a basic education project in Guatemala. Similarly, Anderson (2001) discovered that teacher motivation was a crucial factor in increasing teacher commitment, which, in turn, positively affected learning outcomes in East Africa. Hence, it can be inferred that strong teacher motivation leads to favorable educational results.

In numerous developing countries, a significant percentage of public school teachers suffer from low motivation due to various factors such as low morale and job satisfaction, inadequate incentives, and insufficient controls (Bennell, 2004). The absence of rewards for high-performing teachers leads to reduced morale (Han & Mahzoun, 2018). As a result, the efforts of headteachers to motivate teachers can significantly impact their performance, which, in turn, affects the academic performance of students. Indicators of low teacher motivation include declining standards of professional behavior such as severe misconduct at work or outside of it, subpar professional performance, teacher absenteeism, low time spent on tasks, and limited effort with heavy reliance on traditional teacher-centered teaching practices (Analoui, 2000).

One of the key motivators for teachers is receiving training and development, which can result in various benefits for both the individuals and the organization they work for. Cole (2002) suggests that training can increase employee morale, boost their confidence, and motivate them to perform better. Additionally, the author argues that well-trained employees can use resources effectively, leading to reduced waste and lower production costs. Providing training can also create a sense of security for employees, increasing their loyalty and reducing turnover. In Kenya, schools often rely on in-service staff development to improve the effectiveness of their teachers. This type of training takes place on the job and focuses on improving teachers' knowledge of subject matter and teaching methods (the Republic of Kenya, 2011).

Koech (1999) and Mbiti (2007) agree that the success or failure of a school depends largely on its headteacher. The headteacher is responsible for managing staff and other resources to achieve the school's objectives. Unlike other resources, staff management is socially dynamic and requires effective management skills (DeCenzo, Robbins & Verhulst, 2016). To achieve the desired outcomes in a school, the headteacher must have the necessary training and knowledge in staff management, and the staff must be disciplined, motivated, and committed (Mostafa, Gould, Williams & Bottomley, 2015).

Teachers can be motivated by various factors, including both monetary and non-monetary rewards. For instance, schools and communities may provide incentives to high-performing teachers based on recommendations from the headteacher. These incentives may include housing, food, stipends, and recognition for exceptional work. Additionally, involving teachers in important decision-making processes and daily school management can also serve as a motivational factor.

According to the Kenya Education Management Institute (2011), staff motivation can lead to increased productivity, performance, and loyalty to the organization as employees feel appreciated for their work. To motivate staff, both financial and non-financial incentives should be provided to encourage efficient work. Non-financial incentives can include supporting staff and promoting a positive organizational culture. Empowering

employees by giving them more authority, providing extra training, and improving resources can also increase staff motivation. When staff are motivated, it can result in improved productivity, better exam results, increased performance, loyalty to the organization, and higher staff retention rates (KESI, 2011).

In order to implement effective staff management strategies, it is crucial for a headteacher to have proper training in educational planning, management, and administration. However, according to studies by Mulkeen et al. (2005) and Evans and Yuan (2018), few headteachers in developing countries such as Uganda have received such training. As a result, they may lack the necessary skills in academic and instructional management, time management, school vision and mission, performance tradition, teaching environment, and school-community relations (Ankomah, et al., 2005). This can make the headteacher ineffective in carrying out their role. Abdalla, Mwingi, Mwachira, Okoko, and Webber (2019) suggest that equipping management with necessary skills can facilitate the smooth administration and guidance of decision-makers in the school on how to achieve optimal inputs, as management can motivate both staff and pupils to work.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

According to Kothari (2008), a research design is a logical model that helps researchers draw conclusions about the causal relationships between the variables they are studying. In this study, a descriptive survey research design was used to investigate the impact of headteachers' staff management strategies on the academic performance of private primary schools in Nyeri and Murang'a Counties in the Kenya region. A descriptive research design is suitable for a comprehensive analysis of variables and to determine the association between them (Lambert & Lambert, 2012). This design allowed for a detailed examination and description of the variables under study.

Research Location

Kombo and Tromp (2009) define the site of study as the crucial area that is relevant to the research questions and goals. In this study, the focus was on Nyeri and Murang'a Counties in Kenya. Kothari (2004) suggests that a researcher should have a good understanding of the study location before starting the research to achieve the research objectives. The research was conducted in private primary schools located within Nyeri and Murang'a Counties in Kenya.

Nyeri is situated in the Central region of Kenya and covers an area of approximately 3,356 square kilometres. The county has some of the best-performing private primary schools, with most of them achieving mean scores of 350 and above in the 2018 KCPE examination. The highest-performing KCPE school in the county had a mean score of 378 marks (KPSA, 2019). Murang'a is also located in the Central region of Kenya and covers an area of about 2,558 square kilometres. The county has several private primary schools that consistently perform well in KCPE examinations. These two counties were selected for the study because of the significant difference in performance between private and public primary schools. Public primary schools in the region have poor performance compared to private primary schools. Therefore, studying how headteachers' staff management strategies influence the academic performance of private primary schools in Nyeri and Murang'a counties can provide insights to improve the performance of public primary schools.

Target Population

The target population refers to the complete set of elements that researchers are interested in when drawing conclusions. Kothari (2008) defines population as the entire set of elements for which information is gathered, while Mbwesa (2008) describes the target population as the group of people, events, or objects that the researcher aims to observe. For this study, the target population was composed of 259 headteachers and 2,347 teachers from 259 private primary schools located in Nyeri and Murang'a Counties in Kenya. The total population was 2,606, comprising both headteachers and teachers, and this group was the focus of the study (KPSA, 2019). Additionally, the study aimed to gather information from 15 Sub County Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (SCQASO) to complement the data gathered from teachers and headteachers.

Table 1: Target population of private primary schools, Nyeri and Murang'a Counties

Counties	No. of Headteachers	No. of teachers	No. of SCQASO	No. of private Schools
Nyeri	143	1,315	8	143
Murang'a	116	1,056	7	116
Total	259	2,371	15	259

Sample Size and Sampling Techniques
Sampling involves selecting a part of a population or universe to represent the entire group (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000). The crucial aspect of sampling is that the chosen sample should be as representative as possible of the population it is drawn from. For a sample to be considered representative, it should have similar characteristics to those that would be present if the entire population was analyzed. The following section outlines the sampling procedure and sample size used in this study.

Sampling Techniques
The study utilized two sampling techniques, stratified sampling and simple random sampling. Stratified sampling was used because the two counties under study have different characteristics and different numbers of private primary schools. This technique ensured that all private schools in each county were represented equally. Simple random sampling was then used to select individual schools within each county. At the school level, headteachers were purposively selected, while teachers were selected using random sampling. The researcher used a randomizer tool to select 158 headteachers and 342 teachers from a list of all schools and teachers in the upper classes. The selected individuals were invited to participate in the study and answered questions based on their personal experiences and viewpoints.

Sample Size Determination
In research, a sample refers to a subset of the target population that is chosen to represent the entire population. According to Brink (2000), this approach is commonly used. Kothari (2008) emphasizes the importance of determining an appropriate sample size in research planning. The sample size must meet several criteria, including being ideal for the study conditions, efficient, representative, reliable, and flexible. Slovin's formula (1960) is a method for determining the required sample size for a population. To apply this formula, the researcher must know the size of the population or the estimated population of the study. The formula is provided below:

Headteachers' sample size determination
$n = N / (1 + N * e^2)$

Where n= desired sample size, N=Targeted population size, e: significance level (maximum amount of error the researcher is willing to commit while estimating sample size for the study) =0.05

$$n = \frac{259}{1 + (259 * 0.05^2)} \qquad = \frac{259}{1.6475} \qquad = 157.207$$

$n \approx 158$

A sample of 158 private primary schools was selected for this study.

Teachers' sample size determination
Where n= desired sample size, N=Targeted population size, e: significance level (maximum amount of error the researcher is willing to commit while estimating sample size for the study) =0.05

$$n = \frac{2,347}{1 + (2,347 * 0.05^2)} \qquad = \frac{2,347}{6.9275} \qquad = 342.259$$

$n \approx 342$

For this study, a selection was made of at least two teachers from schools with one stream, and up to three teachers from schools with three or more streams to participate. Additionally, 15 Sub County Quality Assurance and Standards Officers were included to provide supplementary information to the data collected from teachers and headteachers. The respondents were chosen in accordance with the figure presented. The sample sizes for headteachers and teachers were determined using a stratified sampling method, as outlined by Cochran (1977).

Let   N=target population

          n= the desired sample size

N_i= i[th] stratum population. For i=1, 2

n_i=i^{th} stratum sample size. For i= 1, 2

Then we compute i^{th} stratum sample as follows

$n_{i=} \frac{ithstratumpopulation}{targetpopulation(N)}$x (the desired sample size(n)

Therefore we obtain the desired sample size by adding the stratum samples.

n=n_1+n_2 which can be summarized as follows:

$$n = \sum_{i=1}^{k} n_i$$

Where n is desired sample size,   is the summation from i^{th} to k^{th} stratum samples, n_i is i^t stratum sample size, and k is the total number of stratum samples/nu $\sum_i^k$ f strata.

Table 2: Sample size determination per County

Counties		Headteachers Population	Teachers Population	$n_{i=} \frac{ithstratumpopulation}{targetpopulation(N)}$x n	
				Headteachers	Teachers
Nyeri		143	1,315	87	192
Murang'a		116	1,056	71	154
Total		259	2,371	158	342

Data Collection Instruments

Data collection is the systematic procedure of gathering and measuring information on particular variables, with the purpose of addressing specific research questions. In Truman's (2008) study, primary data was collected using a questionnaire that consisted of both structured and unstructured questions. The data collection process was carried out in the field, with the assistance of a research assistant who was given a set period for conducting the data collection.

Headteachers Questionnaires

According to Schutt (2011), questionnaires refer to written sets of questions with response options designed for research or study purposes. In this study, the utilization of questionnaires is crucial for obtaining information from headteachers. Orodho (2009) states that questions are useful in gathering a large amount of data within a short time and can be easily analyzed. To distribute the questionnaires to the respondents, the researcher employed research assistants. To enable the researcher to collect both qualitative and quantitative responses, semi-structured questionnaires were used. The headteachers of private primary schools were the target audience for the questionnaire.

Interview Schedule

The Sub County Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (SCQASOs) were given the interview schedule, which included multiple inquiries regarding the role of headteachers in managing staff and the academic accomplishments of schools.

Pilot Study

Before conducting the actual survey, a pilot survey was conducted to test the survey procedures and instruments to ensure the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. According to Glasgow (2005), conducting a pre-test with the questionnaire or interview schedule can help reduce issues before collecting data. For the pilot test, it is recommended to choose a sample of individuals similar to those planned for the survey. In this case, 20 respondents from Kirinyaga County were selected. Pilot testing involves testing data collection instruments and processes to detect and resolve issues, as described by Mugenda (2003). This process allows researchers to make necessary changes to ensure that the data obtained is consistent and useful.

Pilot testing also helps to create coding sheets for unstructured questions, as noted by Orodho (2009). During the pilot study, questionnaires were administered twice within two weeks to 10 private school headteachers from Kiambu County. The responses from the piloted schools were used to make necessary

changes to the questionnaire to ensure that it captured the required data to answer the research questions and address the research problem.

Instrument Reliability

The reliability of a measurement refers to how consistent the results are when the same measurement procedure is used multiple times. When a researcher uses the same measuring instrument to repeatedly measure the same objects, they should expect to obtain similar results. The goal of reliability is to ensure that the data measurements are accurate, consistent, stable, and repeatable, in order to present an accurate representation of the subject being assessed.

Mugenda and Mugenda define instrument reliability as the ability of a research tool to consistently measure relevant features over time. If the tool produces similar results when measuring quality at different times, it is considered to be more reliable. To test the reliability of a questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted, and the results were analyzed using Cronbach's alpha formula. The internal consistency of the questionnaire was found to be 0.7, suggesting that the tool was reliable in capturing the desired results..

Instrument Validity

Validity is a term used to describe the accuracy and reliability of research instruments in capturing the intended information. It refers to the extent to which the results obtained from a study accurately reflect the meaning of the concept being studied. Validity can be classified into internal and external validity, which pertains to the accuracy of the data collected and the extent to which it can be generalized beyond the sample used.

To measure the validity of a research instrument, content validity is commonly employed. This approach evaluates how well the data collected represents a particular domain or content of a specific concept. Professionals or experts in a specific field are usually consulted to assess content validity.

Construct validity, on the other hand, examines the correlation between measurements and related areas. In essence, it looks at how well the research instrument measures what it is intended to measure. To compute content validity, Lawshe (1975) suggests a formula that takes into account the opinions of experts and their assessment of the instrument's relevance to the concept being studied;

$$CVR = (n_e - N/2)/(N/2)$$

Where   CVR: Content Validity ratio

n_e : number of experts indicating the question is essential.

N: Total number of experts presented to rate the tool

Validity is a term used to describe the accuracy and reliability of research instruments in capturing the intended information. It refers to the extent to which the results obtained from a study accurately reflect the meaning of the concept being studied. Validity can be classified into internal and external validity, which pertains to the accuracy of the data collected and the extent to which it can be generalized beyond the sample used. To measure the validity of a research instrument, content validity is commonly employed. This approach evaluates how well the data collected represents a particular domain or content of a specific concept. Professionals or experts in a specific field are usually consulted to assess content validity. Construct validity, on the other hand, examines the correlation between measurements and related areas. In essence, it looks at how well the research instrument measures what it is intended to measure. To compute content validity, Lawshe (1975) suggests a formula that takes into account the opinions of experts and their assessment of the instrument's relevance to the concept being studied.

Data Analysis

Data analysis involves using mathematical or statistical measurements and testing hypotheses to examine data. The researcher collected both qualitative and quantitative data from research instruments such as questionnaires. To ensure accuracy and consistency, the researcher carefully checked the responses and edited the data. The main goal of data analysis was to derive meaning and explanations from research findings, which was achieved through analysing the data (Shamoo & Resnik, 2003).

The data generated from open-ended questions were coded for computer input. After verification, the final dataset was exported to Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) for statistical analysis. The researcher used SPSS Version 20.0, which is a flexible program that can manipulate data into different formats. The original dataset was kept before any operations were performed on the data.

Continuous variables were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum, while non-continuous variables were analyzed using frequency distribution. The researcher conducted inferential analysis using indices computed from independent and dependent variables. The relationship between variables was tested using Pearson correlation and multiple regression analysis. Results were presented using tables and charts.

Legal and Ethical Considerations

Resnik (2011) defines legal and ethical considerations as a means of determining what behaviour is acceptable and unacceptable. In preparation for the study, the researcher acquired written consent from Karatina University and the National Commission of Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). Additionally, permission was obtained from the participants, who were informed of the study's purpose. The researcher plans to disseminate the findings to relevant stakeholders. During the study, confidentiality, anonymity, and the utilization of data solely for academic purposes were adhered to as guiding principles.

VI.   RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Introduction

The sample size of this study was 158 headteachers and 342 teachers in Nyeri and Murang'a counties. Out of the targeted sample, 123 headteachers' and 298 teachers' questionnaires were returned. This represents a response rate of 77.85% and87.1% for the headteachers and teachers. This was sufficient for data analysis as per Kothari (2004) who asserted that a success rate of 50% or above is sufficient for analysis.

Demographic and Background Information

This section provides a profile of the respondents who were included in the study. This is done by presentingcharacteristics such as the participants' gender, education, and work experience.

The study sought to establish the gender of the respondents and found that the majority of headteachers were male accounting for 74.8%. Consequently,the majority of teachers were male accounting for 63.8%. This implies that most teachers in private primary schools in Nyeri and Murang'a Counties are male. Thesefindings are inconsistent with Future Leaders Trust (2015) which found the majority of both teachers and headteachers were female in English schools.

Table 3: Respondents' gender

	Gender	n	%
Head Teachers	Male	92	74.8
	Female	31	25.2
	Total	123	100.0
Teachers	Male	190	63.8
	Female	108	36.2
	Total	298	100.0

Teacher's qualification is a particular skill or type of experience or knowledge someone possesses to make him or her suitable to teach (Zuzovsky, 2009). The researcher sought information on the respondents' highest level of education attained and presented the results in the table below. Among the headteachers, 6.9% had masters, 34.5% had bachelor's degrees, 45.8% had a diploma while 13.8% reported being holders of a certificate. Among teachers,13.8 % had a bachelor's degree, 37.6% had a diploma, and 48.7% had a certificate as the highest level of qualification. These findings are consistent with Yasin, (2021) who found education qualification plays a role in the academic performance in a school. According to Rice (2003) qualification of the teacher significantly affects the performance of pupils. Similarly, Hammond (2000) revealed that teacher qualification has a direct effect on the performance of students in different disciplines of learning. Moreover, teacher qualification of the teacher is indicated by the formal education, teaching experience and certification or licensure (Jacob, 2014). Consequently, teachers who meet these requirements tend to boost the academic performance of the pupil. Therefore, we assume schools with more qualified teachers are likely to perform better.

Table 1: Respondents' education achievements

	Education	n	%
Head Teachers	Masters	8	6.9
	Bachelor's Degree	40	34.5
	Diploma	52	45.8
	Certificate	16	13.8
Teachers	Bachelor's Degree	41	13.8
	Diploma	112	37.6
	Certificate	145	48.7

Experience is another criterion used often to measure teacher quality. Berliner (1976) is of the view that experience accumulated over the years is the most crucial necessary condition for expertise. Rosenholtz (1986) found that inexperienced teachers (those with less than 3 years of experience) are not more effective than more senior teachers but the benefit of experience appears to level off after about five years. Experience is very critical in teaching, management of school and performance of schools. The study examined the work experience among teachers and headteachers. The study found that 32.5% of headteachers had more than 10 years, 24.4% had 5-10 years, and 30.1% had 2-4 years while 13.0% had less than 2 years. On the experience of teachers, 6.4% had more than 10 years, 30.5% had 5-10 years of work experience, 25.5% had 2-4 years while 37.6% had less than 2 years. The study concludes better academic achievements influence the better performance of schools.

Table 2: Respondents' work experience

	Work experience	n	%
Head Teachers	Less than 2 years	16	13.0
	2-4 years	37	30.1
	5-10 Years	30	24.4
	More than 10 years	40	32.5
Teachers	Less than 2 years	112	37.6
	2-4 Years	76	25.5
	5-10 Years	91	30.5
	More than 10 years	19	6.4

Professional development activities can be conducted by many different organizations, in school and out of school, on the job or during a sabbatical leave. On these occasions, practicing teachers update their content knowledge and teaching skills so they can meet the requirements of new curricula, consider new research findings on teaching and learning, adapt to changes in the needs of the student population, and so on. Criticism has been levelled against the episodic nature of these activities and concern is expressed that very little is known about what these activities comprise and involve. Continuous training is critical in ensuring a professional enhance their skills and increase productivity in line with their work. The study found the majority of headteachers had attended additional training (72%). Some studies on in-service professional development have found no relationship between student achievement in mathematics and reading (Jacob & Lefgren, 2004). Other studies have found higher levels of student achievement linked to teachers' participation in professional development activities directly related to the area in which they are teaching e.g. mathematics (Brown, Smith, & Stein, 1995; Cohen & Hill, 1977; Wiley & Yoon, 1995).
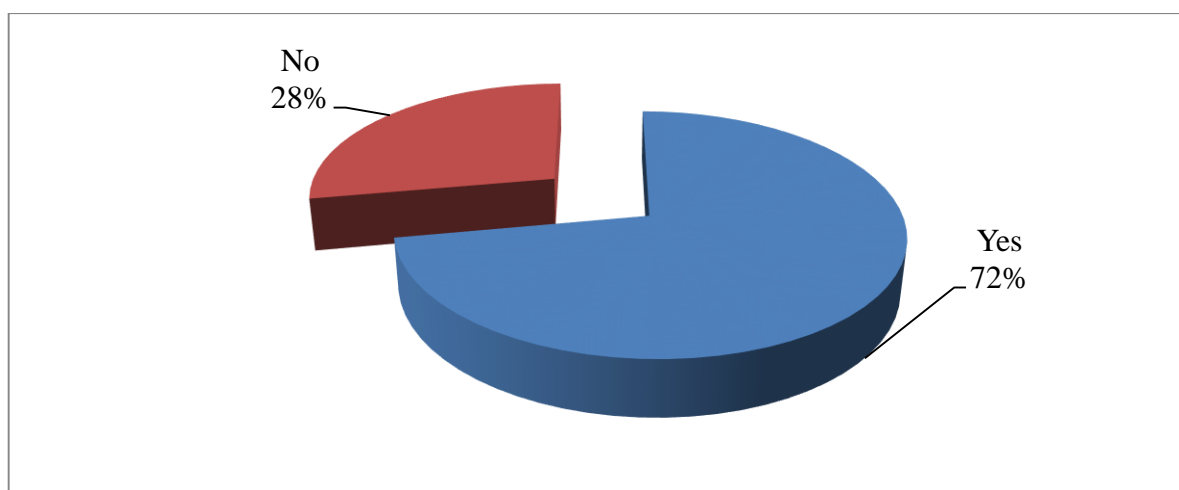
Figure 4. 1: In-service training among headteachers

Effect of Staff Management and Performance of the Private Primary School

The third objective of the study sought to assess the effect of headteachers' staff management strategies and their effect on the performance of private primary schools in Nyeri and Murang'a Counties. The study focused on headteacher self-reporting advising staff on curriculum and instruction, developing training programs for teachers as the need arises, encouraging teachers to attend the training, sending teachers to seminars/in service to enhance teaching skills, and discussing means of improving instruction with teachers, carrying continuous job descriptions, evaluating employee's performance based on the targets, determining areas of further training requirements through evaluation of teachers, work with staff to develop performance standards, having staff motivation programme, setting of clear communication channel for issues affecting employees, provision of safety measures for staff.

Table 6: Self-reporting on the use of staff management strategies among headteachers

	Not at all		Little Extent		Moderate Extent		Great Extent		Very Great Extent	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Advised staff on curriculum and instruction	0	0	0	0	7	5.7	30	24.4	86	69.9
Developed training programs for teachers as the need arises	8	6.5	23	18.7	0	0	39	31.7	53	43.1
Encouraged teachers to attend the trainings	0	0	0	0	15	12.2	16	13.0	92	74.8
send teachers to seminars/in service to enhance teaching skills	0	0	0	0	7	5.7	0	0.0	116	94.3
Discussed means of improving instruction with teachers	0	0	7	6.5	0	0.0	23	21.3	78	72.2
Usually carried continuous job descriptions	16	13.0	0	0	8	6.5	61	49.6	38	30.9
evaluated employee's performance based on the targets	0	0	8	6.5	0	0.0	62	50.4	53	43.1
Through evaluation, I determine areas of further training requirements	8	7.0	0	0	15	13.0	38	33.0	54	47.0
Worked with staff to develop performance standards	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	22	17.9	101	82.1
We have staff motivation programme	0	0	0	0	15	12.2	23	18.7	85	69.1
Set a clear communication channel for issues affecting employees	0	0	0	0	7	5.7	39	31.7	77	62.6
Provided safety measures for staff	0	0	0	0	7	6.1	47	40.9	61	53.0

The study found headteachers felt that they strongly performed well in advising staff on curriculum and instruction(24.4% reported great extent and 69.9% reported very great extent), developing training programs for teachers as the need arises(31.7 % reported great extent and 43.1% reported very great extent), encouraging teachers to attend the pieces of training (13.0 % reported great extent and 74.8% reported very great extent), sending of teachers to seminars/in service to enhance teaching skills(94.3% reported very great extent) as well as discussing means of improving instruction with teachers(21.3 % reported great extent and 72.2% reported very great extent). Headteachers also claimed that they did well in carrying out continuous job descriptions (49.6% reported great extent and 30.9% reported very great extent), evaluating employee performance based on the targets(50.4% reported great extent and 43.1% reported very great extent), determining areas of further training requirements through evaluation of teachers(33.0 % reported great extent and 47.0% reported very great extent), working with staff to develop performance standards(17.9 % reported great extent and 82.1% reported very great extent), having staff motivation programme(18.7 % reported great extent and 69.1% reported very great extent), setting of clear communication channel for issues affecting employees(31.7 % reported great extent and 62.6% reported very great extent) and provision of safety measures for staff as implied by 40.9 % who reported great extent and 53.0% who reported very great extent.

Teacher rating of headteacher's staff management strategies

On the teachers reporting on the evaluation process of headteachers, the study focused on teachers 'reporting on headteachers advising staff on curriculum and instruction, developing training programs for teachers as the need arises, encouraging teachers to attend the training, sending teachers to seminars/in service to enhance teaching skills, discussing means of improving instruction with teachers, carrying continuous job descriptions, evaluating employee's performance based on the targets, determining areas of further training requirements through evaluation of teachers, work with staff to develop performance standards, having staff motivation programme, setting of clear communication channel for issues affecting employees, provision of safety measures for staff.

Table 7: Teacher rating of head teacher's staff management strategies

	Not at all		Little Extent		Moderate extent		Great extent		Very great extent	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Advises staff on curriculum and instruction	0	0.0	7	2.4	0	0.0	90	30.9	194	66.7
Developing a training programs for teachers as need arises	7	2.3	14	4.7	20	6.7	126	42.3	131	44.0
Encouraging teachers to attend the training	7	2.3	0	0.0	20	6.7	53	17.8	218	73.2
Sending teachers to seminars/in service to enhance teaching skills	7	2.4	14	4.8	19	6.5	40	13.7	211	72.5
Discussing means of improving instruction with teachers	7	2.4	0	0.0	14	4.8	78	26.7	193	66.1
Continuous job descriptions	0	0.0	13	4.6	52	18.2	86	30.2	134	47.0
frequent evaluation of employee's performance based on the targets	7	2.3	0	0.0	39	13.1	105	35.2	147	49.3
Working with staff develops performance standards	7	2.4	7	2.4	7	2.4	73	25.1	197	67.7
We have staff motivation program	46	16.1	0	0.0	39	13.7	86	30.2	114	40.0
Setting a clear communication channel for issues affecting employees	14	4.9	0	0.0	20	7.0	125	43.9	126	44.2
Provision of safety measures for its staff	14	5.0	0	0.0	47	16.8	87	31.2	131	47.0

The study found teachers felt that headteachers strongly performed well in advising staff on curriculum and instruction(30.9% reported great extent and 66.7% reported very great extent), and they helped teachers to develop training programs for teachers as the need arises (42.3 % reported great extent and 44.0% reported very great extent), encouraged teachers to attend the training(17.8 % reported great extent and 73.2% reported very great extent), sent of teachers to seminars/in service to enhance teaching skills(13.7% reported great extent and 72.5% reported very great extent) as well as discussing means of improving instruction with teachers(26.7 % reported great extent and 66.1% reported very great extent). Teachers also argued that headteachers did well in carrying out continuous job descriptions (30.2% reported great extent and 47.0% reported very great extent), evaluating employee performance based on the targets(35.2% reported great extent and 49.3% reported very great extent), works with staff develops performance standards (25.1% reported great extent and 67.7% reported very great extent), enforcement of staff motivation programme(30.2 % reported great extent and 40.0% reported very great extent), setting of clear communication channel for issues affecting employees(49.3% reported great extent and 44.2% reported very great extent) and provision of safety measures for staff as implied by 31.2 % who reported great extent and 47.0% who reported very great extent.

Correlation

The study sought to establish the nature of the relationship between the independent variable (staff management) and the dependent variables (Performance of private primary schools). This was done using correlation coefficients to test the linearity of the study variables. The study used Pearson Correlation ® to test whether the relationship between the variables was significant or not at a 95% level of confidence.

Table 8: correlation between staff management and Performance of private primary schools

Correlations			
		Performance	Staff management
Performance	Pearson Correlation	1	.838**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	123	123
Staff management	Pearson Correlation	.838**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	123	123

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation between staff management and Performance of private primary schools is implied by r = 0.838, with a p-value of 0.000, implying a strong, positive and significant relationship. Therefore, the staff management strategies of headteachers of private primary schools strongly influenced the performance of private primary schools in Nyeri and Murang'a Counties. For every unit increase in the staff management

strategies index, the performance of private primary schools in Nyeri and Murang'a counties increases by 0.838 units.

VII.   Summary of the Findings

One of the ways of achieving quality education is to promote Staff development in schools. This belief concurs with Glick Man (1990) who stressed that if one is to work at a place to improve the quality of education in a school, a sensible place to look is the continuous education of educators and that is Staff development.There is a link between teachers' professional development and students' academic performance. The study found headteachers felt that they strongly performed well in advising staff on curriculum and instruction, developing training programs for teachers as the need arises, encouraging teachers to attend the training, sending teachers to seminars/in service to enhance teaching skills as well as discussing means of improving instruction with teachers. This study found ensuring professional growth of teachers, academic and professional qualifications, and Financial Accounting teachers who major in the subject have a positive influence on accounting students' academic performance.Headteachers also claimed that they did well in carrying continuous job descriptions, evaluating employee's performance based on the targets, determining areas of further training requirements through evaluation of teachers, working with staff to develop performance standards, having staff motivation programme, setting clear communication channel for issues affecting employees and provision of safety measures for staff.A study conducted by Ehindero & Ajibade, (2000) indicates that for effective teaching, the teacher requires good communication skills such as good communication, good classroom management, updating knowledge and maintaining personality. No one can teach effectively until having these basic skills of teaching.

The study found teachers felt that headteachers strongly performed well in advising staff on curriculum and instruction, they helped teachers to develop training programs for teachers as the need arises, encouraged teachers to attend the training, and sent teachers to seminars/in service to enhance teaching skills as well as discussing means of improving instruction with teachers. This concurs with the findings of Akpan and Ita (2013) who revealed among others that teachers' participation in seminars/workshops significantly relates to quality universal basic education. Teachers also argued that headteachers did well in carrying out continuous job descriptions, evaluating employees' performance based on the targets, working with staff to develop performance standards**,** enforcement of staff motivation programmes, setting clear communication channels for issues affecting employees and provision of safety measures for staff. Good communication skills of a teacher are the basic need forthe academic success of students, and professional success in life. The teacher communicates more instructions orally in the classroom to students. Teachers with poor communication skills may cause the failure of students to learn and promote their academics. Student needs to understand what is right, and what is wrong it depends upon the communication skills of the teachers they adopt in the classroom (Sherwyn et al., 2000). The correlation between staff management and Performance of private primary schools showed a strong, positive and significant relationship. The study also revealed that there is a significant relationship between teachers' professional development and accounting students' academic performance in secondary schools

VIII.   Conclusions and recommendation of the study

Finally, the study concluded, that staff management significantly contributed to the performance of private primary schools in Nyeri and Murang'a counties. Headteachersadvised staff on curriculum and instruction, developed training programs for teachers as the need arises, encouraged teachers to attend the training, sent teachers to seminars/in service to enhance teaching skills as well as discussed means of improving instruction with teachers. Headteachers also carried continuous job descriptions, evaluated employees' performance based on the targets, determining areas of further training requirements through evaluation of teachers, worked with staff to develop performance standards, motivated staff, and set clear communication channels for issues affecting employees and provision of safety measures for staff.The study also recommended ministry of education develop a framework for evaluating school management strategies on basis of staff management. This will help to shape learning standards for both pupils in public primary and boarding schools.

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