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INFLUENCE OF STAKEHOLDERS PARTICIPATION IN PRIMARY SCHOOL MANAGEMENT ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: THE CASE OF URINGU DIVISION, MERU COUNTY, KENYA

MUTWIRI Rose Edna Kanana[1], Dr. BOWA Omondi[2]

[1]Masters' Scholar: University of Nairobi, Kenya
[2]Lecturer: University of Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract: Public schools in Kenya are often criticized as inefficient, characterized by poor academic performance. Some of the reasons for this low pass rate include: poor quality of primary education, often associated with weak school management, insufficient resources and lack of teacher commitment. The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of stakeholders' participation in primary school management on academic performance in Uringu Division, Meru County. The study also sought to assess the head teachers' management skills, teachers' participation, pupils' participation and parents' participation in primary school management on academic performance in Uringu Division. The study used a descriptive survey design. The target population was 2441 teachers, head teachers, class eight pupils and parents. This study used stratified random sampling to select 331 teachers, head teachers, class eight pupils and parents. This study used both primary and secondary data. Secondary data was obtained from KCPE results for the last five years. This included the mean grades over the five years. The study used a questionnaire as the primary tool for data collection. Data analysis was quantitative. Quantitative data was analysed by use of the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS version 20). Descriptive statistics was utilized to analyse quantitative data. Descriptive statistics included frequency distribution, percentages, measures of central tendencies (mean) and measures of dispersion (Std deviation). The data was then presented in tables. Additionally, correlation analysis was used to establish whether there is a relationship between the dependent and the independent variables. The study concludes that head teachers' managerial skills, teachers' participation, pupils' involvement and parents participation positively and significantly influence academic performance in public primary schools in Uringu division. The components of head teachers' management skills that influence academic performance include leadership styles, interpersonal skills, managerial skills and time management skills. Teachers' involvement in school governance and in developing discipline policies increases their morale and motivation, which in turns improves pupils' academic performance. The involvement of pupils in management and decision making improves academic performance as it makes them feel more confident in their learning. Parents' involvement in their child's learning process offers many opportunities for success- improvements on child's morale, attitude, and academic achievement across all subject areas, behaviour and social adjustment. The study recommends that the government of Kenya should provide opportunities for career development and training for primary school head teachers so as to improve the head teachers' managerial skills, interpersonal skills as well as time management skills.

Keywords: Management Skills, Participation, Academic Performance, School Management

Introduction

Education is a form of investment in human capital, which yields economic benefits by increasing the productivity of its people. Education a nation remains the most vital strategy for the development of the society throughout the world (Mokoena, 2012). Many studies of capital development concur that it is human resources of a nation and not its capital or natural resources that ultimately determine the pace of its economic and social development. The principle institutional mechanism for development of human capital is the formal education system of primary, secondary and tertiary training (Kariyana, Maphosa & Mapuranga, 2012; Lekhetho, 2013).

Since the World Conference on Education for All, the expansion and improvement of basic education has regained a prominent place on the agenda of the main international organizations and bilateral co-operation agencies, and in the action plans prepared by educational authorities in the majority of developing countries (Brownbridge, 2007). In addition, the Convention on the Rights of the Child ratified by over 160 States has helped to establish education not only as a necessity but also as a fundamental right. Despite the economic difficulties experienced in the 1980s, advances have been achieved in the last thirty years in terms of spreading primary education. Moreover, enrolment in schools has grown considerably since 1970s and the number of schools has doubled and that of teachers tripled. Both in Asia and in Latin America, the education systems of many countries now have sufficient capacity to attend to their whole school-age population, and would already be in a position to ensure universal access to primary education (Knell, 2006). Any organisation has various stakeholders, internal and external groups whose support is essential for the survival and growth of any corporation. A school frequently interacts with commonly acknowledged stakeholders who include employees, customers, shareholders, suppliers, government agencies, managers and community groups (Baraza & Nyongesa, 2007).

Cheng and Cheung (2003) have observed that efforts to enhance organizational performance have featured stakeholders' involvement in schools corporate governance. This encourages the involvement of stakeholders at all levels of an organization in the analysis of problems, development of strategies and implementation of solutions. In this case, employees are invited to share in the decision-making process of the firm by getting involved in activities such as setting goals, determining work schedules, and making suggestions. Involvement in governance has been acknowledged as an essential ingredient in quest for better school performance.

Traditionally, principals throughout the world have been the main decision-makers at school level. This situation has been particularly evident in a number of countries such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and parts of the United States of America. During the past 20 to 30 years there has been a major shift towards participative management (PM) in schools (Hourani, Stringe & Baker, 2012; Nicolaidou, Sophocleous & Phtiaka, 2006). These authors have called for greater participation in decision-making as a progressive way of making schools more democratic and more efficient. In South Africa, for example, the new democratic government published a White Paper on the organization, governance and funding of schools. The aim was to help foster democratic school governance (by involving all of its stakeholders, including parents and learners, who are democratically elected).

Although it is the Kenyan government's policy to ensure the delivery of quality education in schools, performance has remained poor despite the various interventions by policy makers and implementers. In the pursuit of improvements, schools like other organization involve stakeholders in the school governance. Most of these innovations towards better school outcomes assign utmost importance to the

quality of governance in schools. According to Gastic, Irby and Zdanis (2008) schools need support of the other stakeholders such as teachers, parents, community leaders and students to succeed. However in developing countries, like Kenya various stakeholders do not participate fully in education matters contributing to poor academic performance .This study therefore sought to investigate how stakeholders participation influence academic performance in public primary school in Uringu division, Meru County.

According to Mokoena (2012), participative management (PM) that includes parents, learners, teachers, community leaders, members of the school governing body and the head teacher positively influences the academic performance of pupil's. The involvement of various stakeholders in school management has been found to influence academic performance in other countries. For instance, burke and Hara (2008) found that parent involvement was a significant factor in both accelerated and sustained student academic performance. Parents' active involvement results in greater recognition of teachers' skills, better teacher evaluations from their principals and hence teacher's improved motivation.

Public schools in Kenya are often criticized as inefficient, characterized poor academic performance. Some of the reasons for this low pass rate include: poor quality of primary education, often associated with weak school management, insufficient resources, lack of teacher commitment, and inadequate support from the Ministry of Education. Baraza and Nyongesa (2007) rightly note that despite sustained and well-intentioned efforts through targeted resources and strategic support, performance in schools still remain stubbornly low.

In the Kenya primary schools setup, school governing bodies and other stakeholders are mandated to manage the funds and run the affairs of schools (Gakure, Mukuria & Kithae, 2013). The Education Act provides guidelines for the school governing body and the head teacher on their roles and responsibilities in managing the affairs of the school. However, some members of school governing bodies and head teachers either have little or no knowledge of the Education Act or simply interpret it incorrectly, which results in many schools experiencing resource mismanagement and poor pupils academic results. They also pointed out that although the Ministry of Education has been providing management training through the Kenya Educational Management Institute (KEMI) for school governing bodies and stakeholders especially the head teachers, many schools still encounter problems in this area and this translates into poor or low mean grades in pupils' academic results. Therefore, this study sought to establish the influence of stakeholders' participation in primary school management on academic performance in Uringu Division, Meru County.

The following were the hypothesized relationships between the main constructs, academic performance and the independent variables

$H_0$1 Head teachers' management skills in primary school management influences academic performance in Uringu division

$H_0$2 Teachers' participation in primary school management influences academic performance in Uringu division

$H_0$3 Pupil's participation in primary school management influences academic performance in Uringu division

$H_0$4 Parents' participation in primary school management influences academic performance in Uringu division

Literature Review

Head Teachers' Management Skills and Academic Performance of Pupils

According to Riley (2008), head teachers are considered as the main source of leadership by the staff, parents and governors. This therefore calls for head teachers to be knowledgeable in educational matters. Successful head teachers contribute to the improvement of pupils' academic achievement through their attributes and competencies. Managerial skills of head teachers therefore contribute to the general performance of schools. Kenya has established KESI, an institute that organizes in-service courses for administrators. KESI was established in 1981 to serve as an instrument for the development of administrative staff for the ministry of education. Its main concern was those teachers who had barely taught for two years after college and were being appointed head teachers without induction. Courses offered by KESI are tailored to address the practical day to day school administration matters, finances and the managerial aspects of school administration. Management skills include technical skills, human relations skills, conceptual skills, time management skills and infrastructure management skills (Nongubo, 2004).

The technical skill is concerned with expert knowledge in a given field, particularly involving methods and techniques and the ability to analyse issues. It is with the right way of doing things using the correct technique. Head teaches need to know current issues and trends in education. They should also be competent in their subject areas so as to set standards for the rest. Since they are tasked with the finances of institutions, they should be conversant with accounting. Misoloh (2011) indicates that interpersonal skills are of great assistance when it comes to dealing with the aspect of human resources. The head teacher needs to get along with the others. This skill is good for team building and motivation of the junior staff. For work to be coordinated and tasks shared in any institution, members should have a harmonious relationship.

As the policy makers and policy implementers, head teachers need to have a clear vision for their institutions. They need to have clear long term goals with an elaborate road map to achieve them. Decision-making, problem-solving and creative skills are key components of the conceptual skills. As managers head teachers are tasked with making decisions that determine the direction and progress of their institutions. This is not easy as decision making is a skill that needs to be developed and nurtured through experience and training (Nongubo, 2004). Time management skills enable the head teachers to set goals and to prioritize tasks and allocate time according to the nature of the task (Sapungan & Mondragon, 2014).

Teachers' Participation in Management and Academic Performance of Pupils

The hierarchical structure that places head teachers at the apex of a pyramid of staff is a common feature in secondary schools in Kenya. In this arrangement, school heads are poised to use their superior knowledge and experience to direct and control the working of the entire school. This negatively affects efficiency and productivity of the schools because teachers work at half steam because they are not effectively involved in decision making to make them feel as part of the schools (Armstrong, 2004). Owing to the dynamics of professionalism and diversity of ideas in secondary schools occasioned by staffing schools with professionally trained teachers and the need to decentralize decision making to the lower levels, the hierarchical structure in management of schools is challenged. On many occasions head-teachers have been advised to involve teachers in decision making as a way of motivating them and to create a feeling of belonging (Ndiku, Simiyu & Achoka,

2009). According to Armstrong (2004) teachers' involvement in decision making enhance pupils' academic performance. Lahler (2006) discovered that teachers have all the willingness and skills needed to the job but will always need to be involved in school activities and decision making processes.

Further, Knell (2006) found significant differences between teachers' involvement in school governance and pupils' academic performance. This correlation study indicated that those head teachers who held the most favourable attitudes towards stakeholders involvement perceived the stated organizational conditions as barriers to participation and those head teachers who held less favourable attitudes towards participation did not perceive these conditions as barriers to involvement. Cheruto and Kipkoech (2011) established that teachers in secondary schools are involved in managerial decisions but at lower levels. Head teachers should therefore evaluate and identify teachers' needs on managerial decisions in order to facilitate further training on the same. This in turn would encourage teachers' participation and enhance team spirit in decision making that would result in efficiency in management of secondary schools.

Involvement of Pupils in School Management and Academic Performance of Pupils

Participation in management is about pupils getting involved in all aspects of school leadership, management, systems and structures. It is not about just 'taking part' in school or lessons. It is about getting involved in real decision-making in school, which is systematic, consistent and sustained (Lahler, 2006). It implies that a range of avenues are available for all pupils and not just representatives on school councils. It is about participation of pupils in decision-making threaded continuously through all the key aspects of school life and teaching, learning and curriculum. According to Livingstone (2012), pupil participation, in practice, means opening up opportunities for decision-making with children and young people as partners engaging in dialogue, conflict resolution, negotiation and compromise – all important life skills.

When pupils become involved in the governance of a school, the school can benefit enormously and become better equipped to meet their needs. Schools involved in pupil participation initiatives indicated that involving pupils more in school life can have positive impacts for themselves, the school and staff (Lienhart & Willert, 2002). It can lead to improvements in achievement and learning, pupils feeling more confident in their learning, improvements in teaching practice, better discipline and behaviour and more positive community relationships between the school, children and adults. Involving pupils in governance can also bring a sense of legitimacy to the school (Mumbe, 2008).

A recent South African study on learner involvement in school management revealed that this aspect is still a challenge in many schools and which had an impact of pupils' academic performance. Nongubo (2004) found that learner involvement in school management is still problematic, though it is presently provided for by policies that govern schools, including the South African Schools Act. In Kenya, Kiprop and Tikoko (2011) indicate that although there are attempts to include views of students in school policy, such attempts are mainly tokenistic and do not extend to core management issues. Students are only allowed to participate in student welfare issues but were deemed to be immature and therefore unable to participate neither in administrative issues such as managing funds and budget nor in curriculum issues such as teaching methods or number of exams.

Parents' Participation in School Governance and Academic Performance of Pupils

Parents play an important role in their children's ability to achieve academically. Every parent should be involved in their children's education. In order for children to succeed in academics, there needs to be a good foundation in place in their homes as well as routines, boundaries, support, and rules that govern the home (Livingstone, 2012; Hatry et al., 2004). The role of parents in their children's education has long been recognized as a significant factor in educational success and school improvement. In recent years as explained by Banks (2002), certain educational organizations and international conferences have concentrated almost entirely on the issue of partnership between schools and parents; for example the Parents in Education Research Network, European Research Network about Parents in Education. Bisschoff and Phakoa (2009) pointed out that parents have rights in terms of their children's education. He introduced an insight of viewing 'parents as consumers'. This view demonstrates education as a commodity and parents are given the right to 'shop' for their children's education in the school of their choice. However, Blase and Blase (2004) differed by explaining that this view of parent power, together with the notion of schools' partnership with parents is rhetoric since in reality there is little opportunity for parents to exercise an individual or collective 'voice' which will have an effect on the children's school experience.

In Kenya, Kibaara and Ndirangu (2014) conducted a study to investigate the effects of parents' involvement in their children's academic achievement in twenty one public schools in Kieni West Sub-County in Nyeri County. The findings of the study indicated that most of the parents interviewed participated in school events and activities and monitored their children's homework. The parents believed that their involvement is beneficial to the teachers in aiding in their children's education progress. In addition, most parents felt that organized parental involvement programmes can improve their relationship with their children. Major recommendations included identifying the type of parental involvement in place, parent's awareness programmes through seminars and workshops and holding teacher parents conferences.

Theoretical framework

The study was based on Bertalanffy (1968) social systems theory. From a biological point of view, an organism is an integrated system of interdependent structures and functions. An organism consists of cells and a cell consists of molecules which must work in harmony. A system is an entity made up of two or more interdependent parts that interact to form a functioning organism. The phrase 'interdependent parts' is very important and means that a manager should not look for a single cause of a problem. A system can either be open or closed. An open system interacts with its environment (Drack, Apfalter & Pouvreau, 2007). All biological, human and social systems are open systems and many physical and mechanical systems are closed systems. Traditional organization theorists regarded organization as closed systems while modern view is to treat it as an open system having constant interaction with its environment. In other words, an organization is an open system that interacts regularly with external forces such as government agencies, customers and suppliers (King, 2009).

The open system concept is the first part of the two parts of systems theory. The second part is the impact of changes within an organization. The changes in one part of the organization affect all other parts of the organization. The boundaries of open systems are permeable or penetrable, flexible and changeable depending upon its activities. The function of the management is to act as a boundary-linking pin among the various subsystems within the organizational system.

In a school, the organism represents the academic performance while a cell represents a parent. A group of cells represents a group of parents. Each cell has molecules and these molecules will represent the influence from each parent, pupil, teacher and head teacher. The influence could be social, economic or cultural. Each group of parents, teachers and pupils will form a structure of the school and this will have a specific role to play in the school. The failure of the structures to perform well leads to low academic achievement of the school.

The systems theory contends that all systems are purposeful and goal directed. Schools for example exist to achieve objectives through the collective effort of individuals and groups in the systems. The success of a school in achieving its goals depends in large part upon the facilitating effects of several subsystems within the system. Subsystems which include teachers, pupils, parents and head teachers are designed to achieve order and organization in the face of environmental demands. Schools are open systems; they operate within a larger context with which they exchange matter, energy, and information through formal and informal feedback processes e.g. the local community. Hence the achievement of the school goals will be a result of successful interaction of the various parties involved.

Explanation of Relationships of variables in the Conceptual framework

Participative management encourages the involvement of teachers, parents, head teachers and pupils at all levels. They are invited to share in the decision-making process of their schools by participating in activities such as setting goals, determining work schedules, and making suggestions. The study is conceptualized based on the variables used in this study which are represented diagrammatically to show relationship between them by illustrating the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variables in order to give coherence. Independent Variables include; teachers' participation in management, Parents' involvement in management, pupils participation in management and head teachers management skills. On the other hand, the dependent variable will be the academic performance of pupil's. The moderating variable will be government education policy.

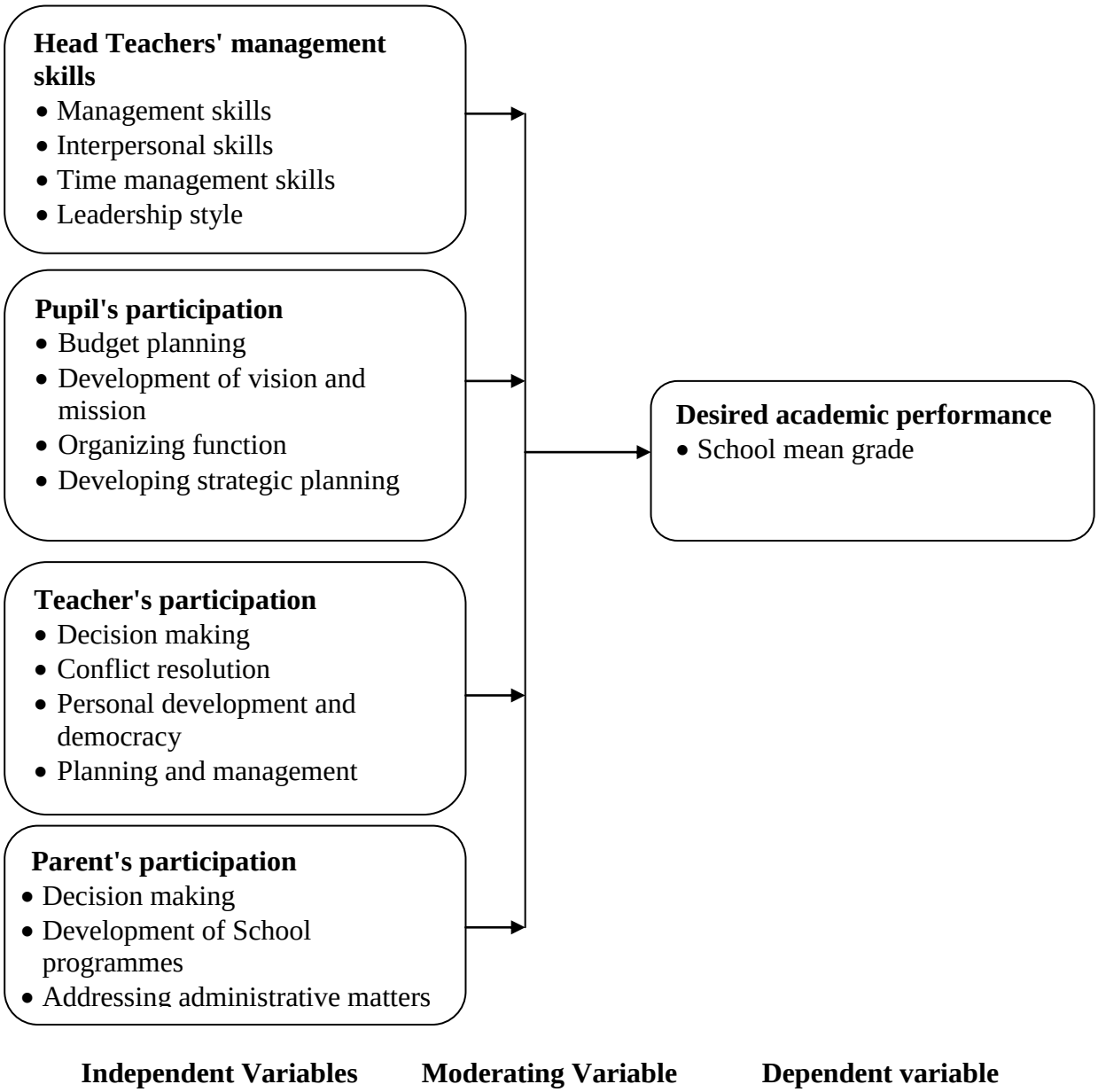

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Gaps in Literature Reviewed

Various studies have been conducted on stakeholders' participation in primary school management globally and locally. For instance, globally, Lekhetho (2013) did a study on stakeholder perspectives on strategies that can improve student performance in the school-leaving examinations in Lesotho and Mokoena (2012) conducted a study on the effective participative management of stakeholders in schools. However, since these studies were not conducted in Kenya, their findings cannot be generalized to Kenya and more specifically to Uringu division.

In Kenya, Misoloh (2011) did a study on the influence of participatory management on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Rarieda District. However, the study was conducted in a secondary school set up which is very different from a primary school set up. This study therefore seeks to fill this research gap by investigating the influence of stakeholders' participation in primary school management on academic performance in Uringu Division, Meru County.

Research Methodology

The study used a descriptive survey design. The researcher used this research design since the research intends to generate statistical information to be used to describe the then current relationship between the influences of stakeholder's involvement in primary schools management and pupils' academic achievement in public primary schools in Uringu Division, Meru County. The target population of this study was teachers, parents and head teachers. There are 32 public primary schools in Uringu Division, Meru County with 521 teachers, 32 head teachers and 1632 class eight pupils. Since it is challenging to get parents in Uringu Division, this study purposively used the class representatives of each school to represent the parents' body. Therefore the number of parents' will be 256. The unit of analysis in this study was schools and the unit of observation was parents, teachers, pupils and parents. The target population was therefore 2441 respondents.

This study used Krejcie & Morgan (1970) sample size determination table to obtain the sample size. According to the table for a population of 2441, a sample size of 331 should be selected. This sample size was distributed among the four categories of stakeholders. This study used stratified random sampling to select 71 teachers, 4 head teachers, 222 class eight pupils and 35 parents.

Table 1: Sample Size

Category	Target Population	Sample Size
Teachers	521	71
Head teachers	32	4
Class Eight Pupils	1632	222
Parents	256	35
Total	**2441**	**331**

This study used both primary and secondary data. Secondary data was obtained from KCPE results for the last five years. This included the mean grades over the five years. The study used a questionnaire as the primary tool for data collection. The questionnaire was structured with closed-ended and likert questions. Before data collection a pilot testing was conducted.

The questionnaire was randomly administered to 10% of the respondents from the sample population. This helped in refining the questions through rephrasing and removal of ambiguous questions. It also helped to remove typographical errors. The content validity was improved by seeking the opinions of experts in the field of study, particularly the supervisors. Also, the face validity of the research instrument was improved by carrying out a pilot test and changing any unclear and ambiguous question. The study used Cronbach's Alpha to measure the reliability of the research instruments. Coefficient of 0.6-0.7 is a commonly accepted rule of thumb that indicates acceptable reliability and

0.8 or higher indicated good reliability. According to the findings, head teachers managerial skills had a Cronbach reliability alpha of 0.724, teachers participation in school management had a Cronbach reliability alpha of 0.732, pupils' involvement in school management had a Cronbach reliability alpha of 0.698 and parents' participation in school management had a Cronbach reliability alpha of 0.711. This clearly shows that the research instrument was reliable and hence no amendments were needed.

Table 2: Cronbach Reliability Alpha

Construct	Cronbach reliability alpha
Head teachers managerial skills	0.724
Teachers participation in school management	0.732
Pupils' involvement in school management	0.698
Parents' participation in school management	0.711

Data analysis was quantitative. Quantitative data was analysed by use of the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS version 20). After confirming that all the data entered is accurate, descriptive statistics was utilized to analyse quantitative data. Descriptive statistics are frequency distribution, percentages, measures of central tendencies (mean) and measures of dispersion (Std deviation). The data was then presented in tables and graphs. Additionally, correlation analysis was used to establish whether there is a relationship between the dependent and the independent variables.

Results and Discussions

The sample size of this study was 331 respondents, who included 71 teachers, 4 head teachers, 222 class eight pupils and 35 parents.

Table 4. 1: Response Rate

Respondents	Sample Size	Responses	Response rate
Teachers	71	71	100.00
Head teachers	4	4	100.00
Class Eight Pupils	222	190	85.58
Parents	35	27	77.14
Total	331	292	88.22

From the findings as shown in table 4.1 above, the teachers had a response rate of 100%, head teachers had a response rate of 100%, class eight pupils had a response rate of 85.58% and parents had a response rate of 77.14%. On average, the study had a response rate of 88.22%. According to Kothari (2004) any response of 50% and above is adequate for analysis thus 77.32% is even better.

Demographic Information

The demographic information of the study comprised of level of education and the experience of teachers and headmasters.

Table 3: Teachers and Head teachers Work Experience

			Category		Total
			Head teachers	**Teachers**	
Work experience	Below 5 years	Count	1	19	20
		%	25.0%	26.8%	26.7%
	5-10 years	Count	2	22	24
		%	50.0%	31.0%	32.0%
	11-15 years	Count	1	10	11
		%	25.0%	14.1%	14.7%
	16-20 years	Count	0	9	9
		%	0.0%	12.7%	12.0%
	Over 21 years	Count	0	11	11
		%	0.0%	15.5%	14.7%
Total		**Count**	**4**	**71**	**75**
		%	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

According to the findings, 50% of the head teachers indicated that they had an experience of between 5 and 10 years, 25% indicated that they had an experience of between 11 and 15 years and the same percent indicated that had an experience of below 5 years. In addition, 31% indicated that they had an experience of between 5 and 10 years, 26.8% indicated that they had an experience of below 5 years, 15.55 indicated that they had an experience of over 21 years, 14.1% indicated that they had an experience of between 11 and 15 years and 12.7% indicated that they had an experience of between 16 and 20 years.

Table 4: Head teachers, Teachers and Parents Level of Education

			Category			Total
			Head teachers	**Teachers**	**Parents**	
Level of education	Master's Degree	Count	0	1	1	2
		%	0.0%	1.4%	3.7%	2.0%
	Bachelor's degree	Count	2	9	1	12
		%	50.0%	12.7%	3.7%	11.8%
	Diploma	Count	1	27	8	36
		%	25.0%	38.0%	29.6%	35.3%
	Certificate	Count	0	13	10	23
		%	25.0%	18.3%	37.0%	22.5%
	Secondary certificate	Count	0	13	6	20
		%	0%	18.3%	22.2%	19.6%
	Primary certificate	Count	0	8	1	9
		%	0.0%	11.3%	3.7%	8.8%
Total		**Count**	**4**	**71**	**27**	**102**
		%	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

From the findings, 50% of the head teachers reported that they had bachelor's degree as their highest level of education, 25% indicated that they had diplomas as their highest level of education and the same percent indicated that they had certificates as their highest level of education. In addition, 38% of the teachers indicated that they had diplomas, 18.3% indicated that they had certificates, the same

percent indicated that they had secondary certificates, 11.3% indicated that they had primary certificates, 12.7% indicted that they had bachelor's degree and 1.4% indicated that they had master's degree. Further, 37% of the parents indicated that they had certificates, 29.6% indicated that they had diplomas, 22.2% indicated that they had secondary certificates, 3.7% indicated that they had primary certificates and the same percent indicated that they had master's degree and bachelor's degree.

Academic Performance

The mean grades for each school was obtained from KCPE results for the last three years and not five years. This is because some schools were new and had done KCPE for only three years.

Table 5: Academic Performance

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
2012	173.44	292.38	240.9990	33.12007
2013	194.99	326.51	237.8047	37.49262
2014	175.52	301.24	228.4060	33.40480

From the findings, the average grade for all the schools involved in this study was 240.9990 in the year 2012, 237.8047 in the year 2013 and 228.4060 in the year 2014. In addition, the minimum mean grade was 173.44 in the year 2012, 194.99 in the year 2013 and 175.52 in the year 2014. Further, the maximum mean grade in the year 2012 was 292.38, in the year 2013 it was 237.8047 and in the year 2014 it was 301.24. These findings show that the academic performance of public primary schools in Uringu division was deteriorating over the years.

Head Teachers Management Skills and Academic Performance

In an effort to assess the head teachers management skills in primary school management influence academic performance in Uringu division, the respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with statements on head teachers management skills and academic performance. The study used a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 represents strongly disagree, 2 represents disagree, 3 represents neutral, 4 represents agree and 5 represents strongly agree.

Table 4.2: Head Teachers Management Skills

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Head teachers are considered as the main source of leadership by the staff and parents	4.352	.908
Successful head teachers contribute to the improvement of pupils' academic achievement through their attributes and competencies	4.647	.538
Managerial skills of head teachers therefore contribute to the general performance of schools	4.529	.670
Head teachers interpersonal skills are of great assistance in team building and motivation of the other staff	4.568	.621
Interpersonal skills enable head teachers to develop a culture that is conducive for teaching and learning	4.421	.776
Head teachers leadership styles affect academic performance	4.772	.697
Head teacher who is democratic encourage teachers to share in making decisions about school-related problems	4.627	.743
Time management skills enable the head teachers to set goals and to prioritize tasks and allocate time according to the nature of the task	4.431	.826

From the findings, the respondents agreed with a mean of 4.872 and a standard deviation of 0.970 that head teachers leadership styles affect academic performance of public primary schools in Uringu division. The respondents also agreed with a mean of 4.647 and a standard deviation of 0.538 that successful head teachers contribute to the improvement of pupils' academic achievement through their attributes and competencies in public primary schools in Uringu Division. In addition, the respondents agreed with a mean of 4.627 and a standard deviation of 0.743 that a head teacher who is democratic encourage teachers to share in making decisions about school-related problems. Further, the respondents agreed with a mean of 4.568 and a standard deviation of 0.62156 that head teachers interpersonal skills are of great assistance in team building and motivation of the other staff.

The respondents also indicate that managerial skills of head teachers therefore contribute to the general performance of schools as shown by a mean of 4.529 and a standard deviation of 0.670. In addition, the respondents agreed with a mean of 4.431 and a standard deviation of 0.826 that time management skills enable the head teachers to set goals and to prioritize tasks and allocate time according to the nature of the task. The respondents further indicated with a mean of 4.4216 and a standard deviation of 0.77634 that interpersonal skills enable head teachers to develop a culture that is conducive for teaching and learning. Additionally, the respondents agreed with a mean of 4.352 and a standard deviation of 0.908 that head teachers are considered as the main source of leadership by the staff and parents.

The findings concur with Riley (2008) argument that head teachers are considered as the main source of leadership by the staff, parents and governors and hence they play a key role in the academic performance of pupils. In addition, the findings agree with Cheruto and Kipkoech (2011) argument that the leadership styles used by head teachers influence the pupils' academic performance. These findings also agree with Nongubo (2004) argument that successful head teachers contribute to the improvement of pupils' academic achievement through their attributes and competencies. In addition, the study found that a head teacher who is democratic encourage teachers to share in making decisions about school-related problems.

Correlation analysis was used to determine the relationship between head teachers managerial skills and academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Uringu division.

Table 6: Head Teachers Management Skills and Academic Performance Correlation

		Academic Performance	Head teachers managerial skills
Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	1	.370
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
Head teachers managerial skills	Pearson Correlation	.370	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

From the findings as shown in table 7, there is a positive significant relationship between head teachers managerial skills and academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Uringu division as shown by a correlation coefficient of 0.429. The relationship was significant as the p-value (0.000) was less than the significance level (0.05).

Teachers Participation in Primary School Management and Academic Performance

In an effort to explore the influence of teachers' participation in primary school management on academic performance in Uringu division, the respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with statements on teachers' participation in primary school management and academic performance.

Table 7: Teachers Participation in Primary School Management

	Mean	Std. Deviation
In this school teachers are involved in the budget planning for this school	2.803	0.876
Teachers are involved in developing visions and missions for the school	2.262	0.710
Teachers are involved in the organizing function: defining and structuring roles	2.323	1.020
Teachers' involvement in designing school programmes in this school is highly supported	3.754	1.038
Teachers are involved in directing function; (clarify uncertainties and risk; providing knowledge, experience and judgment)	3.941	1.079
Teachers are involved in developing discipline policies of the school	4.352	.886
Teachers are involved in developing the strategic plan for the school	2.058	1.172
Teachers are involved in the procurement of goods and services in the school	3.578	.910

According to the findings, the respondents agreed with a mean of 4.352 and a standard deviation of 0.886 that teachers are involved in developing discipline policies of public primary schools in Uringu Division. The respondents also indicated with a mean of 3.941 and a standard deviation of 1.079 that teachers are involved in directing function; (clarify uncertainties and risk; providing knowledge, experience and judgment). Further, the respondents agreed with a mean of 3.754 and a standard deviation of 1.038 that teachers' involvement in designing school programmes in this school is highly supported. Additionally, the respondents agreed with a mean of 3.578 and a standard deviation of 0.910 that teachers are involved in the procurement of goods and services in the school.

The respondents were neutral on the statement whether school teachers were involved in the budget planning for this school as shown by a mean of 2.803 and a standard deviation of 0.876. In addition, the respondents disagreed with the statement that teachers were involved in the organizing function: defining and structuring roles as shown by a mean of 2.323 and a standard deviation of 1.020. The respondents also disagreed with the statement that teachers are involved in developing visions and missions for the school as shown by a mean of 2.262 and a standard deviation of 0.710. Lastly, the respondents disagreed with the statement that teachers are involved in developing the strategic plan for the school as shown by a mean of 2.058 and a standard deviation of 1.172.

As earlier indicated by Knell (2006) teachers' involvement in school governance and in developing discipline policies increase their morale and motivation, which in turns improves pupils' academic performance. Lahler (2006) had earlier discovered that teachers have all the willingness and skills needed to the job but will always need to be involved in school activities and decision making processes. These findings agree with Cheruto and Kipkoech (2011) who established that teachers in public schools are involved in managerial decisions and organizing function but at lower levels.

Correlation analysis was used to determine the relationship between teachers' participation in school management and academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Uringu division.

Table 8: Teachers Participation and Academic Performance Correlations

		Academic Performance	**Teachers participation in management**
Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	1	.429
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
Teachers participation in management	Pearson Correlation	.429	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

The findings, as indicated in table 8, show that there is a positive significant association between teachers' participation and academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Uringu division. This is shown by a correlation coefficient of 0.370 and a p-value of 0.000.

Pupils' Participation in Primary School Management and Academic Performance

The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statements on the influence of pupils' participation in primary school management on academic performance in Uringu division.

Table 9: Pupils' Participation in Primary School Management

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Involving pupils in decision making improves academic performance	4.568	.798
Involving pupils in conflict resolution increases their motivation to learn	4.116	1.118
Pupils' personal development and democracy benefit their learning about sharing power, as well as taking responsibility.	4.369	1.530
Pupils involvement in management lead to improvements in academic achievement and learning	4.222	1.196
Pupils involvement in management makes them feel more confident in their learning	4.455	1.084
Involvement of pupils in management brings improvements in teaching practice	4.256	.937
Involvement of pupils in management brings better discipline and behaviour and more positive community relationships between the school, children and adults	4.229	.907

From the findings, the respondents agreed with a mean of 4.568 and a standard deviation of 0.798 involving pupils in decision making improves academic performance. The respondents also agreed with a mean of 4.455 and a standard deviation of 1.084 that pupils involvement in management makes them feel more confident in their learning. Further, the respondents agreed with a mean of 4.369 and a standard deviation of 1.530 that pupils' personal development and democracy benefit their learning about sharing power, as well as taking responsibility. In addition, the respondents agreed with a mean of 4.256 and a standard deviation of .937 that involvement of pupils in management brings improvements in teaching practice. Additionally, the respondents agreed with a mean of 4.229 and a standard deviation of 0.907 that involvement of pupils in management brings better discipline and behaviour and more positive community relationships between the school, children and adults. The respondents further agreed with a mean of 4.222 and a standard deviation of 1.196 that pupils involvement in management lead to improvements in academic achievement and learning. Lastly, the respondents agreed with a mean of 4.116 and a standard deviation of 1.118 that involving pupils in conflict resolution increases their motivation to learn.

The findings agree with Livingstone (2012) argument that involvement of pupils in decision making plays a significant role in improving discipline and academic performance. However, the findings are contrary to Nongubo (2004) argument that learner involvement in school management is still problematic and can negatively affect their discipline, which would in turn negatively affect their academic performance. In addition, according to Lockheed, Marlaine and Verspoor, (2005), getting pupils involved in governance can also help to bring fresh, new perspectives and ways of looking at and thinking about a whole range of issues.

Correlation analysis was used to determine the relationship between pupil's participation in school management and academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Uringu division.

Table 10: Pupils' Participation and Academic Performance Correlations

		Academic Performance	Pupil's participation in management
Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	1	.125
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.032
Pupil's participation in management	Pearson Correlation	.125	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.032	

As indicated in table 10, there is a positive significant association between pupils' participation and academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Uringu division. This is shown by a correlation coefficient of 0.125 and a p-value of 0.032.

Parents' Participation in Primary School Management and Academic Performance

In an effort to investigate the influence of parents' participation in primary school management on academic performance in Uringu division, the respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with statements on parents' participation in primary school management and academic performance.

Table 11: Parents' Participation in Primary School Management

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Parents are encouraged to participate in decision making	4.469	.996
Parents are consulted before making decisions	4.383	.814
Parents are involved in making school programmes	3.979	1.195
Parents are engaged in addressing administrative matters	3.972	1.139
Solving administrative problems with parents improves the academic performance of pupils	4.482	.898

According to the findings, the respondents agreed with a mean of 4.482 and a standard deviation of 0.898 that solving administrative problems with parents improves the academic performance of pupils. The respondents also agreed with a mean of 4.469 and a standard deviation of 0.996 that parents are encouraged to participate in decision making. The respondents further agreed with a man of 4.383 and a standard deviation of 0.814 that parents are consulted before making decisions. In addition, the respondents agreed with a mean of 3.979 and a standard deviation of 1.195 that parents are involved in making school programmes. Lastly, the respondents agreed with mean of 3.972 and a standard deviation of 1.139 that parents are engaged in addressing administrative matters.

According to Hatry et al. (2004), parents play an important role in their children’s ability to achieve academically and hence they should be involved in their children’s education. According to Sapungan and Mondragon (2014), parents’ involvement in their child’s learning process offers many opportunities for success- improvements on child’s morale, attitude, and academic achievement across all subject areas, behaviour and social adjustment. The findings also concur with Kibaara and Ndirangu

(2014) findings that most parents felt that organized parental involvement programmes can improve their relationship with their children.

Correlation analysis was used to determine the relationship between parents' participation in school management and academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Uringu division.

Table 12: Parents' Participation and Academic Performance Correlation

		Academic Performance	**Parents participation in management**
Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	1	.225
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.021
Parents participation in management	Pearson Correlation	.225	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.021	

From the findings, there is a positive significant relationship between parents' participation and academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Uringu division. This is shown by a correlation coefficient of 0.225 and a p-value of 0.021.

Conclusions

The study concludes that head teachers' managerial skills positively and significantly influence academic performance in public primary schools in Uringu division. Head teachers are considered as the main source of leadership by the staff and parents and hence they play a key role in the academic performance of pupils. The components of head teachers management skills that influence academic performance include leadership styles, interpersonal skills, managerial skills and time management skills.

The study also concludes that teachers participation in school management positively and significantly influences the academic performance of pupils' in public primary schools in Uringu division. Teachers involvement in school governance and in developing discipline policies increase their morale and motivation, which in turns improves pupils academic performance. However, teachers were not involved in budget planning for schools, in developing visions and missions and in the organizing function: defining and structuring roles.

The study further concludes that pupils' involvement in school management positively and significantly influences academic performance of pupils in public schools in Uringu division. The involvement of pupils in management and decision making improves academic performance as it makes them feel more confident in their learning. Further, the study established that pupils' personal development and democracy benefit their learning about sharing power, as well as taking responsibility.

Lastly, the study concludes that parents participation in school management positively and significantly influences academic performance of pupils in public schools in Uringu division. Parents' involvement in their child's learning process offers many opportunities for success- improvements on child's morale, attitude, and academic achievement across all subject areas, behaviour and social adjustment.

Recommendations

1. The study also revealed that successful and skilled head teachers contribute to the improvement of pupils' academic achievement through their attributes and competencies in public primary schools. However, some of the head teachers had certificates as their highest level of education. This study therefore recommends that head teachers should purpose to increase their level of education to at least a bachelors degree. To the government of Kenya and ministry of education, the study recommends that they should provide opportunities for career development and training for primary school head teachers so as to improve their managerial skills, interpersonal skills as well as time management skills.

2. The study also found that teachers were involved in the procurement of goods and services in public primary school. This study recommends that teachers should not be involved in the procurement of goods and services as this will lead to conflict of interest.

3. The study also established that school teachers were not involved in the budget planning and organizing function: defining and structuring roles in their schools. This study recommends that head teachers as well as the management of public primary schools should ensure that teachers are involved in key planning and management issues like budget planning, development and implementation of a strategic plan and organizing function.

4. The study found that involving pupils in management and decision making improves academic performance as it makes them feel more confident in their learning. However, the involvement of pupils in school management in public primary schools is minimal. This study recommends that head teachers should also involve pupils in some aspects of school management like conflict resolution and development and implementation of a strategic plan.

5. The study established that solving administrative problems with parents improves the academic performance of pupils. This study therefore recommends that parents are encouraged to participate in decision making and should be consulted before making decisions. In addition, respect for teachers should be cultivated by the parents to enhance learning in school among pupils. During parents meeting parents should be educated on the need for pupils to respect their teachers.

6. Parents should be educated on the need to create a conducive home environment for their children. Any academic performance is related to the Childs home environment in addition to that of the school.

Areas for Further Research

This study was limited to Uringu Division in Meru County and hence its findings cannot be generalized to the whole of Meru County. The study therefore suggests a similar study to be conducted to cover Meru County. The study also suggests further studies on the influence of other stakeholders like the government, School committee as well as alumni on academic performance of public primary schools.

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