

EFFECT OF DEVOLUTION ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION: A CASE OF BUNGOMA COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Pre-primary education plays a pivotal role in setting the foundation for better outcomes in post-nursery education. Globally, attention has shifted to how pre-primary education is being implemented both at the national and sub-national levels, with greater financial investments being channelled towards its improvement. In Africa, the quest for universal basic education has forced many countries to rethink how they are implementing pre-primary education, considering that basic education covers education from nursery to secondary school level. In Kenya, prior to 2010, the implementation of pre-primary education was left largely in the hands of private actors. However, the promulgation of the constitution that same year reset the button on this. In the Fourth Schedule of Kenya's Constitution, pre-primary education is listed as a function of county governments. Not only does this point to a more domesticated degree of supervision, it also flags pre-primary education as a statutory beneficiary of the funds disbursed annually to all devolved units. In spite of this, there has been a gap in empirical studies assessing how devolution, as a structural governance phenomenon, is affecting the implementation of pre-primary education. The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of devolution on the implementation of pre-primary education, with specific reference to Bungoma County, Kenya. The study had 3 objectives thus: to determine the effect of financial resource on the implementation of pre-primary education; to examine the effect of legislation on the implementation of pre-primary education; and to assess the effect of human capital development on the implementation of pre-primary education.

The study utilised the Diffusion of Innovation theory. The study employed a descriptive research design. Both probability and non-probability sampling techniques were used to identify the respondents who included County Executive Committee Member (Education), County Officials in charge of education from the 9 Sub-Counties, Heads of pre-primary education institutions and the Clerk of the County Assembly. Only Questionnaires were used to collect data. Both qualitative and quantitative data was collected using both primary and secondary data collection methods. Quantitative data was analysed using both SPSS and MS Excel while qualitative data was analysed thematically. The findings were presented in line with the study objectives. The study established that Financial resource ($\beta=0.313$, $p<0.05$) has a positive and significant effect on implementation of pre-primary education. Legislation ($\beta=0.125$, $p<0.05$) has a positive and significant effect on implementation of pre-primary education. This is the case too with Human Capital Development ($\beta=0.103$, $p<0.05$) which also has positive and significant effect on implementation of pre-primary education. The study concludes that devolution has positive and significant effect on implementation of pre-primary education. The study recommends that the leadership of county governments in Kenya should improve on the allocation and management of financial resources for better implementation of pre-primary education. Additionally, all county assemblies should formulate sound laws and policies to strengthen the framework for implementation of pre-primary education. County governments in Kenya should also improve on their human capital development programs as far as the

implementation of pre-primary education is concerned.

Key Words: *devolution, implementation, pre-primary education, Bungoma County, Kenya*

INTRODUCTION

At the international level, the implementation of pre-primary education (or Early Childhood Education), has received solid attention, as articulated in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Among the ten goals focussed on education, one states that ‘by 2030 ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education’. The SDGs, as a global covenant, emphasize the need for concerted and domesticated efforts to achieve the stated aims. Articles 4 and 28 of the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of Children not only emphasize the right of children to quality education but also highlight the fact that it is the responsibility of governments to make the realisation of this right possible. Pre-primary education plays a critical role in setting the foundation for better outcomes in post-nursery education. It acts as an anchor upon which education in later life is built. Education being a pipeline process depends heavily on the quality of inputs at the formative stage which have an impact on the outcomes downstream (Alande, 2013).

In Europe, the implementation of pre-primary education is done through a trans-national strategy that includes all the member states of the European Union. Currently, there exists a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training, dubbed ‘ET 2020’ which has an outline of overarching policies and targets that all the member states are expected to work towards. Every country has a leeway to contextualize the policies in a manner that corresponds to their socio-political and cultural reality. A monitoring and evaluation process produces information at the relevant local, regional and/or national level to support continuing improvements in the quality of policy and practice (Willekens, Scheiwe & Nawrotzki, 2015).

Kaga, Bennett and Moss (2010) posit that Brazil’s implementation of ECE shadows its governance structure, which is federal in nature, with 3 levels of government i.e. Federal (Union), State and Municipal. The federal level formulates the general rules and principles while both the state and municipal authorities are the ones responsible for implementation. Notwithstanding, the municipal authorities also have the leeway of moderating and customizing some of the rules and principles into policies that are more responsive to their unique situations.

Singapore’s pre-primary education has gone through three main cycles: survival-driven education in the 1960s to efficiency-driven education in the 1970s to now an ability-driven one (Khoo, 2004). The main emphasis is on the quality imperative and implementation of virtually every aspect takes this into account. Pre-school education isn’t compulsory and it is offered largely by private-actors with limited input from the government. Notwithstanding, the ministry of Education maintains a robust system of evaluation of all pre-school education to ensure that it meets the minimum prescribed standards as per the sector’s policy guidelines (Khoo, 2010).

The Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA) flags pre-primary education as a service that is generally and historically neglected. As a remedy, an operational framework is currently guiding the implementation of pre-primary education, which contains outcomes in six broad areas, namely: policy advocacy and communication, quality systems and programs, equitable access to opportunities, improved governance and accountability, research generation and dissemination and enhanced partnerships with both state and non-state actors. Further, Article 11 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children (ACRWC) calls on all state parties to provide free and compulsory basic education, which also covers pre-primary education.

In South Africa, Hall (2013) notes that the country has an elaborate policy on Early Childhood Education and Development (ECED) that caters for the multi-sectoral approach to delivering this service. The National Integrated Early Learning and Development Standards (NELDS) and South African National Curriculum Framework for Children from Birth to Four (NCF) are the anchors for pre-primary education in the country. Since the governance architecture is tripartite, the national government plays the role of formulating the overarching policies and providing the core funding while the provincial and municipal authorities do more of the direct implementation (Giese, Budlender, Berry, Motlatla and Zide 2011). Despite this, the provincial authorities also have leverage to come up with guidelines suited to their contexts, which must be articulated in their Integrated Development Plans (IDPs).

In Tanzania, pre-primary education still has hallmarks of Julius Nyerere's proposals based on the philosophy of Education for Self-Reliance. The current policy framework, which was enacted in 1995, sets out a shared approach in implementation of pre-primary education. On the one hand, primary schools are mandated to set aside at least one classroom for pre-primary education with the support of the community. The other side obligates the government to provide teachers and other learning resources (Mtahabwa and Rao 2009). By and large, there is preference for private early childhood education centers compared to public ones due to the higher quality of education in the former (Mwinuka, 2001). According to Scott-Villiers (2017), most African countries with centralized systems of governance exhibit several symptoms that are associated with poor or failed governance. He further argues that one of the most serious symptoms include the inability to discern between public and private resources since most of the people in positions of leadership exploit public resources for private gain. Kanyinga (2016) asserts that lack of devolution in most African countries with centralized governments leads to limited participation by the citizenry. Most African countries, Kenya included, were affected negatively by strong and centralized governments perpetuated by the colonialists.

In Kenya, the responsibility for implementation of pre-primary education is split between the national and county governments, according to the Fourth Schedule of the country's constitution, enacted in 2010. The former (national government) has locus on development of policy while the latter (county governments) is charged with development of infrastructure, employment of care-givers and supporting institutions through provision of teaching and

learning materials. This division of duties has had its own controversies, with each level of government straddling the boundary.

Previously, pre-primary education in Kenya was largely run by private individuals and institutions including churches, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and local communities (Mumanyi, 2014). However, after the promulgation of the new Constitution in 2010, this function became a statutory mandate of county governments, signalling a new direction in terms of greater investment of resources, development of a proper legal, policy and regulatory framework to govern operations of pre-primary education, and an increased scrutiny of operations of pre-primary institutions, to ensure compliance with a minimum threshold (Cowell, Ellis, Sherry-Brennan, Strachan & Toke, 2017).

The growth of the education sector in the country has over time called for reforms in the way the sector is managed to enhance efficiency in service delivery, based on the complexity and scope of service demands (Khaunya, Wawire & Chepng'eno, 2015). The focus has been to deal with sector issues related to access, equity, quality, relevance and efficiency in the management of educational resources. In 2003, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST) embarked on reforms geared towards attaining standards in consonance with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Education for All (EFA). In 2005, a policy framework for the sector, the Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005 was developed to guide these reforms (Barrett, 2015). Other legal reforms include those espoused in the Basic Education Act (2013), among others.

In 2018, MOEST rolled out the National Pre-Primary Education Policy (NPPEP), which replaced the National Early Childhood Development Policy (2008) that was not aligned to the 2010 Constitution. The NPPEP provides a frame of reference to county governments in their implementation of pre-primary education, as a balance between their responsibilities and those of the national government, as articulated in the Fourth Schedule of the 2010 Constitution. Khan (2013) investigated the impact of devolution in education on students' achievement at secondary school level in Pakistan. The study took into account pre-devolution (1998-2003) and post devolution (2004-2009) performance results of all five districts that were sampled for the study. The results of the study showed that devolution in education has no significant impact on students' achievement. There was no improvement in students' achievement. Rather, the students' average pass percentage decreased slightly after devolution. Even in some small districts, the results were lower than pre-devolution period.

Ngamesha (2013) investigated the effects of education decentralization on students' performance in Tanzania. The study measured aspects like full involvement of all duty bearers in taking decisions and timely empowerment of all concerned including school administrators, and deployment of qualified teachers and students' leaders at lower tiers in the implementation of the policy. A key finding was that devolution of authority to local communities is not successful unless all stakeholders internalize the objectives, benefits, and responsibilities involved. Additionally, it was established that there are inadequate measures undertaken in order to increase financial and human resources for the improvement of students' performance in the Community Secondary Schools located in the Wards. The study further indicated that there is a need for improved commitment to allocation of additional

resources towards the schools, rigorous monitoring by all levels of decision making and implementation, and improved quality of teachers in order to increase access and quality of academic performance.

Bungoma County, which will be the area of study, is located on the southern slopes of Mt. Elgon, which also forms the apex of the County. It borders the Republic of Uganda to the Northwest, Trans-Nzoia County to the Northeast, Kakamega County to the East and South East, and Busia County to the West and South West. It covers an area of 3032.4 km². It is divided into nine (9) Sub-Counties and forty-five (45) County Assembly Wards. It is further divided into twenty-one (21) Divisions, eighty-one (81) Locations and one seventy nine (179) Sub-locations. Politically, the county has nine (9) constituencies namely; Bumula, Kabuchai, Kanduyi, Kimilili, Mt Elgon, Sirisia, Tongaren, Webuye East, and Webuye West. The County is one of the forty seven (47) county governments that were established through the promulgation of the current constitution in the year 2010 (Okongo, 2012). The population of Bungoma is estimated at 1,630,934, as projected in 2009 by Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), of which females constitute 52% while males are 48%. The age-percentage distribution stands at; 0-14 years 45.9%, 15-64 years 51.4% and over 65 years 2.3%. The region has a population density of 453.5 people per Square Kilometer with a national percentage of 3.6%. Poverty level index stands at 53% while age dependency ratio is at 93.8%.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Devolution has enabled the county governments to perform the functions assigned to them and impart in young people meaningful knowledge, skills and competencies that transform them into productive actors in the local, national and transnational economies (Gitonga & Keiyoro, 2017). In the Fourth Schedule of Kenya's Constitution, pre-primary education is listed as a function of county governments. Not only does this point to a more domesticated degree of supervision, it also flags pre-primary education as a statutory beneficiary of the funds disbursed annually to all devolved units. Considering the fact that county governments have invested substantial resources in pre-primary education, it is imperative that a survey is undertaken to assess the how devolution has impacted the implementation of the pre-primary education especially in the first cycle of devolution (Odhiambo, 2014). Several studies have been done on the effect of devolution. For instance, Sayed and Ahmed (2014) conducted a study on education decentralization in South Africa, equity and participation in the governance of schools. The study indicated that the quest for equity has been one of the major drivers of education transformation in South Africa. The study further indicated that the extent to which the policies of education decentralisation in relation to the governance of schools promotes equity. This study was conducted in South Africa with a different contextual reference. Therefore, the findings might not be applicable in the current study, whose locus is Kenya. Muli (2014) conducted a study on the challenges of implementation of Kenya's devolution strategy. The study findings reveal that the main challenges that face the implementation of the devolution strategy include the physical and political environment, the national government and its agencies whose actions at times contradict actions taken by the county governments, inadequacy of resources both financial and human capital, and

resistance from both the members of county assemblies, employees, the electorate and the business community. Notably, this study only looked at the challenges but did not look at the effects of devolution with specific reference to pre-primary education. Therefore, the findings might not be applicable in the current study. Njuguna (2016) examined devolution and its effect on the community. The study found that the social and economic projects initiated after devolution had yielded some benefits. Devolution had led to improved accessibility to the market due to improved roads, improved availability of medicine in healthcare facilities, improved lighting in the streets, and increased accessibility to water. This study concentrated on the effect of devolution on the community but did not mention anything on education, more specifically pre-primary education. From the foregoing, there was need for analysis of how devolution is having a specific and direct knock-on effect, on the implementation of pre-primary education, with specific reference to a combination of devolution-related issues like legislation, financial resource and human capital development which, hitherto, no study combined as is the case in this study. Additionally, there was need to measure how devolution continues to contribute to the implementation of pre-primary education, the latter being a statutory mandate for county governments.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To determine the effect of financial resource on the implementation of pre-primary education in Bungoma County, Kenya.
2. To examine the effect of legislation on the implementation of pre-primary education in Bungoma County, Kenya.
3. To assess the effect of human capital development on the implementation of pre-primary education in Bungoma County, Kenya.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Financial Resource and Implementation

Resources are very useful in the management and development of activities. A number of scholars have examined the effect of resources on implementation of a given project. Potokri (2014) conducted a study evaluating the availability of financial resources and manpower development in selected monotechnic institutions in Nigeria. This research investigated manpower development and availability of financial resources in Nigerian monotechnic institutions, which are single-subject institutions of higher education that offer specialized programmes. A quantitative research design located within the positivist paradigm was adopted. Samples of 200 students and 80 members of staff were randomly selected from two public and two private monotechnic institutions. The findings showed that regardless of how well and articulate the plans are failure to avail adequate financial resources will make it difficult to attain the set goals. Manpower development, in terms of the skills and competencies of prospective graduates, is affected by the funding made available to these institutions. It was further found that the financial resources provided or otherwise available in monotechnic institutions (whether privately or publicly owned) are inadequate. Inadequate

financial resources will constrain the operations thus make it difficult to attain the set objectives.

Agbloyor, Abor, Adjasi and Yawson (2014) conducted a study on private capital flows and economic growth in Africa, within the context of the role of domestic financial markets. The findings indicated that developing countries must mobilize domestic resources for development. National budgets contain potential for savings and redistribution. Governments can make additional resources available for sustainable development by reforming their tax systems and eliminating harmful subsidies and unproductive expenses. When dictators send billions to secret bank accounts, and when wealthy citizens send their savings overseas, they drain domestic financial resources, undermining the basis for development. Parnell and Carraher (2013) conducted a study on the role of effective financial resource utilization on strategy's impact on performance. The study employed a survey research design. Through random sampling, a sample of fifty schools was picked from a population of one hundred schools. The study findings suggest that an appropriate strategy should align to specific financial resource competencies to enhance development. The findings further point to the fact that students' general performance is a function of better utilization of appropriate equipment and other teaching tools. Scarcity of financial resources affects the quality of education because it limits that accessibility to key teaching and learning equipment to enable quality learning to take place.

Handel (2014) conducted an investigation on developing educational financial resources for young Crossrail. The study adopted a descriptive research design. Data was collected using a questionnaire that was administered through "drop and pick" method. The data was analysed using percentages and frequencies. The findings of the study were presented in tables and charts. The findings indicate that Crossrail infrastructure can be easily adapted to meet the needs of varying class abilities and dynamics for purposes development. The availability of financial resources is a key factor to any development including implementation of projects and should be managed well by implementing important measures that will control its usage.

Musyoki and Gakuu (2018) conducted a study that sought to examine factors that influence successful implementation and completion of infrastructural projects in Embu County in Kenya. The study was modelled along three theories thus: Institutional Theory, Systems Theory and Participatory Involvement Theory. A descriptive research design was used and a population of 100 respondents was involved in the study. One key finding was that organizational resources have a positive and significant influence on the implementation of infrastructure projects at the county level. Ager, Rukangu and Ibuathu (2015) conducted a study on the influence of financial resource on successful implementation of strategic plans in the Ministry of Land, Housing and Urban Development in Meru County, Kenya. The study utilized a descriptive research design whose import was a sample of 53 members drawn from the management teams of the lands offices located in Imenti North Sub-County. Data was collected using questionnaires. The findings confirmed that there was a significant relationship between financial resources and implementation of strategic plans within the lands sector.

Munyao (2018) investigated the relationship between financial management practices and financial sustainability of the County Government of Nakuru, Kenya. The study was grounded on two theories: The agency theory and Resource-based theory. Descriptive research design was employed for the study. Data was collected from a sample of 84 respondents drawn from amongst revenue officers, accountants, auditors and administrators. Structured questionnaires were used in data collection. One key finding was that there exists a weak, positive and non-significant relationship between budget management and financial sustainability. As a result, the study recommended that the county government needs to minimize its expenditures as a way of improving its financial sustainability.

Legislation and Implementation

Legislation encapsulates the process of enactment of laws and formulation of policies that provide a framework for implementation of certain actions, programs and interventions by the government. Jones (2013) investigated the impact of legislation on the organization. Survey forms were formulated and given to the residents to fill out. Thereafter, the forms were collected and the necessary information recorded down in report form. The findings from the study concluded that legislation leads to organizational transformation since it dictates decisions and the style of management. Ma, Cui, Song, Zhang and Huang (2015) undertook a survey on the importance of legislation. Survey forms were drafted and given to the residents for filling. There after data was collected using questionnaires and presented for analysis using the SPSS package. The analysed data was presented in the form of tables, charts and graphs. It was revealed from the study that legislation allows an advantageous division of labour which enhances efficiency in development. Positive amendment of legislation leads to positive employment effects of growth in national output but a negative employment effect results to increase in imports. Good legislation also contributes to the organization and development of policies that guide economic growth and implementation of positive projects.

Mu, Bu and Xue (2014) investigated on environmental legislation in China concerning achievements, challenges and trends. The study adopted data analysis methods which include the qualitative and quantitative methods. Interviews and observations were used to collect data which was then analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The analysed data was presented using tables. From the findings, the study indicates that continuous improvements of legislation reduce environmental problems and more opportunities are created to strengthen public participation which enhances developments. Legislation strengthens management and development by enforcing effective laws which govern the performance and construction of positive projects.

Oyoo (2015) conducted a study on the effects of government legislation on the University of Nairobi's Strategy Implementation. The study was based on three theories thus: Dynamic Capabilities Theory, Stakeholder Theory and Open System Theory. A Cross-sectional survey research design was employed. Primary data was collected from a total of 50 respondents who were selected through random sampling. One key finding was that government legislation has a significant and positive influence on all the indicators of strategy.

David (1992) conducted a study on implementation of copyright laws in libraries and publishing houses in Kenya. The study also aimed at establishing the level of awareness regarding copyright law amongst staff members in the sampled institutions. A total of 80 respondents were sampled using random sampling technique. The respondents included librarians, library users and staff members of publishing houses. The targeted the following institutions: British Council Library, American Cultural Centre Library, ICIPE Library, Kenyatta University Moi Library and Jomo Kenyatta Memorial Library University of Nairobi. Data was collected through interviews, observation methods and questionnaires. The study found that there was low awareness of copyright laws amongst the staff members of libraries and publishing houses. As a result, one of the study's recommendations was the need for deliberate training and dissemination of information on copyright laws to ensure greater compliance and observance of these laws.

Human Capital Development and Implementation

Human capital development is central to the performance of any organization because of the role it plays in improving the performance of employees' capabilities and output. Human capital development can range from on-the-job training (invariably referred to as apprenticeship) to tuition assistance to team-building activities like development of skills, management of projects and morale building. Development can be conducted through coaching, job training, leadership training, and many others. Pelinescu (2015) investigated the impact of human capital on economic growth. The study involved the use of questionnaires through which both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. The findings of the study revealed that human capital plays a vital role in enhancing the growth of the economy because worker output has a direct correlation to productivity of the overall economy.

Hakooma and Seshamani (2017) conducted a study on the impact of human capital development on economic growth in Zambia. The objective of the study was to determine how human capital affects development in economic growth. Interviews were held and data was collected and recorded in form of percentages. The study findings indicated the presence of a long-run relationship between economic growth by GDP per capita and human capital, proxied by the government expenditures on health, education and secondary school enrolment. The study further revealed that human capital is the main contributor to the increase of real GDP per capita. Lervik et. al. (2005) undertook a study on implementation of human resource development practices in organizations in Norway. The study sought to determine which approach, between recreation and replication, yielded the best outcomes in the process of developing a company's human resource. These two dominant dimensions were surveyed, taking into account the four stages through which human resource development usually goes through. Ultimately, they recommended that human resource development programs ought to be implemented through the recreation approach as it increases the prospects of success as a tool of enhancing the knowledge, skills and competencies of workers.

Lonska and Mietule (2015) investigated the impact of human capital development on the economic and social development of a country. The study relied heavily on secondary data, which upon collection, was analysed using ratios and percentage. Regression analysis was used to give insight into the relationship between the variables that were involved. The findings of the study demonstrated a very strong correlation between human capital development and a country's economic development. Increase in a country's economic performance also affords that country the resources to further develop and widen her human capital pool. A skilled human capital resource also effectively implements any developmental policies in a country. Maithya (2016) conducted a study on the influence of human resource on implementation of strategic change management practices at the University of Nairobi. The study utilized a Case Study research design. Members of the senior management at the university were interviewed and other relevant documents analysed, both of which yielded primary and secondary information. One noteworthy finding was that hindrances to human resource strategy implementation include lack of adequate resources, lack of properly skilled personnel and resistance to change. The study recommended that the university should continuously train and develop its employees for purposes of equipping them to cope with unforeseen but inevitable changes.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Innovation Diffusion Theory

Innovation Diffusion theory was introduced in 1962 by Everette M. Rogers. This theory focuses mainly on bringing a clear understanding concerning how, why and at what rate innovative technologies and ideas spread in a social system. Instead of focusing on persuading individuals to change, Innovation Diffusion theory takes a contrary approach to study change as it views change to be primarily about reinvention of products and behaviours so that they can fit into the needs of individuals and groups of people. This theory further emphasizes that it is not people who change but the innovations. Diffusion itself can be defined as the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system. Hence, diffusion of innovations refers to the spread of ideas and information from one place to another.

This theory is divided into four main elements which include; innovations, time, communication systems and social system. Innovation refers to implementation of new ideas and practices. Innovation includes all sets of commodities including the old and new ones which are presented as new when being used. The time aspect of innovation diffusion theory records adopter categorization and rate of adoptions till the end. Communication system refers to the channel used to share information from one medium to another. Faster communication system enables quicker diffusion of innovations. In this case, a social system is a set of interrelated units put together to solve a problem and achieve common goals.

In Kenya, devolution is one of the most notable innovations in the country's governance architecture. The 2010 constitution created 47 devolved units, which, in the collective view, together with the national government, are stated in Article 6(2) as 'distinct and interdependent'. Further, according to Article 174(f), one of the objects of devolution is to

‘promote social and economic development and the provision of proximate, easily accessible services throughout Kenya.’ The constitution has solid guarantees for devolution in terms of legislative anchorage, minimum thresholds of financing the devolved units by Treasury and a succinct definition of the roles and responsibilities of county governments as contained in the Fourth Schedule. Resulting from the above, devolution continues to effect a steady influence on various systems and services at the grassroots level, one of them being pre-primary education, which is the subject of this study. The pace of the change resulting from devolution varies from one county to another and from one development theme compared to another. Nonetheless, devolution remains the trigger of rural renaissance across the vast non-urban areas in Kenya. As per this study’s objectives, the three key ways to be researched regarding how devolution, as a governance innovation, influences the implementation of pre-primary education are financial resourcing, human capital and legislation.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopted the descriptive research design which aims at examine the effect of devolution on the implementation of pre-primary education: a case of Bungoma County, Kenya. According to Creswell (2013) Descriptive Research Design is the process of collecting data to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject. This allowed the researcher to assess the variables and report what would happen and without interfering with the outcome.

Site of the Study

The researcher carried out the research study in Bungoma County. The actual places were in pre-primary schools and the County Government head offices in Bungoma County. The county, whose capital is Bungoma town, has a population of 1,630,934 and covers an area of 2,069 km². It borders the Uganda on the Northwest, Trans Nzoia County on the Northeast, Kakamega County on the East and South East, and Busia County on the West and Southwest. Administratively, Bungoma County is divided into 9 Sub-Counties which also double up as constituencies and forty five Wards. It is further divided into 21 divisions, 81 locations and 179 sub-locations. The Sub-counties that make up Bungoma County are Mt Elgon, Bumula, Webuye West, Kanduyi, Webuye East, Sirisia, Kabuchai, Tongaren and Kimilili. The economy of Bungoma County is mainly agricultural, centering on the sugarcane and maize industries. The area experiences high rainfall throughout the year, and is home to several large rivers, which are used for small-scale irrigation.

Study Population

The study’s target population consisted of the following categories: (1) County Executive Committee Member (CECM) in charge of Education and Vocational Training – 1; (2) Clerk, County Assembly – 1; (3) County Government officials in education sector – 42 (These include ECDE Directors at Sub-county and Ward levels, Quality Assurance Officers, School Inspectors among others); (4) Administrators of pre-primary institutions – 329 (These include

head teachers of all early childhood/nursery/pre-unit centres). From the above information, the population was made up of 373 respondents.

Sampling Techniques and Sampling Size

A study sample design is a definitive plan used to gain a sample from a given population. It shows a step-by-step procedure that the researcher adopted in selecting items from the target population that will make the sample for the study (Carlsen & Glenton, 2013). The sample size of the study was 189 government officials and administrators of public pre-primary schools. The study employed both probability and non-probability sampling techniques. The first two respondents (CECM, Education and Clerk, County Assembly) were purposively selected as respondents, based on the strategic positions they hold and the exclusive nature of the information they would avail to the researcher. Both stratified sampling and simple random sampling techniques were used to select the respondents from the other two categories, namely County Government officials and Administrators of pre-primary centres. These officials were put in strata (9 sub-counties) and thereafter, those who were respondents were selected through simple random sampling. A sample population of 189 was arrived at by calculating the target population of 371 (excluding the CECM, Education and Clerk, County Assembly) with a 95% confidence level and an error of 0.05 using the below formula taken from Kothari (2004).

$$n = \frac{z^2 \cdot N \cdot \hat{p}^2}{(N - 1)e^2 + z^2 \hat{p}^2}$$

$$n = \frac{1.96^2 * 371 * 0.5^2}{(371-1)0.05^2 + 1.96^2 * 0.5^2} = \frac{356.3084}{92.5 + 0.9604} = 189 \text{ respondents}$$

Where; n = Size of the sample; N = Size of the population and given as 371; e = Acceptable error and given as 0.05; \hat{p} = the standard deviation of the population and given as 0.5 where not known; Z = Standard variate at a confidence level given as 1.96 at 95% confidence level

Research Instruments

Questionnaires were used to collect primary data. Questionnaires, according to Marshall, Cardon, Poddar and Fontenot (2013), constitute various questions that are arranged in a specific order, so as to obtain relevant research data. Questionnaires were used because they were effective in collection of first-hand sources of information for the study. Questionnaires were structured according to the research objectives therefore making the process of analysis

Data Collection

The researcher applied for a research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) to conduct this research, based on receipt of a Research Authorisation Letter from the Graduate School in Kenyatta University. Once the permit was received from NACOSTI, the researcher embarked on data collection in the field. While in the field, each questionnaire presented to respondents was accompanied by a Letter

of Introduction highlighting the intention of the study and requesting for the respondent's consent. A 'drop and pick later' method was used to distribute questionnaires to respondents. The use of this method ensured that respondents are afforded adequate time to fill in questionnaires. The researcher also left his phone contact details behind to enable respondents who wanted to make follow-up inquiries while filling the questionnaires left to them. This went a long way towards improving the response rate of the study. It also ensured that respondents are not influenced in the type of responses they were giving.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is the processing of the collected data to make inferences and deductions. The collected data was entered into IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24. Both inferential and descriptive statistical appropriations were used in the analysis of the findings. Descriptive statistics entailed the use of various measures of central tendencies and dispersion whereas inferential statistics involved the use of regression analysis. The regression model adopted is:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \varepsilon$$

Where: Y = Implementation of Pre-Primary Education; X₁ = Financial Resource; X₂ = Legislation; X₃ = Human Capital Development; β₀ = Constant ; β₁, β₂, and β₃ = Regression Coefficients; ε = Error Term

The researcher regressed implementation of pre-primary education against financial resources, legislation and human capital development. The study sought to determine the *betas* in the equation which give figures that represent changes in implementation following one unit change in each of the independent variables. Beta zero represents the minimum level of implementation of pre-primary education, when all the dependent variables are held constant at zero. The findings of the study were presented using frequency distribution tables, pie charts and bar graphs where relevant.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Financial Resource and Implementation of Pre-Primary Education

From the findings, financial resource has a positive and significant effect on implementation of pre-primary education. Most respondents agreed that local resources have been efficiently mobilized to promote pre-primary education and that the level of pre-primary education has improved following County government introduction in 2013. Respondents further agreed that adequate teaching materials are availed to pre-primary education institutions by the County Government and that adequate incentives are availed to pre-primary education teachers to carry out their work. Respondents also agreed that the adequate financial resources have been allocated towards implementation and improvement of pre-primary education in Bungoma County and that there are adequate ECDE learning class rooms in Bungoma County. The study established that adequate funds have been availed for construction or maintenance of classrooms pre-primary education classrooms and that pre-primary education programs in the County are well funded. There has generally been an

increase in allocation of funds towards the pre-primary education in Bungoma County every subsequent financial year in terms of absolute numbers, although there is stagnation in comparative weighed percentages.

Legislation and Implementation of Pre-Primary Education

As shown by findings, legislation has a positive and significant effect on the implementation of pre-primary education. Most of the respondents agreed that policies and guidelines have promoted the development of pre-primary education and that the policies developed strengthen the community-based involvement in the management of early childhood services. The study found out that the developed policies recognizes parents as primary caregivers and that the policies are geared towards children's mental capability development. The most consequential legislation is the Bungoma County Early Childhood Education Act, 2014, which provides the overarching framework for management and financing of the sub-sector. The study further established that the policies developed on early childhood eliminate discrimination of children and families on the basis of gender and that the policies promote involvement of parents in their children's learning. The study further established that the policies developed have incorporated all Government ministries and other partners offering services and programs for infants and children. The policies developed aim at safeguarding the rights while at the same time recognizes families as primary health providers. The policies developed aim at safeguarding the welfare of children and these policies are also centred on the view that a coordinated approach is required to harmonize the management of pre-primary education across the whole county.

Human Capital Development and Implementation of Pre-Primary Education

From the findings, human capital development has a positive and significant effect on implementation of pre-primary education. Majority of the respondents agreed that pre-primary school teachers are well motivated to do their job and that ECD teachers are accorded adequate support to perform their duties. The study established that there were not enough teachers in Bungoma County although the County has well-developed training programmes to enhance their skills. The ECD teachers are competitively remunerated, and that teaching and learning materials are availed to pre-primary school centres on time. The county has employed and deployed a total of 2,102 personnel, of different cadres, who directly deal with the implementation of pre-primary education.

INFERENCE ANALYSIS

In order to determine the influence of devolution on the implementation of pre-primary education, regression analysis was used. The findings on the Model Summary are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.824 ^a	.680	.673	.50883

a. Predictors: (Constant), Human Capital Development, Legislation, Financial Resources

From the findings in Table 1, the value of coefficient of R is .824 representing 82.4%; this shows that there is a strong coefficient between the study variables. The value of R² is .680 which represents 68.0% indicating that there are other factors other than, Human Capital Development, Legislation, and Financial Resources that affect implementation of pre-primary education in Bungoma County, Kenya.

Analysis of Variance was conducted at 5% confidence level and a comparison made between the f-calculated and f- tabulated. Findings are in Table 2.

Table 2: Analysis of Variance

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	78.541	3	26.180	101.121	.000 ^b
Residual	37.023	143	.259		
Total	115.565	146			

a. Dependent Variable: Implementation of Pre-Primary Education

b. Predictors: (Constant), Human Capital Development, Legislation, Financial Resources

From the above ANOVA table, F-calculated >F- tabulated (101.121>2.668). This finding indicated that the overall regression was significant in determining the effect of devolution on the implementation of pre-primary education in Bungoma County, Kenya. Thus Human Capital Development, Legislation, Financial Resources affects implementation of pre-primary education. According to Kozak and Piepho, (2018), if the F-calculated >F- tabulated, and then the overall regressions was significant in determining the relationship between the variables.

The study used the p values to determine the significance of independent study variables. The interpretation of the p values was done at 5% level of significance as shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Regression Coefficients

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Standard Error	Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	15.508	.590		26.266	.000
Financial Resources	.313	.029	1.694	10.662	.000
Legislation	.125	.030	.548	4.178	.000
Human Capital Development	.103	.026	.452	3.951	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Implementation of Pre-Primary Education

On the basis of the findings in Table 3, the following regression equation is modelled;

$$Y = 15.508 + 0.313X_1 + 0.125X_2 + 0.103X_3$$

Where: Y = Implementation of Pre-primary Education; X₁ = Financial Resource; X₂ = Legislation; X₃ = Human Capital Development

Thus, at 5% level of significance, the *beta* coefficient and p-value of Financial Resource ($\beta=0.313$, $p<0.05$) confirm the existence of a positive and significant effect on implementation of pre-primary education. The finding is supported by Handel (2014) who conducted an investigation on development of educational financial resources for young Crossrail and established that availability of financial resources is a key factor to any such development, including implementation of projects and should be managed well by instituting measures that will control pilferage and promote prudence.

Legislation ($\beta=0.125$, $p<0.05$) has a positive and significant effect on implementation of pre-primary education. This finding is in line with Jones (2013) who carried out a study on the impact of legislation on the organizational efficiency and concluded that legislation leads to organizational transformation because it either buttresses or constrains growth. Ma et al. (2015) investigated on the importance of legislation and established that positive amendment of legislation leads to positive employment effects of growth in national output but a negative employment effect results to increase in imports and that good legislation also contributes to the organization and development of policies that guide economic growth and implementation of positive projects. In 2018, MOEST rolled out the National Pre-Primary Education Policy (NPPEP), which replaced the National Early Childhood Development Policy (2008) that was not aligned to the 2010 Constitution. The NPPEP provides a frame of reference to county governments in their implementation of pre-primary education, as a balance between their responsibilities and those of the national government, as articulated in the Forth Schedule of the 2010 Constitution.

Human Capital Development ($\beta=0.103$, $p<0.05$) has a positive and significant effect on implementation of pre-primary education. This finding is supported by Pelinescu (2015) who investigated the impact of human capital on economic growth and established that human capital plays a vital role in enhancing the growth of the economy. Similarly, Hakooma and Seshamani (2017) conducted a study on the impact of human capital development on economic growth in Zambia and established that human capital is the main contributor to the increase of real GDP per capita. At the same time, Lonska and Mietule (2015) investigated on the impact of human capital development on the economic and social development of a country and found out that human capital development is increased by national economic performance which enhances effective development policy.

CONCLUSIONS

Financial Resource and Implementation of Pre-Primary Education

Financial resource has a positive and significant effect on implementation of pre-primary education. Local resources have been efficiently mobilized to promote pre-primary education and that the level of pre-primary education has improved following County government introduction in 2013. Adequate teaching materials are availed to pre-primary education in the County and that adequate incentives are availed to pre-primary education teachers to carry out their work. Adequate financial resources have been allocated towards implementation and improvement of pre-primary education in Bungoma County.

Legislation and Implementation of Pre-Primary Education

Legislation has a positive and significant effect on implementation of pre-primary education. The policies and guidelines have promoted the development of pre-primary education and that the policies developed strengthen the community-based management of early childhood services. The developed policies recognize parents as primary caregivers and that the policies are geared towards children's mental capability development. The policies developed on early childhood eliminate discrimination of children and families on the basis of gender and that the policies promote involvement of parents in their children's learning.

Human Capital Development and Implementation of Pre-Primary Education

Human capital development has a positive and significant effect on implementation of pre-primary education. ECD teachers are well motivated to do their job and that ECD teachers are accorded adequate support to perform their duties. There are enough ECD teachers in Bungoma County and the ECDE teachers have well-developed training programmes to enhance their skills. The ECD teachers are competitively remunerated, the County has adequate well qualified teachers for the ECD education and that ECD materials are availed to ECD centres on time. Also, the county has employed and deployed a total of 2,102 personnel, of different cadres, who directly deal with the implementation of pre-primary education.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Financial Resource and Implementation of Pre-Primary Education

Since financial resource has a positive and significant effect on implementation of pre-primary education, the study recommends that all County Governments in Kenya should improve allocations to this sub-sector, not just in absolute numbers, but in the overall percentage. Management of the allocated resources should be prudent, taking into account value for money principles in public finance to ensure the highest possible return on investment. All counties in Kenya should ensure that all the local resources have been efficiently mobilized to promote a collaborative approach that leverages on synergies between the county government and local community. Finally, the teaching materials, incentives and other financial resources for pre-primary education should be availed in time.

Legislation and Implementation of Pre-Primary Education

The study established that legislation has a positive and significant effect on implementation of pre-primary education. Therefore, this study recommends that all counties should formulate sound policies that promote and strengthen the implementation of pre-primary education. Besides, these policies should be reviewed continually to realign the sub-sector with any emerging realities. All counties in Kenya should formulate laws and policies that promote the development of pre-primary education and to strengthen the participation of grassroots communities for better synergy. Legislation should also continually seek to strengthen governance and accountability especially on the part of duty bearers.

Human Capital Development and Implementation of Pre-Primary Education

From the findings, human capital development has a positive and significant effect on implementation of pre-primary education. Based on this finding, the study recommends that the county governments in Kenya should continually improve on their human capital and development programs as far as the implementation of pre-primary education is concerned. They should institute programs that promote retooling of the personnel to ensure that they remain up to date with the professional demands of their jobs. The personnel that are employed should be qualified, competent, committed and accountable. The remuneration of these employees should be competitive as an incentive for optimal productivity.

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