

PRINCIPALS HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENT NATIONAL EXAMINATION ACHIEVEMENT IN KIAMBU COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

In a school, human resource management is critical. Low staff management can be blamed for a variety of issues in organizations, including a high turnover rate, subpar job output, poor work quality, and even discipline issues. Principals at secondary schools frequently deal with challenges relating to human resource management. The study objective was to determine the effects of staff development on secondary school students' academic performance in Kiambu County. The study employed a descriptive survey research methodology. Principals and teachers from Kiambu County's, 303 secondary schools 227 public and 76 private were the study's target population. A total of 30 secondary schools were included in the study. The 303 schools were assigned to their respective sub-counties, and the 30 secondary schools were chosen at random. Principals and teachers were chosen with care. When gathering focused data, this strategy was used to pick a typical group in a population. The study used a questionnaire to gather primary data. The questionnaire had questions that addressed issues related to the study's objectives. This study made use of content validity. Before any fictitious test can be carried out, the quality of all measuring items must be confirmed, which is the aim of content validity. With the supervisor's assistance, the research instrument was created, and it was made sure that it is connected to the study objectives. The correlation co-efficient was computed using Cronbach's Coefficient alpha to determine the degree of

consistency in responses acquired by the instrument each time it was administered. The study's data was quantitatively analysed. The information gathered was entered and analysed using SPSS. The mean and standard deviation were produced using the descriptive statistics tool in SPSS and displayed as tables, frequencies, and percentages. To demonstrate the strength of the relationship between staff development, performance management, pay management, and participation in decision-making, correlation analysis was utilized. The study found that that teacher's opportunities for high-quality professional development leads to effective instructional practices which improves student academic achievement. The study concluded that that remuneration affects the performance of teachers, improves teacher's productivity and efficiency which has an overall effect on student academic achievement and remuneration of teachers in terms of salary, allowances and motivations contributes in the way teachers perform in school and this affects student academic achievement. The study recommend that the government should put in place mechanisms for enhancing progressive between training and development for teachers.

Key Words: Compensation Management, Human resource, Performance Management, Staff Development and Students' Academic Performance.

INTRODUCTION

Human Resource Management (HRM) is the process or strategy that has been shown to be the most practical and efficient in achieving a goal (Holmes, 2013). In the context of a school, human resource management refers to how a school administrator uses human resources to create the greatest results and how the school works with its governing body. The human resources of a school are its staff members as well as its human resource administration, which consists of the procedures designed and put into place within the educational system (Young, 2014). In order to support the educational objective of the system, the employees' personal and professional aspirations, and the school community in which the school system is situated, it builds an efficient human resource system. As a result, the principle should use prudence when working with human resources in his capacity as a human resource manager. Principals and other competent human resource managers should act as a catalyst for inspiring teachers to take initiative. Academic achievement is the progression toward short- and long-term educational objectives made by a student, instructor, or institution (Fredericks & Piltch, 2015). Tests and continuing evaluations are frequently used to assess academic progress, although there is no consensus on how to measure it or which factors are most crucial: declarative data, like facts, or procedural knowledge, like skills (Leithwood & Riehl, 2013). The greatest way for head teachers to use managerial strategies to improve student performance is to motivate their staff and students by giving them more power and responsibility to make decisions, enhancing resources to inspire them, and giving them greater authority (Harris & Lowery, 2013). In this study, academic achievement refers to how much human resource management abilities have influenced student performance in Kiambu County.

Globally issues of principal human resource management in relation to performance have been addressed severally. In Britain, for example, human resource management falls under the logistical support or management of educational resources. This is also referred to as 'school Business Management (Henshke, 2016). HRM impacts on worker's productivity. It is quoted, 'what has been traditionally referred to as management of school financial resources is a significant part of educational administration. A study of head teachers' management techniques at Hudson High School found that they were unprepared for their jobs, which explains why they had strained relationships with Human Resources (Bulloch, 2015). That is why, in most cases, they used a linear model to manage human resources rather than a collegial model. Low academic performance is linked to a lack of practice.

According to Katzenbach and Smith (2016), are goal-focused individuals who work with specialized expertise to achieve maximum. Effective teams pursue performance excellence through shared goals, collaboration, and early conflict resolution. This was observed by Susan (2015) creates an atmosphere where teams strictly follow orders as defined for the achievement of organizational goals. Thus, HRM should create effective teams if schools must fulfill their strategic goals. When Principals create an environment of the suspect, every teacher will pull to their side creating unhealthy competition. This as outlined by Husend (2009) may affect students' performance. In sub-Saharan Africa with a focus on Nigeria, similar practices affecting academic achievement were noticed in the (Education Master Plan, 2015). To

increase teacher motivation, the Master Plan recommended that the ministry of education design and execute criteria for professional progression for teachers. School heads are resource managers in charge of implementing policies and programs that foster not only efficiency and effectiveness, but also staff satisfaction. The greatest way for headteachers to use managerial strategies to improve student performance is to motivate their staff and students by giving them more power and responsibility to make decisions, enhancing resources to inspire them, and giving them greater authority (Master Plan, 1972).

In Kenya, managerial approaches like those provided by the Kenya Education Management Institute (KEMI), which provides INSET, have greatly aided principals' accomplishments in Resource Management (RM). Schools evaluate their students' training needs. The success of a business and a manager's ability to attract, onboard, develop, and motivate employees are the only criteria by which human resource management performance can be measured (Ibrahim, 2014). School principals are entrusted with role of supervising teaching and learning in the schools. This means they must captivate performing teams among the teachers, students and non-teaching staff. According to Henshke (2016) a principal who is able to have cohesive teams is likely produce positive learning outcomes. This is because such principals will involve staff in decision-making and always encourage team problem solving. The current study will focus on four aspects of human resource which include the staff development, performance management, compensation management, and participative decision making and how they influence student academic performance.

Staff development has been proven to be an effective way of strengthening teacher skills and how well to deliver teaching instructions. A well-trained teacher is expected to communicate the topic content in a professional and effective manner. In all fairness research indicates that, in addition to the skills that these teachers possess, environmental, economic, and sociocultural factors, among others, also affect students' exam results. Proper linkages between these components are essential in order to earn better grades in school. In most cases, a qualified teacher analyzes these aspects and incorporates them into their teaching methods. That is why, at the end of each topic in the secondary curriculum, emergent difficulties are highlighted. Teacher performance management in secondary schools depends on both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. Monitoring classroom activities, punctual and frequent attendance at school, strong classroom preparation, overall timeliness, and participation in extracurricular activities are all signs of a teacher's performance. Because there is minimal happiness among teachers, the less motivated they are, the greater the likelihood of ineffective performance and retention. The most essential outcome anticipated of schools has historically been to improve performance and the quality of education the pupil receives. The single most important school variable influencing student accomplishment is the quality of a teacher (Kleinhenz & Ingvarson, 2014). One of the most important motivations for employees to look for work is the pay. Employees are paid for the services they provide and the effort they put in at work. Effective teachers are essential for excellent student accomplishment, so they must be fairly compensated. To begin, qualified teachers are in low supply in some areas and in certain courses. Second, it indicates that teaching is a less popular career choice among young people. Teachers must be accountable for their students' intellectual as well as socio-emotional growth, and they must

keep up with new knowledge in their topics and fields. As a result of these circumstances, certain countries have created various compensation and incentive systems targeted at enhancing teacher effectiveness. Individualized pay, incentives for instructors in hard-to-staff areas, and rewards based on student performance on national exams are all part of these initiatives. Teachers' participation in decision-making is likely to boost school performance. A driven teacher would always show a passion for his or her job, dedication to duty, make time to complete resolutions, work above his or her limits, have a sense of being a part of success or failure, and be outstanding in all of his or her endeavors. For highly motivated teachers who participate in decision-making, these are viewed as crucial.

Furthermore, it promotes a sense of democratic engagement, which makes it important. If teachers are involved in the decision-making process, they will be more committed to the curriculum and instructional success. It is more of an oath to sign onto a resolution but not to carry it through. Teachers are aware that everyone is evaluated by their own accomplishments and shortcomings, especially when everyone has decided on a course of action. Over the past nine years, there has been a decline in KCSE exam performance in Kiambu County secondary schools (2009 to 2017). Trend studies suggest that in Kenya, the majority of schools scored significantly below the required 12 points, according to Mwangi (2015). All of the schools that were surveyed had below-average mean grades (Mwangi 2015). The performance of public and private schools in Kiambu County decreased from a mean grade of 5.519 in 2016 to 4.67 in 2017, 4.60 in 2018, and 4.45 in 2019. Therefore, it is crucial to conduct empirical research on the effects of human resource management strategies on student achievement in Kenya's public secondary schools in Kiambu County. Gituathi (2012), Gacheru (2015) and Gitonga (2012) in Kiambu have all linked poor performance to factors other than the principals' use of human resources. Therefore, this research contributed to addressing the question of whether or not national examination performance of students in Kiambu County is influenced by the principal's human resource management practices.

Problem Statement

In a school, the management of human resources by the principal is crucial. High turnover, poor performance, poor work quality, and even indiscipline are some of the current problems that have been related to inadequate staff management by secondary school principals. At the school level, principals are constantly confronted with human resource management issues, which they must handle before it is too late. Kiambu secondary schools acknowledge the significance of HRM practices. However, due to changing environment and surrounding, the needs of personnel proportionally changes and despite the principal's application of these practices, there is no evidence whatsoever that these practices have impacted positively on student's performance. Schools in the county have continued to perform poorly in the national examination despite Kiambu having adequate human and physical resources. Studies have been on human resource management practices.

Nyoho (2021) conducted research on how human resources management affected senior secondary students' exam performance. The study indicated that public senior secondary

schools where exams are administered, have considerable effects on students' academic performance as a result of human resource management. Gituathi (2012) looked into the factors impacting children's performance. The findings suggest that effective HRM practices are the only way to ensure student success in all aspects of school life, including exam performance and other extracurricular activities. In Kenya's Bungoma East Sub-County, Wanjala (2021) did research on principals' management strategies and academic accomplishment. The study discovered that administrators' human resource management approaches had a direct impact on school academic attainment. The studies done have not been specific on how well the principals human resource management practices influences student academic performance in Kiambu County thus creating a knowledge gap. This study therefore filled the gap by establishing the influence of the principal's human resource management practices on secondary school student national examination achievement in Kiambu County, Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the Nigerian city of Uyo, Ekpoh et al. (2013) did a study to establish the influence of staff development activities on job performance of teachers. Questionnaire was used to obtain primary data. The study found that teachers who participated in staff development activities were more effective in executing their duties as compared to those who did not. The study focused on secondary school teachers' job performance and staff development programs. The research did not focus on the impact of staff development on student academic achievement, resulting in a knowledge gap. The current research aimed to close this gap by determining the impact of staff development on secondary school student academic performance in Kiambu County.

Shaha et al. (2015) investigated the effects of integrated professional development and teacher observations on pupil performance. Teacher observations were connected with professional development opportunities associated with targeted teacher improvements by school leaders or designated internal coaches. Teachers could receive a variety of professional development assistance about teaching strategies as needed using an online, on-demand system. Systemic teacher observations, along with coordinated professional development, resulted in considerably enhanced student accomplishment on standardized examinations in reading and arithmetic, according to the findings. Because the study's context was not specified, the findings could not be applied to the current study, resulting in a knowledge gap. The current research aimed to close this gap by determining the impact of staff development on secondary school student academic performance in Kiambu County.

Fischer et al. (2018) did a study on the influence of teacher professional development on student academic performance. The study used descriptive research design. A questionnaire was used to collect primary data. The study found that participating in professional development had an effect on teacher classroom activities which had an overall effect on student performance. As a result, components of instructional enactment characteristics are connected with student performance in a meaningful but modest way. As a result, this study reaffirms the need for high-quality professional development for instructors and advises that research into effective

instructional approaches be advanced. The research looked at a variety of factors and how they affect student academic performance. As a result, the study's findings are inapplicable to the current investigation, resulting in a knowledge gap. The current research closed this gap by determining the impact of staff development on secondary school student academic performance in Kiambu County.

Joseph (2018) did a study on the impact of staff development on the pupils' academic performance in Kibalinga Sub-county, Mubende district. SPSS was utilized for data entry while descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. This research notes that many teachers in many schools in Kibalinga Sub-county, as per staff list available at District Education Officers office Mubende, are trained and especially the staff at model schools. Many teachers are also undergoing staff development programme like in-service Grade III teachers courses, Grade V upgrading courses, degree courses and Continuous Professional Development courses (CPDs). The study established a strong relationship between budgeting and staff development in schools. The percentages and Chi-square (X^2) results of the different respondents reveal that budgeting has a significant relationship with staff development. The study concluded that all schools had teachers who had undergone staff development, irrespective of whether the school budgeted for it or not. The study concentrated on staff development and budgeting, but neglected to address the problem of academic performance, leaving a knowledge gap. The current study closed the gap by determining the impact of staff development on secondary school students' academic performance in Kiambu County.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework serves as the study's foundation. Edwin A. Locke and Gray P. Lathan are proponents of the Goal Setting Theory, which this study is based on (1952). In Kiambu County, the theory will aid in determining the impact of the principal's human resource management techniques on secondary school students' performance. In 1968, the theory was advanced, and in 2012, it was reaffirmed. It tries to explain how the area of organizational behavior could grow from a solid theoretical foundation to advanced research and practical applications of better human resource management methods. The study, therefore, seeks to find out to what extent the Goal Setting Theory is applicable in showing how principal management practices of human resource influence student performance. Based on this theory, it is hoped that solutions would be suggested. This according to Edwin and Gray is simply because the school head can be trained on resource management and tailor the goals of educational institutions to the needs of the students and teachers. They should ensure that students and teachers participate in the target set in terms of school mean standard score and subject mean score. They should help students and teachers to achieve their goals by motivating them, sponsoring staff on development opportunities, managing students' discipline, involvement in participatory decision making, and encouraging staff to prepare professional records. Through such activities, head teachers would become effective and efficient resource managers as students also become achievers of better grades in national examination which will result in schools' improved mean score.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research was conducted using a descriptive survey research approach. This type of research is recommended because it allowed the researcher to collect data in order to answer inquiries about the status of the research subject. Descriptive survey research lets a researcher explain a phenomenon in terms of attitude, values, and features by determining and reporting how things are done (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). This strategy was appropriate for the research since it aided in accurately portraying people's profile events and situations.

Target Population

The target population was the principals and teachers in secondary schools in Kiambu County. In Kiambu County, there are 303 secondary schools, 227 of which are public and 76 private. The population is as shown in table 1.

Table 1. Target Population

Sub-county	No. of schools	Head teachers	Teachers
Public secondary schools	227	227	4590
Private secondary schools	76	76	1600
Total	303	303	6190

Sampling Technique and Sample Size

For the preliminary sampling of schools, a stratified sampling approach was utilized. According to Onen and Yuko (2011), this technique divides the population into groups based on criteria, and a set number of cases are chosen from each group. As a result, the 303 schools were assigned to their respective sub-counties, and then the schools were chosen at random. The Kiambu County Director of Education Office provided the categorization (2020). Principals and teachers were chosen with care. When gathering focused data, this strategy was used to pick a typical group in a population. The researcher felt that by using this strategy to pick the head teachers and teachers, the respondents provided the necessary information for the study because they are in charge of curriculum oversight and academic matters in their schools. The researcher employed a purposive sampling strategy to ensure gender equity in schools where female teachers out number male teachers and vice versa.

Out of the 303 secondary schools in the three sub county, a sample of 30 day secondary schools was picked and schools sampled from them. This was equal to 10% of the target population. A sample size of between 10 and 30 percent is a good representation of the target population when the research population is fewer than 10,000, thus 10 percent was sufficient for the study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). 30 principals and 619 teachers worked at the 30 schools as a whole. The distribution was as shown in table 2

Table 2. Sample Size

Sub-county	Sample ration	No. of schools	Head teachers	Teachers
Public secondary schools	0.1	22	22	459
Private secondary schools	0.1	8	8	160
Total	0.1	30	30	619

Data Analysis

The data from the study was quantitatively analyzed. SPSS was used to enter and evaluate the data collected. The descriptive statistics tool of SPSS was used to analyze the quantitative data to produce mean, standard deviation, and percentages, which were then shown as tables, frequencies, and percentages. Pearson Moment Data was scaled, evaluated for correlation between independent and dependent variables, and placed on interval and ratio scales using correlation analysis. The statistical link between two or more variables is summarized by the correlation coefficient, also known as r. The scale for the correlation coefficient is always set to be between -1 and +1. There isn't much of a relationship between the variables when r is close to 0, but it gets stronger when r deviates from 0 in either a positive or negative direction.

Findings and Discussions

Staff Development

The respondents were requested to indicate the extent to which they agreed with statements on staff development. The findings are as shown in table 3 and 4 respectively.

Table 3. Principals Extent of Agreement on Staff Development

Extent of Agreement on Staff Development	N	Mean	Std. Dev
Teachers who participated in staff development programmes are more effective in their job performance which improves student academic performance	28	4.179	0.670
Systemic teacher observations, coupled with aligned professional development, results in improved student academic achievement	28	3.607	1.031
Teachers opportunities for high-quality professional development leads to effective instructional practices which improves student academic achievement	28	4.500	0.509
Well trained teacher through professional development will deliver the subject content professionally and effectively improving student academic achievement	28	3.714	0.854
Staff development in schools leads to better grades attained by students in secondary schools	28	4.036	0.744
Composite mean		4.007	0.762

From the findings the composite mean was 4.007 while composite standard deviation was 0.762. This depicts that teacher’s opportunities for high-quality professional development leads to effective instructional practices which improves student academic achievement. The findings agree with a study by Uyo, Ekpoh et al. (2013) who stated that teachers who participated in staff development activities were more effective in executing their duties as compared to those who did not.

Table 4. Teachers Extent of Agreement on Staff Development

Teachers Extent of Agreement on Staff Development	N	Mean	Std. Dev
Teachers who participated in staff development programmes are more effective in their job performance which improves student academic performance	510	4.175	0.657
Systemic teacher observations, coupled with aligned professional development, results in improved student academic achievement	510	3.616	1.046
Teachers opportunities for high-quality professional development leads to effective instructional practices which improves student academic achievement	510	4.455	0.498
Well trained teacher through professional development will deliver the subject content professionally and effectively improving student academic achievement	510	3.714	0.878
Staff development in schools leads to better grades attained by students in secondary schools	510	4.033	0.763
Composite mean		3.999	0.768

From the findings the composite mean was 3.999 while composite standard deviation was 0.768. This depicts that teacher’s opportunities for high-quality professional development leads to effective instructional practices which improves student academic achievement. The findings agree with a study by Fischer et al. (2018) who found that that participating in professional development had an effect on teacher classroom activities which had an overall effect on student performance. As a result, components of instructional enactment characteristics are connected with student performance in a meaningful but modest way.

Correlation Analysis

The research question was: what was the relationship between principal’s human resource management practices and secondary school student national examination achievement in Kiambu County, Kenya. To achieve this, the researcher performed a Pearson moment correlation on the study variable's association. The findings are shown in table 5.

Table 5. Correlations Matrix

		Student national examination achievement	Staff development	Performance management	Compensation management	Participative decision
Student national examination achievement	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.612	.598	.644	.678
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.	.425	.541	.225	.968
	N	176	176	176	176	176
Staff development	Correlation Coefficient	.612	1.000	.033	.435	.001
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.002	.	.000	.003	.002
	N	176	176	176	176	176
Performance management	Correlation Coefficient	.598	.122	1.000	.026	.008
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.004	.001	.	.000	.000
	N	176	176	176	176	176
Compensation management	Correlation Coefficient	.644	.037	.026	1.000	.124
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.002	.000	.001	.	.002
	N	176	176	176	176	176
Participative decision	Correlation Coefficient	.678	.001	.008	.114	1.000
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.003	.001	.003	.000	.
	N	176	176	176	176	176

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

According to the data presented in the table above, a strong positive correlation between performance management and student national examination achievement ($r=0.598$, $p=0.04$). On the other hand, the study discovered a significant positive relationship between compensation management and student national examination achievement, as indicated by a correlation coefficient of 0.644, which indicates a strong positive relationship between the two. This strong correlation was found to be statistically significant because the significant value was 0.002, which is below 0.05. Further the study found a strong positive correlation between participative decision and student national examination achievement ($r=0.678$, $p=0.03$).

Conclusion

The study concluded that that teacher’s opportunities for high-quality professional development leads to effective instructional practices which improves student academic achievement. In addition, the study concluded that teachers who participated in staff development programmes are more effective in their job performance which improves student

academic performance. The study concluded that that the quality of performance management by head teachers enhances teaching activities which improves student academic performance. The study also concluded that principal's performance management practice of academic progress records influence students' academic performance in KCSE.

Recommendations of The Study

On staff development, the government should put in place mechanisms for enhancing progressive between training and development for teachers. Progressive review of ways of assessing and formulating emergent training needs for teachers should be put in place so as to ensure that training and development was mainstreamed in the Ministry of Education.

On performance management, there should be effort to ensure that consultative, democratic and transformational leadership styles were promoted in schools. Adequate policies aimed at guiding performance appraisal of teachers so as to the performance in schools should be formulated by the government in close collaboration with all education stakeholders. Performance management should be strengthened in schools so as to enhance assessment and feedback among teachers.

On compensation management, policies for augmenting budgetary allocations for funding training and development and for ensuring there is compensation through the Ministry of Education should be regularly enacted. There should be synchronized rewards management frameworks in schools so that promotions, cash incentives and other forms of rewarding teachers should be instituted.

On participative decision, there is need to put in place mechanisms for ensuring that principals involve teachers, parents and students when making key decisions in schools. Follow up efforts for ensuring that the recommended made after all assessments undertaken in schools are implemented should be put in place.

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