

**Effect Of In-Service Training On Performance Of Head Teachers In Public Schools In Kenya;  
A Case Of Vihiga County.**

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**ABSTRACT**

The value of a nation depends on the quality of its citizens, which in turn depends on the excellence of their education system, and this eventually is an output of the quality of the teacher. The teacher is the signpost that determines the accomplishments and ambitions of a nation. Hence, it is essential to empower teachers to make the future of a nation secure. The demands and expectations with regard to the position of a head teacher can be addressed by both induction as well as in-service training. This study focused on the effect of in-service training on performance of primary school head teachers in Vihiga County, Kenya. The specific objectives of this study were to investigate the effect of INSET programmes on academic performance of schools in Vihiga County and to establish the effect of financial management skills acquired during INSET on management of finances in public schools. A sample size of 34 Head teachers was selected to take part in the study. The study adopted descriptive study design which enabled the researcher to describe and explain events as they occur. The schools in each administrative Division were treated as a cluster during the sampling. Multi-stage sampling was used to ensure every section of the study area and cluster was adequately represented in the study. Structured questionnaires developed by the researcher were used to collect data from the selected respondents. All the items in the questionnaire were formulated in line with the study objectives and in keeping with the theoretical and empirical literature on In-service training and performance of schools. The collected data was coded and analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0 for windows. The findings of the study indicate that In-Service Training had a statistically significant effect on academic performance in Public School in Kenya and that financial management skills acquired through In-Service Training influenced financial management in public Schools in Kenya. The study findings are significant to the stakeholders, policy formulators and implementers in the Ministry of Education in terms of planning for future-in-service programmes and also form a foundation for improving service delivery among the head teachers besides bridging the existing knowledge gap in terms of in-service training and performance of head teachers in public schools in Kenya and beyond.

**Key words;** In-Service Training, Academic Performance, Financial Management, Public Schools.

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

The Performance of a head teacher is an important indicator and measure of a school's ability to achieve its goals (Shunsuke, 2006). Newton (1993) observes that performance of any organization basically means output or results. This refers to the outcomes obtained from processes, services and personnel that permit evaluation and comparison relative to goals and standards. In school environments, and more particular in the Kenyan context, performance of primary school head teachers is normally defined in terms of test scores, examination results, pupils' ability to apply what is learnt and the rate at which pupils graduate and move on to secondary schools (Eshiwani, 1987). All over the world, both Governmental and Non Governmental organizations recognize in-service training as an important tool for employees' development towards attainment of sustainable performance (Shunsuke, 2006). In the study of Karhuse (2006), he was of the view that in-service training should be able to improve the quality of services provided by employees thereby increasing the chances of attaining the fundamental goals of national development programmes. Cole (2008) supports that training is central in achievement of organizational objectives and employee performance. According to Saleemi and Bogonko (1997) employee training is not a one stop process but a never finished job so long as an organization remains operational.

Sheffield (1991-2001) conducted a study in 100 organizations in the United Kingdom where he identified in-service-training as one of the critical factors that affect productivity and profitability. According to Torrington (2005) in-service training is one of the most important variables that influence organizational performance. Cole (2008) in his study found that training is a learning activity which is directed towards the acquisition of specific knowledge and skills for the purpose of initiating or improving performance. Acquisition of appropriate human resources skills is therefore necessary as this will help cope with challenges presented by evolving needs of the ever-changing work environment. Therefore managers of institutions should undergo some form of continuous in-service training in order to update their skills and competencies towards sustainability of improvement in the performance of their organizations.

As such, head teachers who are the managers and routine inspectors of their schools should attend in-service training programmes to update their administrative skills. This is commonly organized by the Ministry of Education Science and Technology in form of seminars, workshops, conferences covering several schools and school-based training in order to sharpen their skills. These in-service

training programmes instituted by the Government through KESI (now known as KEMI) are aimed at equipping head teachers of public primary schools with the necessary competence and skills for effective handling of their new found roles in the changing work environment (Karhuse, 2006).

In response to the increasing school management challenges, the Kenya government is currently stressing on capacity building for managers and effective management of schools Sang' (2008). The government has come up with management training policies conducted at provincial and district levels. Kenya education management institute (KEMI) for example has been conducting management training programmes for all managers of schools Sang' (2008). It is upon this background that this study seeks to establish the effect of in-service training on the performance of public schools in Vihiga County.

### **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Currently the head teachers of public schools in Kenya are highly challenged to achieve performance targets because the society is now keen on education (Eshiwani, 1987). This situation was made more complex with the introduction of free primary education and banning of corporal punishment which boosted enrollment levels and thereby improved transition to Secondary Schools. This calls for continuous modification of school management strategies. As a response to the emerging challenges, the government strives to update the head teachers' school management skills through investment in In-service training programmes.

Even though head teachers in Vihiga County have been beneficiaries of in-service training, the effect of the INSET on performance of head teachers in public schools particularly in is not known and has not been documented. It is against this background that this study was conceived and designed to address this knowledge gap.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The study was guided by the following study objectives:

- i. To investigate the effect of INSET programmes on academic performance of Public Schools in Vihiga County.
- ii. To ascertain the effect of financial management skills acquired during INSET on management of finances in public schools in Vihiga County.

## **1.4 Literature Review**

### **1.4.1 Theoretical Framework**

In this study, the Path-Goal theory presented by Sheikh (2006) in his book entitled leadership and performance was applied. The path-goal leadership theory is a relatively new theory and derivative of expectancy motivation theory. The theory gets its name from the assumption that effective leaders can enhance performance of organizations like public primary schools by changing their skills and perceptions of work goals according to the prevailing situation. According to the theory, when an organization like a school has a problem, it needs to identify a specific way of solving the problem or getting a workable solution. The specific way used to address the problem is the path and the solution that is ultimately found is the goal hence the name Path-Goal theory. In this study, performance of the head teachers is the critical problem under focus and INSET is the path chosen to address it.

### **1.4.2 In-service Training**

Tulsian (2005) defines in-service training is the process of helping employees to acquire more knowledge of the job through sharpening of the needed skills, attitude and values associated with efficient performance of the jobs. Cole (2008) defines training as any learning activity which is directed towards the acquisition of specific knowledge and skills for the purpose of an occupation or task. In service training on the other hand are programmes of employee development that are delivered within an organization by external training providers.

In-service training programs are frequently carried out for head teachers of schools. They are meant to equip them with various managerial skills and make them build and improve their competences and potentials for managerial jobs. Countries all over the world recognize that in-service training is necessary for all teachers and head teachers. The head teachers who are managers of schools require some form of professional development and training in order to remain viable and competitive as their counterparts in the business world. Koech (1999) points out that head teachers who are well developed in management are also essential for successful curriculum implementation, effective and efficient management and administration of schools. In-service training has been embraced in other countries apart from Kenya, for example in Ghana and Philippines. Shunsuke observes that training in Philippines is decentralized and individual clusters of teachers have set their own training content

under the prescribed broad framework. Shunsuke (2006) does not mention the role of in-service training on work performance of head teachers, hence the need to carry out this research.

#### **1.4.3 Objectives of INSET in Kenya**

Training improves a person's skill, his or her power of intelligence and develops in him the desired attitudes and values required for his or her work. In the Kenyan context, the training programmes and all its various activities continue to be co-ordinated by the MOEST working in close liaison with the KESI within the ministry's INSET unit. In conjunction with KESI the TSC plans to train head teachers on ways of carrying out supervision in school's because it was realized that the leadership of many head teachers was poor, thus leading to management and administrative problems in school (Republic of Kenya, 1987). The main objective of in-service training programmes in Kenya is to deepen teachers' knowledge in education, and provide academic leadership training to head teachers of primary schools. Specifically, in-service training of head teachers has been conducted to upgrade their managerial skills with a view to improving on the overall standards of basics of education in Kenya (Eshiwani, 2008). Hammer, (1983) argues that even the most experienced employees must be retrained continually because of changes in job content due to promotion, refinements in technology and transfers. Management in organizations should be aware that effective training programmes also result in increased productivity, decreased absenteeism and greater work satisfaction, (Okumbe, 2001).

In-service training is necessary for all teachers and head teachers as these programmes help to prepare those involved in the implementation process of education to be more effective. For example, Okumbe (1999) recommended that for purposes of effectiveness of school teachers, school managers, and curriculum implementers, an effective in-service training should be provided to them. Mutai (2003) underscores the need for effective school management and reports that promotion of teachers to a position of responsibility should be pegged on having undergone a pre-service training on his/her new roles.

Eshiwani (1993) and Okumbe (1999) notes that training improves Head teachers effectiveness in discharging their functions. It is therefore important that training needs for school heads are addressed immediately one is appointed. This would render them effective in discharging their managerial duties such as implementing educational policies and general work performance in a school institution.

#### **1.4.4 Effect of INSET on Academic Performance**

Performance of a head teacher is an important indicator and measure of school achievement of its goals. Brumbach (1988) as quoted by Armstrong (2004) contends that performance refers to behaviors, results and adjusting to organizational behaviors and actions of work to achieve results or

outcomes. Further more, Newton (1993) observes that performance also means output or results. The outcomes obtained from processes products and services evaluation, and comparison relative to goals, standards and results.

In the context of those observations, in-service training of head teachers in Kenya is a determining factor for the success of educational organizations. Eshiwani (1987) asserts that one of the reasons cited for the poor academic performance of schools in Kenya as well as developing countries could be the weak managerial capabilities. It was perhaps with this realization that in-service training programmes for head teachers were established to serve as an instrument for the development and improvement of education in Kenya.

In the Kenyan context today, the head teachers are under greater demands from parents and sector stakeholders for better performance. If education management across Kenya is to improve, especially in public primary schools, in-service training of heads could be part of a solution. According to Sergiovanni (2002), the reason for training through in-service programmes focuses on improvement of the head teachers' ability to make more informed professional decisions, to solve problems better, and to inquire into his or her on practice. A general improvement of performance of head teachers has been sought by providing in-service programmes and activities. As demand for schools to improve student performance increases, the need for head teachers to go for inset becomes essential. Bulach, & Michael. (1990), cites that head teachers should be knowledgeable in curriculum issues to ensure that teachers cover the syllabus and asses the students' comprehension of what has been taught. Head teachers are meant to give feedback to teachers in relation to what they found out during supervision to ensure that students' academic achievements are met.

Several authors have recognized the importance of head teacher in curriculum implementation, supervision and sustainability of Academic performance. Notably is the work of Shiundu and Omulando (1990) who observes that head teachers are the day-to-day managers who have the responsibility to ensure that the teachers implement the set curriculum and that learning is actually taking place. The head teachers' role in sustaining academic performance includes inspecting lesson plans, schemes of work, lesson notes, setting academic achievement targets and ensuring that the syllabus are covered on time. Whereas the above studies of Bulach (1999) and Omulando and Shiundu (1992) looks at effectiveness of head teacher in curriculum development, it does not

categorically say whether an effective head teacher should go for INSET in order to effectively address academic performance of the school, hence the head to carry out this study.

Financial management is that activity concerned with planning, raising, controlling and administering funds used in business. Paisey (1992) observes that the survival of any organization and the realization of its objectives depend upon effective financial control that of all kinds of information in education, none is more important than financial information since all activities of the school and its ultimate performance turn on soundly managed finances. According to Bennars (1994) he observes that financial management skills is paramount to all heads of schools and that they should know how the monies are obtained, established and expended in schools the head teachers should accurately prepare the financial establishments and present to the school committee for discussion hence the head teacher plays the role of a financial manager in the school.

The Kenya FPE programmes continues to draw an increasing concern among many stakeholders as one of the immediate concerns has been the ability of the head teachers to effectively execute their new roles as managers and accountants for the FPE funds (Paneng, 1999). Koech (1999) on his recommendation on financial management establishes that many students end up rioting and destroying school Property because of their anger at what they perceive as sub-standards services brought about by mismanagement of their parents hard-earned money.

The whole issue of poor financial management in education institutional has contributed to increased costs & poor returns. Some head teachers themselves have no idea of the most elementary sound financial practices yet in many instances, they are charged with planning and implementing of expensive projects which often fail to be completed due to misappropriation of funds. Karhuse (2007) in his study on leadership programmes establishes that there is need to enhance the competency of elementary head-teachers in the management of the rapid enrolment rate and therefore an increase in capitation grants in the hands of the incompetent head teachers. However, the studies of Karhuse and Paisey stresses more on general procedures and rules of handling finances without identifying the need for in- service training of head teachers and its effect on performance, hence the need to conduct this study.

Financial resources according to Ken (1989), lies squarely within the realms of the Head teachers' duty. Thus, in order to ensure good performance, the head teachers have to manage and provide the required resource to the staff and learners respectively.

### 1.5 Methodology

Descriptive survey design was adopted in this study and 34 head teachers were selected to take part in the study as respondents. The study was carried out in Vihiga County, Kenya between May and August 2015. The primary data collected from the respondents was coded, analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Qualitative data was presented graphically by use of bar graphs, pie charts and line graphs. Inferential statistics involving Chi-Square, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used establish the direction and magnitude of interaction between key study constructs. The collected data was tested using Kolmogorov – Smirnov (K-S) test to determine whether it was normally and uniformly distributed. K-S is a non-parametric test that compares the cumulative distribution function for variables within a specified distribution (Malhotra, 2007). The overall verdict of K-S test using normalized Z –statistics for all the study variables obtained at the level of significance of (.000) (2-tailed) indicated that the data for this study was normally and uniformly distributed, hence permitting the use of non-parametric statistics like chi-Square.

### 1.6 Study Findings

#### 1.6.1 Effect of In- Service training on Academic Performance of Public Schools.

The effect of INSET on academic programmes was tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and results presented in table 1.

**Table 1: Correlation between INSET and Academic Performance**

		Academic Performance
<b>In-Service</b>	Pearson Correlation	.596**
<b>Training</b>	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	34

\*\*Correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2- tailed)

\*Correlation significant at 0.01 level (2 - tailed)



Findings reveal a statistically significant positive relationship In-Service Training and academic performance in public schools in Vihiga County ( $r=0.596$ ;  $P<0.05$ ). This means that when head teachers are trained in various leadership and management aspects, students in their schools register improved academic performance. Training improves head teachers' effectiveness in addressing administrative duties in schools including strict enforcement of curriculum implementation activities. The results of this study are in line with the argument of Eshiwani (1987) who asserts that in-service training of head teachers in Kenya is a determining factor for the success of educational organizations. Eshiwani (1987) found out that one of the reasons cited for the poor academic performance of schools in Kenya as well as developing countries could be the weak managerial capabilities. It was perhaps with this realization that in-service training programmes for head teachers was established to serve as an instrument for the development and improvement of education in Kenya (Eshiwani, 1987).

Bulach & Michael (1990) cited that head teachers should be knowledgeable in curriculum issues to ensure that teachers cover the syllabus and assess the students' comprehension of what has been taught. Head teachers are meant to give feedback to teachers in relation to what they found out during supervision to ensure that students' academic achievements are met. However Shiundu and Omulando (1990) observe that head teachers are the day-to-day managers who have the responsibility to ensure that the teachers implement the set curriculum and that learning is actually taking place.

### 1.6.2 Effect of In-Service Training on management of finances in public schools.

To determine the effect of INSET on management of finances in public schools, a Chi-square test was run and findings presented in table 2.

**Table 2: Chi-square results for effect of INSET on Management of Finances in Public Schools**

	Value	Df	Asympt.Sig. (2 -sided)	Exact Sig (2- sided)	Exact Sig. (1 -sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	19.548 <sup>a</sup>	1	.008		
Continuity Correction <sup>b</sup>	19.414	1	.008		
Likelihood Ratio	19.768	1	.006		
Fisher's Exact Test				0.008	.008

Linear by Linear Association	19.917	1	.008		
N of valid cases	34				

0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 4. The minimum expected count is 51.48.

Findings in table 2 reveal a significant positive relationship between INSET and management of Finances in Public Primary Schools ( $X^2 = 19.548$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ;  $df = 1$ ). This implies that INSET enhances head teacher's ability to effectively manage finances in public schools in Vihiga County. Since only one degree of freedom ( $df = 1$ ) was recorded in the  $X^2$  computation, Yates correction for continuity was performed and results accordingly incorporated in the final score ( $X^2 = 19.548$ ;  $df = 1$ ). This was a single sample Chi-square where the researcher intended to establish the goodness-of-fit between observed and expected results in the relationship between INSET and financial management in public schools.

The findings of this study are consistent with those of Koech (1999) on financial management where he contended that many students end up rioting and destroying school Property because of their anger at what they perceive as sub-standards services brought about by mismanagement of their parents hard-earned money. Financial resources according to Ken (1989) lies squarely within the realms of the head teachers' duty. Thus, in order to ensure good performance, the heads have to manage and provide the required resource to the staff and learners respectively.

## 1.7 Conclusions

Regarding the findings of the study in relation to the objectives, the following conclusions were made:

- i. Considering the first objective of the study it is concluded that In-Service Training influences academic performance of Public School in Kenya.
- ii. Following the findings on the second objective of the study, it is concluded that financial management skills acquired though In-Service Training influence financial management in Public Schools in Kenya.

### 1.8 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are made:

There is need for head teachers to undergo in-service training to enhance their knowledge and skills so as to enhance their ability to make more informed professional decisions, to solve problems better, and to inquire into his or her own practice. As demand for schools to improve student performance increases, the need for head teachers to go for INSET becomes essential.

Financial management skills are paramount to all heads of public primary schools in Kenya. Head teachers need to gain a general appreciation of the way school finances are obtained and prudently expended to meet the schools objectives. This is because head teachers play the vital role of financial managers in public primary schools. With the increased government and donor funding in public primary schools due to Free Primary Education (FPE), knowledge of financial management by head teachers has only but become a must.

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