THE PRINCIPALS INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISORY ROLES INFLUENCE ON THE ATTAINMENT OF KCSE TARGETS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN TRANS-NZOIA COUNTY

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Abstract

Educational institutions aspire to attain set academic targets. However, set targets are hardly achieved. The objective of this study was to assess the extent to which the principals' instructional supervisory roles influenced the attainment of targets at KCSE. The study targeted, 101 public secondary schools, from which a sample of 21 Mixed Day, 4 Boys boarding, 5 Girls boarding school and 5 mixed day and boarding. Stratified, random sampling method was employed to sample schools while purposeful sampling was used to select the principals, director of studies, Parents Association chairpersons and form three-class prefects as respondents. Questionnaires, interviews and document analysis were used in data collection. Descriptive statistics were used in qualitative data analysis, while quantitative data was analyzed with the help of paired sample t-test, and ANOVA. A chi-square tested the hypothesis. Results confirm the existence of a positive relationship between the principals' instructional supervisory role and academic targets, hence the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative upheld. The study provides insights regarding the principals' instructional roles in mitigating the attainment of targets. It recommends that the principals' should spearhead the creation of a conducive environment and execute their leadership mandates with efficiency.

Keywords: Instruction, Supervision, Roles, Targets and Attainment.

1.0 Background of the Study

The quest for desirable change has for a long time driven school principals into devising approaches for attaining desired strategic outcomes. One such strategy is setting targets. Despite the lack of universally accepted definition of the word target, most the definition agrees that a target is a numeric description of agency work and the results of that work (Willet, 2009). Although there are numerous levels of measuring achievement, students' targets are usually pegged on formative and Summative levels of evaluation. At the formative stage, targets are meant to measure short time gains in a given lesson or period of time. On the other hand, the targets pegged on summative evaluation level are judgmental since they focus on the learners' final grade/outcome on the base of numerical feedback (Iqbal, Suleiman & Irshadullah, 2017).

Over the years, education planners have employed target setting as a strategy to improve academic performance. Targets give everyone in an institution a clear sense of what they should be aiming at. When targets were well set in schools, they enable students to focus on what's important as they ignore other distractions. In Great Britain, the non-attainment of educational goals was a great challenge, which prompted the government in 2003 to initiate environmental improvement measures (Bennett, 2017). In addition, the school leadership under the principal was mandated to ensure that facilities were adequately utilized in order to promote the attainment of goals (Bennett, 2017).

Setting targets as a strategy for promoting students' performance was witnessed also undertaken in New Zealand, Australia, Malasya, India and Korea as observed by Holsted, (2015), Hattie (2008), Surasak, (2013) & Cheryan, (2018) respectively. They all point to the fact that instructional supervision by the principal plays a role in students' achievement. In the African context, school-based determinants had been partly identified as influencers of students' performance. Studies carried out in sub-Saharan Africa by Mijgaard and Mingat, (2012), in South Africa, by Chisholm, (2011), Mmotlane (2009), and in Nigeria by Abe, (2014) all identified: retention, completion rate, poverty, teacher presence, quality teaching, regular assessment, parental engagement, and students' self-drive study as factors that shouldn't be ignored when analyzing the factors that contribute to improving student performance.

In the Kenyan context, the Teachers Service Commission (the body charged with employing teachers) began to enforce the target setting process in schools by entrenching it into the code of regulation by 2015. The TSC formulated Teacher Performance Appraisal and Development tool for tracking teacher performance (TSC, 2016). The principal was positioned at the center of curriculum implementation, a process that was aided by the introduction of annual Performance Contracts (PC). The tools captured performance parameters within the school setting for the teachers and principals' respectively. Key among the indicators of ascertaining/measuring the performance teachers' and students' achievement was pegged on students' academic targets. Cumulative termly targets reflected the average of the year, which pointed towards KCSE.

The effectiveness of a school in terms of curriculum delivery rested on the shoulders of the principals whose mandate was to supervise and monitor the process (Mirera, 2012). It therefore, implied that principals' instructional supervisory role played a critical role in realizing student achievement (Musyoka, 2018). In Trans Nzoia, empirical research by Simiyu and Akaranga, (2016); Mobegi, Ondigi & Oburu, (2010); Abiri, 2013; and Barasa (2015), as regards general

determinants of academic performance at KCSE had been undertaken. However, none of these studies had addressed school-based factors that influence the attainment of students' academic targets in public Secondary schools, with particular reference to Trans Nzoia County. Moreover, very little was known regarding the extent to which principals' instructional supervisory role influenced the attainment of students set academic targets at KCSE, in public secondary schools in Trans Nzoia County, Kenya.

It must was observed by stakeholders that students' academic targets at KCSE were rarely attained in public secondary schools, in spite of the strategy being employed by the Teachers Service Commission as a tool of enhancing student performance. Failure to attain set academic targets often resulted in unacceptable levels of attrition, reduced graduates throughout, which in turn increased the cost of education (Jayanthi, 2014).

The purpose of this study was to therefore to determine the extent to which Principals' instructional supervisory role influenced the attainment of set performance targets at KCSE in public secondary schools and recommend redial measures, to address the challenge.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The quest for high student performance has compelled principals to devise various strategies. However, public secondary schools continue to register dismal performance, far below the set students' academic performance targets. Information maintained at Trans Nzoia County Directors Education indicates that public secondary schools hardly attain the set targets. Scanty research evidence points to the fact that aspects of the principals instructional supervision roles such as; leadership style, experience, education level, self –esteem, self-efficacies among other variables could be associated with the non- attainment of students set targets. Stakeholders have continued to blame each other and if this unfortunate situation persists, it will create more confusion. Therefore, establishing why set targets are not attained and the extent to which the principals' instructional supervision role influences the attainment of students' set targets necessitated the need to carry out the current study, in public secondary schools in Trans Nzoia County.

1.3 Significance of the study

The findings of the study was hoped to provide valuable information to government, school administrators, teachers and students on what ought to be done so that the principals' instructional supervision activities increase the like hood of attaining the set targets.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

The study adopted the theory of Education Production Function (EPF) whose main proponents are Dewey, Husted and Kenny (1998). The theory presumes that there is exchangeability of predictors to produce similar outcome. Education results are viewed to be a function of various predictor variables which when manipulated in the educational process, they yield certain outcome. In the current study, the predictor variable was the principal's instructional supervisory role (teacher motivation, availing & managing resources, and supervision) whereas the output was the attainment of students set academic targets at KCSE.

The researcher conceptualized that the manipulation of the principals' supervision role could

influence the attainment of students set academic targets at KCSE. The principals instructional supervision role was the independent variable while the dependent variable was the attainment of students set academic targets at KCSE.

2. Literature review

Principals' Instructional Supervisory Roles and set Targets
Executing operational leadership was used in the study to imply the act of scheduling programmes to determine and influence the activities of an institution towards the attainment of specified objectives. Mirera (2012) retaliated that instructional supervision entailed performing administrative duties such as planning, directing, organizing, and coordinating in order to achieve institutional goals.

As a chief executor of the school's overall strategic plan, the principal was expected to execute his/her leadership skills through enhancing teacher capacity. Nzambi (2012) noted that as instructional leaders' headteachers had the mandate to provide workshop training opportunities during which teachers would be equipped with skills and knowledge needed for efficient service delivery.

Another notable area of instructional supervision role was availing and managing instructional resources. For effective curriculum implementation, the principal was guided by a budget to procure supplementary and relevant teaching and learning resources. Physical resources played a critical role in determining the students' achievement (Abbasi & Mir, 2012). In addition, the principal was also mandated to build the teachers' capacity, an act which was expected to lead to effective utilization of the procured instructional resources. The principal also ensured the safety and security of procured resources for routine use.

Availing instructional resources was not enough. The psych of the implementers (teachers) was the fuel needed to run the software in school. Dabo (2016) noted that improving teacher motivation was a necessary prerequisite for enhanced students learning outcomes. The principal was expected to establish forms of motivation that yielded the highest results when a plan of action was executed (Shephered-Jones, 2018). Motivated teachers required less supervision and were always willing to accomplish teaching and learning goals. Motivated staff and particularly teachers, had a sense of confidence, enjoy teaching, and were loyal besides exhibiting a high sense of commitment.

The principals' role was to create an enabling environment (social and physical) for meaningful engagements to take place. When teachers were satisfied with their working environment, they got motivated towards inspiring students to remain focused on achieving challenging academic excellence. Teachers could be motivated intrinsically (non-material) or extrinsically (material form). In this regard, the principal role was to find out what form of motivation yielded the highest results before employing the strategy (Shephered-Jones, 2018).

Finally, the research by Abubakar (2018) confirmed that supervision helped to ensure set standards by the respective Ministry of Education were adhered to and the goals were met. To achieve enhanced performance and goal attainment he further insisted that supervision ought to entail

monitoring teachers' job performance and the execution of timely remedial measures were implemented to guarantee advancement of teacher competencies. This confirmed the assertion by Mobegi, Ondigi & Oburu, (2010) that the principal was the lead coordinator and appraiser. Curriculum supervision by the principal played a pivotal role in the attainment of desirable students' performance.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Design
The study used a correlation research design, which helped to investigate the possibility of existence of relationship between the principals' instructional supervisory role and students' academic targets at KCSE.

3.2 Target Population
The study targeted all Principals, Directors of studies; form three-class prefects, and the Chair persons of Parents Associations in Public Secondary Schools. Records at Trans-Nzoia County Director of Education office (2018) showed that the County had 101 public secondary schools which had sat for KCSE, for the period under investigation (2014-2018). They comprised of 5 mixed day and boarding schools, 70 mixed day schools, 12 Boys boarding, and 14 girls boarding schools.

3.3 Sampling Procedures
To guarantee equal representation, the study used stratified sampling technique to pacify the population into four homogenous sub-groups (strata). The sub-groups were; boys boarding, girls boarding, mixed day/boarding, and mixed day schools. Names of the schools from the four categories were inscribed on a piece of paper and then folded and shuffled in respective baskets. Thereafter, the researcher used a simple random sampling technique to select 30% from each category. Fincham (2008) had recommended a representative sample of between 10% - 30% of the accessible population as an adequate sample. Fincham (2008) further endorsed that whenever the target population was small (less than 1000 members), a minimum sample of 30% was acceptable for educational research. The process led to the sampling of 21 schools from the mixed day strata, 4 from boys boarding, and 5 from girls boarding. The fourth category of mixed day and boarding were purposively sampled because there were only 5 in total, a number perceived by the researcher to small, hence no need for sampling. The reasonable representation of all categories of school did not only improve the precision of the sample but also reduced the sample error and took care of gender representation.

From the sampled schools, single random sampling technique and purposive sampling was used to sample 35 principals, directors of studies, Chairpersons of parents Association and 142 form three class-prefects (each representing a respective stream) to be respondents.

3.4 Validity of the Study

To ensure validity, a further literature review was undertaken to assist in the operationalization of the constructs that were measured. A pilot study was undertaken prior to the study. A sample of close and open-ended question were developed and presented to the experts for scrutiny within the department (School of Education). This helped in creating and modifying accurate measures of the construct. This followed by a pilot study that targeted schools in Trans Nzoia County that did not eventually participate in the main research. Thereafter, experts from the School of Education Kisii University scrutinized the questionnaires for clarity, formatting, acceptable response options and wording. Appropriate recommendations were incorporated in the data collection instruments.

3.5 Reliability of the study

To ensure reliability, a pilot study of a single test, for the two sets of questionnaires in six schools from the same County was administered. This helped in ascertaining the internal consistency of the instrument items. The reliability coefficient of the research instrument was assessed using Cronbach's alpha (α) and computed using SPSS computer software version 20. An alpha of 0.78 was established, an indicator that reliability was adequate. Ursachi, Horodnic and Zait (2015) note as a general rule that, α of 0.6-0.7 indicates an acceptable level of reliability, and 0.8 or greater is a very good level.

3.6 Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis involved a process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of information collected (Kumar, 2011). This was done descriptively with the help of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (Version 20) package which provided a summary of descriptive statistics. Qualitative data analysis took the approach of thematic examination to identify patterns in the interview and questionnaires data. This presentation was in line with the objective of the study. The qualitative approach method helped fill the gaps left by the quantitative method. This approach was suitable for gaining an in-depth understanding of underlying reasons and motivations.

Quantitative data involved the use of inferential statistics that entailed conversion of data to numerical forms before subjecting it to statistical analysis. Evidence was deduced with the help of the chi-square leading to the rejection or acceptance of the null hypotheses under investigation. In addition, a pared T-Test aided in the establishment of a statistical significance in mean differences between the set and attained Mean.

In addition, analysis of documents such as stores and ledger books were undertaken to deduce relevant information in line with the objective. The measure of quality (availability, state and usage) was analyzed from critical instructional resources namely: learning/teaching materials, tuition facilities, and physical education facilities were analyzed

4.0 results and Discussion
4.1 Introduction

This study sought to determine the extent to which Principals' instructional supervisory role influenced the attainment of set performance targets at KCSE in public secondary schools in Trans-Nzoia County. Table 1 is a paired t-test result which indicates that a statically significant difference in the observed means between the set target and the actual achieved performance across the secondary schools in Trans-Nzoia County.

Table 1: Paired Samples T-Test for the Difference in Set KCSE Performance and Attained Performance

	Paired Differences					T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 Target - Achieved	2.30333	1.05552	.19271	1.90919	2.69747	11.952	29	.000
Pair 2 Target – Achieved	2.15167	.90995	.16613	1.81188	2.49145	12.951	29	.000
Pair 3 Target – Achieved	2.15000	.99195	.18110	1.77960	2.52040	11.872	29	.000
Pair 4 Target – Achieved	2.09000	1.08671	.19840	1.68422	2.49578	10.534	29	.000
Pair 5 Target – Achieved	2.05000	1.00164	.18287	1.67598	2.42402	11.210	29	.000

Source: Researcher, (2020)

The years under investigation (2014-2018) show a significant differences between the set and achieved with p-value $0.000 < 0.05$. The findings reflect the general poor performance of students. This was a sad reality as non-attainment of set targets at KCSE diminished students' opportunity to pursue their dream careers and reduced their chances of meaningful participation in national development. It also raised many disturbing concerns among stakeholders (Havergal, 2015). Non-attainment of set targets at KCSE diminished student's opportunities to pursue their dream careers and at the same time reduced their chances of meaningful engagement in the countries progress. It also created feelings of unworthiness and frustration (Ray, 2014). Table 2 indicates the frequency of classroom visitation by the principal.

Table 2: Principal's Response Regarding Classroom Visitation

Visitation	Frequency	Percent
Weekly	4	13.3
Monthly	16	53.3
Termly	11	36.7
Total	**31**	**100**

Source: Researcher, (2020)

Table 2, shows a minority of 4(13.3%) of the respondents visited classrooms weekly, while those who visited the classroom monthly made up 16 (53.3%). The remaining 11 (36.7%) were principals who visited the classrooms termly. Visitations to the classrooms enabled the principals to oversee and provide the much-needed intervention during the teaching and learning process. It also reflected on the effectiveness of the principal in supervising the curriculum implementation. Minimal visitation means less interaction between the teachers, students and the principals. Further, minimal visitations for instructional supervision implies that the principal was not monitoring the objectives set to help achieve the set target. Samoei (2014) noted that some principals refrained from visiting classrooms for classroom observation and rarely provided in-service training for teachers. This partly explains why some schools missed the attainment of set academic targets at KCSE. Table 3 captures the director of studies' response to the principals' observation roles.

Table 3: Instructional Supervision Engagements –DOS' Responses

Pre-Observation	N=30	1	2	3	4
The principal supervises the teachers as they prepare for the teaching/learning exercise in order to fulfill the lesson objectives	F	17	13	0	0
	%	56.7	43.3	0	0
The principal makes attempts to create a positive relationship with the teachers as they prepare lesson plans and classroom expectations	F	19	10	1	0
	%	63.3	33.3	3.3	0
The principal discusses the type of assessment (test, quiz, portfolio, project and essay) to be used by the teacher to determine whether the lesson objectives will be met	F	11	17	2	0
	%	36.7	56.7	6.7	0
The principal discusses how the teacher addresses individual differences among students and the classroom management approach.	F	13	15	2	0
	%	43.3	50	6.7	0
The principal provides all the teaching and learning resources needed for improved performance.	F	21	8	1	0
	%	70	26.6	3.3	0
Observation					
The principal records information regarding teacher-student interactions, as he/she looks for patterns of involvement and non-involvement from the students.	F	12	14	4	0
	%	40	46.7	13.3	0
The principal visits classrooms regularly to monitor and ascertain students' progress during the teaching and learning processes	F	15	12	3	0
	%	50	40	10	0
The principal evaluates and records the strengths and weaknesses of the teacher observed during the teaching/learning exercise.	F	4	21	3	0
	%	13.3	76.7	10	0
The principal determines whether the instructional time allocated for the lesson is adequate for meaningful learning to take place.	F	13	14	2	1
	%	43.3	46.7	6.7	3.3
The principal evaluates the teaching methods applied by teachers, as the basis of guiding them to improve on their pedagogical skills.	F	7	16	7	0
	%	23.3	53.3	23.3	0
The principal collects data that helps to address the objective of the lesson and record the various instructional strategies the teacher uses to start, sustain and conclude the lesson.	F	11	13	5	1
	%	36.7	43.3	16.7	3.3
The principal assesses the teacher's capacity to integrate ICT in the teaching and learning exercise	F	6	12	11	1
	%	20	40	36.7	3.3
Post Observation					
The principal encourages the teachers to acquire new skills that could be supportive during times of frustrations that may occur in class	F	517	11	2	0
	%	56.7	36.7	6.7	0
The principal analyzes the teaching process after the classroom observation and advises the teacher accordingly	F	12	14	4	0
	%	40	46.7	13.3	0
The principal shares information gathered during the teaching/learning with a view of helping the teacher make adjustments going forward.	F	13	13	4	0
	%	43.3	43.3	13.3	0
The principal dialogues with the teacher on how to better their output as professional teachers	F	21	6	3	0
	%	70	20	10	0
The principal holds staff appraisal meetings to discuss the strength, weaknesses, and opportunities that are helpful in the attainment of set targets.	F	19	10	1	0
	%	63.3	33.3	3.3	0
The principal organizes seminars and refresher sessions aimed at equipping the teaching staff with appropriate teaching skills.	F	11	12	7	0
	%	36.7	40	23.3	0
The principal develops a robust reward system for teachers and students with a view of enhancing their motivation.	F	7	16	7	0
	%	23.3	53.3	23.3	0
The principal provides strategic leadership in line with the school's strategic plan	F	19	6	4	1
	%	63.3	20	13.3	3.3

Source: Researcher, (2020)

In regards to observation in instructional supervision,(table 3) the majority 17(56.7%) of DOS respondents asserted that their principals always availed instructional resources that the teachers

used in realizing the lesson objectives 13 (43.3%) claimed that their principal supervised the teachers as they prepared for the teaching/learning exercise in order fulfill the lesson objectives. The respondent's opinions were also similar as the majority 29(96.7%) affirmed that their principal made attempts to create a positive relationship with the teachers as they prepared lesson plans and shared about their expectations sometimes and always.

Generally, it could be seen from the findings above that in regards to the principal's instructional supervision roles from the pre-observation to the post-observation phase, the majority of the DOS asserted that their principals sometimes and always undertook activities and measures to promote teaching and learning process. From these findings, the researcher could deduce that from the DOS' point of view, the principal's execution of instructional supervision was above average. These findings were in line with those of Mweru (2010) who reported that supervision was critical in a system that was concerned with keeping up with the efforts of employees in line with the goals of the administration. Kotirde and Yunos (2014) emphasized that the principal must undertake, planning, organizing, coordination, influencing, and communication as part of his/her daily routine. An enabling environment could be realized when the principal takes the lead in providing/availing as well as supervising both human and material resources (Mumasi, 2013). This was anticipated to impact positively on students' academic performance.

Table 4 shows a chi-square goodness of fit test results of the relationship between the principals' instructional supervision and the achievement of the set academic performance target.

Table 4: Chi-Square Results- Instructional Supervision and Target Achievement

Resource Availability		Target Performance				P-value
		N=30	Close Extent	Moderate Extent	No Extent	
Teaching and Learning Material	Low-quality evidence	F	0	0	11	0.024
		%	0	0	36.7	
	High-quality evidence	F	3	8	0	
		%	10	26.7	0	
	Moderate-quality evidence	F	0	2	4	
		%	0	6.7	13.3	
Tuition Facilities	Low-quality evidence	F	0	1	11	0.032
		%	0	3.3	36.7	
	High-quality evidence	F	3	8	0	
		%	10	26.7	0	
	Moderate-quality evidence	F	0	1	6	
		%	0	3.3	20	

Physical education facilities	Low-quality evidence	F	0	5	10	0.044
		%	0	16.7	33.3	
	High-quality evidence	F	2	6	0	
		%	6.7	20	0	
	Moderate-quality evidence	F	0	0	7	
		%	0	0	23.3	

Source: Researcher, (2020)

Table 4 displays that the majority of the schools whose actual performance was far off from the performance targets 'had low-quality evidence 11(36.7%) of teaching and learning resources, whereas those schools whose mean was closer to the target 3(10%), had high-quality evidence of teaching and learning resources. Therefore adequacy and proper effective usage of relevant teaching and learning resources were important for the school's achievement of its set target, as supported by statistically significant chi-square results of p-value 0.024<0.05. An increase in teaching resources would have a likelihood of significant influence on set targets. The principals' capacity to mobilize and effectively manage teaching and learning resources greatly determined the extent to which targets were attained.

Similarly, a small number of schools with high-quality evidence of 3(10%) of tuition facilities exhibited a high level of attaining set targets to a closer extent. This was supported by the statistically significant p value (p=0.032<0.05). Therefore, the researcher inferred that the state, availability and proper usage of relevant tuition facilities was crucial for the attainment of the set target.

Additionally, the adequacy and effective use of physical education facilities by the students' enabled them to engage in extra learning hours as their brains were stimulated. These findings show that the availability of physical education facilities significantly increased the probability of schools achieving their set performance targets. This fact was supported by the statistically significant p-value of (p=0.044<0.05). The provision of adequate and relevant instructional resources by the principal as the CEO was reinforced by the findings of Abassi & Mir (2012) who retaliated that physical resources played a pivotal role in determining student achievement.

The null hypothesis which stated that there is no statistically significant relationship between the principals' instructional supervisory role and the attainment of set performance targets at KCSE in public secondary schools in Trans-Nzoia County was rejected. The chi-square results, provided evidence that there was a statistically significant relationship between the principals' instructional supervisory role and set performance targets at KCSE in public secondary schools in Trans-Nzoia County, Kenya.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations
5.1 Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the null hypothesis was dismissed and alternative the hypothesis was adopted. It was inferred that there is a statistically significant relationship between the

principals' instructional supervisory role and the attainment of targets at KCSE in Trans-Nzoia County, Kenya. In addition, it was also evident that timely procurement and proper utilization of instructional resources' such as learning/teaching material, tuition and physical education facilities in schools had an association with target attainment. To ensure effective utilization of instructional resources, the principal has to enhance the teachers' capacity, boost their morale through trainings/workshops programs and take the lead in creating a conducive environment. In addition, the principals' who increase the frequency of curriculum supervision and proceed to do so with objectivity increases the likelihood of students meeting the set target.

5.2 Policy Recommendations

i.   The principal should initiate and sustain programs (training/workshop) for continuously enhancing the teachers' competency so that they can effectively utilize the instructional resources while implementing the curriculum.
ii.   The TSC should organize frequent capacity building workshops for Principals as regards the need for increasing the frequency of instructional supervision, ensure timely feedback and employ a professional approach while undertaking supervision.
iii.   The principal should strategically expedite the process of procuring and availing, relevant, adequate, instructional resources, needed for curriculum implementation process.
iv.   The principal should transformational leadership by putting in place programs that guarantee the likelihood of attaining the set targets to a larger extent.

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