INFLUENCE OF STAFFING LEVELS AND SCHOOL LOCATION ON HEAD TEACHERS' INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION PRACTICES IN INTEGRATED ISLAMIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to establish the influence of staffing levels on head teachers' instructional supervision practices in Integrated Islamic Primary Schools in Nairobi and Garissa Counties, Kenya. The study adopted the descriptive survey design. The target population for this study consisted of 86 head teachers and 688 teachers of integrated Islamic primary school. Census was used to obtain 86 head teachers (42 from Garissa County and 44 from Nairobi City County). Out of the 688 teachers, stratified proportionate sampling using was used to obtain 234 teachers from integrated Islamic primary schools in Garissa and Nairobi. Structured questionnaires for head teachers and teachers as well as interview guide (for head teachers) were used for data collection. Analysis used descriptive and inferential statistics such as frequencies, cross-tabulation percentages, correlation to summarize the data. The results showed that there understaffing has a significant effect on head teachers' *instructional supervision (r-.038).*

Further, findings indicated that urban teachers are more qualified than rural teachers (M=4.04). The study concluded that limited (inadequate teaching staff) created work overload on the part of head teachers since they had to teach more lessons than usual thereby becoming an impediment to frequent instructional support to teachers. Based on study findings, the study recommended that managers and stakeholders in integrated Islamic primary schools in Garissa and Nairobi counties, and elsewhere applicable to employ adequate numbers of qualified teachers improve instructional supervision of head teachers.

Keywords: Head teachers, instructional supervision, school location, understaffing levels

INTRODUCTION

Education is a powerful tool that enhances individuals' capabilities to actualize their dreams from the imaginable into reality (Oxfam, 2019).

Good number of countries have dedicated to offering quality and valuable education for each and every one (Maina, 2018). Primary education is a basis for education in succeeding higher education levels (Sodorkin, 2011). This is supported by the findings of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organizations (UNESCO, 2014) and Etor (2014) which acknowledged education as one of the fundamental human rights. Different religions including Islam put substantial emphasis on its believers and followers to obtain knowledge. From Islamic perspective, education is a permanent process of training a person to actualize his function and reconstruction of his society. Integration of education is the provision of secular and Islamic education in one learning institution at the same time (Rosnani, 2013, Abdi, 2017), Arthur, 2017).

Glickman (2015) revealed that on a continuous basis, the governments of different nations endeavour to fund learning institutions to make sure that they have teaching personnel and instructional resources as well as providing a conducive environment to both the teacher and leaner (Ngugi, 2015; Muthima, Udoto & Anditi, 2016).

A number of developing countries, including Kenya have financial support initiatives to ensure increased enrolment, progression and graduation (Bray, 2002; Asyango, 2005; Ayako, 2006; Ngware, Onsomu & Muthaka, 2007. Ndiku & Muhavi, 2013). Regardless of the increased enrolment and big investments in education system, Elacqua (2016) found that provision of good and effective instruction services needs to be on the list for quality education to be achieved. Access and progression is however thwarted by inadequate staffing (Asiago, 2018). Providing quality education requires adequate planning and execution of plans by managers of educational institutions. Reliability, in the educational system perspective is brought about by providing adequate teaching staff and creating a conducive learning environment that will ensure school administrators specifically head teachers are facilitated and enhanced with effective supervision practices (Peretomode, 2014). Within any school organization personnel is the most valuable asset. In a study, Glanz, Shulman and Sullivan (2014) state that to deliver services to clients effectively, it is important to take into consideration staff capacity in terms of the numbers and their competence.

At present teachers in Kenya are employed and deployed on demand driven policy (Teachers Service Commission, 2012). Teachers recruited and deployed as the vacancies arise and at the same time the financial ability to cater for the recruitment and deployment. This implies that financial constraint is a huge factor in the short supply of teaching staff in Kenyan schools. This compromises the quality of education offered in schools since the head teachers are unable to carry out instructional supervision because of the inadequate number of teachers in their schools (Maina, 2018). For an organization to have the ability and capacity to grow, it is crucial to ensure the availability and quality of personnel within the same organization. According to Nyandiko (2014) head teachers are experiencing shortages. These shortages are due to the unbalanced distribution of teachers because of the preference of the teachers to work in urban and semi urban areas or other high potential areas.

Most institutions consider the placement of schools as an important factor. Location can however also be in terms of whether a school is located in the less developed areas or in the developed areas.

In the Kenyan setting, location of a school in an urban area could determine the amenities available to the school, learners and the teaching and nonteaching staff. Some of the factors related to school location that could negatively affect head teachers' role in instructional supervision could be inadequate social amenities (Gawande, Sabihuddin. & Mahatme. 2020). According to Bore (2012), human resource is critical for effectiveness and efficiency in any organization. This is particularly in educational SO institutions where inadequate staff could gravely compromise the quality of instructional supervision that head teachers provide. The compromise could be occasioned by the fact that head teachers could be more engaged in rather than teaching offering instructional supervision support that classroom teachers need.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Concerns have been raised on staff imbalances between urban and rural areas (Owede, & Mbadiwe, 2018). The same situation obtains in the Kenyan situation as it does in Nigeria. Rural schools tend to be avoided by most teachers while the vast majority; given a choice they would flock to urban areas to enjoy the social amenities that are associated with such areas.

In addition, teaching in urban areas also has the benefit of having more learning resources, better exposed parents and the possibility of attracting more philanthropic initiatives. With hindrances such as few number of teachers, school location is bound to affect the staffing levels and consequently leave head teachers with teaching loads than counterparts in urban areas; hence compromise on their quality of their instructional supervision (Osokoya & Akuche, 2012). Due to understaffing, head teachers are faced with heavy workload (Ndungu, 2015). As a result, little or no time is allocated to instructional supervision. Understaffing leads to few contact hours between the head teachers and the teachers whom they are supposed to mentor (Lidoro, 2014). The current study sought to determine whether significant differences existed between head teachers' reported instructional practices and school location (Nairobi City County and Garissa County). The study therefore sought to determine whether significant differences existed between rural and urban based schools. In addition, the study also sought to analyze whether the reported head teachers' instructional practices were better rated based on the study location.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Human resource, according to Bore (2012) is the most important resource in school organization. Teachers comprise the most imperative human resource in schools and learning institutions and are considered the key for the success of learning and teaching process. When considering capacity, Opudo (2012) found that both competence and the number of staff needed to deliver services to the clients are significant. Understaffing levels refer to the number or adequacy of teachers in a school. Staff, according to Okumbe (2008) needs to be trained and developed so as to acquire basic competencies and skills that would enable them fit into their work. Drajo (2010), noted that teachers are the most important resource that contributes to the success of their schools.

The challenge of inadequate staffing levels in the learning institutions forcing the head teachers to attend classroom lessons at the expense of undertaking classroom observation is massive. According to Bouchamma, Basque and Marcotte (2014) head teachers are experiencing staff due unbalanced shortages to distribution of teachers. Most teachers' prefer working in urban, semi-urban and high potential areas.

Understaffing and inadequate physical resources was cited by teachers and supervisors as challenges that teachers and schools faced. This had negative impacts such as large classes and heavy workload for teaching fraternity 2016). This (Chinyoka, distracts instructional supervisors from supervision.

Kulik, and Kulik (2013) noted that, an inadequate number of teachers lead head teachers to carry heavy workload which will influence on instructional supervision practice and when number of teachers is below the required, head teacher is forced to play the role of a teacher as well as head teacher' roles therefore reduces head teachers' efficiency. Due to the inadequate number of teaching staff head teachers are facing overload in planning, organizing, directing and controlling school programmes. Head teachers' workload goes beyond what one single individual can possibly achieve successfully (OECD, 2008). A study conducted by Buregeya (2011) noted that there is an ongoing decline on supervision of schools throughout the globe due to staffing levels and teaching and learning environments.

Head teachers are experiencing staff shortages which hinder realization of curriculum demands, low level of staffing compelled head teachers to take more lessons in expense of carrying out effective instructional supervision practices for instance, classroom visitation among others (Nyandiko, 2008). He further indicated that in Kenya, there exists an unbalanced distribution of teachers with most teachers preferring working in urban, semi-urban and high potential areas.

The study revealed that inadequate staffing and high teacher turn-over were some of the challenges faced by the integrated Islamic primary schools head teachers. During the interview with a head teacher. it emerged that understaffing was a major challenge to their effective instructional supervisions' roles. The challenges of inadequate staffing levels have forced the head teachers to attend classroom lessons. To address the problem, the authors revealed that head teachers of integrated Islamic primary schools have resorted to employ teachers in order to ease the work load. The recruitment of teachers is done by the owners due demand and at the same time when there is availability of financial resources unlike in public schools. This therefore implies that some vacancies could remain unfilled due to lack of finances.

This ultimately affects quality of integrated Islamic primary schools' since the head teachers may not be able to carry out instructional supervision for lack of adequate number of teachers. In a study carried out by Ndung'u (2015), it was found out that staffing levels in the schools poses a challenge to effective instructional supervision by head teachers. A couple of researchers have established that schools in Kenya are facing a shortage of teachers (Adikinyi, 2007; Nyandiko, 2008). This study tended to find out the efforts made by the head teachers in addressing the staff shortage in their schools since no literature has provided for the integrated Islamic primary schools.

School Location and head teachers' Instructional Supervision practices

Location refers to rural or urban area in this study. Learning can occur anywhere and belief is often that if a school is built, students will attend. School location can affect students' learning outcomes either positively or negatively. Most institutions consider the placement of schools as important factor. Location can however also be in terms of whether a school is located in the less developed areas or in the developed areas (Osokoya & Akuche, 2012).

One of the factors that surround school location and have an influence on head teachers' role of instructional supervision are availability of resource such as water, infrastructure, electricity and availability of teachers and their level of expertise in the education sector. Head teachers play an important role in strengthening their instructional supervision and the learning environments (Fullan, 2011).

Head teachers have a role to play in ensuring the location in which the schools they teach is conducive and have essential facilities infrastructure and water. Head teachers need to increase their instructional supervision of the school as well as the condition that influences their instructional supervision practices. They can contribute to improved learning by shaping the conditions and location in which teaching and learning occur. They must adapt their school to a changing environment (Hargreaves, Halász, & Pont, 2014). Most schools in rural lacking qualified teachers since qualified teachers prefer to stay in urban schools. This is likely affecting rural schools negatively (Osokoya & Akuche, 2012).

As a result rural schools mostly learning are unfriendly with and unqualified teachers so head teachers have to deal with untrained teachers as well as unqualified teachers. This leads instructional supervision a difficult task and head teachers have to monitor frequently.

The number of teachers in rural schools is usually low because teachers do not readily accept postings to rural areas, because rural communities population, characterized by low monotonous and burdensome life. Most teachers prefer to stay in the schools in urban areas because of the available amenities. With hindrances such as limited number of teachers, the quality of instructional supervision is likely to be more compromised in rural based schools than the ones in rural areas. (Osokoya & Akuche, 2012). Due to understaffing, head teachers are faced with heavy workload. It was on basis of this background that the researcher saw it necessary to investigate the influence of school location on head teachers' instructional supervision practices.

Most schools in rural areas lack qualified teachers who can teach subjects perfectly and this is likely affecting quality of education negatively.

This means the head teachers in such locations have to deal with teachers who lack training and teaching qualifications and such teachers make instructional supervision a difficult task. They have to be monitored on a more frequent basis than the qualified ones and require more guidance and more efforts to get motivated than the qualified and trained teachers. need to increase supervision of the school and shaping the conditions in which teaching and learning occurs as well as adapting their school Head environment. teachers' instructional supervision is basically influenced by the location of the school (Mavindu, 2013). Head teachers face various sets of challenges such as long distances travelling and this is because of the school location (Drajo, 2010); a position supported by Dipaola and Hoy (2013).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study guided by system theory which is a set of elements and can be close or open. A school receives its input from the environment and empties back output to the environment. The system theory by Bertalanffy, Sergiovanni and Starrat (2004) forces the researcher to focus on the relationship and exchange of energy

between the school and its environment. The theory works for this study as it explains the relationship between the school and its environment. In regards to this study the theory can be used to explain how systems such as head teachers, teachers and equipment work inter-relatedly to achieve a set of goals. The theory explains the interaction and determines the teaching quality and process of learning whereby effective interaction may lead to good instructional activities and supervision activities by head teachers. The theory is relevant to the study because as it explained the relationship between the school and its environment such as head teachers, teachers, instructional materials, equipment and finances.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Conceptual frameworks, as defined by Marshall and Rossman (2016) are mental maps inferred or derived from specific illustrations or circumstances that help to show the relationships between interplay of variables graphically and diagrammatically. The conceptual framework is illustrated in Figure 2.1

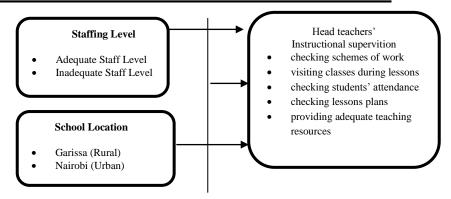


Fig 1. Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework that describes the study

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research employed descriptive design; which allows survey researchers to obtain information from selected target group that provided reasons for ineffective instructional supervision. The study targeted population consisted of 86 head teachers and 602 teachers from various integrated Islamic primary schools in Garissa and Nairobi Counties. The sample size of 234 teachers was arrived at by using the Yamane's (2001). Stratified and random sampling procedure was adopted in selecting teachers from different integrated Islamic primary schools to take part in the study. The preferred sampling method was stratified sampling since it enables the researcher to limit sampling bias and ease of application. The study sample was divided into two categories; head teachers and teachers.

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Interview guides and questionnaires were the research tools adopted for the study. Questionnaires were used to collect information from the teachers while questionnaires and interview guide for the head teachers. To test the research tool measures what it alleged to be measuring, content validity was utilized. On the other hand, reliability of the items was found by piloting the instruments in selected schools randomly to participate in the study. The research data was collected through distribution of the questionnaires personally to the sampled respondents. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages and crosstabulation were used to analyze the sample characteristics. Correlation analysis was used to determine the relationship between instructional supervision and other independent variables. The findings of the study were presented through tables.

RESULTS	AND	DISCU	SSION
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In this section, the results of data gathered are presented and discussed. The study sought to determine the influence of staffing levels on head teachers' instructional supervision in integrated Islamic primary schools. Three options were given from which the respondents were required to pick one depending on their agreement.

		Instruct	Total		
		Never	once a	twice a	
			term	term	
Adequacy	Inadequate	25	14	12	41
of teachers		61.0%	34.1%	4.9%	100.0%
in your	Adequate	8	17	19	44
school		18.2%	38.6%	43.2%	100.0%
Total		33	31	21	85
		38.8%	36.5%	24.7%	100.0%

Table 1: Adequacy of teachers in schools

The findings of Table 1 show that 61 percent of the head teachers had inadequate teaching staff and cited that instructional supervision was never carried out while 34.1 percent of them with inadequate of teaching staff cited that instructional supervision carried out once a term. On the other hand, 54.5 percent of the teachers with inadequate of teaching staff cited that instructional supervision was never conducted and 24.5 percent of the teachers with inadequate of teaching staff cited that instructional supervision was carried out once a term. However, 43.2 percent of the head teachers with adequate of teaching staff cited that instructional supervision was conducted twice a term while 48.9 percent of the teachers with adequate of teaching staff cited that instructional supervision was carried out twice a term.

This explains instructional supervision was not conducted as mandatory. It is noted that most of head teachers with inadequate teaching staff never conducted instructional supervision while most of them with adequate teaching staff conducted instructional supervision twice a term. The findings of this study concur with the findings of Opudo (2012) who in his study confirmed that sufficient staff capacity in a school helps in delivering great services to its

	Z	Mean	Deviation	Z	Mean	Deviation
Adequate teaching staff give	85	1.	1.0	23	2.	1.057
enoughtime for head teachers		81	52	1	07	
to supervise						
Due to inadequate teaching	85	2.	1.0	23	2.	.976
staff headteachers are		26	25	1	01	
overloaded						
Overstaffing makes	85	2.	1.1	23	2.	1.040
instructionalsupervision		24	20	1	04	
easier						
Adequate teachers make	85	2.	1.2	23	2.	1.016
headteachers to delegate		78	76	1	14	
duties						
Understaffing leaves head	85	2.	.94	23	2.	.990
teacher littletime for supervision		01	5	1	20	
Understaffing makes completing the	85	2.	1.2	23	2.	1.015
syllabus difficult		81	86	1	45	

clients pupils and students. The author found that adequate teaching staff gives room to head teachers to do effective instructional supervision other than taking up lessons as a result of insufficient number of teachers in the school.

Table 2 indicates that there was a significant mean difference between head teachers and teachers on the perceptions of understanding makes completing the syllabus difficult.

Head teachers showed higher mean scores (M= 2.81, SD=1.286) than teachers (M=2.45, SD=1.015). Likewise, there was a significant mean difference between head teachers and teachers on the perceptions of adequate teachers make head teachers to delegate duties.

Head teachers scored higher mean (M=2.78, SD=1.276) than teachers (M=2.14.SD=1.016). The findings revealed that teachers and head teachers disagreed that due to inadequate teaching staff head teachers are overloaded. Head teachers scored (M=2.26 SD=1.025) than teachers (M SD=.976). This according to the study affects the effectiveness of instructional supervision. The study by Glanz et al., (2007) supports the findings by posting that inadequate staffing levels in the learning institutions make head teachers, who are undertake to instructional supposed supervision, to take up classroom lessons and fill the gap. This, according to the study has a negative impact on instructional supervision. The findings of the study mirror the findings of Nyandiko (2014) who confirmed that head teachers are experiencing staff shortages. This according the author hinders realization of curriculum demands.

Table 3: Correlation between staffing levels and instruction supervision

		staffing	Instructional
		level	supervision
Staffing level	Pearson	1	.038**
	correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.502
	N	316	316
Instructional	Pearson	.038**	1
supervision	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.502	
	N	316	316

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

Table 3 presents a correlation analysis to determine relationship between staffing levels and teachers' head instructional supervision. As correlation presented the coefficient was.038 with significance value of .502. The pvalue associated with the test is 0.05 therefore more than indicating that the correlation coefficient is not significant. Hence the staffing levels do not have a significant effect on the instructional supervision of the teachers. This provides head sufficient information to fail to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that understaffing levels do not influence head teachers' instructional supervision practices

in integrated Islamic primary schools.

Table 4 indicates that there was a significant different mean score between head teachers and teachers on those who were qualified in their inclinations and preferences to work in urban areas. Head teachers showed higher mean scores (M= 4.04, SD=.1029) than teachers (M= 3.98, SD=1.030). Likewise, there was a significant mean difference on the perceptions of head teachers in rural areas manage to carry all instructional supervision. Head teachers scored higher mean (M = 3.12, SD=1.219) than teachers (M=2.76, SD=1.312).

Table 4: Head Teachers and

Teachers' Means on School location

and Instructional Supervision

	N	Mean	S D	N	Mean	SD
Urban schools tend to have More streams than rural.	85	3.19	1.31	23	3.48	1.312
Qualified teachers look to work in urbanareas.	85	4.04	1.02	23	3.98	1.030
Rural School head teachers are overloaded.	85	2.34	.646	23	2.44	.826
Teachers in urban are more trained.	85	3.67	.836	23 1	3.79	1.192
Rural school head teachers manage to carry out instructional supervision.	85	3.12	1.21	23	2.76	1.312

However, there was a significant mean difference on the perceptions of teachers in

urban areas are more trained. Teachers scored higher mean (M=3.79, SD=1.192) than head teachers (M=3.67, SD=.836). Likewise, there was a significant mean difference on the perceptions of school in urban areas tend to have more streams than rural. Teachers showed higher mean scores (M=3.48, SD=1.312) than head teachers (M=3.19, SD=1.314). The study also found that significant mean difference between teachers and head teachers on the perceptions of due to the rural areas head teachers are overloaded. Teachers mean scores (M= 2.44, SD=.826) while head teachers mean was (M=2.34, SD=.646). This indicated that both head teachers and teachers agreed that school location can influence instructional supervision either positively or negatively. The findings of this study are mirrored in the findings of a study conducted by Osokoya and Akuche (2012) which revealed that schools in urban areas have more teachers because teachers believe that urban schools have sufficient learning materials like books, internet, electricity, infrastructure and more allowances.

Table 5 presents the correlation analysis to determine the relationship between school location and head teachers' instructional supervision. The results of the correlation analysis revealed that correlation value was .143 between the school location and instructional supervision with a significance value of .011.

Table 5: Correlation analysis between school location and head teachers' instructional supervision

		School	Instructional
		locatio	supervision
		n	
School location	Pearson correlation	1	.143*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.011
	N	316	316
Instructional supervision	Pearson Correlation	.143**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.011	
	N	316	316

^{*.} Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The p-value associated with the test .011 is equal to the significance level 0.05. This indicates that the correlation between school location and instructional supervision is statistical significant.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concluded that staffing levels and school location influenced the head teachers' perceived effectiveness in instructional supervision. The better the pupil-teacher ratio, the more effective the head teacher was rated in terms of their frequency of instructional supervision.

The study concluded that enhancing instructional supervision head teachers and stakeholders need to strategize on how to attract and retain enough teaching staff for rural schools. Schools managers need to create learning environment similar to that in urban areas whereby effective instructional supervision will be achieved by the head teachers.

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