

The Influence of Appraisal of Teacher's Professional Knowledge and Application on the Implementation of Curriculum in Public Secondary Schools in Kenya

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Abstract

Teacher Performance Appraisal (TPA) is recognized globally as a crucial tool in managing the performance of educators with the potential to greatly impact curriculum implementation and academic outcomes. However, despite its significance, teachers' unions often oppose this policy, viewing it as a means to undermine educators. This research examines the influence of teacher appraisal on curriculum implementation in public secondary schools within Bureti Sub-County. By investigating the appraisal of teachers' professional knowledge and application, this study aims to shed light on factors that affect the effectiveness of curriculum delivery. The target population comprises 63 principals and 889 assistant teachers from 63 public secondary schools in Bureti Sub County. Sampling techniques include stratified, purposive, and random sampling, with structured questionnaires serving as research instruments. To test the reliability of the research instruments. Correlation analysis was used to establish if there was a relationship between the independent variables. Pearson correlation coefficient (r) was used to determine the relationship between the two variables with a value of + 1 and - 1. Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to analyze quantitative data. To determine the variance of the responses, ANOVA was used. Findings indicate that teacher appraisal significantly impacts curriculum implementation, with pedagogical competence, content mastery, adaptability, and collaboration emerging as key factors. Recommendations include enhancing professional development, fostering reflective practice, aligning appraisal criteria with curriculum goals, and promoting leadership capacity among school administrators.

Keywords: *Performance appraisal, professional knowledge, implementation of curriculum*

1.0 Introduction

Curriculum implementation in public secondary schools plays a vital role in shaping students' learning experiences and outcomes. Teacher appraisal, as a mechanism for assessing educators' competencies and performance, influences how effectively curriculum objectives are translated into classroom practices. The major aim of performance appraisal is to develop teachers to improve curriculum delivery in schools. As noted by Hult and Edison (2016), performance appraisal enables the education workforce to be more productive, skillful, and up to the task. This is in terms of professional knowledge, time management, innovation, creativity, and

supervision of co-curricular activities among other educational teaching standards and requirements. Performance appraisal therefore strives to ensure that teachers professionally manage their work and use the appropriate teaching methods during curriculum implementation (Kiplangat, 2016). The requirement of a proper performance appraisal seems to be a major challenge in Bureti Sub County, a gap that this study intends to fill. In Bureti Sub-County, understanding the relationship between teacher appraisal and curriculum implementation is crucial for improving educational quality and student achievement. This research seeks to explore the influence of teacher appraisal on curriculum implementation, focusing on the appraisal of teachers' professional knowledge and application.

1.1 Problem Statement

Kenya's secondary education sector faces multifaceted challenges in achieving both international and national education objectives, including the Education Sector for ALL (EFA) initiative, ensuring quality learning outcomes, meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and realizing Kenya Vision 2030 (Musera et al., 2012). Despite concerted efforts to enhance curriculum implementation, such as through the teacher Performance Appraisal and Development (TPAD) opposition from teachers' unions (KUPPET and KNUT) persists. These unions often criticize TPAD, arguing that it is excessively focused on fault-finding rather than providing constructive guidance. The strained relationship between teachers and those responsible for appraisal creates an environment of distrust and resentment, with teachers viewing appraisers as fault-finders rather than supportive guides. This antagonistic dynamic may hinder effective curriculum implementation, ultimately impacting student performance.

1.2 Objective of the study

To examine the extent to which appraisal of teachers' professional knowledge and application influence the implementation of the curriculum in public secondary schools in Bureti Sub-County

2.0 Literature Review

The performance competency area encompasses various tasks essential for effective curriculum implementation. These tasks include conducting lesson observations and preparing and managing necessary professional documents and records such as schemes of work, lesson plans, and lesson notes aligned with the current curriculum and syllabi. Additionally, it involves maintaining records of work and learners' progress, evaluating learners' understanding of covered content in line with the school testing policy, and ensuring syllabus coverage within the stipulated time. Teachers who are key curriculum implementers should identify the correct pedagogical content and prepare teaching and learning aids in advance for effective implementation of the curriculum. Drake (2013) noted that various strategies, such as reading, identifying, adopting, evaluating, and interpreting activities, should be carried out in advance by a teacher before the lesson for effective curriculum delivery.

Jensen's (2011) research, conducted in Australia, delved into the influence of teacher performance appraisal on curriculum implementation effectiveness, revealing significant delays in crucial aspects of curriculum delivery among educators. Furthermore, the study unveiled a notable decline in student performance in reading, coupled with a stagnation in mathematics achievement. Jensen's findings underscored a positive relationship between effective performance appraisal and teacher effectiveness, ultimately leading to improved student performance. Hult and Edston (2016) observed that teachers embrace TPAD as it aids in improving pedagogical skills and motivates them during the evaluation process. Similarly,

Strong and Tucker (2003) and Iraki (2013) stressed the pivotal role of TPAD in ensuring quality teaching and effective curriculum delivery, thereby enhancing the teaching-learning process. Kerry (2013) also emphasized the significance of teacher performance appraisal in curriculum implementation and student performance, particularly when teachers are well-equipped with professional knowledge and apply it effectively in their teaching practices. While these studies, underscore the positive effects of teacher performance appraisal systems like TPAD on aspects such as productivity and pedagogical skill enhancement, there remains a notable gap in understanding the direct relationship between teacher appraisal outcomes and the effective implementation of curriculum, as well as its subsequent impact on student performance.

Varly and Mazunya's (2017) study in Burundi highlights the importance of teacher retraining as a requirement for the success of curriculum implementation and education reforms, and underscores the challenge of teachers misunderstanding key innovations introduced by the curriculum. However, there remains a gap in understanding the specific factors influencing teacher retraining and comprehension of curriculum innovations in the context of public secondary schools in Bureti Sub-County, Kenya. In addition, though the study provides valuable insights into the challenges faced in curriculum implementation, there is a lack of empirical investigation into how teacher retraining and comprehension of curriculum innovations directly impact curriculum implementation within this particular geographic and educational context.

According to TSC Circular No. 12/2017 dated 5th June, cited by Dorothy and Bonn (2017), the Teacher Performance Appraisal and Development (TPAD) system has played a significant role in enhancing the preparation and maintenance of these professional documents. The literature lacks an in-depth exploration of how teacher appraisal, particularly in terms of assessing professional knowledge and application, influences curriculum implementation in public secondary schools. While the Teacher Performance Appraisal and Development (TPAD) system has been recognized for improving the preparation and maintenance of professional documents, such as lesson plans and schemes of work, its direct impact on curriculum delivery remains underexplored. Addressing this gap, the current study focuses on investigating the extent to which teacher appraisal influences curriculum implementation in Bureti Sub-County's public secondary schools.

A study conducted by Aloo et al. (2017) suggests that the implementation of Teacher Performance Appraisal (TPA) since its inception in 2016 has positively impacted curriculum implementation by teachers. Their findings align with those of Chikemibe and Mukamure (2010), as cited in Aloo et al. (2017), which emphasize the importance of considering teachers as key implementers who play a critical role in curriculum implementation. Teachers break down the curriculum into teachable units as reflected in schemes of work and lesson plans delivered to learners, highlighting the significance of teachers' professional knowledge and application in effective curriculum implementation. The appraisal of teachers' professional knowledge and application through TPAD is seen as a mechanism to enhance curriculum implementation by identifying areas for improvement and suggesting strategies for enhancement. This aspect underscores the importance of understanding the influence of teachers' professional knowledge on curriculum implementation. The study aims to address this knowledge gap left by previous researchers specifically in Bureti Sub County schools, Kericho County, Kenya.

3.0 Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining surveys and interviews to gather data from teachers and administrators in public secondary schools within Bureti Sub-County. The survey instrument assesses perceptions of teacher appraisal practices and their impact on curriculum implementation, while semi-structured interviews provide deeper insights into the experiences and perspectives of educators and school leaders. Participants were selected through purposive sampling to ensure representation across different schools and teaching disciplines.

4.0 Results and Discussions

The majority of the respondents in the study, 90%, strongly agreed that the timely preparation of schemes of work had contributed to the enhanced completion of the syllabus. Similarly, 82.5% of the respondents strongly agreed that lesson observation had facilitated syllabus completion, while also indicating strong agreement (82.5%) that the appraisal of teachers' professional knowledge and application has led to improvements in the preparation of teaching aids, consequently enhancing students' academic performances. These findings underscore the respondents' strong belief in the substantial contribution of teacher appraisal towards supervising curriculum implementation in public secondary schools. The implications of these findings suggest that appraising teacher's professional knowledge and application ensures that educators are adequately prepared to fulfill their instructional responsibilities as mandated by the Ministry of Education and the Teachers Service Commission (TSC).

The analysis of survey data reveals a significant influence of teacher appraisal on curriculum implementation in public secondary schools within Bureti Sub-County. Key factors identified include pedagogical competence, content mastery, adaptability, and collaboration among teachers. Teachers who receive effective appraisal support demonstrate heightened levels of instructional quality, increased student engagement, and improved learning outcomes. Interviews conducted with educators and administrators corroborate these findings, emphasizing the crucial role of ongoing professional development, reflective practice, and leadership capacity in enhancing curriculum delivery.

Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was used to establish if there was a relationship between the independent variables (professional knowledge and application, time management, creativity, innovation, and co-curricular activities) and the dependent variable (supervision of curriculum implementation) by correlating the study findings. Pearson correlation coefficient (r) was used to determine the relationship between the two variables with a value of + 1 and - 1.

Table 1 Correlation between appraisal of teacher's professional knowledge and application and the implementation of curriculum

| | Teacher's professional knowledge and application | Implementation of curriculum |
|----------------------------------|--|------------------------------|
| Teacher's professional knowledge | | 1 |
| Pearson correlation | .861** | |
| Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.000 | |
| Implementation of curriculum | | 1 |

Table 1 presents a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.861$ with a p-value of 0.000. This correlation coefficient indicates a strong positive linear relationship between the appraisal of teachers'

professional knowledge and application and the implementation of the curriculum. Specifically, a correlation of $r = 0.861$ suggests that as the level of appraisal on the application of teachers' professional knowledge and application increases, so implements the curriculum. This finding aligns with the earlier observations, which suggest that the appraisal of the application of teachers' professional knowledge and application has positively impacted the implementation of the curriculum.

This result is consistent with previous research by Osati (2019), who similarly noted that performance appraisal focusing on teachers' professional knowledge and application significantly contributed to teacher performance. Such appraisal practices ensure that teachers are adequately prepared to fulfill their instructional responsibilities as mandated by the Ministry of Education and their employer, the Teachers Service Commission (TSC). Thus, the strong correlation identified in this study underscores the importance of effective teacher appraisal in promoting the successful implementation of the curriculum in public secondary schools.

5.0 Conclusion

This research highlights the critical role of teacher appraisal in shaping curriculum implementation in public secondary schools within Bureti Sub-County. By identifying factors that influence the effectiveness of teacher appraisal, such as pedagogical competence, content mastery, adaptability, and collaboration, this study provides valuable insights for educational policymakers, school administrators, and teachers. The study found that there is a strong positive correlation between the appraisal of teacher's Professional knowledge and application and Implementation of curriculum.

6.0 Recommendations

The study recommended the strengthening connection between teacher appraisal and curriculum implementation and stakeholders to work collaboratively to improve educational quality and student outcomes in Bureti Sub-County's public secondary schools. Ultimately there is a need to invest in professional development, promoting reflective practice, aligning appraisal criteria with curriculum goals, and supporting leadership capacity-building efforts.

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