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RESEARCH ARTICLE

THE ROLE OF TEACHERS IN THE FORMULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF SCHOOL-BASED INNOVATIONS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: A CASE OF NANDI NORTH DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the roles of teachers in the formulation and implementation of school-based innovations in Secondary Schools. This paper examines the various roles of teachers in the formulation of school based education innovations. The paper also investigates the various innovation implementation strategies employed by schools. The various challenges that school management go through in trying to formulate and implement innovations in their schools have also been highlighted. The study was conducted in Nandi North District. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 20 schools out of 50. From this, a total of 140 teachers participated in the study. Primary data was collected by use of questionnaires while document analysis formed the main source of secondary data. The collected data was analyzed by use of descriptive statistics and presented in form of frequency tables. The study found that teachers' roles in the formulation of school based education innovations are not recognized. It was also found that school innovation implementation strategies were inappropriate in the management of schools. The study also found out that there were various constraints to formulation and implementation of school based education innovations. It was recommended that teachers be regarded as partners in education management. The study recommended that schools need to come up with prudent measures in regard to innovation formulation and implementation. The study also recommended the need for management of secondary schools and the Ministry of Education to conduct regular self-appraisals on their weaknesses and strengths with a view of minimizing on the constraints and challenges realized during the formulation and implementation process of school innovations.

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INTRODUCTION

Educational innovations are meant to enable educational institutions strive towards improving service, products and performance. Educational innovations at the national level have always been drawn by bureaucrats at the Ministry of Education Headquarters, who enforce them downwards to the field officers and school principals in a top-down approach. According to Hanson (2003), these innovations are usually restrictive with an emphasis on standardized instructional content and teaching processes. At most times, the innovations are imposed on teachers who are usually never consulted (Orora, 1997). Ultimately, the innovations end up with little implementation due to the fact that they are externally sourced (Fullan, 2001). Furthermore, Fullan (2001) maintains that there exists a mismatch between the initiation process and the subsequent implementation of education innovations, a proof of lack of consultation between the Ministry of Education and all stakeholders concerning education matters. As stated by Ochieng and Kaluoch (2008) the Ministry of Education institutes education innovations and issues directives without carrying out a survey on their relevance and practicability. This culminates into directives

and innovations which fail the implementation test, compelling school administrators, management boards, teachers and parents to circumvent on them (Editorial, Daily Nation, 2000). Notable innovations instituted in the recent past which have faced implementation challenges include the Free Primary Education (FPE), the Subsidized Secondary Education (SSE), the ban on corporal punishment, mobile phones, holiday tuition and mock examinations (Siringi and Macharia, 2007; Mzungu, 2007 and Mwiria, 2008). Education innovations are not absent in our schools. They do exist, only that they are too many, disconnected, episodic, fragmented and are issued in a top-down approach (Fullan, 2001, p.21). Adaptation to top-down educational innovations in school is a very challenging experience since they get introduced so fast that the management of secondary schools is unable to cope with them due to their inadaptative nature and lack of a plan for their implementation (Orora, 1997).

The bureaucracy exhibited at the Ministry of Education in relation to formulation of innovations, is also replicated at the school level. School administrators have made it a practice of imposing innovations in their schools with little or no consultation with teachers and other personnel who are in most cases, the implementers. Lasky *et al.* (2001) note that

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positive strategic innovations at school level aimed at enabling teachers take control of the change process in ways that enhance their morale and to benefit students as well as improving schools are lacking. The outcome of this is low morale, less motivation and lack of empowerment on the teachers, coupled with limited access to new ideas and few opportunities for growth. This largely compromises their teaching, and yet learning is intricately linked to the teachers' ability to teach well. Majority of education innovations in our schools are introduced and implemented inappropriately through the power – coercive strategy in form of directives, they are bureaucratic and are done in a top-down approach (Orora, 1997, Fullan, 2001). Education innovations are therefore seen to succeed in one school and a disaster in another (Fullan, 2001), thus contributing to poor academic achievement of secondary schools.

Teachers' role in determining innovations at secondary level is only confined to classroom decisions, selecting materials, determining class organization and choosing instructional procedures in addition to being in charge of routine programs. Goodlad (1984) contends that the teacher has little influence or involvement in school-wide and other extra classroom matters. Their role is no more than re-directing developments that have been set in place and are being steered by others (Penny & Brad Fox, 1997). In this respect, teachers are expected to be loyal to the school organization, behave consistently according to the rules and regulations, and defer to the authority of their superiors. According to Hoy and Miskel (1982), this compromises teachers' professionalism such that their input in school innovations is not felt. It is in light of this argument that Orora (1997) suggests that: "One of the most distinctive features of educational innovations is the rate at which they fail. If proposed, they are often not adopted, if adopted, they frequently are not fully implemented; if implemented, they rarely last". Innovations cannot be realized in schools whose teachers have been sidelined.

Improvement efforts get cut out in most schools due to the fact that whatever teachers determine as innovations is not fully supported by the administrators and managers (Fullan, 2001). Involvement of teachers in the introduction of educational innovations in schools is considered a portrayal of weak leadership style on the principal and schools' management (Grauwe, 2004). Teachers have been on the periphery on matters of innovation formulation, yet they are the implementers of the same in their schools. Mwiria (2008) propounds that there is too much bureaucracy in the ministry of education which is also reflected at the school level. In addition, Moorhead and Griffin (1997), stress on the fact that innovations work well in organizations with good management. Education innovations in public schools are poorly introduced and inappropriately implemented due to questionable management styles. Schools lack a consistent and an elaborate mode of innovation formulation. Hatch (2003), confirms that efforts to implement and integrate various improvement efforts in schools face a paradox. Schools are juggling the demands of implementing several improvement programs at the same time. This culminates into innovation overload which saps the strengths and spirits of those schools (Fullan, 2001).

In addition, Lasky *et al.*, (2001) note that positive strategic innovations at school level aimed at enabling teachers take control of the change process in ways that enhance their morale and to benefit students as well as improving schools are lacking. The outcome of this is low morale, less motivation and lack of empowerment on the teachers, coupled with limited access to new ideas and few opportunities for growth. This largely compromises their teaching, and yet learning is intricately linked to the teachers' ability to teach well. Teachers' role in determining innovations at secondary level is only confined to classroom decisions, selecting materials, determining class organization and choosing instructional procedures in addition to being in charge of routine programs. Goodlad (1984) contends that the teacher has little influence or involvement in school-wide and other extra classroom matters. Their role is no more than re-directing developments that have been set in place and are being steered by others.

### Statement of the problem

Kenyan secondary schools are managed through education innovations and directives issued by the Ministry of Education (M.O.E) in a bureaucratic and hierarchical manner. The implementation of these innovations and directives at school level is faced with serious challenges (Mwiria, 2008). Education innovations are implemented through inappropriate strategies (Fullan, 2001 & Orora, 1997). Weak management capabilities have been cited as a major cause of poor academic achievement, student indiscipline and general teacher apathy among the teaching staff in schools (Eshiwani, 1986; Republic of Kenya, 1999; Ndiku, 2007). It is the expectation of the M.O.E that the directives and innovations instituted at the headquarters will be effectively implemented, leading to an overall improvement in management and performance of schools. However, the situation on the ground is such that the bureaucracy at the M.O.E, which is also witnessed at the school level, is an impediment to implementation of innovations. Notable ministerial directives that have faced implementation challenges include the ban on holiday tuition, the ban on mobile phones and mock exams (ROK, 2008).

The formulation and implementation of school innovations in Nandi North district secondary schools has been a challenging experience. Schools have not been performing well due to the fact that teachers in those schools have not been actively involved in their formulation and implementation. In addition, most innovations have been formulated through inappropriate strategies leading to their little or no implementation at all. There is therefore an urgent need to re-examine the roles of teachers in the formulation of school innovations together with the various implementation strategies if schools in Nandi North District are to achieve their goals in academic performance.

### Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were:

1. To investigate the roles of teachers in the formulation of school-based education innovations.
2. To investigate implementation strategies employed by different schools.

3. To identify the constraints to successful formulation and implementation of school based innovations in schools.

## METHODOLOGY

The study used the descriptive survey design to investigate the roles of teachers in formulating school based innovations, the various implementation strategies in schools as well as the constraints to their successful formulation and implementation. The study was confined to public secondary schools in Nandi North District. The population sample for this study consisted of 20 public secondary schools. Simple random sampling was used to select 20 public schools out of 50 that were studied. Respondents for this study comprised of teachers due to the assumption that they charged with the enforcement of school routines in their schools. Their roles in school innovation formulation were therefore of great importance. From each sampled school, seven teachers were selected using simple random sampling. Therefore a total of 140 teachers were selected to participate in this study. However, a total of 125 responses were received, forming a return rate of 89.3%, being adequate for data analysis. Data was analyzed by use of descriptive statistical techniques which included percentages, means, frequencies and standard deviation. Data was presented in frequency distribution tables, pie charts and bar graphs.

## Validity of Research Instruments

Validity of research instruments was established before going to the field. The instruments were given proper wordings while the irrelevancies in the questions were corrected.

## Findings

### Teachers' roles in the formulation of school innovations

School based innovations under consideration in this study were in the areas of

Instructional Methodologies, Timetabling, Student Discipline and the enforcement of

School rules, School Finances, Welfare and Motivation of school personnel, school infrastructure, School Routine, and in the area of Co-curricular activities. Tables 1 and 2 below illustrates teachers' roles in formulation of school based innovations. The findings revealed that teachers' roles were not consulted during the formulation of school Innovations. Teachers are not consulted when it comes to formulation of innovations on matters of school discipline and enforcement of school rules in many schools as confirmed by 60 % (75) of the teachers. Teachers' roles in formulating innovations in school finances are not recognized as indicated by 76.8% (96) of the sampled teachers and a mean of 3.26 with standard deviation of 1.37. On welfare and motivation of

**Table 1: Teachers' roles in formulation of school based innovations**

Management section	SA	A	U	D	SD	T
1 Instructional methodologies and Timetabling	F 39 % 31.2	41 32.8	3 2.4	21 16.8	19 15.2	125 100
2 Student discipline and enforcement of school rules	F 14 % 11.2	26 20.8	7 5.6	38 30.4	37 29.6	125 100
3 School finances	F 11 % 8.8	18 14.4		63 50.4	33 26.4	125 100
4 Welfare and motivation of school personnel	F 15 % 12.0	23 18.4	9 7.2	49 39.2	21 16.8	125 100
5 School infrastructure and development projects	F 7 % 5.6	12 9.6	5 4.0	59 47.2	42 33.6	125 100
6 School routine	F 19 % 15.2	24 19.2	4 3.2	43 34.4	28 22.4	125 100
7 Co-curricular activities	F 46 % 36.8	27 21.6	7 5.6	21 16.8	18 14.4	125 100

**Table 2: Teachers' roles in formulation of school based innovations**

Statement	N	$\bar{X}$	SD
Instructional methodologies and Timetabling	125	2.51	1.47
Student discipline and enforcement of school rules	125	3.48	1.41
School finances	125	3.71	1.25
Welfare and motivation of school personnel	125	3.26	1.37
School infrastructure and development projects	125	3.94	1.13
School routine	125	3.30	1.44
Co-curricular activities	125	2.50	1.54

## Data Collection Instruments

Data collection instruments for this study were questionnaires which were administered to 125 teachers. The data involved gathering views, opinions, and suggestions. In addition, the researcher analyzed documents such as minutes of staff and departmental meetings from the sampled schools. The responses gathered from the respondents were derived from both closed and open-ended items in the questionnaire.

school personnel, 56% (70) respondents indicated that teachers' roles were not recognized, while a significant number of 30.4%(38) agreed. Majority of the schools do not recognize roles of teachers when it comes to formulating innovations for the improvement of infrastructure and development projects as shown by 81.8 %(101) of the respondents. School based education innovations aimed at improving the schools' routine do not get much input from teachers as shown by 56.8 % (71) who disagreed. Teachers' roles are considered to a small extent as indicated by 34.4 %

(43) of the respondents. Respondents were also asked whether teachers' roles are considered in co-curricular activities, 58.4% (73) of the respondents were in agreement while 31.2 % (39) of the respondents disagreed. This had a mean of 2.50 and standard deviation of 1.54. Responses from the sample show that teachers' roles are not recognized during formulation of innovations in many areas of school management.

**School Innovation Implementation Strategies**

Responses from the sample on innovation implementation strategies indicate that in most schools, 28.8 % (36) of the teachers felt that school administrators used coercion as a strategy to implement school innovations. However, 23.2 % (29) respondents indicated that during formulation, administrators started with some consultation but quickly switched to coercion at the implementation stage. This implies that although some principals use consultation, consensus and participatory involvement, coercion is the most commonly used strategy in Nandi North district secondary schools as shown by 52.0%(65) respondents.

innovations in schools was cited by 72.0% (90) of the sample. There was lack of support and encouragement from the administration and management, as indicated by 62.4% (78) of the respondents. Lack of adequate skills and knowledge among the initiators was cited by the respondents as one of the constraints in the formulation and implementation of school based education innovations. This is confirmed by 61.6 % (77) respondents. Inadequate pre-service training as a constraint was noted by 75.2 % (94) respondents with only 16.8% (21) disagreeing. Lack of in-service training on management of innovations in schools was cited by 72.0% (90) of the sample. There was lack of support and encouragement from the administration and management, as indicated by 62.4% (78) of the respondents. The bureaucratic nature of schools and their centralized systems is a constraint to formulation and implementation of innovations in schools as confirmed by 68.8 % (86) respondents. A history of non-implementation of past school-based educational innovations was confirmed by 68.8% (85) of the sample population while 16.0 % (20) respondents disagreed. Culture of schools was a factor that the researcher wanted to find out if it affected implementation

**Table 3: Innovation implementation strategies employed by Schools**

Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
No response	12	9.6
Adequate preparation	17	13.6
Consultation and consensus	31	24.8
Coercion	36	28.8
Other(s): Consultation then coercion	29	23.2
Total	125	100

**Table 4: Constraints to formulation and implementation of school innovations**

S/NO	Constraints		Level of agreement					
			SA	A	U	D	SD	T
1.	Lack of adequate skills and knowledge among initiators in the formulation of educational innovations at school level	F	51	26	0	24	14	125
		%	41.0	20.6	0	19.4	11.4	100
2.	Inadequate pre-service training on formulation and implementation of educational innovations in schools	F	49	45	10	8	13	125
		%	39.2	36.0	8	6.4	10.4	100
3.	Lack of in-service training on management of innovations in school	F	22	68	19	11	3	125
		%	17.6	54.4	15.2	8.8	2.4	100
4.	Lack of support and encouragement from the administration and management	F	33	45	14	31	2	125
		%	26.4	36.0	11.2	24.8	1.6	100
5.	Schools are bureaucratic and centralized systems giving no room for formulation of school-based educational innovations	F	41	45	11	17	11	125
		%	32.8	36.0	8.8	13.6	8.8	100
6.	History of non-implementation of past school-based education innovations	F	35	50	18	15	5	125
		%	28.8	40.0	14.4	12.0	4.0	100
7.	School culture does not allow the formulation of school-based educational innovations	F	28	14	11	48	20	125
		%	22.4	11.2	8.8	38.4	16	100
8.	Likelihood of disagreement during their discussions and deliberations	F	14	48	21	26	16	125
		%	11.2	38.4	16.8	20.8	12.8	100
9.	Poor teacher-administration relationships	F	28	55	8	28	6	125
		%	22.4	44.0	6.4	22.4	4.8	100

**Constraints to formulation and implementation of school based education innovations**

It was established that the formulation and implementation of school innovations faces various constraints. Lack of adequate skills and knowledge among the initiators was cited by the respondents as one of the constraints in the formulation and implementation of school based education innovations. This is confirmed by 61.6 % (77) respondents. Inadequate pre-service training as a constraint was noted by 75.2 % (94) respondents with only 16.8 % (21) disagreeing. Lack of in-service training on management of

of school based innovations. It was noted by 54.4% (68) of the teachers who participated in this study that school culture indeed favors the formulation and implementation of school based education innovations, 33.6% (42) of the respondents indicated that school culture is a constraint. Asked whether there was a likelihood of disagreement during the discussions and deliberations on introduced school innovations, 49.6 % (62) of the sample agreed, 33.6 % (42) disagreed. On teacher-administration relationships, 66.4% (83) of the respondents agreed that poor relationships between teachers and the administration were an impediment to formulation and implementation of school based education

innovations. Respondents cited other constraints to formulation and implementation of education innovations in schools. These included opposition and resistance from the BOG, the community and the school sponsors, especially on the school innovations concerning school worship service, studying or teaching on weekends while others cited inadequate personnel. These constraints have to a large extent contributed to the unsuccessful formulation and implementation of school based education innovations in many of the schools in the sample. It also emerged from most schools that formed the sample for this study that the process of formulating and implementing school innovations in schools is not without a number of challenges.

### Challenges Posed by SBE Innovation

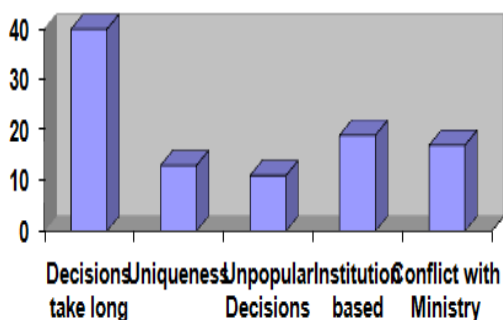


Figure 1: Challenges posed by School Based Education Innovations.

#### KEY

Decisions taking too long	40%
Institution based	19%
Conflicts with the Ministry	17%
Uniqueness	13%
Unpopular decisions	11%

The greatest challenge posed by school based education innovations is that decision making before an innovation is arrived at takes too long as was indicated by 40%(50) of the sample. Innovations arrived at in school may lack the seriousness they deserve during implementation as was noted by 19 % (24) respondents. Respondents further indicated that school based innovations do conflict with the directives from the Ministry of Education while 13%(16) noted that these innovations are unique to each school such that they may not be applicable in other schools. In addition, respondents insisted that there was the risk of adopting very unpopular decisions which may have appeared objective and relevant at initiation stage, only to emerge very unpopular and subjective at implementation stage. These findings do confirm that school based education innovations pose big challenges both at formulation and implementation stages.

#### Recommendations

Basing on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Teachers have a wealth of knowledge which should be nurtured by regarding them as partners in school management and according them the position they deserve in education management. Teachers' roles need to be recognized during the formulation of education innovations in schools.
2. Regular and relevant in-service courses should be organized to equip teachers with skills necessary for the prudent implementation of school innovations in schools.
3. Secondary schools should conduct regular self appraisalsto enable them rectify on their weakness and improve on their successes so as to minimize on the various constraints and challenges exhibited during the formulation and implementation of school innovations. Great organizations in the corporate world have embraced this and schools are not an exception.

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