EPRA International Journal of Environmental Economics, Commerce and Educational Management
Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra0414 |ISI I.F Value: 0.815|SJIF Impact Factor (2024): 8.481 ISSN: 2348 – 814X
Volume: 11 | Issue:7 |July 2024

TOWARDS A MODEL FOR EFFECTIVE TRAINING OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

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Article DOI: https://doi.org/10.36713/epra17690
DOI No: 10.36713/epra17690

ABSTRACT

Often times the appointment of principals in Kenya is not strictly based on criteria to select those with requisite leadership training and skills .The principals, therefore, need to be taken through training programmes . Sometimes these programmes are not based on Training Needs Assessment (TNA). The low performance in examinations in Kisii County may be an indication of compromised quality education due to poorly or inadequately trained Principals. The objectives of this study were: To identify the educational supervision competencies that secondary school principals need in order to effectively perform their educational activities in their schools; and to develop a training model for the effective training of Principals in Kenya. The study used a mixed method research design and within it used concurrent triangulation. The study was done in Kisii County, which is one of the 47 counties in the country which register poor academic performance in national examinations in both primary and secondary schools. The target population was 360 principals and 11 Quality Assurance and Standard Officers (QASO). The sample population consisted of 36 principals and 9 QASOs selected through simple random sampling. Questionnaires and interview guides were used for data collection. In order to ensure the validity of the instruments, they were vetted by 3 Research Experts of Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology. Test- retest method was used to ascertain the reliability of the research instruments. From the study the training needs of the principals in terms of the form of training, the duration to be taken, the institution to be in charge, timing of the training, the need for field practicum and need for induction of principals before assuming office were established. A training model for principals based on these findings is proposed. It is recommended that bodies charged with the responsibility of training principals in Kenya should consider adopting this model.

KEY WORDS: *Training needs, principals, training model.*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Any training programme should have assessment of the needs of the workers first (Hoves, 2004). In-service training programmes for educational staff in Africa are done without first conducting a training needs assessment (TNA), UNESCO, (2008.) This compromises assessment of the usefulness of the training programmes offered. Headship is very pivotal in determining school activities and eventual outcomes. For this reason, education managers, right from elementary to higher levels of learning ought to be people who possess appropriate skills in order to perform their administrative tasks effectively.

At the secondary school level, stakeholders in education expect Principals to provide apt leadership and guidance not only to learners but also to teachers, parents and entire school fraternity. Besides the fact that at the secondary school level learners are very sensitive and delicate given the traumatic adolescence experiences they encounter, it is also note-worthy that it is at this stage that they get their bearing as to what careers and vocations they would pursue later

in life. Consequently, parents and governments make heavy investments in education of their youth to make them economically productive and secure in future. In light of this, Olembo (2008) avers that the public has invested a lot in the education of the young so much that such immense investment must be entrusted to well-trained Principals to guarantee maximum production without wastage. Republic of Kenya (1988, 1999). Reports aver that training of Principals will yield quality and raise standards of education in Kenya.

The foregoing points to the fact that Principals ought to get relevant training in order to be committed to the education process. Professionals in any given work environment are bound to perform their duties and responsibilities without much ado if they have the necessary skills for their job. Public secondary school Principals are such professionals, and are, therefore, expected to be thorough in their work. Analysis of education management conducted in Kenya by the Kenya government in 1994 observed that the trend in secondary schools is that ordinary teachers are promoted to be Principals on the basis of their experience in the classroom. Consequently, due to lack of management skills, the Principals often encounter difficulties in basic accounting, bookkeeping and human resource management.

The training of principals in Kenya is entrusted to the Kenya Educational Staff Institute (KESI) and Kenya Education Management Institute (KEMI) .According to UNESCO (2006), in service training programmes for educational staff in Africa are done without first conducting TNA. This consequently compromises the usefulness of the training programmes offered. According to KESI (2009) faces a number of challenges and one of them is lack of capacity to conduct TNA before mounting training programmes. As a consequence sometimes irrelevant, inadequate and non-demand driven training programmes are offered.

Ajuogo, Indoshi and Agak (1999) relate this to the incompetence amongst education managers in areas such as human relations, general knowledge, information technology, curriculum supervision, report and proposal writing, accountancy and action research among other areas.

Statement of the problem

The appointment of secondary school principals in Kenya is not based on their having undergo specialized training based on needs assessment. The training of the principals is also not anchored on systematic needs assessment .This scenario has led to public outcry that the quality of secondary school principals is in doubt. This study, consequently, sought to find out the kind of training that could regularize and professionalize the training of Principals in Kenya in their roles so as to enhance their competency The objectives were; examine the competencies that secondary school Principals need in order to effectively perform their educational activities in their schools; and to develop a training model for the effective training of Principals in Kenya.

2.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used the mixed methods approach and within it used concurrent triangulation research design Zang, W. & Creswell, J. (2013). The study was carried out in Kisii County. Kisii County was chosen because it is one of the counties experiencing low achievement in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education Examination administered at the end of secondary education. Poor management of the secondary schools has been touted as possible a contributory factor in this scenario. The study population involved 360 Principals and 11 Quality Assurance and Standards. Out of this population 36 Principals 9 Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (QASOs) were selected using simple random sampling technique. Information was sought from the Principals whose training needs was the concern of this study and QASOs who are the primary custodians of quality assurance and standards in schools.

The research instrument used in this study was questionnaires and interview guide according to Hasan (2007), a number of techniques may be used in carrying out TNA. This study used interview schedules and questionnaires. According to Armstrong (2008), for better results when carrying out a single training Needs Analysis exercise, it is advisable to use a combination of a number of these techniques. This informed the use questionnaires and interview guide. Validity of the research instruments was ascertained using expert vetting. The reliability of the questionnaires was established through piloting and using the test – retest method. The correlation coefficient derived was 0.76 and was therefore considered acceptable.

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3.0 RESULTS AND DISSCUSION

3.1 The major purpose of this study was to carry out an assessment of training needs of secondary school Principals in Kenya.. The various aspects which were studied in this line with this were;

(i) The form/kind of training for Principals.
(ii) The duration to be taken by the training model/programme and the different parts of the model.
(iii) The institution to be in charge of the training.
(iv) Timing of the training in terms of whether the training should come before appointment or after appointment.
(v) The need for a field practicum as part of the training and how long it should take.
(vi) The need for induction of Principals before assuming office and the time it should take.

3.1.1 Form of Training for Principals

On the form of training that Principals should undergo, Principals and QASOs responded variously. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. ***Form of training for principals***

Form of Training	QASO	Principals
Workshops and Seminars'	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
In-Service Training	2 (22.2%)	7 (22.6%)
Post graduate studies in supervision and quality assurance	6(66.7%)	22 (70.9%)
Experience exchange	1 (11.1%)	2 (6.5%)
Total	9 (100%)	31 (100%)

The result in table 1 indicate that on the kind of training, post graduate studied in supervision and quality management in education was preferred by a majority of the Principals 22 (70.9%). Most of the QASOs 7 (77.8%) also concurred with the Principals that Post Graduate Diploma in supervision and quality management was the most appropriate form of training to be offered to Principals. If this is done in Kenya, it will be in line with the mode which is used in the training of school inspectors in the USA where according to Rob & Webbin (2009) training for school administrators is done before appointment. This is used as a requirement for one to be appointed as a school administrator where one is required to have undergone a professional training in supervision and quality assurance in education before they are appointed into office.

3.1.2 Duration of the Pre-Service Training for Principals

The length of any training program always has an impact on the quality and success of a training program. The study wanted to find out from the respondents how long a pre-service training program for Principals should take. Table 2 shows the QASOs and Principals' opinion.

Table 2. ***Duration of pre-service of training programmes of principals***

Duration	QASO	Principals
1 month	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
3 months	1 (11.1%)	4 (12.9%)
6 months	2 (22.2%)	6 (19.4%)
1 year	6 (66.7%)	21 (67.7%)
Total	9 (100%)	31 (100%)

Majority of the QASOs 6 (66.7%) were of the view that Principals professional training should take a duration of one year. This was also echoed by the Principals where 21 (67.7%) were of the same view. This duration might be adequate in equipping the Principals with the necessary competencies that are important to the performance of their

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duties and responsibilities. This period of one year will parallel the period taken for pre-service training of inspectors in Tanzania where 9 months are used (URT, 2009). From the interviews conducted, the respondents were of the view that the duration for the pre-service training programme for Principals in Kenya should be modeled alongside the Post Graduate Diploma programmes which normally take one year to complete. The one year pre-service training of quality Principals according to one of the respondents should include field practicum: The training of Principals in Kenya should take at least one year. A lesser period may not be enough and the problems we are experiencing now may persist. What is suggest then is that this period of one year should include the element of attachment to Senior Principals for some 3 months so as to equip the graduates with the necessary practical and work environment skills.

The pre-service training for Principals in Kenya should therefore take one year. The one year should contain in itself a field practicum of three months. Course work and assessment to take 9 months.

3.1.3 The Institution to be in Charge of the Pre-Service Training for Principals

Views on which body should be in charge of the professional training of Principals were sought.
The results from QASOs and Principals are tabulated in Table 3.

Table 3 Institution to be in Charge of the Pre-Service Training for Principals

Training institution	QASO	Principal
KEMI	6 (66.7%)	21 (67.7%)
KICD	1 (11.1%)	5 (16.1%)
Directorate of QASOs	1 (11.1%)	3(9.7%)
Newly Created Institution	1 (11.1%)	2 (6.5%)
Universities	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Total	9 (100%)	31(100%)

Majority of the QASOs 6 (66.7%) and Principals 21 (67.7%) preferred KEMI as the body that should be in charge of the professional training of Principals. Also a considerable number of QASOs 1 (11.1%) and Principals 5 (16.1%) preferred Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) as the body to be in charge of the professional training of Principals. This might be partly because KEMI is currently in charge of training educational staff and has trained the Principals and QASOs before this could have influenced their positive response. Kenya Education Management Institute having the mandate by the government of Kenya to train educational staff in the Country might do a good job since they are already involved in the training of educational staff in the country including the quality assurance and standards officers. The universities in Kenya can also come up with Post Graduate Training Programmes in supervision and quality management in education so as to train the prospective Principals before they are hired by the Teachers Service Commission.

3.1.4 Timing of the Pre-Service Professional Training for Principals

When should the professional training for Principals be conducted? Is it before or after appointment? The study wanted to find out the preferred time for professional training of Principals. The responses obtained are contained in Table 4.

Table 4. Timing of the Pre-Service Professional Training for Principals

When Training Should Come	QASO's response	Principals response
After Appointment	1 (11.1%)	4 (12.9%)
Before Appointment	8 (88.8%)	27 (87.1%)
Total	9 (100%)	31 (100%)

Majority of the respondents both QASOs 7 (77.8%) and Principals 27 (87.1%) preferred training for Principals to come before they are appointed into office as indicated in table 4. This could ensure that they are well prepared professionally before they assume office. Otherwise when the training comes after appointment, it is like placing

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the horse after the cart. This is in line with what happens in the training of school administrators in the USA (Rob & Webbin, 2009) and in Tanzania (URT, 2009).

3.1.5 Need for Field Practicum as part of the Pre-Service Training for Principals

Need for, and duration of field practicum as part of the professional training for Principals was also sought. The results obtained are contained in Table 5.

Table 5. Need for Field Practicum as part of the Pre-Service Training for Principals

Need	QASO's response	Principals response
Yes	8 (88.9%)	29 (93.5%)
No	1 (11.1%)	2 (6.5%)
Total	9 (100%)	31 (100%)

The data in table 5 shows that most of the QASOs, 8 (88.9%) and most Principals, 29 (93.5%) supported the view that professional training for Principals should have field practicum as part of the training. The field practicum will equip the trainees with the necessary field exposure which is necessary for the Principals to understand their real work environment before they start working. This agrees with the views of Armstrong (2008), who maintains that field practicum should always be part and parcel of any training; otherwise the training will lack important field exposure which is very necessary in any training programme.

3.1.6 Duration of field practicum as part of the pre-service training principals

The views of principals and QASOs was sought on the duration of field practicum as part of pre-service training for principals the results are indicated in table 6.

Table 6. Duration of Field Practicum as Part of the Pre-Service Training for Principals

Duration	**QASO's response**	**Principals response**
1 month	1 (11.1%)	6 (19.4%)
3 Months	7 (77.8%)	21 (67.7%)
6 months	1 (11.1%)	4 (12.9%)
More than 6 Months	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Total	9 (100%)	31 (100%)

It is indicated in the table that the duration for the field practicum is to be three months. This is according to most of the QASOs 7 (77.8%) and majority of the Principals 21(67.7%) (64.1%). In Tanzania according to URT (2008), the training of its educational officers in the field has a practicum of 2 weeks. The three months suggested by this study is much more than what is being practiced in Tanzania's model but it is in line with most pre-service training programmes. The duration suggested is therefore found to be adequate enough to accord the potential Principals enough work environment orientation in their training which will make them acquire the requisite competencies from their training.

3.1.6 Need and Duration of Induction Course for Principals

The QASOs and Principals responses on the need for duration of induction course are given in Table 7 and Table 8 respectively.

Table 7 Need and Duration of Induction Course for Principals

Need for Induction	QASO's response	Principals response
Yes	9 (100%)	29(93.5%)
No	0 (0%)	2 (6.5%)
Total	9 (100%)	31 (100%)

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All the 9 (100%) of the QASOs and majority 29 (93.5%) of the Principals were of the view that induction course is needed after Principals are trained and hired but before they assume office. According to Armstrong (2008) induction is the process of receiving and welcoming employees when they first join the organization. It involves giving them basic information they need to settle down quickly and happily. Induction according to Okumbe (1999) helps the staff to like their job and offer the best immediately they join the organization. Induction of Principals is therefore important as it provides the officers with the integration that they need as they settle in their new job environment.

The results on the duration of the induction course of principals are presented in table 8 that follows:

Table 8. Duration of the Induction Course for Principals

Duration	QASO's response	Principals response
1 month	7 (77.8%)	26 (83.9%)
3 Months	1 (11.1%)	4 (12.9%)
6 months	1 (11.1%)	1 (3.2%)
More than 6 Months	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Total	9 (100%)	31 (100%)

On the issues of the duration of the induction course, majority 26 (83.9%) of the Principals were of the view that it should take 1 month while 7 (77.8%) of the QASOs shared the same view even though some 2 (22.2%) of the QASOs were of the view that it should take 3 months. In Tanzania the induction training takes 6 months but it comes before basic training to orient the recruits before they are trained. In Kenya according to KESI (2009) it takes 2 to 4 weeks and it comes immediately after appointment. This is, according to Ondicho (2004), the only 'professional training' they get before they start working. The suggested duration of one month is found to be adequate because these officers have already been trained and have undergone through a field practicum for 3 months.

Model for the Training of Principals

The following aspects of the training model for Principals were identified by the study and suggested a training model for Principals. These aspects included: Form of training, duration of the training, the institution to be in charge of the training, field practicum, induction training, appointment criteria, curriculum content and in-service training. Majority of the respondents were of the view that there should be a professional training programme for prospective Principals who should be subjected to postgraduate studies in supervision and quality management in education.

The professional training should take one year plus a field practicum of three months. The training should come before appointment and KEMI should be the institution to be in charge of training. Before assuming office, the professionally trained Principals should be inducted for a period of one month. This is according to the majority of the respondents. Based on the findings of this study a training model which follows is a proposed. The model is diagrammatically presented in figure 1.

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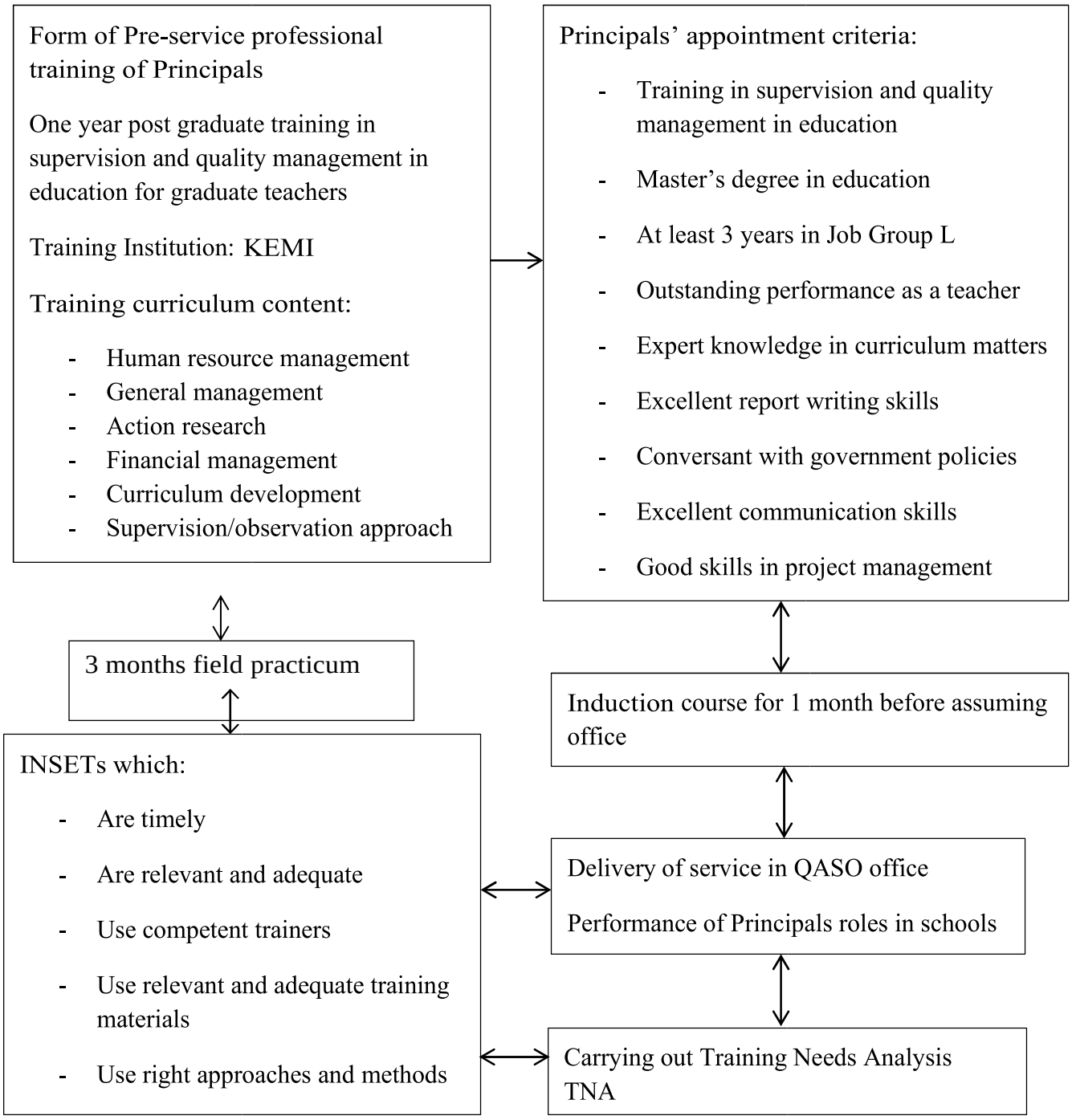


Figure 1 Diagramatic representation of a training model for principals.

Source: Adapted from Mokua (2015) p 115, and field data. Form Figure 1 it can be seen that this study has given birth to a training model. The first step in training prospective Principals should be to undergo a post graduate training for one year in supervision and quality management in education. The entry requirement to this training will be a Bachelor of Education degree or Post Graduate Diploma in Education. A mandatory field practicum for 3 months should follow and be part of this training. The curriculum to be used in the training is the one suggested in literature review and which has been used in the identification of the training needs of the current Principals in Kisii County. After the training, the graduates are eligible for appointment criteria including having a master's degree in education among other requirements as detailed in the model.

The appointed Principals are then supposed to be inducted for a period of one month before they assume office.

After the completion of the induction course, the Principals are posted to a station to start working. As they perform their work and interact with their work environment, some training needs may arise. This can be identified by conducting a TNA to establish the kind of training which will enhance the performance of their work as Principals. In-service training will then be offered in accordance with the results of the training needs analysis. The results of the TNA and in-service trainings offered will have an impact on the future pre-service professional training for Principals and the cycle will repeat itself.

Conclusion

It is concluded that there are principals in secondary schools in Kenya who not only lack requisite skills in leadership but also have not undergone relevant training based on needs assessment.

Recommendations

- This study identified the training needs of principals in secondary school of Kenya. These needs were established by the principals who are the targets of training and Quality Assurance and Standards Officers who are custodians of quality. These are consequently relevant needs. It is recommended that KESI should carry out the training of the principals taking into account these needs.
- A training model has been proposed for the training of principals in Kenya. The Ministry of Education and KESI should consider adopting this model.

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