

EFFECTIVENESS OF HEADTEACHERS IN MONITORING TEACHING AND LEARNING: THE CASE OF SELECTED PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KONDOA DISTRICT, TANZANIA

¹Dr. Joyce Nemes and ²Hussein Ismail Sharali

The University of Dodoma, College of Education,

P.O. Box 523, Dodoma, Tanzania

E- Mail of Corresponding Author: xusper@yahoo.co.uk.

Abstract

This study examined the effectiveness of Head Teachers (HTs) in monitoring teaching and learning in the primary schools of Kondoa district, Tanzania. The study used the Goal-setting Model to determine how effective HTs are in monitoring teaching and learning. It established that HTs involve teachers in the allocation of teaching subjects, hence facilitating the attainment of the set goal of achieving teaching and learning. Moreover, the HTs were found to ensure there was an equal supply of teaching and learning materials, review of lesson plans and class journals, with only a few among their ranks undertaking classroom observation. The study also identified the challenges school heads face while monitor teaching and learning such as the shortage of teachers, lack of teachers' houses and poor relationship between school and parents and their coping mechanism.

Key Words: Head Teacher, Monitoring, Teaching and Learning, Public Primary Schools.

1. Background

Empirical evidence generally affirms that Head Teachers (HTs) play a vital role in monitoring teaching and learning for the success of all pupils. Ali's (2011) study in Bangladesh, for example, found that, HTs treated the pupils' achievement as their ultimate goal. In consequence, they worked under pressure using their skill to handle different adverse situations in school to improve the teaching and learning process. The study also established that the impact of HTs on pupils' learning is generally mediated by teachers, the school climate and classroom practice. This reality prompts HTs to work hard to boost the teachers' motivation and school climate, which ultimately influenced the quality of classroom teaching and learning.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, Nhleko's (1999) study in South Africa found that pupils learn better when there is a fair interaction between their parents and schools. In this regard, HTs play a crucial role in creating an enabling school climate for parents through class teachers to monitor their children's homework, aftercare and support. Also, the study found that HTs motivate educators, pupils and parents to enhance the supervision of teaching and learning in their schools and establish effective school supervision as well as management.

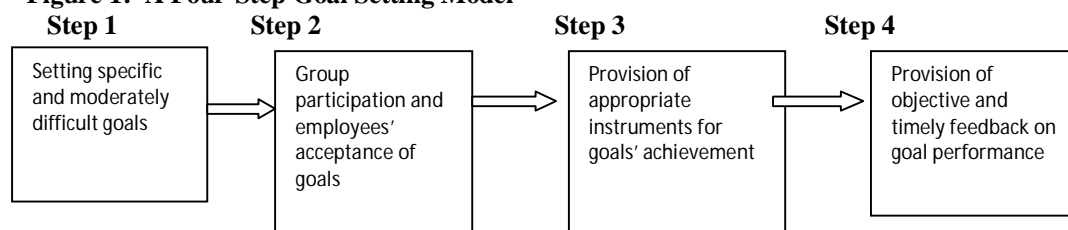
Similarly, Tanzania the Government through its Education and Training Policy (ETP) of 1995 is bent on establishing an effective machinery to foster education management and administration for the betterment of the country's schools. In this regard, the ETP stipulates that primary school leaders should possess a certificate or diploma in education and be formally trained in school

management and administration (URT, 1995). The then Ministry of Education and Culture [MoEC], now the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training [MoEVT]) stipulates the roles of HTs in monitoring school teaching and learning activities. These roles include monitoring curriculum implementation, enforcing the school academic timetable, supervising the preparation and review of teaching and learning documents and ensuring proper pupils' assessment (MoEC, 1991).

Despite the government's efforts to implement the Primary Education Development Plan (PEDP) Phase I (2001-2006) and Phase II (2007-2011), which focused on the qualitative and quantitative improvement of primary school education sector, the performance had not improved as required (URT, 2006). For example, the pass rate in PSLE was 28.6 percent in 2001, 27.1 percent in 2002 and 40.1 percent in 2003, 54 percent in 2011 and only 31 percent in 2012 (URT, 2004). As for the illiteracy rate, it shot up to 31 percent in 2010 from only 9.6 percent in 1986 (Kawambwa, 2013; Mushi, 2009). The country had inherited at independence a 85 percent illiteracy rate. The factors behind the fall in the pass rate as well as a rise in illiteracy rate include a wide gap between words and deeds, between the policies ministers attending conferences proclaim and the action taken in their respective countries towards mobilising sufficient resources to make effective learning possible (Moshia, 2006).

The Edwin A. Locke and Gary P. Lathan's (1968) goal-setting model helps to understand the roles of HTs in monitoring teaching and learning in their respective schools. In this study, the four-steps of the goal-setting model have been modified by the researchers in accordance with its research objectives so as to investigate the current practice of HTs in monitoring teaching and learning activities. Those four steps are indicated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: A Four-Step Goal Setting Model



Source: Okumbe (2007)

The four-step goal-setting model was deployed to guide the study on how HTs go about fostering academic performance within their schools. The review of literature available reveals that little has been done locally to investigate the effectiveness of HTs in monitoring teaching and learning in the school context. Some studies carried out in Tanzania like that of Msemwa (2005) in Dar es Salaam focused on the influence of HTs' supervisory roles in pupils' academic performance in primary schools, whereas the one by Dachi and Alphonse (2010) in Mwanza, Tanga and Coast regions focused on what public primary school HTs considered to be their role in improving education quality. And yet, ignoring the foundational influence of the HT role on monitoring teaching and learning in the primary school context might have contributed much to mass failures, increased illiteracy, examination malpractices and the deterioration of education standards. This was the knowledge gap that prompted the researchers to assess the specific role assigned to HTs so as to monitor teaching and learning in Tanzania's primary schools in line with the goal-setting model. The study focused on Kondoa District.

2. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

- i. Determine the extent to which head teachers involve teachers in teaching and learning improvement goal-setting;
- ii. Find out activities performed by head teachers in providing support to their teaching staff to achieve teaching and learning objectives.
- iii. Establish the challenges head teachers face in providing support to their teaching staff in a bid to achieve teaching and learning objectives.
- iv. Come up with strategies head teachers deploy to overcome challenges in providing support to their teaching staff towards achieving teaching and learning objectives.

3. Methodology

The study was conducted in Kondoa district because from 2009 to 2013 (see Table 1), the district kept on performing dismally and was the least performing among six districts of Dodoma region (province) in the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE). To make matters worse, 719 (10.6%) pupils out of 6,789 candidates registered for PSLE in 2013 were unable to read and write. With a deficit of only 15 percent of the actual teachers' need, the district nevertheless continued performing poorly in the PSLE (District Education Officer [DEO] and Chief District School Inspector [CDSI], Kondoa District Council [KDC], 2013). Naturally, this generated research curiosity, hence the undertaking of this study in the area.

Table 1: Trends of Pupils Performance in PSLE from 2008-2012

Years	# of Candidates	# of passing candidates	%	Position in Region
2008	13,735	4,171	30.1	6/6
2009	14,252	4,372	31	6/6
2010	8,872	3,391	38	6/6
2011	16,940	5,007	30	6/6
2012	12,180	1,400	12	6/6
AVERAGE	13,195	3,668	28	6/6

Source: DEO Office-KDC (December, 2013)

As Table 1 illustrates, Kondoa experience mass failures and increased illiteracy over the years under review. Thus, the current study sought to establish the contribution of monitoring roles assigned to HTs in enhancing teaching and learning in the troubled district.

Purposeful sampling was used to draw six HTs, six Academic Teachers (ATs), 12 teachers (class VI stream 'A' English and Kiswahili or Mathematics teachers), one DEO and one CDSI. In addition, cluster sampling was deployed to group schools into two main categories namely good and poorly performing schools in relation to results in the PSLE for 2011, 2012 and 2013. Then from the good performing schools in Group 'A' the best three (3) schools were picked; conversely from the poorly performing schools in Group 'B' three (3) worst performing schools were picked, hence six public primary schools in Kondoa took part in the study. Also a total of 26 informants participated in the study. Interviews, questionnaires (with open-ended questions) and documentary review were used to collect requisite data. Individual, face-to-face semi-structured interviews were held with the HT, AT, DEO and CDSI. The questionnaire was administered with teachers.

Pre-testing of the instruments in a pilot study was carried out in two primary schools—Modeli and Miningani—both in Kondoa before actual field work to ensure the validity of the research tools. Moreover, the study deployed multiple data collection methods in a triangulated fashion to ensure

reliability. The interviews were administered first, followed by questionnaire administration and eventually documentary review. Thus the study was able to achieve triangulation of data collection tools—the use of two or more data collection instruments. Furthermore, ethical issues were considered to ensure the study was conducted in accordance with research protocol by seeking prior consent from respondents, giving confidentiality assurances and non-use of coercion in recruiting informants. The informants were also at liberty to withdraw from the study at any time of the data collection process if they so wished. Qualitative data were subjected to content analysis whereas quantitative data were analysed with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0.

4.0 Analysis and Discussion of the Study Findings

4.1 Head Teachers' Involving of Teachers in Teaching and Learning Goal-setting

Information pertaining to the first research objective was obtained through the use of interview and documentary review. The general findings indicate that, all the HTs (100%), five (83.3%) ATs and the DEO together with the CDSI (100%) interviewed affirmed that it was customary for the primary schools to hold a meeting before the new academic year to discuss salient matters and allocate teaching subjects to all teaching staff, including the head teacher. The allocation of teaching subjects depends on the capacity, experience and number of teachers available within their school. This implies that in majority of primary schools visited in Kondoa District, HTs involve their teaching staff in the allocation of teaching subjects, hence facilitating the attainment of particular goals set towards enhancing teaching and learning.

The study findings also show that, all the HTs (100%) reported that they ensured the schemes of work were prepared at least one week before the commencement of a given school term. The copies of schemes of work were submitted to the deputy heads or ATs for making regular follow-up.

To cross-check these findings, documentary review was conducted by scrutinising some of the schemes of work. It was established that all schemes of work had copies delivered to the AT offices. In fact, all of them had been seen as they contained comments from the HTs in the respective schools. It was also established that the schemes of work contained crucial information that could be deployed in monitoring the teaching and learning activities in schools. More significantly, the HTs were found using them for this purpose.

4.2. HTs' Support to Teachers to Achieve Teaching and Learning Objectives

According to the Goal-setting Model, the school management provides workers with appropriate support and resources to facilitate goal achievement. In other words, educational management should help teachers to achieve their goals through lesson plans, schemes of work and participatory management (Okumbe, 2007). To gather the relevant data, the questionnaire, interviews and documentary review were used, particularly to get information on activities head teachers perform in rendering support to their teaching staff to achieve teaching and learning objectives.

Open-ended questions (in the questionnaire) made teachers mention ways in which HTs supported them to achieve set teaching and learning objectives. Responding eight (67%) of the teachers reported that, HTs plan and monitor remedial timetable; Six (50%) acknowledged that HTs ensured an equitable supply of teaching and learning materials as well as reviewing and commenting on duty masters' journal; five (42%) of the teachers recognised the role of HTs in planning for motivation and rewards for good performing teachers and pupils; and three (25%) indicated that

HTs were also required to monitor effective use of teaching and learning materials. Only one (8%) teacher mentioned that HTs were undertaking classroom observation.

These findings have several implications. First, HTs may be aware of specific roles required in supporting teachers in their teaching and learning to attain set objectives. What appears in question is the extent to which HTs effect those roles. The study found that fulfilment of those roles among HTS varied from one school to another, possibly due to work overload in school administration and management as well as teaching. Second, the study findings also imply that HTs would boost the performance of their schools if they spared ample time for making classroom lesson observations, performance appraisals, review of pupils' exercise-books and channelling of their mandated authority towards effective management of teaching and learning in their respective schools.

The information obtained from the use of the questionnaire administered with teachers was cross-checked with information from interviews. As such a similar question was posed during interviews. Responding, six (100%) HTs, five (83.3%) ATs and the DEO as well as the CDSI (100%) acknowledged that there was concern among HTs regarding making sustained reviews of lesson plans. The interviewees reported that HTs were required to review, comment and sign teachers' lesson plans so as to know the progress made in topic implementation, number of pupils attending in a session and the teaching methods the teachers applied. Moreover, properly and correctly filled lesson plans would provide HTs with a composite picture of what transpired in the classroom. During interview, one HT said:

The Academic Teacher and I alone cannot manage to review all the teaching documents seriously. What we can manage and that is what we usually do is count teachers' periods per week and match them with the number of lesson plans prepared in a given week and comment on the percentage calculated (Interview held with HT on 17/3/2014).

In line with these findings, the URT (2011) treats HTs as the top leader of a school, who should be aware of what they have to manage in curriculum prior to teachers' classroom attendance and performance as well as supervision of the curriculum. In this regard, Charles, Kimutai and Zachariah (2012) and Lutatenekwa (2005) assert that the role of HTs is to ensure that teachers make advance and timely well-structured lessons plans with an interesting beginning. These plans should also highlight the revision of previous knowledge in addition to clearly showing pupils' activities and a summary of major points at the end of lessons.

Also, during interviews, five (83%) HTs, four (67%) ATs, the DEO and the CDSI (100%) said that HTs should review pupils' exercise-books in performing their teaching and learning monitoring activities. It was also reported that, pupils' exercise-books helped the HTs know the topics covered by pupils, the lessons' sequence, the exercises given, the marking frequency and comments given by the teachers. Other aspects include corrections of exercises and nature of notes written by the pupils. Moreover, a regular review of pupils' exercise-books provided HTs with a snapshot of the topics coverage and a picture of reluctant, slow and truant learners in classes. As a result of exposure to such information, the HTs could remind teachers and pupils about their duties in teaching and learning whenever necessary. Apart from interviews, documentary review was carried out. In particular, 12 Standard VI pupils' exercise-books were reviewed. The exercise-books were found contain a lot of written notes, a number of exercises done and they were generally well-marked.

Moreover, four (67%) HTs, four (67%) ATs and the DEO as well as the CDSI (100%) reported that, HTs are required to go through class journals. These class journals are largely exercise-books used to monitor teachers' classroom attendance. Every morning, the class monitors filled in the column

of subjects of the day and names of responsible teachers. Other details were completed by teachers responsible after teaching. The class journals were then collected after the morning or afternoon session and submitted to the academic office or HT's office for daily review. These class journals reminded teachers to ensure regular class attendance. Thus, HTs cross-checked the actual number of sessions taught in each stream or class per day against the actual requirements. The journals also allowed the HTs know the absent teachers and the number of pupils attending the sessions.

In addition, 12 class journals from six schools under the study were reviewed to cross-check the information collected through the use of interviews. It was established that there were two formats of class journals. Four schools used improvised journals with adjustments made by hand in ordinary exercise-books whereas the other two used standard printed class journals distributed by the DEO's office. In some cases, the teachers signed into the class journals but they were not reviewed and commented upon by any of management teams. More significantly, both formats of class journals were not robust enough to help school monitor teachers' session attendance effectively. In this regard, the MoEVT (2001) urges HTs to ensure regular teachers' classroom attendance and efficiency in classroom teaching by making frequent checks and follow-up of class journals.

The results from the study also show that, only one (17%) HT managed to recall her role in making classroom lesson observation to ensure the lesson plans and lesson notes teachers prepared were congruent with actual classroom teaching and learning. The HTs explained that, even the best schemes of work, lesson plans and lesson notes prepared do not automatically translate into effective classroom implementation. In this study, the lone HT who was found employing classroom lesson observation did so by encouraging team teaching to improve teachers' classroom instructional practices. During an interview, this HT said:

I am not sure if the HT is allowed to conduct classroom lesson observation as a means for monitoring teaching and learning. Even teachers understand this and they are not comfortable and ready to be followed in the classroom when teaching (Interview Held on 24/3/2014).

In this regard, Omari (2010) asserts that, teachers spend hours in classrooms filled with of pupils possessing different qualities in terms of age, ability and experience; moreover, they had to contend with varying classroom sizes and complex topics. Other mitigating factors include teachers' quality in terms of teaching credentials and commitment. Thus, teaching and learning need certain conditions to be met for them to produce the required outcome. These conditions can only be identified through classroom lesson observation.

4.3. Challenges Head Teachers Face in Supporting Teachers Staff towards Achieving Teaching and Learning Objectives

Data pertaining to this research objective were obtained through the questionnaire with open-ended questions administered with teachers and interviews held with the HTs, ATs, the DEO and the CDSI. The findings generated from questionnaires that teachers had filled in have been presented in Table 2:

Table 2: Teachers' Responses on Challenges Head Teachers Face when Providing Support to them towards Achieving Teaching and Learning Objectives

S/N	Challenges	Frequency	
		N=12	Percentage
1.	Pupil truancy	10	83
2.	Shortage of teachers	8	67
3.	Poor parents-schools relation	8	67
4.	Difficult in handling overcrowded classroom	8	67
5.	Lack of teachers house	5	42
6.	Inefficient source of income	5	42
7.	Lack of motivation to hard working teachers	4	33
8.	Shortage of books	4	33
9.	Lack of pre-primary program in schools	4	33
10.	Lack of school feeding programmes	2	17

Note: Information in Table 2 (a) is based on Multiple Responses.

Source: Field Data (2014)

The data presented in Table 2 indicate that the common challenges the HTs faced when monitoring teaching and learning activities in schools (arranged in descending order according to their frequency) were “pupils’ truancy”, “shortage of teachers”, “poor relationship between parents and schools”, “difficulties in handling challenges associated with overcrowded classrooms”, “shortage of teachers’ houses”, “inefficient source of income to run academic activities especially internal examinations”, “lack of motivation for hard-working teachers”, “shortage of books”, “lack of pre-primary education programme” and “lack of feeding programme in schools”.

To establish the trustworthiness of the information obtained from the questionnaires, interviews were held with HTs, ATs, the DEO and the CDSI to solicit similar information pertaining to the same objective. The findings from interviews were consistent with those stemming from the questionnaire. Indeed, all the six (100%) HTs themselves, six (100%) ATs as well as the DEO the CDSI (100%) cited pupils’ truancy and many of those pupils were reluctant in exerting efforts into learning. The interviewees reported that improving performance partly depends on pupils’ regular class attendance. Similarly, Oduro (2009) asserts that the several challenges HTs face when monitoring teaching and learning activities include handling the misuse of teaching time due to the lateness and absenteeism of teachers as well as pupils in schools and classrooms. Another inhibiting factor that HTs had to contend with was the shortage of teachers in schools as pointed out by three (50%) of the HTs and four (67%) of the ATs. The DEO and CDSI (100%), on the other hand, did not believe there was generally a severe shortage of teachers as only some schools faced qualified shortages of qualified teachers in schools.

Furthermore during interviews, the HTs themselves appeared to contradict the proposition that the shortage of teachers undermined the support they rendered to teaching staff. One HT revealed that at School “A₁” there were 24 teachers to cater for 778 pupils, hence a Teacher-Pupils Ratio (TPR) of 1:32. At School “A₂”, there were 26 teachers for 484 pupils, hence a TPR of 1:19. At School “A₃”, there were 30 teachers and only 336 pupils, hence TPR of 1:11. At School “B₁”, there were nine teachers and 234 pupils, hence a TPR of 1:26. At “B₂” School, there were nine teachers for 273 pupils hence a TPR of 1:30 whereas School “B₃” had five teachers to cater for 176 pupils, hence a TPR of 1:35. It is apparent that there was no severe shortage of teachers at any of schools under study. After all, the officially-sanctioned TPR is 1:45. In other words, the poor pupils’ performances in PSLE cannot be attributed to the high TPR in the schools under study. On the other hand, quantity of teachers does not necessarily translate into quality teachers. Hence the poor performance could arise not because of a severe shortage of teachers, but due to a shortage of qualified teachers

with impeccable credentials capable of bolstering academic performance as suggested by the DEO and the CDSI.

Moreover, documents relating to the PSLE results reviewed indicate that the school with the highest TPR had a TPR of 1:35 and had the worst performance in the PSLE. However, before too much can be read into that, it is worth noting that the school with the second highest TPR of 1:32 but was the leading school in the district in PSLE performance. In other words, there could not be an absolute correlation between high TPR and poor performance. Besides, the school with the lowest TPR of 1:11 was in the third position in terms of performance, not first. This implies that, although the quantity of teachers in schools is important as a measure of potentially good performance, there are other variables such as the quality and diligence of the teachers to work towards the attainment of teaching and learning goals. These findings are consistent with those of UNESCO (2006) to the effect that teachers' qualifications in Sub-Saharan Africa, especially at the primary education level, were generally lower than those of any other region at the same level. In fact, a number of primary school teachers are primary schools and secondary school leavers with minimum training. Therefore, HTs had to cope with severe shortage of highly qualified teachers and instead had to rely on poor quality teachers, many of whom were also lowly motivated to teach.

Also, three (50%) of the HTs and three (50%) of the ATs said that lack of teachers' housing was another challenge HTs encountered when monitoring teaching and learning activities. The study found that lack of teachers' housing was more acute in rural schools. It was observed that two rural-based schools had one housing unit each. Whereas the first school had nine teachers, the second had five teachers. The third school had two houses for teachers but had nine teachers. During interviews, one of the ATs said: "There are no civilian standard houses built around the school for teachers to rent." In consequence, many of the teachers had to trek over long distances from the houses with corrugated iron roofing sheets they had rented. Even then some of these houses had no plaster on the wall and the floor was earthen. In this school, out of nine teachers, seven stayed far from the school premises. Instead of making teaching preparations, classroom presentations, assessment and overseeing thorough cleanliness supervision, the teachers had to worry about the long walk home. Consequently, many activities were always done below par and, hence, shoddy either due to the teachers late arrival at school or exhaustion.

Furthermore, two (33%) of the HTs and the DEO (50%) cited lack of training as another challenge that the HTs encountered when monitoring teaching and learning in schools. The HTs reported that they needed to know what exactly they were required to do when monitoring teaching and learning in the school context so as to manage and lead teachers and pupils effectively and ultimately produce better performance. HTs also insisted that they knew less about what and how to perform effective monitoring of teaching and learning. Also, the DEO reported that, the function of HTs is to co-ordinate the effort of teachers, pupils and parents to achieve school goals, particularly enhanced teaching and learning. Clarifying, the DEO said that more than three quarters of the HTs were appointed because of either their experience in the teaching profession, hard-work, or educational level. After being appointed to the headship post, they were left to lead blindly without any tangible training or guidelines that would give them a firm grounding in school leadership and management. In fact, it was established that many HTs overstep their boundaries in executing their duties, which inevitably causes unnecessary friction and conflict between teachers and the HTs, and sometimes between schools and the surrounding community.

Dachi and Alphonse (2010) observe that HTs are generally exposed to teachers' professional training but not so many HTs are exposed to clinical supervision skills so as to fulfil the role of

instructional leadership and effective management of classroom processes. Furthermore, Nzabonimpa (2011) and Lakshmi and Gopal (2014) note that many HTs are unaware of their job description, lack management training and close support to practise instructional supervision, and hence they experience both role conflict and ambiguity in the course of executing their headship duties.

Finally, only one (17%) HT and of a rural school reported experiencing the challenge related with inefficient communication between the DEO's office and his school. The HT reported that for efficient support regarding teaching and learning, there should be regular and formal support from officers in DEO's office. The HT said that they needed close co-operation with people from DEO's office so as to oversee effectively teachers' work effort, and discipline in addition to resolving some deep-rooted school conflicts. The HT also reported that such co-operation was imperative in motivating the WEC, school committee and the village council to foster their support towards enhancing educational achievement. Because of such co-operation, the DEO would be able to identify the teachers' in-service training needs and facilitate their exchanging of experiences from other successful and exemplary schools visited by the DEO.

The study also sought through a review of staff meeting documents to establish whether internal meetings were frequently held to reinforce positive teaching and learning values that would translate into enhanced performance and whether they also needed support from higher education authorities. In this regard, Arlesting (2008) and Swai and Ndiddle (2006) suggest that HTs have to consider the mode of communication held with teachers and outsiders as well as issues frequently talked about. If such communication does not support teaching, learning and pupils' academic outcomes, then they are considered to be useless in supporting the HTs' role in monitoring teaching and learning activities.

4.4 Strategies Head Teachers Deploy to Overcome Challenges in Supporting to their Teachers towards Achieving Teaching and Learning Objectives

To foster effective monitoring teaching and learning, HTs are supposed to provide objective and timely feedback on the performance geared towards goal attainment. All these will be successful once challenges confronting ht in monitoring are minimised.

Information obtained through interviews held with the HTs, ATs, the DEO and the CDSI indicate that, six (100%) HTs, six (100%) ATs, the DEO and the CDSI (100%) supported the view that pupil truancy was addressed through a review of attendance registers, and that such monitoring also motivated the pupils to attend school regularly in addition to creating an environment for enacting bye-laws to control pupils' attendance and gaining of parental co-operation. The HTs and ATs also disclosed that, it is important to know pupils who attended classes, the absentees and reasons behind their absence. It was also reported that, even though every subject teachers can quickly take stock of class attendance, absentees and latecomers, class masters are the ones usually charged with the responsibility of keeping and marking attendance registers in schools. Moreover, it was also reported that HTs were required to review attendance registers regularly, but this was not possible due to the sheer large number of attendance registers in schools they were supposed to contend with. As a result, the review was conducted periodically, either weekly or monthly. For day-to-day monitoring of pupils' attendance, the HTs reported that duty masters' journals were more effective and efficient means used.

To cross-check the above information, a scrutiny of 12 attendance registers was done during documentary review to determine whether they were used in monitoring pupils' attendance. It was found that, all (100%) the attendance registers reviewed were marked and the monthly attendance

rate calculated. Nine (75%) of the attendance registers had a mean attendance of more than 89 percent. Also, the review of the duty masters' journals revealed that they contained a summary of the whole school attendance for a day, for sick ones, for those with permission, for truancy cases. It was established that at least every evening or early in the morning, the HTs took a glance at the summary and commented on the observations. Furthermore, it was established that information presented in the duty masters' journals was very useful and precise, hence of great potential for HTs to utilise in their daily management and administration of their respective schools.

Out of the six duty journals reviewed, four (67%) were efficiently scrutinised and commented upon by the HT. Although the remaining three (33%) were also seen and commented upon, this exercise was done rather infrequently. This finding is in line with that of Calman (2010), who found that HTs role are an important cog in improving pupils' learning by ensuring that they attend school regularly and are always present in class for all the subjects to get a full doze of the academic programme in store for them. Indeed, pupils who attend school regularly learn more and succeed than those who dodge classes or fail to attend school regularly.

Also, five (83%) HTs, six (100%) ATs and the DEO confirmed that school leaders frequently collaborated with school committees and the village council to raise parents' education awareness and gain their crucial co-operation so as to boost children's school attendance and care for children. The informants made it clear that the efforts of HTs, teachers and pupils cannot work effectively in isolation without the parents' co-operation and contributions, monetary or in kind. The HTs said that parents should encourage their children to attend school regularly, learn hard and make sure that children have proper uniforms, notebooks, pens and other essentials. At home, for example, the HTs insisted that children should be given some time to review their notes and complete homework assigned in school.

Furthermore, it was established that HTs conduct regular internal inspections and use the remedial timetable to convince reluctant teachers to teach and improve the performance of struggling pupils, in addition to prompting them to undertake frequent, adequate effective pre-class preparations. This idea was supported by four (67%) of the HTs, four (67%) of the ATs and the DEO (50%). It was also observed that internal inspections carried out mostly revolved around reviewing the schemes of work, lesson plans, teaching lesson notes and pupils' exercise books.

On the other hand, in all the schools under study there were no planned schedules for implementation as remedial timetable due to a shortage of teachers. Instead, the extra hours called remedial timetable was largely ad hoc. Also, it was found that HTs encouraged effective pre-class preparation by insisting on teachers to submit lesson plans, lesson notes and teaching aids to the HT or academic committee before going to teach. But some of the HTs interviewed had the view that preparation of teaching documents by teachers did not necessarily guarantee their effective execution in the classroom. To make matters worse, the HTs do not have the benefit of observing what were nicely spelled out in the lesson plans in practice in an actual classroom through observation. Indeed, the CDSI ruled out such classroom observation for teachers:

HTs are not allowed to make classroom lesson observation. Classroom lesson observations are strictly done by school inspectors. If it happens that there is a special case involving an individual teacher's teaching ability, the HT has to report to the DEO and CDSI, then they will arrange on how to inspect the reported teacher (Interview Held on 13/3/2013).

In other words, HTs are not allowed to conduct classroom lesson observations, a reality that denies them an opportunity to establish the relationship between what the teachers plan and practice. In fact, Lutatenekwa (2005) and Guloba, Wokadala and Bategeka (2010) insist that there is growing

evidence that only through classroom lesson observation can supervisors determine exactly teachers' actual classroom practices. Through such checks, the HTs can establish whether their teaching methods were dominated by lecture-citation methods, or interactive methods that involved active pupils' participation, or whether there was heavy reliance on copying of notes, or whether the teachers made clarity in elaborating issues a priority, or whether teachers stand still in front of the class and teach, thus failing to provide suitable assistance to slow learners (*ibid.*).

Moreover, it was reported by three (50%) of the HT and three (50%) of the ATs that the problem of the shortage of teachers in schools was minimised by adding through extra hours of teaching and using double-shifts. Rural schools resorted to this option primarily there were no enough teachers who were willing to teach in rural-based schools, particularly in certain geographical areas of the district. The problem of the shortage of teachers was more prevalent in some subjects than in others. In this regard, the DEO and the CDSI (100%) said that such shortage of qualified teachers in subjects such as mathematics, sciences and English were dealt with by HTs, who encouraged team teaching and peer coaching in schools.

5. CONCLUSION

Generally, the study findings attest to the fact that, first, the majority of the HTs involved their teaching staff in allocating their teaching subjects, hence facilitating the attainment of the goal set towards boosting teaching and learning outcomes. Moreover, the HTs in the district under study performed activities such as ensuring equitable supply of teaching and learning materials; reviewing and commenting on duty masters' journal; and rewarding teachers and pupils for exemplary performances. On the other hand, the HTs faced challenges such as the shortage of teachers, lack of teachers' houses and poor relationship between school and parents. Nevertheless, the HTs had knowledge on how to cope with these challenges. For example, they were found trying to alleviate or minimise problems the encountered by finding viable options. Second, it is also evident from the study findings that HTs faced specific challenges when monitoring teaching and learning, which were outside their jurisdiction, if not competencies. For instance, the operational rules barred them from making direct classroom observation pertaining to the execution of what the teachers had planned since this was a job for school inspectors. Also, there were problems HTs faced that needed the intervention of higher educational authorities from the ward, district or ministerial levels depending on the gravity of the problem. On the whole, the Goal-setting Model is applicable within the education industry—as its application in this study demonstrates—once the shortcomings identified as undermining the effectiveness of the head teachers in monitoring teaching and learning activities are well addressed.

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