

Training of Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (QASOs) is important for the effective performance of their roles. This training is sometimes done without doing Training Needs Analysis (TNA) to find out exactly what these officers need. This study therefore endeavoured to identify the training needs of QASOs in Kisii County. The study was done in Kisii County. Kisii County is one of those counties in the country which register poor academic performance in national examinations in both secondary and primary schools. This low academic performance in national exams may be an indication of compromised quality education which might be partly because of QASOs who are not competent. The county is divided into 9 Sub county administrative units; which also made it ideal for the generation of adequate sample which yielded reasonable data for analysis. The objectives of this study were: To find out the competency level of QASOs in Kisii county, to find out the relevance of the current appointment criteria in appointing QASOs, to find out the adequacy and relevance of the In-Service training programmes for QASOs and to find out the kind of a training model which can be used to institutionalize the training of QASOs in Kenya. The study used descriptive survey research design. The study population was 9 Sub County Education Officers, 9 Sub County QASOs and 330 secondary school principals in the County. Stratified, saturated and random sampling techniques were used to sample the respondents. A study sample of 113 respondents: 7 SCBOs, 7 SCQASOs and 99 secondary school principals in the County were used in the study. Questionnaires and interview guides were used for data collection. Quantitative data was summarized and reduced into tables of frequencies where frequency counts, percentages, means and ranks were used in the analysis. Qualitative data was summarized, categorized and reported verbatim. The following findings emerged from the study: The QASOs competencies in all the six areas studied were found to be average. The in-service training programmes for QASOs even though relevant were found to be untimely, inadequate, took very short time, and used methods and training materials which were not helpful. The INSETs were not based on any TNA results and no assessment of the impact of training on performance was ever done. The study also developed a training model for the training of QASOs in Kenya. The study concluded that the training of QASOs in Kenya is irregular and this has resulted in the QASOs being averagely competent, a situation that might compromise their role performance. The study recommends that: QASOs in Kisii County should be trained on the six competence areas identified; the Public Service Commission should include a master's degree in education and a post graduate diploma in supervision and quality management in education as part of the appointment criteria; the Ministry of Education should improve on the INSETs offered and always conduct TNA before any INSET programmes are conducted and the government should adopt the training model developed by this study to ensure that the training of QASOs is regularized and professionalized. The study suggested the following areas of further research: Similar research to be done in some other counties in the county for the sake of generalization of the findings, a study on the relationship between personal characteristics of QASOs and their training needs, a study to find out the extent to which the undergraduate teacher training curricula caters for competencies needed by QASOs and a study to be done to find out the current competencies needed by Educational QASOs in Kenya.

## ABSTRACT