



Full Length Research Paper

Training needs of BoG and PTA on school leadership and management in Kenya's secondary education: A study of a district in the Kisii County of Kenya

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Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and Board of Governor (BOG) constitute an integral part of the school governance and/or leadership and management structure. They make a significant contribution to the teaching and learning process of a school. They provide a very important interface between the school and the community. The two bodies are therefore considered a key stakeholder in the education of a child. Therefore their involvement in the life of the school is very important. This article reports on the findings of a study conducted in one county in Kenya. The study utilised a survey design and comprised of head teachers (30), chairs of PTAs (30) and BOGs (30) drawn from thirty secondary schools. The schools were purposively sampled for the study. Data was collected through the use of questionnaires. The study mainly focused on the roles of PTAs and BOGs. The study revealed that both BOGs and PTAs performed various strategic roles, for instance, identification of school development projects, staff salary review, staff recruitment, school community welfare, quality standard assurance, raising funds, discipline and monitoring of school performance, among others. However, it emerged that training and support was seriously lacking and that affected the way they performed their various roles. It was also noted that sufficient induction into their roles was lacking.

Keywords: Training needs, Leadership and management, skills, Parents Teachers Association (PTA), Board of Governors (BOG), County, Kenya, Principals, Head teachers.

INTRODUCTION

In many countries in the world over, school governors and PTA have been recognised for their significant contributions in the teaching- learning process in secondary schools. They have been acknowledged for contributing to students' progress, improving schools and raising standards (Ranson et al.; 2005). School governing bodies are known by different phrases or names in

various countries, for instance, in Kenya they are known as board of governors (BOG) (Kindiki, 2009; Onderi and Makori, 2012; Republic of Kenya, 2008); in South Africa they are called school governing bodies (SGB) (Van Wyk, 2007; Tsotetsi et al.; 2008), in Nigeria they are known as school boards and in the UK and elsewhere they are simply known as school governors (Creese and Bradley, 1997; Shearn et al., 1995; Heystek, 2006; Maswela, 2007; Okendu, 2012; James et al., 2010). Regardless what they are called, their roles are more or less similar and that is contributing to the child's education. It is

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important to point out that school governing bodies and parent teacher association are all volunteers but the former has a legal mandate. In other words they have a legal backing (Onderi and Makori, 2012). Through various education Acts, the governors have statutory responsibilities (Wilson, 2001).

School governing bodies and PTAs provide a link through which parents and the rest of community assumes a partnership responsibility and in that way participate in the education of their children. Parent teacher association (PTA) and school governing bodies or school governors constitute part of the formal governance structure of a school and through such structures the voice of the parents and other stakeholders is heard. Through such a link BOG and PTA becomes part of the school leadership. Their involvement in education is based on a number of rationales (Kindiki, 2009; Bray, 2000; Onderi and Makori, 2012):

- Improving decision-making process about teaching and learning, resulting in more effective use of resources, and contribute to more effective practices and outcomes;

- Sharing experiences and expertise;
- Increasing resources;
- Increasing sense of ownership;
- Increasing effectiveness;
- Better evaluation and monitoring systems;
- Children learn better and the school becomes more successful;
- Citizens get empowered and become active in education;
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools.

However, Eliason, (1996) cited in Van Wyk (2007) argues that “changing where and how decisions are made does not guarantee that better or more efficient or more effective school practices will result.” Over time and through legislation, school governors’ responsibilities have expanded tremendously such that they are now involved in almost everything about schools. For instance they are involved in financial management, appointment of the principal and teaching staff, reviewing and appraising the principal, setting targets and standards, approving budgets and implementation of curriculum., among other responsibilities (Onderi and makori, 2012; Ranson, 2005; James et al., 2011). Issues have been reported regarding their effectiveness partly due to lack of appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding and partly due to poor educational background (Van Wyk, 2007; Kindiki, 2009). This study attempts to inquire about training needs of BOG and PTA in Kenya.

In this article the words principal and head teacher are interchangeably used.

Management of education in Kenya

In Kenya the management of education is done by different bodies at different levels. For instance, at the institutional levels, school management committees (SMC) and centre management committees (CMCs) manage primary schools respectively; while board of governors (BOG) manage secondary schools and tertiary institutions and at the university levels, university council manage their universities (Republic of Kenya, 2008). These bodies provide strategic management in both human and other resources, thus contributing and facilitating the smooth operations, infrastructural development and provision of the teaching and learning materials and/or resources. For instance, the university ‘ council oversees the activities of the institutions and is responsible for the appointment and dismissal of the head of the institution, the determination of the education character and mission of the institution and matters related to finance and development’ (World Bank, 2008a). Their role is provided for in the Education Act 1968 (revised, 1980) Cap211. Through their involvement practices and outcomes are expected to improve (Bush and Heystek, 2003).

It is assumed here that the bodies that manage and/or govern education have the necessary qualities, skills, knowledge and experience required to contribute to the improvement of practices and outcomes.

Appointment, composition, and roles and responsibilities of School governors

Historically, the involvement of stakeholders in the form of board of governors (BOG) in the management of secondary schools in Kenya came into being after independence in 1963, as a response to the recommendations made by the first Kenya education commission report of Ominde.

The Education Act Cap 211 makes it very clear regarding the details of the composition and categories of the board of governors and their tenure of office (Republic of Kenya, 1980). It also stipulates the qualities to be considered when appointing the BOG. For instance, they should be people with commitment, competence and experience (Republic of Kenya (1980). These are very good qualities in relation to governance and development of educational institutions. However, evidence indicates that the appointment of secondary school board of governors is occasionally marred by political interference. There is also indication in the review of literature that many school head teachers would often influence the selection of “less educated BOG members who will rarely question their ineptitude in the running of the schools.”

(World Bank, 2008). In the process they end up appointing close relatives or less qualified members of the BOG. Political interference has also been highlighted as a serious concern in the Koech report (Republic of Kenya, 1999). According to the report, political interference results in BOG with low level of education, lack commitment and dedication, leading to weak management of institutions (Republic of Kenya, 1999). Kindiki (2009) also reports that in many schools BOG members were incompetent in school management because majority of them have low level of education and lacked the necessary skills and experience in education and therefore were compromising their services to the schools. Political concerns have also been highlighted in Botswana in relation to the appointment of board of governors (Moswela, 2007), where appointment is based on their political or social status in their community rather than on the level of education, among other factors. Moswela (2007) observes that boards with such a poor educational background become a hindrance to the efficient running of schools.

Regarding the responsibilities of the BOG in Kenya, the Education Act Cap 211 has neither offered any definition nor provided any standards upon which their effectiveness would be assessed or measured. Despite that absence explicitness in the law, review of literature reveals that BOG is almost involved in every aspect of

the school life. For instance, in school finance management, recruitment of staff, maintenance of discipline, improvement of school performance, salary

review, quality standard assurance, curriculum implementation, school development, raising funds for school project and school welfare, among others (Onderi and Makori, 2012). However, in South Africa, the Education Act is rather detailed, for instance, according to the South Africa schools Act (SASA), it is the responsibility of the SGB to develop the mission statement of the school, adopt the code of conduct for learners of the school, and determine the admission and language policy of the school (Tsetetsi et al., 2008). Also according to Heystek (2006) the South Africa School Act (SASA) (Chapter 4), the general Notice (Section 49-53) the School governing body (SGB) is charged with the

responsibility of administrating, planning and management of everything related to school funds, assets and the budget of the school. Other responsibilities include: suspending learners found guilty of misconduct from attending the school as a correctional measure for a period not exceeding one week; recommending the appointment of teaching and other staff at the school; dealing with disciplinary hearing of educators; supporting the principal, educators and other staff in the performance of their professional function; supplementing the resources supplied by the state in order to improve the quality of education provided by the school; overseeing the maintenance of school property and buildings and employ extra teachers

through raised funds (Heystek, 2008).

In the UK, the series of legislation one after the other (1986, 1988, 1980, 2002, 2006) have not only expanded the responsibilities of the school governors but have also made them more onerous, complex and intense (Field, 1993; Creese and Bradley, 1997). For instance, they are now in charge of school administration, strategic planning, staff appointment and dismissal, accountability, staff review and appraisal, monitor and evaluate performance, approve the school budget, setting strategic vision and aims, appoint the headteacher, act as a critical friend by providing support and challenge and community cohesions and the school, among others (Field, 1993; Creese and Bradley, 1997). However, concerns have been raised regarding governors' suitability to challenge and appraise the head teacher (Hellowell, 1990). Also others feel that the responsibilities have been imposed on them (Shearn et al. (1995). Yet others argue that the responsibilities are putting governing bodies under pressure to comply with all duties and responsibilities as a result of performance driven culture (Heystek, 2011). Similar views have also been expressed by James et al. (2011) who note that because the responsibilities have expanded over the years and are complex and onerous they are exerting significant pressure on the governing bodies. Ranson (2011) identifies some areas of pressure that include: forming judgments about resources and staffing in times of financial constraint; clarifying distinctive ethos of the school that would attract parents in making their choice of school in the new quasi-market place and the need to ensure sustained performance in improving pupil achievements. It is all about accountability (Balarin et al., 2008) as cited in James et al. (2011) argues ' that the accountability pressure on the school and governing bodies as accountable bodies for schools have accumulated over time and have become thorough, demanding and intense.'

It is evident from the forgoing discussion that the roles and responsibilities of school governing bodies are increasingly becoming extensive and complex with each passing moment, but the question is, how about their skills, knowledge and experience in relation to school

management and governance imperatives? How confident are they in dealing with issues or matters related to their roles effectively? Issues of 'skills deficit' and lack of confidence among others have been reported (Van Wyk, 2007).

For governors to be effective in discharging their roles and responsibilities, it is important that they undergo induction training (especially new governors) and in-service training for experienced governors. This is in a way is echoed by Price Water House Coopers (2008) who observes that 'there are different types of training for different people, for experienced governors and those that are for newly appointed.' Also ensuring that all governors are well trained is a key feature of effective governance (McCrone et al., 2011). Also for governors to

be effective they require certain skills and qualities. However, James et al.; (2010) reports that uptake of training is very low in some cases. For instance, Bush and Heystek (2003) reports that in Guateng in South Africa parent governors are reluctant to undergo training, perhaps arguing that they don't think they need it. That may lead to what Tsotetsi et al. (2008) describe as 'lack of ownership of training.'

Induction training and induction packs for school governors

It is important that new governors are given sufficient introduction regarding their schools as well as detailed information on their roles and responsibilities. They should also be given an overview on their expectations, because nowadays 'too much is expected of governing bodies' (James et al.; 2010). According to Price Water House Coopers (2008) all governing bodies should have induction procedures in place for new governors which might include an induction pack about the school and some form of mentoring arrangements using experienced governors to support new governors. Price Water House Coopers (2008) also reports that induction is very beneficial to newly appointed governors because it improves their effectiveness on their roles and also makes them aware of developments that may affect their school and their roles as governors. This is also echoed by McCrone et al.; (2011) who adds that training provides governors with a good level of knowledge and understanding to carry out their roles effectively.

In England, a study conducted by Bath University reveals the following regarding induction programme features (Price water House Coopers, 2008):

- Participation in induction training by new governors was low;
- Only half of the governing bodies surveyed had a structured induction process for new governors;
- Only 44 percent adopted a mentoring scheme for new governors;
- A quarter of the school in the survey did not provide new governors with information describing their roles and responsibilities.

This raises some concern regarding induction training and induction packs for school governors to efficiently perform their duties as strategic managers of schools.

Training needs of school governors

In many countries of the world the roles, responsibilities and tasks of school governing bodies have become extensive and complicated and require certain competencies and abilities in order to govern schools effectively. These competencies depend on their skills, knowledge and experience. For instance they need

financial management skills management expertise, participatory decision-making, among other skills. It is regrettable that a majority of them lack appropriate capabilities to discharge various functions effectively. Therefore many experience what Van Wyk (2007) describe as 'skills deficit'. And 'skills deficit' among school Governing Body (SGB) members weakens their effective functioning (Tsotetsi et al.; 2008).

According to the deputy principal in a rural school in Guateng province in South Africa, 'training makes a difference.' (Bush and Heystek, 2003). Tsotetsi et al. (2008) observe that 'without training school governing body (SGB) members cannot exercise their governance responsibilities successfully.' Therefore training of school governing bodies remains a priority.

In Kenya, in 1988, in an effort to develop capacities for governing bodies among other school leaders, the government established the 'Kenya Education Staff Institute' (KESI) to provide in-service training to serving leaders and potential school leaders. The intended benefactors were the principals, deputy principals, and heads of departments, school committees and boards of governors. Evidence indicate that the institution has been in existence for over two decades but it has not been able to provide in-service programmes successfully due to inadequate funding and lack of full time training facilities (Kindiki, 2009). Perhaps that may partially explain the reasons for lack of capacity among school governing bodies in Kenya. Issues of lack of capacity have also been echoed in the Koech report (Republic of Kenya, 1999), which noted that management of educational institutions in Kenya was found to be weak due to the fact that most of the boards of governors lacked quality management capacities. Also Kindiki (2009) reports that secondary school boards of governors in Kenya have not been exposed to adequate management training. Also majority of them lack adequate supervisory competencies to utilise available information for educational management purposes. The Kindiki (2009) further observes that if the government has failed to deliver training through KESI, school administration should organise workshops and in-service training courses for their BOG and teachers to enlighten them on the changing trends and approaches in curriculum implementation.

Kindiki (2009) also reports that in Kenya there is no clear government policy on training of BOGs and as such many schools sideline their training. This is similar to what Price Water House Coopers (2008) reports on training of school governing bodies- that training is not compulsory but governors are strongly encouraged to take up available training particularly induction training in order to improve their effectiveness in their roles and responsibilities.

Kindiki (2009) argues that BOG members should be trained to enable them to be more knowledgeable, confident, determined and effective in their roles. This is

also echoed by Tsotetsi et al. (2008) who in reference to the school governance situation in South Africa, argues that “ in view of the complex functions prescribed to SGB in South Africa, sound training should be provided for proper discharge of the multiple duties bestowed upon them to avoid the so-called ‘muddling through’ approach.” Similar view is also expressed by a parent governor of a school in South Africa “without training we can fumble in the dark, but with training we can see where we are going.” (Tsotetsi et al. 2008).

In South Africa, a number of educators felt that SGB lacked confidence and also were not sure about their duties (Van Wyk, 2007) and therefore depended on the principal who uses his or her professional power and information advantage to the SGB. This made them less effective in discharging their duties. Their lack of effectiveness was attributed to lack of interest in the school, low levels of literacy and lack of training (Van Wyk, 2007). One teacher had a view that ex-educators such as ex-principals, ex-teachers could do a good job serving in the SGB than so many illiterate parents (Van Wyk, 2007), arguing further that illiteracy precluded

parents from accessing relevant management information. Therefore the level of literacy and lack of knowledge on educational matters will make school governors avoid, ignore or neglect issues related to teaching and learning, for instance, curriculum matters (Tsotetsi, et al.; 2008).

Other issues linked to training that have been highlighted include (Van Wyk, 2007; Tsotetsi et al.; 2008): lack of government commitment in their budget for training as a result there is inadequate funding for training programme; timing of training- it is important to provide sufficient time for training; relevancy of training- training should address governors specific needs in relation to their roles and responsibilities; encourage ownership of training; consideration of choice of language of training materials when dealing with heterogeneous group of school governors , it is important to consider different training strategies, for instance, using oral presentation, posters, and story-board all tailored to the needs of the participants, it is also important where possible to have people from outside the school , for instance, education department officials rather than using principals to deliver training and finally it is important to spread the training reasonably where possible. It is important also that training of governors is an ongoing activity.

In Kenya, Kindiki (2009) noted that academic /educational background/level of BOG members had an impact in the implementation of the curriculum. For instance, members of the BOG with Bachelor’s Degree, Masters Degree and PhD Degree ensured that better implementation of the curriculum was achieved than BOG with secondary and diploma education levels of education (Kindiki, 2009).

Appointment, composition and roles of PTA

Literature is scanty on the appointments and composition of PTAs in various countries in the world; however, PTAs are larger bodies which bring in most or all parents together (Bray, 2000). And therefore they are far larger than school boards of governors.

However, historically in both developing and developed countries the emergence of PTA is partly due to the failures of the school boards of governors and partly due to the need for extra financial support from the local community for school development (Hurt, 1985). In the UK, for instance, review of literature reveal a long history of PTA dating back to 1956 when there was the National Confederation of Teacher Parent Association (NCPTA) (Edwards and Redfern, 1988). But, according to the writers the early configuration was rather different, a loose kind of PTAs which was associated with and based on individual schools.

In Kenya, PTA was created following a presidential directive in 1980 (Kindiki, 2009). It is therefore assumed that it was set up to raise extra funds for the school development. Also there was a feeling elsewhere that BOGs were politically elected and therefore were not the right forum to address the interests, concerns and needs of parents and the community in general. Therefore in that regards PTA were seen as the better option. PTAs are elected on a yearly basis by parents during annual general meetings (AGM) (Geoffrey et al.; 2012).

Apart from Southern Sudan, Rivers and Lagos states of Nigeria, and Sindh province of Pakistan where PTAs are legally mandated, in a majority of other countries, they are volunteer with no legal mandate whatsoever (Okendu, 2012; Kamba, 2010; Bray, 2000). In Southern Sudan, for instance, PTA is mandated by the Southern Sudan Education Act 2008. It is stipulated in the Act 2008 (Kamba (2010) as cited in Onderi and Makori (2012) that:

School management committees and parents teachers association shall be established by committees at the school levels as a means of engaging communities and creating community ownership and commitment to delivery and management of education services to the citizens of Southern Sudan in accordance with the interim constitution of Southern Sudan 2005 (part1:Chapter1:Clause 41.1.b)

It is encouraging to note that most teachers in the review perceive PTAs as a group that has genuine interests in the welfare of the school. They are also viewed as less threatening, and as a valuable resource in the life of the school. Perhaps less threatening is used here in reference school governing boards. PTAs are esteemed as good organisers of social function or events

(Brighouse, 1985). But Edwards and Redfern (1988) point out that in the early years things were rather different –head teachers felt that the involvement of PTAs in school matters consumed a lot of their valuable time. So head teachers were not comfortable with PTA’s involvement.

The involvement of PTAs in schools has enabled them to perform various functions. However, Bray (2000) reports that the role of PTA depends on the culture and structure of the education system. One of the PTA’s role that has been widely reported is that of fundraising (Bereford and Herdie, 1985; Bastiani, 1993; McConkey, 1985; Dufla et al.; 2009). However, further review of literature indicate that their roles are broader than just fundraising, for instance, in the USA, Lin (2010) reports that PTAs are involving parents in classroom decisions, promoting communication, social events and fundraising, and lobbying the state and national legislation on behalf of the students. Other PTA roles resulted in providing parents and teachers with an opportunity to socialise and raise funds (Wolfendale, 1992; Yehie, 2000; Novicki, 1998). However, further review indicates that some of the events organised by PTAs are less appealing to parents. For instance, Edwards and Redfern (1988) identifies fundraising as one of the most controversial aspect of PTAs social events. Fundraising activities may impact negatively on the establishment of what Edwards and Redfern (1988) describe as ‘a true educational partnership between parents and teachers.’

In Kenya PTAs are involved in monitoring implementation of school programmes, monitoring education services and mobilising additional resources (Republic of Kenya, 2005). Besides, they are also involved in curriculum implementation, staff recruitment, looking after the welfare of the school community, quality standard assurance, improving school performance, dealing with discipline matters, raising funds and managing school finance among others (Onderi and Makori, 2012). However, Bray (2000) indicates that other studies have expressed concerns regarding many schools restricting the role of the community to the provision of finance and facilities. In some parts of Kenya PTAs play a role in supporting the government to deal with shortages of teachers in the free primary education by raising extra money to employ community teachers who are equally qualified as teachers service commission (TSC) teachers. In a baseline survey involving 192 schools, it emerged that 17.5% of the teachers are community teachers paid by PTA (Ng’ang’a, 2010).

In other contexts PTAs are responsible for overseeing academic performance of the students as well as development of school projects on behalf of the parents (Geoffrey et al.; 2012). In some parts of Nigeria, PTA are legally mandated and perform a number of functions, for instance, they compliment government efforts in the provision of equipment, facilities and fund; it strengthens parents cooperation with the school in achieving set

objectives and also assist in enforcing compliance and adherence to school orders (Okendu, 2012).

Also in other contexts PTAs have been involved in some specific functions which can be seen as operational rather than strategic in nature. For instance, providing personal hygiene facilities such as wash basins and stands and soap in classrooms and toilet rolls in latrines (UNICEF, 2009). In Ghana, Dunne et al.; (2007) reports a specific situation where in one school PTAs made an effort to contact parents whose children had missed school for a long time and encouraged them to send their children back to school. Perhaps it is for this reason that Roschanski (2007) comments that “PTAs have been established in order to strengthen both the quality and efficiency of the education system.” Okendu(2012) regards PTA as one of the community agency in the education system. However, because of their usefulness in performing some operational tasks and also because they lack a true representation of parents and community, Dunne at al. (2007) argue that PTAs lacks the power to hold the head teacher to account. This mirrors Farrell and Law (1999) views.

Training needs of PTA

It has been widely acknowledged that training contributes to individual and organisational effectiveness (McCrone et al.; 2011; James et al.; 2010). Training give people confidence and the skills and qualities needed to perform various tasks or functions. It also improves people’s knowledge, determination capacity and capabilities (Kindiki, 2009).

Unfortunately literature on the training of PTAs in Kenya and other context is scant. However, in Pakistan the government is involved in the provision of PTA training in organisation and management skills. Also in Myammar there is an evident of the government providing training to PTA through an NGO called the community based development association (Bray, 2000). Through such training PTAs were able to assume other roles in the community besides fundraising, maintenance and construction buildings. For instance, collect baseline data with the help of enumerator, set annual enrolment and retention targets in consultations with teachers, head teachers, conduct house to house advocacy with parents of children who are not enrolled in school (Bray, 2000).

Current Study

The study was conducted in Gucha District, one of the eleven districts in Nyanza province. Nyanza is one of the eight provinces in Kenya. It is situated in the western region of the country, approximately 500 miles from Nairobi and roughly 500, 000 people based on the 1999 census (Onderi and Makori, 2012). There are 174

secondary schools and 474 primary schools with an enrolment of 22,952 and 124,894 pupils respectively. Onderi and Croll (2008) have identified a number of education issues and/or problems confronting the district. They include, poor examination performance, lack of structured in-service training programmes for teachers, a lack of priorities for relevant continuing professional development programmes for teachers, shortage of qualified teachers and shortage of educational facilities such as classrooms, libraries and laboratories (see also Onderi and Makori, 2012). It can be argued that some of these challenges fall within the limit of school governing bodies (BOG) and parents teachers association (PTA) and equally confront them; the main role of BOG and PTA is to improve teaching and learning outcomes. However issues of lack of capacity and therefore skills deficit have been reported (Kindiki, 2009; Onderi and Makori, 2012; Bush and Heystek, 2003). Many of them have been described as either semi-illiterate or illiterate with poor educational background. Also many of them lack knowledge and understanding regarding educational matters and therefore require serious training (Van Wyk, 2007).

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The study adopted quantitative methodology to investigate the skills needs of BOGs and PTAs in relation to the roles they discharge in various secondary schools in Kenya. The study adopted a survey design and utilised questionnaires as a method approach. One major limitation of the study is that it cannot be generalised to all schools in the county because the participants were purposively sampled and therefore lacks representation. However it can be generalised to all schools that took part in the study. Also knowledge generated would be important in terms of understanding the nature and extent of the skills need phenomenon among BOG and PTA.

Data was collected from head teachers (30), chairs of the board of governors (BOG) (30), and chair of parents' teachers association (PTA) (30). Although sampling was purposive, there was an element of stratified sampling in the sense that the schools were sampled first, followed by participants. Prior to data collection, the researcher gave self introductory letter to sample school heads. In the letter the researchers introduced and explained the purpose of the study, explained that the study involved the head teacher, chairs of BOG and PTA and request for their permission and participation. In the letter, the researchers also indicated that participants had a choice to opt out of the study at any time without any negative consequences on their part. The participants were also assured that their names and all the information they provided would be treated with strict confidence and used only for the purpose of the study. Through the head

teacher, BOG and PTA were served with letters requesting their permission and participation in the study. At the end of the letter participants were requested to sign a declaration of informed consent form in which they confirmed their understanding of the contents of the letter, the nature and purpose of the study, what was expected of them and their voluntary participation. The chairs of the BOG and PTA were asked to leave completed questionnaires in the head teachers' office.

The questionnaires format consisted of open-ended, closed-ended and rating scale items. They were self-administering in nature. This sort of format was necessary to diversify responses as well as reduce what Watson and Coombes (2009) call 'question fatigue'. The open-ended section offered the respondents an opportunity to make comments, expand or clarify some information on their response and thus enable the researcher to capture their perspectives on the skills needs in relation to their roles. All the participants questionnaires had some general items, for instance, chairs of BOG and PTA were asked questions such as gender, level of education and occupation, while the head teachers' questionnaires had items on their experience on headship and period of service in their

current school, among others. These areas were considered important for the purpose of providing some understanding on their background. The researcher distributed the questionnaires to the participants on different occasions, allowing them some time since they were able to read and understand the items correctly. The researcher collected all completed questionnaires from the head teachers' office. The response rate was 100%. At the end of the study, the researcher thanked the respondents for their participation in the study.

FINDINGS

Participants' Background

The participants of this study consisted of the head teachers, chairs of board of governors and chairs of parents teachers association (PTA) drawn from thirty secondary schools. All participants were males. Data was analysed per category and all figures are rounded to the nearest 10%.

Ninety percent (100%, n=30) of PTA, ninety percent (100%, n=30) of head teacher and one hundred percent (100%, n=30) of BOG members were males. Perhaps saying something about how these roles were perceived by women.

Ninety percent (90%, n=30) of PTA had beyond primary education level, which included Form IV, 'A' Level and certificate in Theology. Just over half of the PTA participants were either professional or semi-professional. Their profession included, church pastor, politician (councillor), farmer, nurse aid and

Table 1. Showing the roles as scored by BOG

| Roles | BOG (%) n=30 |
|--|---------------------|
| School finance management | 90 |
| Raising funds for various school projects | 60 |
| Quality standard assurance | 70 |
| Recruitment of staff | 90 |
| Salary review | 70 |
| Curriculum implementation | 50 |
| Identify school development project | 90 |
| Improvement of school performance | 80 |
| Maintaining school environment | 70 |
| Maintenance of discipline in the school | 90 |
| Look after the welfare of the school community | 70 |

Table 2. Showing the roles as scored by PTA

| Roles | PTA (%) n=30 |
|--|---------------------|
| School finance management | 90 |
| Raising funds for various school projects | 90 |
| Quality standard assurance | 60 |
| Recruitment of staff | 40 |
| Salary review | 40 |
| Curriculum implementation | 30 |
| Identify school development project | 80 |
| Improvement of school performance | 80 |
| Maintaining school environment | 70 |
| Maintenance of discipline in the school | 70 |
| Look after the welfare of the school community | 80 |

businessmen. The result indicates that PTA chair persons were non-educators, therefore were mainly lay people in matters pertaining to education. It also suggests a diverse professional background which provide a bit of mix in decision- making in educational matters. They also come from a diverse professional background.

Ninety percent (90%, n=30) of BOG had beyond primary education level, which included Form IV, 'A' level, Diploma, college and university level education. In terms of profession it is evident that less than half (slightly over 40%) were either professional or semi-professional, which included, retired police officer, police officer, church pastor, church officer (Deacon) airline industry and peasant. The result indicates that BOG chair persons were non-educators, and therefore they can be rightly described as lay people in matters pertaining to education. They also come from a diverse professional background.

One hundred percent (100%, n=30) of the head teachers had post primary education level, which included, Diploma in education, university Degree and masters Degree in education (Med). On experience in

headship position, half (50%, n=30) had less than 5 years, less than half (40%, n=30) had more than 5 years, while a small portion (10%, n=30) had over 10 years of headship experience. Besides, more than three quarters (80%, n=30) of the heads had served in their current schools for 2 years and beyond. The result may suggest that a majority of the secondary school head teachers in this study did not have long experience in educational management and governance in their current school.

Roles of BOG and PTA

This section is about whose role is it? The PTA and BOG participants were asked to indicate by ticking in the box on the list of roles or responsibilities provided what they considered to be their role or responsibilities. The head teachers were also asked to indicate by ticking in the boxes on the list of roles or responsibilities on the questionnaires whose task they thought it was, BOG or PTA or both. Their responses are illustrated in the following three tables (table 1, 2 and 3).

For BOGs, the key roles (score of 80- 90%) are school

Table3. Showing the roles of PTA and BOG as scored by head teachers

| Roles | Heads (%) n=30 | | |
|--|----------------|-----|------|
| | BOG | PTA | Both |
| School finance management | 80 | 0 | 20 |
| Raising funds for various school projects | 20 | 50 | 30 |
| Quality standard assurance | 20 | 0 | 80 |
| Recruitment of staff | 90 | 0 | 10 |
| Salary review | 90 | 0 | 10 |
| Curriculum implementation | 30 | 10 | 60 |
| Identify school development project | 10 | 30 | 60 |
| Improvement of school performance | 10 | 0 | 90 |
| Maintaining school environment | 10 | 30 | 60 |
| Maintenance of discipline in the school | 50 | 0 | 50 |
| Look after the welfare of the school community | 10 | 30 | 60 |

Table4. Showing ranked roles based on BOG and PTA scores

| Rank(s) | BOG | PTA |
|---------|---|---|
| 1 | School finance management (90%) | School finance management (90%) |
| 2 | Identify school dev. Project (90%) | Raising funds for projects (90%) |
| 3 | Recruitment of staff (90%) | Identify school Dev. Project (80%) |
| 4 | Improvement of school performance (80%) | Look after school welfare (80%) |
| 5 | Maintenance of discipline (80%) | Improvement of school Performance (80%) |
| 6 | Salary review (70%) | Maintaining school environment (70%) |
| 7 | Look after the school welfare (70%) | Maintenance of discipline in school (70%) |
| 8 | Maintaining of school environment (70%) | Quality standard assurance (60%) |
| 9 | Quality standard assurance (70%) | Salary review (40%) |
| 10 | Raising funds for school projects (60%) | Recruitment of staff (40%) |
| 11 | Curriculum implementation (50%) | Curriculum implementation (30%) |

finance management, recruitment of staff, identifying school development projects, improvement of school performance, maintaining of discipline in the school. The least of their roles (50-60%) is implementation of curriculum and raising funds. And therefore placed in a continuum you have at one end school finance management, recruitment of staff, identifying of school development project maintenance of discipline in the school and improvement of school performance and on the other end are curriculum implementation and raising funds for various school projects and the rest falls in between.

Recruitment of staff, salary review and curriculum appear to be the least PTA roles (Scores, 30- 40%) while managing school finance, fund raising, identifying school development projects, improvement of school performance and look after the welfare of the school community (80- 90%) tops the list. It can therefore be argued that PTAs roles can easily be placed in a continuum such that at one end are fund raising,

identifying school development projects, improvement of school performance, school financial management and look after the welfare of the school and on the other end are recruitment of staff, salary review and curriculum implementation and the rest falls in between.

Based on the head teachers views in this study (see table 3) PTAs' main role (Score of 50%) is to raise funds for various school projects. They identify 3 key roles (Scores 50- 90%) for BOG which includes: Salary review, recruitment of staff, school finance management and maintenance of discipline in the school. The head teachers considered roles such as quality standard assurance, curriculum implementation, identifying school

development projects, improvement of school performance, maintaining school environment and looking after the welfare of the school community as the responsibility of both PTAs and BOGs.

Based on the scores on the lists of roles of BOG and PTA in table 4 above, the roles can be ranked into 5 categories for BOG and 6 categories for PTA.

BOG roles list (ranked into 5 categories based on the percentage score)

Category I (Score of 90%)

- School finance management
- Identify school development project
- Recruitment of staff

Category II (Score of 90%)

- Improvement of school performance
- Maintenance of discipline

Category III (Score of 70%)

- Look after the welfare of the school community
- Salary review
- Maintaining school environment
- Quality assurance

Category IV (Score of 60%)

- Raising funds for various school projects

Category V (Score of 50%)

- Curriculum implementation

PTA Roles (ranked into 6 categories also based on percentage score)

Category I (Score of 90%)

- School finance management
- Raising funds for various school projects

Category II (Score of 80%)

- Identify school development project
- Look after school welfare
- Improvement of school performance

Category III (Score of 70%)

- Maintaining school environment
- Maintenance of discipline in the school

Category IV (Score of 60%)

- Quality standard assurance

Category V (Score of 40%)

- Salary review

Category VI (Score of 30%)

- Recruitment of staff
- Curriculum implementation

From the categories identified above it is evident that curriculum implementation is at the bottom category for both BOGs and PTAs, perhaps suggesting that it is a task they both feel least confidence, experienced and/or knowledgeable.

A number of implications can be drawn from the categories above, for instance, in 'looking after the welfare of the school', BOG have it in category III while PTA have it in category II, perhaps suggesting that PTA consider themselves better guardians of the schools than BOG.

Training needs of BOG and PTA

This is based on the views of the head teachers, BOG and PTA. Their responses have been analysed and presented separately.

Two questions were posed to the BOGs regarding training. The questions are as follows:

Does the BOG receive any training that prepares/equips them for the various roles in the teaching- learning process? Just fewer than 50% of the BOG indicated that they received training which they thought contributed positively towards discharging their roles. When asked to specify regarding the training they received, two simply said workshops and seminars without any elaboration on what was covered, while four said, seminars on management, school management, roles of BOG and financial management and education administration and coordination of school activities.

The other question posed is: If yes to the previous question, do you think the training serves the purpose? Just half of the BOG participants in the study indicated that the training they received served important purpose; they felt confident and effective in discharging their roles. Something that is positive and encouraging.

Two questions were posed to PTAs regarding training, the questions are as follows:

As a PTA member, do you receive any training that prepares/equips you for the different roles you play in the school? Just fewer than 30% indicated that they received training which they thought contributed positively towards discharging their various roles.

When asked if there were areas they thought training was urgently required, they identified the following areas: School development projects and welfare of the school community; specific role for PTA members; Education Act; financial resource management, including expenditure, and role conflict management.

A number of questions were posed to the head teachers regarding training of PTA and BOG as follows:

Does PTAs receive any training that prepares/equips them for their different roles in the school? Just 30 % (n=30) of the head teachers indicated that PTA do receive training.

Does BOG receive any training that prepares/equips them for their different roles in the school? Just fewer than 40% (n=30) of the head teachers indicated that BOG do receive training.

When asked if they thought such training serves any purpose, just fewer than 50% (n=30) of the head teachers indicated to the affirmative.

And when asked whether they thought such training was necessary, just fewer than 80% (n=30%) indicates to the affirmative.

And when asked whether there were areas that they considered training was urgently needed; 80% (n=30) indicated to the affirmative.

When asked to specify the areas in training that they thought required urgent attention, they identified the following: financial and administration management; school policies; tendering procedures; strategic planning; public relations; understanding their roles; staff recruitment; curriculum implementation; quality standard

assurance; performance improvement; how the Ministry of Education operates; understanding the Ministry of Education discipline policy and managing the school environment.

Induction and induction packs for new BOG and PTAs

This section is based on the responses of the head teachers, BOG and PTA regarding induction. Their responses have been analysed and presented separately.

Three questions were posed to the BOG chairs regarding induction as follows:

Does BOG receive any sort of induction into their roles in the teaching- learning process? Just 60% (n=30) of the BOG chairs indicated that they received some sort of induction in relation to their roles.

When asked if they received an induction pack designed to introduce BOG to their roles in the teaching-learning process, just under 40% (n=30) indicated to the affirmative.

And when those who said that they did not receive induction pack were asked how they came to know and understand their roles, they identified the following: learning on the job through trial and errors; by imitation or borrowing information from what the rest of the school do; more often we relying on the DEO's office for sensitisation and, the education officials and head teacher gives briefings during inauguration and reading of the Education Act.

Four questions were posed to the chairs of PTA concerning induction as follows:

Do new PTA members receive any induction to their role at all? Just over 80% indicated that they receive an induction concerning their roles.

When asked if their school has induction pack for PTA that introduces and guides them to their roles, just fewer than half PTA chairs indicates that they received induction packs;

When those who indicated that they did received were asked how they knew and understood their roles, just over 60% (n=30) indicated that sometimes they received informal support from their PTA fellow members.

And when asked who was responsible for induction, just over 70% (n=30) indicated that the head teacher was responsible.

Two questions were posed to the head teachers regarding induction packs as follows:

Does the school have an induction pack for new PTA that introduces them to their different roles? Just 50% (n=30) indicated that the school had induction packs for new PTA for their initial support.

When asked if the school had induction pack for new BOG that introduces them to their different roles,

Just fewer than 60% (n=30) indicated that the school had induction packs for new BOGs.

DISCUSSION

This study set out to investigate the training needs of BOG and PTA in a county in Kenya drawing on the experiences and practices in the country and other international contexts. The study employed extensive review of literature and empirical study in order to understand theory and practices in relation to training in the context of roles of BOG and PTA. This article reports on the findings of the study. Based on the review of literature, it is evident that the involvement of BOG and PTA in education is widely recognised. There is also evidence of a general consensus that their involvement contributes significantly to the teaching- learning process of a child's education. However, with time they have assumed enormous roles and/or responsibilities, for instance, staff salary review, staff appointments, staff reviews or rather appraisals, maintenance of discipline, maintenance of property and building, raising extra funds for the development of the school in general and also to pay community teachers, curriculum implementation, advocacy service and the development of school visions, writing school mission and policies among others. At times they discharge these roles strategically and/or operationally. However, concerns have been raised regarding their capabilities in discharging these roles. It has been noted with concern that the growth in their roles and/or responsibilities has not been matched with relevant training; as a result a number of them lack confidence, skills, knowledge, understanding and necessary information on school matters. A situation that Van Wyk (2007) rightly describes as 'skills deficit'. Such a situation undermines their ability to discharge roles and responsibilities. It also emerged that curriculum matters was an area that most governing bodies and PTAs least identified as one of their roles. Also, evidences from the review of literature reveals that a number of them were either semi-illiterate or illiterate which could be attributed to poor educational and/or academic background, therefore making it difficult for them, for instance, to understand policy documents, among other areas. Findings from the survey conducted are discussed under three themes, namely participants' background, role and responsibilities, training and, induction and induction packs.

Participants' background

An understanding of the participants' background is very important in this study because of their increasing roles and responsibilities in the teaching and learning process. It is encouraging noting that a majority of BOG and PTAs

involved in this study had beyond primary education which is very positive because a good level of education has been recognised as key to good governance. Their role involves reading and writing of documents and poor level of education can easily become a hindrance to their

effectiveness. This mirrors Moswela's findings in Botswana (Moswela, 2007). The participants also had a diverse background, which brings a certain degree of richness and perspectives especially in the decision making process.

Roles and responsibilities of PTA and BOG

This section has been included because it is believed that roles and responsibilities underpin training. Without roles and responsibilities training may not be necessary. Roles and responsibilities of BOG and PTA are illustrated in tables 1, 2 and 3 and show their enormity. Table 1 show that BOG considered curriculum matters and fundraising least among their roles and responsibilities, while PTA considered recruitment of staff, salary review and curriculum implementation least among their roles and responsibilities. This may suggest something in relation to their confidence, understanding, attitude, knowledge

and skills, among others. According to the head teachers, PTAs' main role was fundraising and for BOG was salary review, recruitment of staff, school finance management and maintaining discipline. The head teachers viewed the rest of PTAs and BOG's roles and responsibilities as shared roles. The finding of this study on how both PTA and BOG felt about curriculum matters mirrors Van Wyk's findings on how SGB felt in South Africa (Van Wyk, 2007).

Training of PTA and BOG

Training of PTA and BOG forms the focus of this study. It emerged from the study that the training BOG and PTA received lacked consistence, structure and was therefore ad hoc, provided mainly through seminars and workshops. Also it is evident that just a small number of BOG and PTA received training, for instance, fewer than 50% (n=30) BOG and just fewer than 30% (n=30) PTA indicated that they received training. This is similar to the head teachers' views, for instance, just over 30% (n=30) and just fewer than 40% (n=30) indicated that PTA and BOG respectively received training. The BOG, PTA and head teachers all agreed that training BOG and PTA received served a purpose in terms of increasing their confidence as well as providing them with the skills necessary in their roles and responsibilities. Just over 80% (n=30) of the head teachers indicated that such training was necessary. A number of areas were identified by the headteachers and PTA where training was urgently required. They include, tendering

procedures, financial resource management, school policies, and PTA specific roles, welfare of the school community, curriculum implementation, quality standard assurance, staff recruitment, performance improvement, Education Act, role conflict and public relations among others.

Induction and induction pack

In the review of literature induction has been recognised as very important, for it introduces BOG and PTA about their schools and their roles and responsibilities. It can be rightly referred to as introduction training. Although in this article it has been treated separately in the literature it is linked to training and therefore accorded similar status as training. On induction, 60% (n=30) of BOG and 80% (n=30) of PTA indicated that they received induction when they started on their roles. On induction packs, 40% (n=30) of BOG and just fewer than 50% (n=30) of PTA indicated that they received induction pack. Fifty percent (50%) (n=30) and sixty percent (60%) (n=30) of head teachers indicated that PTA and BOG respectively received induction packs. When those who did not receive induction were asked to say how come they were able to understand their roles, they identified the following: learning through trial and error, by imitating or borrowing information from their counterparts in other schools, head teachers briefings and support from fellow PTA. There is a need for a further research concerning training of PTA and board of governors, especially areas such as training uptake, attitude towards training and timing of training, among others

CONCLUSION

It is evident from the review of literature and the empirical findings that both BOGs and PTAs are heavily involved in the management of secondary schools either, strategically and/or operationally. It is also evident that their roles and responsibilities have also grown in number, complexity and intensity over the years. However, increase in roles and responsibilities have not been matched with appropriate training and as a result their effectiveness in hampered by lack of understanding, knowledge and skills in school matters. There is therefore a mismatch between roles/responsibility and meeting training needs. They therefore lack the capability and /or capacity to fulfil their roles. Many of them lack the confidence necessary for them to fulfil their responsibilities. Therefore for both PTA and BOG to be effective and useful in the discharge of their roles and responsibilities in the teaching and learning training is fundamental. The study has also shown that both PTA and BOG require induction or introductory training, initial training and in-service training to be able to perform their

leadership and management roles in schools.

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