Impact of principals' instructional leadership on teacher professional development. A case of public secondary schools in Mombasa County Kenya.

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to establish the impact of principals' instructional leadership on teacher professional development in Mombasa County in Kenya. The specific objectives of this project were to investigate the impact of principals' instructional leadership on teacher pedagogical skills, teacher knowledge of assessment and reporting, teacher self-efficacy and teacher support on inclusive education practices. The components of Weber's (1996) instructional leadership model was used to guide this study. The study employed explanatory sequential research design to establish the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variables. The target population of this study was the 1,103 principals and teachers teaching in the county. A sample of 305 respondents were picked out of which 216 responded back. These were 14 principals and 202 teachers. Data was collected through a questionnaire for the teachers and interview sessions with the principals. Descriptive statistics and inferential analysis was conducted on the data. Quantitative data was analysed descriptively using means and standard deviations, while qualitative data were thematically analysed and presented verbatim. The study found out that effective instructional leadership positively impacted teacher professional development. Policymakers, academia, school administrators, and teachers should collaborate to support this system as this will ultimately improve student learning outcomes.

Key words: Instructional leadership, teacher professional development, pedagogical skills, inclusive education, teacher self-efficacy, assessment and reporting.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, instructional leadership has become the centre of attention of school leadership as it is believed that schools exist to advance learning (Bush 2008). Instructional leadership is therefore the process of designing a school's' tradition and instructional program that is sufficient to student learning (Blase, 2003). School leaders are anticipated to take on various responsibilities such as collaboration, monitoring progress, analysing student achievement data, giving feedback, and promoting professional growth (Leithwood et.al., 2010). All these behaviours are encompassed into the instructional leadership spectrum. Lindstrom (2004) defines Instructional Leadership as any action geared towards educating teachers to their roles so as to realize the school goal.

Teacher Professional Development (PD) refers to activities that enhance teachers' abilities in their teaching practices (Nelson & Sassi, 2005). Effective teacher PD is job-embedded, collaborative, and ongoing. A practical example is professional learning communities (Townsend, 2019). Instructional leadership plays an essential role in advancing teacher comprehension about student learning, and its conceptualization has gradually progressed from direct, autocratic perspectives to a more indirect, collaborative perspectives. There are several studies that have shown the link between instructional leadership and teacher professional development. For instance, Leithwood and Louis (2010) in a study conducted in USA found out that instructional leadership was a very important factor in promoting learning. Bush and Glover (2014) did a comprehensive review of research on school leadership models, including instructional leadership, and their impact on teacher professional development in Pakistan. Their study examined various leadership models and their effectiveness in promoting instructions. The research study established that instructional leadership is significantly an effective management model for promoting student's academic achievement. A study by Vladimirova and Le

Blanc, (2016) states that UN reports on the aspects of education has been neglected and no implementation observed at all during the study. The principals as instructional leaders are therefore called upon to facilitate and ensure the smooth implementation of the policies highlighted on the reports since this will enable the attainment of lifelong learning for quality education. When instructional leadership is effectively carried out, the available teachers are effective in their duties and this leads to improved performance from the learners at the same time teachers are motivated. By exercising effective instructional leadership there will be improvement in terms of teamwork among the school players irrespective of their levels of academics (Koopasammy, 2012).

The Teachers Service Commission (TSC) in Kenya has developed various initiatives to enhance instructional leadership among secondary schools leadership (TSC, 2020). According to TSC, instructional leadership involves creating a conducive learning environment, setting academic goals, developing and implementing effective teaching and learning strategies, monitoring and evaluating student progress, and furnishing teachers with effective comments to enhance their teaching prowess. These initiatives were aimed at enhancing student's academic performance as opposed to enhancing the teacher's capacity in terms of pedagogical skills, knowledge of assessment and reporting, self-efficacy as well as support on inclusive education practices.

A circular number 2009 (QSA/2/1A/VIL.1/86) released by the Ministry of Education in Kenya introduced instructional supervision in schools, emphasizing the role of school principals and head teachers in performing internal instructional supervision. This supervision involves various tasks related to curriculum implementation, teacher support, and student learning.

Principals' instructional leadership in secondary schools in Kenya

The Teachers Service Commission (TSC) in Kenya has developed various initiatives to enhance instructional leadership among secondary schools leadership (TSC, 2020). According to TSC, instructional leadership involves creating a conducive learning environment, setting academic goals, developing and implementing effective teaching and learning strategies, monitoring and evaluating student progress, and furnishing teachers with effective comments to enhance their teaching prowess. These initiatives were aimed at enhancing student's academic performance as opposed to enhancing the teacher's capacity in terms of pedagogical skills, knowledge of assessment and reporting, self-efficacy as well as support on inclusive education practices. This study therefore sought to obtain teachers opinion on the principals' instructional leadership practices which have got a great impact on their pedagogical skills, self-efficacy, support on inclusive education practices as well as their knowledge of assessment and reporting.

Instructional leadership has been strengthened by TSC by organizing workshops, seminars and other training programs for principals. It is said, these initiatives are there to equip principals with the competencies that are required to effectively lead and manage the schools well. Curriculum development, teacher professional development, assessment and evaluation, student discipline and welfare, and school management are some of the areas covered in the trainings (Wasike and Simatwa, 2017). In addition to workshops and training programs, TSC has also introduced performance appraisal systems for principals, with an aim of assessing their instructional leadership competencies and to provide feedback to improve their performance.

Statement of the problem

Instructional leadership plays an integral role in enhancing the school academic performance. It is the role of school principals as instructional leaders to provide an ambient school environment that will enhance teacher's pedagogical skills at the same time improve teacher motivation. Research has proved that schools where principals are available and consistently collaborate with the teachers with the aim of improving their instructional competencies, always boast of better performance. However,

there are also schools that have been closed due to poor academic performance in the national examinations which have been blamed on poor instructional leadership. Many studies have also attempted to disentangle what made schools effective and pointed to instructional leadership as an essential factor. However, according to a report from TSC County office 2022, Mombasa County public secondary schools are grappling with challenges in terms of the Teacher Professional Development Programmes offered by various stakeholders. For instance, the report indicates that, the initiatives lack an ambitious vision of teaching and learning, the programmes have also failed to cultivate teachers' ownership since they are short, sporadic and disconnected from classrooms. They are described as one-size-fits all and that they have failed to cater for the teachers' individual needs. The problems are claimed to be the principals' faults due to the inadequacies sited in terms of instructional leadership offered. From the report, there is a doubt if indeed the principals have embraced instructional management practices in their spheres of influence. Secondly, there is no clarity whether the instructional leadership practices are being implemented and the influence of these practices on quality performance.

It is for this reason that this study sought to find out whether principals' instructional leadership impacts teacher professional development in public secondary schools in Mombasa County. At the same time there is a knowledge deficit on how principals' instructional leadership impact on teacher professional development in the setting of public secondary schools in Mombasa County, Kenya. There is particularly little research on the precise instructional leadership techniques that, in this situation, are most effective in fostering teacher professional development, as well as on teachers' insight on the influence of instructional leadership of principals' on their own professional development. Likewise, the importance of principals' instructional leadership in supporting teacher professional development in Kenyan secondary schools has received little emphasis. In order to fill in these knowledge gaps, this study looked at how principals' instructional leadership impact on teacher professional development.

The Study Objectives
The study objectives were
i.   To investigate the impact of principals' instructional leadership on teacher pedagogical skills in public secondary schools in Mombasa county.
ii.   To determine the impact of principals' instructional leadership on teacher Knowledge of assessment and reporting in public secondary schools in Mombasa county.
iii.   To assess the impact of principals' instructional leadership on teacher self-efficacy in public secondary schools in Mombasa county.
iv.   To identify the impact of principals' instructional leadership on teacher support on inclusive education practices in public secondary schools in Mombasa county.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical framework

Table 1.1

Presents the components of Weber's (1996) Instructional Leadership Model.

Definition of the school mission	Management of curriculum and instructions	Promotion of a positive learning climate	Observation and improving instruction	Assessing the instructional programmes
Together with other stakeholders, the instructional leader creates a shared vision and objectives for the school.	The instructional leader models and supports the use of data to drive instruction, provides resources and support for the application of instructional best practices, and assesses how classroom practices correspond with the school's goal.	By expressing objectives, laying out expectations, and creating a calm learning environment, the instructional leader fosters a conducive learning environment.	Through classroom observation and professional development opportunities, the instructional leader monitors instruction and makes adjustments as necessary.	A curriculum effectiveness assessment's planning, design, administration, and analysis are all facilitated by the instructional leader.

Note. Adapted from Weber, James R. (1996) book. Leading the instructional program. This is the original article where Weber proposes and explains the five domains of his model.

The Concept of Instructional Leadership

Instructional leaders do not have a distinct or specific rule or way to define their roles (Lewin and Caillords, 2001). However, instructional leadership is described in terms of the chores the leader performs or delegates in order to enhance teacher's professionalism or student's academic progression (Leithwood and Jantzi, 2008). Significantly, instructional leaders have to move away from their usual responsibilities of being school managers and administrators and put more energy on enhancing learning and implementation of the curriculum, instructions and assessment (Jenkins, 2009). The ever changing demands placed on school principals (local, national and state policies, parents, and community members' expectations) make it impossible for a principal to complete all tasks successfully without involving others (Ellis, 2014).

Principals' Instructional Leadership and teacher pedagogical skills

Teacher pedagogical skills are significantly impacted by the instructional leadership of principals (Coleman & Glover, 2010). The procedures of teaching and learning at a school are the focus of a principal's instructional leadership. It entails a collection of techniques that assist in enhancing the teaching and learning for all students (Jackson, 2013). Setting directions, developing people, reorganizing the organization, and administering the educational program are the four main aspects of instructional leadership, according to the Model for Instructional Leadership (Baum & Krulwich, 2016). Principals can significantly influence the growth of teachers' pedagogical skills in each of these areas. For instance, while creating goals, principals can create a distinct vision for teaching and learning at the institution, which can lead to the professional growth of instructors (Keengwe & Onchwari, 2016).

Principals' Instructional Leadership and teacher Knowledge of assessment and reporting

Teachers' understanding of assessment and reporting may be impacted by the instructional leadership of principals (Black and William, 1998). Teachers are more likely to appreciate the significance of assessment and reporting and use these tools effectively in their teaching practices when principals assist and mentor them in developing these skills (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). The Model for Instructional Leadership states that principals who are informed about assessment and are able to advice and critique teachers on their assessment procedures can greatly increase the effectiveness of their staff (Stiggins, 2001). This can be accomplished by offering continuous assistance and feedback to instructors as well as professional development opportunities for them to advance their knowledge and abilities in evaluation. Additionally, principals can encourage teachers to view assessment as a crucial component of the teaching and learning process by fostering a culture of assessment and reporting within their institution. This may result in more insightful and efficient assessment methods that support students' learning and development.

Principals' Instructional Leadership and teacher self-efficacy

Studies have demonstrated that the instructional leadership of principals significantly increases teacher efficacy (DeWitt, 2021). Self-efficacy is a person's confidence on their ability to ignite motivation, intellectual resources, and a series of activities for ensuring control over their lives activities (Wood and Bandura, 1989). Wood and Bandura (1989) defines Self-efficacy as a person's confidence on their skills which will enable him/her to ignite motivation, intellectual capacity and other series of activities to enable him/her control his/her life. According to a 2005 study by Hoy and Spero, principals can boost teachers' self-efficacy by giving them constructive criticism, praising and celebrating their achievements, cultivating a positive school climate, and providing professional development opportunities that are catered to each teacher's specific requirements. Staff members might be inspired and helped in their quest for self-worth by a principal who has high self-efficacy.

Principals' Instructional Leadership and support on inclusive education practices

Teachers' support for inclusive educational approaches has been proven to be positively impacted by the instructional leadership of principals (Nind et al., 2023). The term inclusive education techniques refers to instructional methods that are created to accommodate the distinctive needs of all students, including those who have special needs, impairments, or come from various cultural backgrounds (Porter & Smith, 2012). According to research by Bratton (2023), administrators can foster an inclusive culture in the school by displaying transformational leadership behaviours including encouraging cooperation and involving teachers in decision-making processes. This may inspire educators to use inclusive methods and make concessions for learners with special needs. A positive school climate where teachers feel respected and supported in their attempts to teach all students can be developed by principals who support inclusive education techniques.
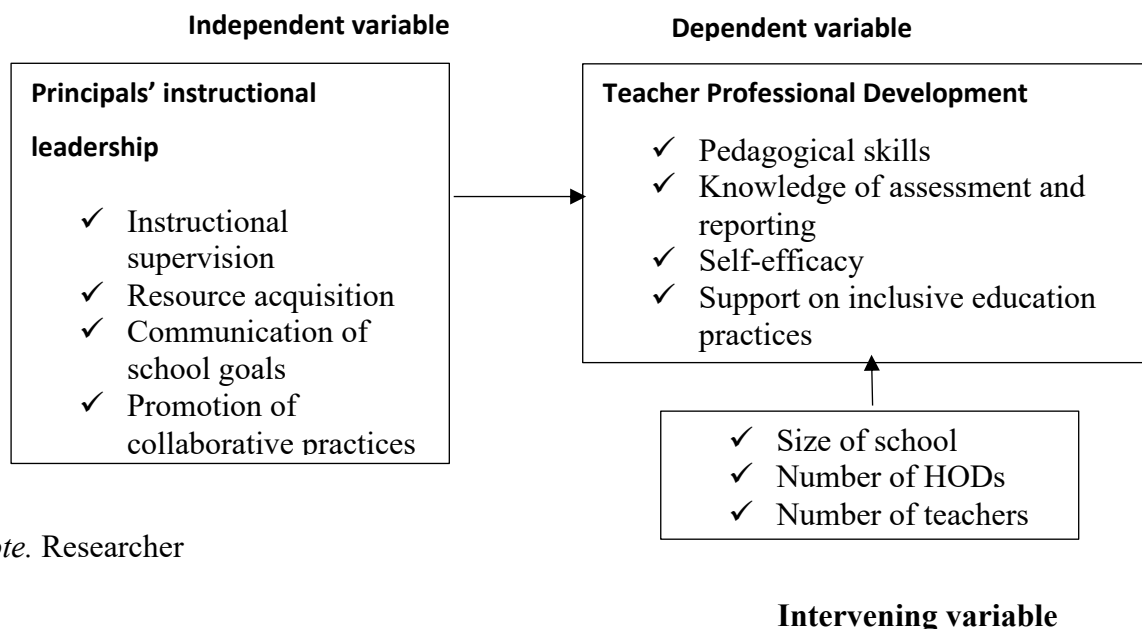
Research Gaps

There is a lack of data on the long-term effects of instructional leadership on teacher professional development. Limited studies on how principals' instructional leadership styles vary based on factors such as school context, socio-economic status, and cultural diversity. Furthermore there is a need for more research on how principals can effectively lead and support teacher professional development in low-performing schools. There is also limited understanding of how principals can support teacher professional development in a remote or online learning context. The lack of studies that examine the impact of instructional leadership on student achievement and how they may be related to teacher professional development is also a research gap. Limited research on the role of instructional coaches and how they can support and enhance the work of principals in promoting teacher professional development is also a gap.

Conceptual framework

Figure 1.1 shows the conceptual framework that was used in this study.

Figure 1.1
Conceptual Framework of the study

<table>
<tr><td align="center">**Independent variable**</td><td align="center">**Dependent variable**</td></tr>
<tr><td>

Principals' instructional leadership

- ✓ Instructional supervision
- ✓ Resource acquisition
- ✓ Communication of school goals
- ✓ Promotion of collaborative practices

</td><td>

Teacher Professional Development

- ✓ Pedagogical skills
- ✓ Knowledge of assessment and reporting
- ✓ Self-efficacy
- ✓ Support on inclusive education practices

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- ✓ Size of school
- ✓ Number of HODs
- ✓ Number of teachers

Note. Researcher

Intervening variable

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study relied on a mixed method research design. Among the six types of mixed-method designs, the explanatory sequential design was suitable and therefore used for this study (Morse, 2016). In an explanatory sequential research design, the researcher first collects and analyses quantitative data, followed by qualitative data collection and analysis to explain the quantitative results (Creswell & Clark, 2011).

Variables

The term "Principals' Instructional Leadership" refers to the behaviours and activities of the principal that support teacher professional development, enhance teaching quality, and improve student learning outcomes (Nelson & Sassi, 2005). It is the independent variable in this study. Teacher pedagogical skills, Teacher assessment and reporting knowledge, Teacher self-efficacy, and Teacher support for inclusive education methods were the study's dependent variables.

Data Collection Methods

The respondents were teachers and principals who were given self-administered questionnaires to collect the data. The researcher also conducted an interview with the principals. The teachers' opinions of the principals' instructional leadership and its impact on their professional growth were evaluated using the questionnaire. . Data collected from the questionnaires were analysed using statistical methods called regression analysis, while qualitative data collected from document analysis was analysed using content analysis.

Location of the research study

This study was carried out in the County of Mombasa here in Kenya. The research study was carried out specifically at the county's public secondary schools because according to a report from TSC County office 2022, Mombasa County public secondary schools are grappling with challenges in terms of the Teacher Professional Development Programmes offered by various stakeholders.

Target and sample population of the study

Schools

All of Mombasa County's public secondary schools was the study's target population. According to data from the Teachers Service Commission office in Kenya, there are 53 public secondary schools in the county of Mombasa currently employing 1103 teachers, including principals.

Table 1.2

Target and sample population of the study

Respondent	Target Population N	Sample picked n	%
Principals	53	16	30
Teachers	1050	289	27
TOTAL	**1103**	**305**	**57**

Note. From TSC offices in Mombasa county

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings of this study are presented in three parts based on the explanatory sequential research design. The first part involves quantitative results obtained from the respondents structured questions based on the specific objectives. The second part involves qualitative data obtained through interviews with the principals. The third part brings together the quantitative and qualitative findings, integrating them to explain the impact of principals' instructional leadership on Teacher Professional Development in a more comprehensive manner.

Return Rate

The researcher began by looking at the return rate of the study by the respondents. Table 1.3 presents the return rates for both principals and teachers from the schools that were involved in the sample of the study.

Table 1.3
Return rates

Respondent	Sample size	n	Return rate %
Principals	16	14	88
Teachers	289	202	70
TOTAL	**305**	**216**	

Note. From field data by the researcher

In this study, Table 1.3 shows the sample size for principals which was 16, and 14 of them were interviewed, resulting in a return rate of 88%. For teachers, the sample size was 289, and 202 questionnaires were returned, resulting in a return rate of 70%. The total sample size was 305, and a total of 216 respondents participated in the study. A return rate of 60-70% is considered acceptable (Wu & Thompson, 2020).

Quantitative results of the study

In the first phase, quantitative data was obtained in order to analyse the objectives of the study. The quantitative data was obtained from surveys administered to teachers. This was in the form of Likert-scale responses for closed ended questions and response forms for open ended questions.

1. Impact of principals' instructional leadership on teacher pedagogical skills

The first objective of this study was to investigate the impact of principals' instructional leadership on teacher pedagogical skills. Table 1.4 shows the findings of this study.

Table 1.4

Teachers' response on Principals' instructional leadership on teacher pedagogical skills

No.	My Principal	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Usually		Agree		Strongly agree		Total
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
1	Enhances student's innovative and critical thinking by acquiring and allocating teaching learning resources.	2	1%	2	1%	5	2%	68	34%	125	62%	202
2	Collaborates with the teachers in discussing their strategies aimed at addressing students learning abilities as well as teacher's classroom management system.	9	4%	3	1%	11	5%	41	20%	138	68%	202
3	Conducts an assessment of the teaching and learning and records the strengths and weaknesses observed in the classroom.	7	3%	12	6%	42	21%	47	23%	94	47%	202
4	Collects data that aims at addressing the lesson objectives while recording variations of teaching methodologies used by the teachers at the beginning and conclusion of the lesson.	4	2%	8	4%	23	11%	59	29%	108	53%	202
5	Discusses and advises the teacher on how to enhance their instructions	1	0%	17	8%	33	16%	57	28%	94	47%	202

A substantial majority of teachers, 62% (n=125), strongly agreed that their principal enhances students' innovative and critical thinking by acquiring and allocating teaching and learning resources, with an additional 34% (n=68) agreeing. This indicates a strong positive impact of principals' efforts in this area. Additionally, 68% (n=138) of teachers strongly agreed that their principal collaborates with them

in discussing strategies aimed at addressing students' learning abilities and classroom management systems, while 20% (n=41) agreed. This highlights a robust collaborative effort by principals to support and enhance teaching strategies.

When it comes to conducting assessments and recording observations in the classroom, 47% (n=94) of the teachers strongly agreed that their principal identifies strengths and weaknesses, with 23% (n=47) agreeing. This shows that nearly half of the respondents observe their principals actively engaging in evaluative roles. Furthermore, 53% (n=108) of teachers strongly agreed that their principal collects data to address lesson objectives and records variations in teaching methodologies used, with an additional 29% (n=59) agreeing. This reflects a significant focus on methodological improvements spearheaded by principals.

Lastly, 47% (n=94) of the teachers strongly agreed that their principal discusses and advises them on enhancing their instructional methods, and 28% (n=57) agreed. This underscores the advisory role of principals in supporting the development of teachers' instructional skills. Overall, the data suggests that a significant proportion of teachers view their principals' instructional leadership positively, particularly in enhancing pedagogical skills through collaboration, assessment, data collection, and advisory roles.

2. Impact of principals' instructional leadership on teacher Knowledge of assessment and reporting

The second objective was to determine how principals' instructional leadership affects teacher knowledge of assessment and reporting. The findings, based on teachers' responses, provide clear insights into this aspect.

Table 1.5

Teachers' response on Principals' instructional leadership on teacher Knowledge of assessment and reporting

No.	My principal	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Usually		Agree		Strongly agree		
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	Total
1	Leadership style has influenced my understanding and use of assessment and reporting practices	9	4%	11	5%	56	28%	64	32%	62	31%	202
2	Is aware of the assessment tools and strategies teachers deploy to determine the lesson objectives.	8	4%	15	7%	43	21%	65	32%	71	35%	202
3	Is informed about the instructional methodologies teachers use during their lesson execution and engages in classroom observations focused on assessment practices	15	7%	5	2%	24	12%	80	40%	78	39%	202
4	Encourages collaboration among teachers to share best practices in assessment	12	6%	8	4%	29	14%	69	34%	84	42%	202
5	Cultivated a climate of professional growth and learning related to assessment and reporting	4	2%	3	1%	19	9%	67	33%	109	54%	202

Regarding the influence of the principal's leadership style on teachers' understanding and use of assessment and reporting practices, 32% (n=64) of the teachers agreed, while 31% (n=62) strongly agreed. This indicates that the majority of teachers acknowledge a positive impact of their principal's leadership on their assessment and reporting knowledge.

Secondly, 35% (n=71) of the teachers strongly agreed that their principal is aware of the assessment tools and strategies deployed by teachers to determine lesson objectives, with an additional 32% (n=65) agreeing. This suggests that principals are significantly engaged in understanding and supporting the assessment practices of their teachers.

Furthermore, 40% (n=80) of the teachers agreed, and 39% (n=78) strongly agreed that their principal is informed about the instructional methodologies used during lesson execution and engages in classroom observations focused on assessment practices. This demonstrates a high level of principal involvement in observing and understanding assessment methodologies.

In terms of encouraging collaboration among teachers to share best practices in assessment, 42% (n=84) of the teachers strongly agreed, and 34% (n=69) agreed. This indicates a strong emphasis by principals on fostering a collaborative environment for sharing effective assessment strategies.

Lastly, 54% (n=109) of the teachers strongly agreed that their principal has cultivated a climate of professional growth and learning related to assessment and reporting, with 33% (n=67) agreeing. This highlights the principal's role in promoting continuous professional development in assessment and reporting practices.

Overall, the data suggests that a significant proportion of teachers view their principals' instructional leadership positively, particularly in enhancing their knowledge and practices related to assessment

and reporting. The principals' awareness, involvement, encouragement of collaboration, and promotion of professional growth are seen as key factors contributing to this positive impact.

3. **Impact of principals' instructional leadership on teacher self-efficacy**

The third objective was to assess the impact of principals' instructional leadership on teacher self-efficacy in public secondary schools in the county. Table 1.5 shows the findings of this study.

Table 1.5

Teachers' response on Principals' instructional leadership on teacher self-efficacy

No.	My principal	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Usually		Agree		Strongly agree		
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	Total
1	Makes me feel confident in my ability to effectively teach my students and address their diverse learning needs	10	5%	13	6%	26	13%	56	28%	97	48%	202
2	Has significantly increased my self-Efficacy overtime compared to my first year of teaching. This has increased my level of confidence as a teacher	9	4%	9	4%	27	13%	25	12%	132	65%	202
3	Has ensured my school culture encourages collaboration and sharing of best practices among teachers.	3	1%	8	4%	23	11%	65	32%	103	51%	202
4	I feel that the school provides adequate resources and support for my professional development and classroom practices	11	5%	20	10%	33	16%	45	22%	93	46%	202
5	Contributes to creating an environment that fosters teacher self-efficacy	19	9%	12	6%	3	1%	6	3%	162	80%	202

Firstly, regarding the confidence teachers feel in their ability to effectively teach and address their students' diverse learning needs, 48% (n=97) of the teachers strongly agreed that their principal makes them feel confident, while 28% (n=56) agreed. This shows a strong positive impact of principals' leadership on teachers' self-efficacy.

Secondly, 65% (n=132) of the teachers strongly agreed that their self-efficacy has significantly increased over time compared to their first year of teaching due to their principal's influence, with an additional 12% (n=25) agreeing. This indicates that principals play a crucial role in boosting teachers' confidence over their careers.

In terms of school culture, 51% (n=103) of the teachers strongly agreed that their principal ensures a culture that encourages collaboration and sharing of best practices among teachers, while 32% (n=65) agreed. This highlights the importance of principals in fostering a collaborative and supportive school environment.

Regarding the provision of adequate resources and support for professional development and classroom practices, 46% (n=93) of the teachers strongly agreed that their school provides these, with an additional 22% (n=45) agreeing. This demonstrates that a significant proportion of teachers feel supported by their principals in their professional growth.

Finally, 80% (n=162) of the teachers strongly agreed that their principal contributes to creating an environment that fosters teacher self-efficacy, with 3% (n=6) agreeing. This overwhelmingly positive response underscores the critical role of principals in nurturing teachers' belief in their capabilities.

Overall, the data suggests that a significant proportion of teachers view their principals' instructional leadership as having a highly positive impact on their self-efficacy. The principals' ability to boost confidence, foster a collaborative culture, provide adequate support, and create a conducive environment for teacher growth are key factors contributing to this positive perception.

4. Impact of principals' instructional leadership on teacher support on inclusive education practices

The fourth objective was to identify the impact of principals' instructional leadership on teacher support on inclusive education practices. Table 1.6 below shows the findings.

Table 1.6

Teachers' response on principals' instructional leadership on teacher support on inclusive education practices

No.	My principal	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Usually	Agree	Strongly agree

		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	Total
1	Principal effectively communicates a clear vision for inclusive education in our school.	13	6%	2	1%	26	13%	71	35%	90	45%	202
2	Demonstrates a commitment to fostering a supportive environment for inclusive education.	14	7%	3	1%	34	17%	59	29%	92	46%	202
3	Supports teachers in acquiring the necessary skills and knowledge for inclusive teaching practices.	9	4%	4	2%	26	13%	76	38%	87	43%	202
4	Provides adequate support and resources for teachers implementing inclusive education strategies.	8	4%	3	1%	34	17%	69	34%	88	44%	202
5	Regularly monitors the implementation of inclusive education practices in classrooms.	9	4%	1	0%	24	12%	90	45%	78	39%	202

Firstly, when asked whether principals effectively communicate a clear vision for inclusive education, 90 teachers (45%) strongly agreed and 71 teachers (35%) agreed, making a total of 161 teachers (80%) who supported this statement. Regarding the commitment of principals to fostering a supportive environment for inclusive education, 92 teachers (46%) strongly agreed and 59 teachers (29%) agreed, totaling 151 teachers (75%).In terms of supporting teachers in acquiring the necessary skills and knowledge for inclusive teaching practices, 87 teachers (43%) strongly agreed and 76 teachers (38%) agreed, resulting in 163 teachers (81%) in agreement. When asked about the provision of adequate support and resources for implementing inclusive education strategies, 88 teachers (44%) strongly agreed and 69 teachers (34%) agreed, making a total of 157 teachers (78%) who felt supported. Lastly, on the regular monitoring of the implementation of inclusive education practices in classrooms, 78 teachers (39%) strongly agreed and 90 teachers (45%) agreed, with a total of 168 teachers (84%) endorsing this statement.

In summary, a significant majority of teachers in public secondary schools in Mombasa County perceive that their principals exhibit strong instructional leadership by communicating a clear vision, fostering supportive environments, providing necessary skills and resources, and regularly monitoring inclusive education practices.

Regression analysis

Regression shows a cause-effect relationship and is used to predict a variable using observed factors. The study sought to identify whether teacher professional development in public secondary schools in Mombasa County is impacted by principals' instructional leadership. Table 1.7 shows this summary of the regression model.

Table 1.7

The regression model

Model	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std error of estimation	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	0.705[a]	0.657	0.123403	31.842	4	135	.000

The independent variable is principals' instructional leadership, and the dependent variable is teacher professional development. The R square value of 0.705 indicates that the model explains 70.5% of the variation in teacher professional development. This is a good fit, suggesting that principal instructional leadership is a strong predictor of teacher professional development. The ANOVA part of the regression model tells us whether the overall regression model is significant and whether the individual independent variable is significant predictor of the dependent variable. The Sig. F Change value for the Model row is also significant at the 0.05 level, indicating that principal instructional leadership is a significant predictor of teacher professional development. The regression model therefore suggests that the principals' instructional leadership has a strong positive impact on teacher professional development. The model has a good fit and a small standard error, suggesting that it is reliable. The regression Model is of the form:

y = a + bx

Where:

y is the dependent variable (teacher professional development)

a is the y-intercept

b is the slope coefficient

x is the independent variable (principal instructional leadership)

Qualitative results of the study

Qualitative data was obtained in phase two from the interview sessions with the principals. The method of analysis for the qualitative data involved thematic analysis, which involved identifying and analysing patterns and themes within the data. The researcher transcribed the interview recordings and coded the data according to relevant themes, which was used to provide insight into the specific ways in which the principals' instructional leadership impacts teacher professional development.

1. Principals view on teacher pedagogical skills

During the interviews session with principals, one of the objectives under discussion was to look at the impact of principals' instructional leadership on teacher pedagogical skills. The findings collectively suggest an overall positive perception among principals regarding the impact of principals'

instructional leadership on various aspects of teacher pedagogical skills, including collaboration, assessment, data collection, and instructional advice.

2. Interview session with principals on teacher Knowledge of assessment and reporting

The other objective that questions were asked on during the interview sessions with principals was on the impact of principals' instructional leadership on teacher Knowledge of assessment and reporting. The findings collectively suggest an overall positive perception among school principals regarding the influence of the principal's instructional leadership on various aspects of assessment and reporting practices, including awareness, engagement, collaboration, and fostering a climate of professional growth.

3. Interview session with principals on teacher self-efficacy

Teacher self-efficacy was the other objective which questions were discussed during the interview with principals. The results of the study show that principals agree that instructional leadership has a positive impact on teacher self-efficacy.

4. Interview session with principals on teacher support on inclusive education practices

The final interview session was on the impact of principals' instructional leadership on teacher support on inclusive education practices. Principals were asked questions in the interviews sessions relating to the study objectives and the responses gotten from most of them had the same theme. The responses from most principals consistently reflect a dedication to clear communication, creating a supportive environment, supporting teachers' professional development, providing adequate resources, and actively monitoring the implementation of inclusive education practices.

Mixed Results of the study

According to explanatory sequential research design, after reporting the quantitative and qualitative findings the third part contains the convergence of the two results.

1. Principals' instructional leadership and teacher pedagogical skills

The quantitative data shows a generally positive trend regarding teachers' perceptions of how their principals' leadership practices contribute to their pedagogical skills. Across all five statements related to leadership activities and the pedagogical skills in the quantitative data, strong agreement dominates. The qualitative response from the principals indeed suggests a positive self-perception regarding their impact on teacher pedagogical skills. These findings collectively suggest an overall positive perception among principals and teachers regarding the impact of principals' instructional leadership on various aspects of teacher pedagogical skills. . The findings of this study are in agreement with those done by Leithwood and Seashore Louis (2012) who found out that principals who effectively engaged in instructional leadership practices, such as providing feedback, facilitating professional development, and supporting collaboration, positively influenced teachers' pedagogical skills and classroom practices.

2. Principals' instructional leadership and teacher Knowledge of assessment and reporting

The quantitative data shows a generally positive trend regarding teachers' perceptions of how their principals' leadership practices contribute to their understanding and utilization of assessment and reporting practices. Across all five statements related to leadership activities related to this objective, strong agreement dominates. In the qualitative data, the principal explicitly states their dedication to shaping a leadership style that positively impacts teachers' assessment and reporting skills. This echoes the general trend of quantitative results, where a majority of teachers agreed or strongly agreed their principal positively influences their understanding and utilization of these practices. This is in

agreement with studies done by Darling-Hammond et.al, (2010) which highlights the importance of principals engaging in instructional leadership practices that support teachers in developing and implementing effective assessment practices. The study however is in a disagreement with the one done by Hallinger and Murphy (2014) which found out that teacher agency and autonomy play a crucial role in shaping their assessment practices. They found that overly prescriptive or directive leadership approaches can sometimes restrict teachers' ownership and creativity in assessment.

3. Principals' instructional leadership and teacher self-efficacy

The quantitative data reveals a strongly positive trend regarding teachers' perceptions of how their principals' leadership practices contribute to their self-efficacy. Across all five statements related to leadership activities, strong agreement dominates. Both the quantitative and qualitative data highlight the principal's dedication to shaping leadership that positively impacts teachers' confidence and effectiveness. This commitment likely underlies the high agreement among teachers that the principal enhances their self-efficacy. This shows there is an overall agreement that Principals' instructional leadership has a positive impact on teacher self-efficacy. This is in agreement with a study done by Tschannen-Moran (2007) which highlights that several principal leadership practices, including providing resources, feedback, and opportunities for collaboration, can positively influence teacher self-efficacy, leading to improved student outcomes.These findings are however contrary to the ones gotten by Hallinger and Murphy (2014) which point out that overly prescriptive or directive leadership approaches can sometimes undermine teacher autonomy and negatively impact self-efficacy.

4. Principals' instructional leadership and teacher support on inclusive education practices

The principal's statement during the interview about emphasizing clear and transparent communication regarding the vision for inclusive education directly aligns with the positive quantitative findings. The study is however in disagreement with the one done by Ainscow (2005) which argued that systemic barriers and lack of resources can hinder successful inclusive education implementation even with strong leadership practices. It is also in disagreement with the one done by Slee (2006) which challenges the notion of a universal "ideal" of inclusive education, arguing for critical attention to diverse student needs and cultural contexts.

Summary of the findings

The findings from the study revealed a predominantly positive perception among teachers regarding the impact of principals' instructional leadership on various aspects of teacher pedagogical skills. The findings from the study also indicate a predominantly positive perception among teachers regarding the impact of principals' instructional leadership on various aspects of teacher knowledge of assessment and reporting. A substantial majority of teachers agreed that their principal's leadership positively influences their understanding and utilization of assessment and reporting practices. In terms of the principal's role in increasing teachers' self-efficacy over time, the majority of respondents acknowledged the positive influence of principals throughout their careers. Examining teachers' responses on the principal's role in inclusive education, the findings suggest nuanced understanding with predominantly positive perceptions. Firstly, regarding the communication of a clear vision for inclusive education, a significant majority of teachers agreed that the principal effectively communicates this vision, highlighting a prevailing positive sentiment toward the clarity of the inclusive education vision set by the principal.

Conclusion

Based on the findings from the study, it can be concluded that principals' instructional leadership has a significant and predominantly positive impact on teacher professional development in public secondary schools in Mombasa County. This leadership had a positive impact on teacher pedagogical

skills, teacher Knowledge of assessment and reporting, teacher self-efficacy and teacher support on inclusive education practices.

Recommendations

While principals' instructional leadership demonstrates a significant and positive impact on various aspects of teacher professional development, some areas require further attention for stronger support and improvement:

i.   The study established that teachers are facing challenges implementing inclusive education practices therefore, there should be implementation of targeted support mechanisms for teachers facing challenges with specific aspects of inclusive education, such as identifying learning disabilities or managing diverse classroom dynamics. This could involve mentoring programs, peer support groups, or individual consultations with experts.

ii. The teachers' decision making process was not data oriented. It is therefore recommended that teachers utilize data from student assessments, observations, and feedback to inform decisions about resource allocation, professional development priorities, and adjustments to inclusive education practices.

iii. Consider conducting further research to deepen understanding of specific challenges faced by teachers in implementing inclusive education practices.

iv. Some schools lacked mental health awareness programmes, the principals therefore, should develop and implement best practices for supporting teachers' mental health and well-being when navigating the demands of inclusive education.

v.   The principals should facilitate regular workshops and seminars for both principals and teachers to stay updated on the latest assessment and reporting methodologies. Foster a culture of continuous learning within schools.

vi. Principals should be encouraged to conduct regular self-efficacy assessments among teachers and tailor support accordingly with the aim of fostering a positive school culture that promotes mentorship and peer support.

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