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Influence of Managerial Skills on Performance of Departmental Heads in Public Secondary Schools: A Survey of KISII Central Sub-County

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Abstract:

Schools are in consistent pressure to ensure harmonious system among the employees to achieve higher academic performance. The responsibilities for achieving superior performance are mostly entrusted with the HODs by the school principals through delegation of tasks and authority to make decisions. However, HODs in many schools often lacked the competency necessary for achieving performance as reflected in National examination results. The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of managerial skills on the performance of HODs in public secondary schools a survey of Kisii central sub-county, Kisii County with the aim of determining the extent to which leadership skills; conceptual skills, human skills and technical skills affect performance of HODs. The target population was all HODs, principals and 10 teachers sampled randomly. The study adopted a survey design in which data was collected by use of questionnaires with questions on a 5 likert-scale and interview schedules. Completed questionnaires were coded and classified and the data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics i.e weighted mean and frequency and inferential statistics mainly ANOVA. Findings established that possession of managerial skills by HODs improved their performance and it formed a basis for further research in linking determining how to link IT with managerial skills to enhance performance of HODs in secondary schools.

1. Introduction

Departmental Heads therefore, are expected to show respect for superiors and demonstrate appropriate managerial skills for them to create an environment in which academic staff and other subordinates can best perform, to demonstrate effective communication skills by sharing information with academic staff, use appropriate decision-making techniques and problem solving skills to resolve disagreement, resistance and opposition of staff in such institutions. They are also required to effectively use motivational skills to encourage academic staff to perform other complementary tasks of: collation of results, registration of students and to regularly attend School and Departmental meetings in the bid to accomplish stated educational goals. The objective of this study therefore was to determine the influence of managerial skills on performance of Heads of Department in public secondary schools.

Leaders at the helm of affairs in any organization are charged with the responsibility of mobilizing appropriate human and material resources available, for the purpose of achieving the organizational goals. Consequently, the effectiveness of organizations is partly determined by the quality of leadership. Edem (1998) argue that success of school administrators depends on personality traits or the psychological make-up of individuals and the environment to which they have been exposed. He further argues that, the effects of possession of some special skills and family background as the major factors in the molding of the successful school administrator.

According to Chitiavi (2002), there is no doubt that every Head teacher's dream is to get his school ranked among the best in national examinations results. When results are eventually released, schools with good investments reap good results over which they celebrate jubilantly. Statistics have revealed that some schools perform exceptionally well while others perform poorly. A closer investigation reveals that good performance does not just happen. It is a result of good teaching and overall effective headship. The quality of leadership makes the difference between the success and failure of a school (Millette, 1988). He further explains that research and inspection clarify the extent to which the quality of leadership is crucial to improvement. In highly effective schools, as well as schools which have reversed a trend of poor performance and declining achievement it is the head teacher who sets the pace, leading and motivating pupils and staff to perform to their highest potential. It is generally agreed that the most important manifestations of quality education have to do with literacy, cognitive abilities, performance and progression to higher levels of learning. There is reliance on scores and transition rates as core measures of achievement. In Kenya, examinations are generally acceptable as valid measures of achievement (Maiyo, 2009).

According to Sushila (2004), the principal is the leader in a school, the pivot around which many aspects of the school revolve, and the person in charge of every detail of the running of the school is it academic or administrative, hence, the principal therefore should be involved in making most of the decisions of the school. It is therefore important that the principal is a leader, a thinker and a decision maker. A discreet principal will employ teamwork as a working strategy by setting up committees and smaller groups of members of staff to investigate ideas or strategies headed by HODs. From, the background information, it was evident that little research had been done to determine how managerial skills influence the performance of HODS in schools in Kenya which formed a basis for this research with the aim of replicating the findings to other sectors.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Several studies had been conducted on the influence of managerial skills on performance of employees but with mixed findings. For instance, Harman (1995) studied factors influencing principal's administrative effectiveness in Niger State Post Primary Schools. The study revealed that communication and motivational skills have significant influence on principals' administrative effectiveness in schools. In addition to that, Sometip (1984) carried out a study on the perceived importance of managerial skills of educational administrators in public schools and post-secondary educational institutions. He identified four managerial skills of educational administrators- job management skills, employee orientation skills, organizational skills and program advancement skills and concluded that educational staff administrators perceived that both management skills and employee orientation skills were more important to their position. Hence, it was evident that little study had been conducted on the influence of managerial skills in particular to leadership skills, conceptual skills, human skills and technical skills as a whole on performance of HODs in public secondary schools and it was on this basis that this study sought to find out how they influence performance of HODs in public secondary schools in Kisii County.

1.2. Broad Objectives

Influence of managerial skills on performance of departmental heads in public secondary schools: a survey of Kisii County

1.3. Specific Objectives

- (i) To find out the influence of leadership skills on HODs' performance.
- (ii) To find out the influence of conceptual skills on HODs' performance.
- (iii) To find out the influence of human skills on HODs' performance.
- (iv) To find out the influence of technical skills on HODs' performance

1.4. Research Questions

1. Do leadership skills influence HODs' performance?
2. Do conceptual skills influence HODs' performance?
3. Do human skills influence HODs' performance?
4. Do technical skills influence HODs' performance?

1.5. Justification of the Study

The study was necessary to bridge the gap between other studies that had been conducted on managerial skills and determine how leadership skills, Technical skills, Conceptual skills and Human skills influence performance. The findings of the study would broaden knowledge and improve the managerial skills of HODs, as they handle situations in their institutions. Again the study had implications for educational administrators in the area of promoting staff productivity. The study also had implications for professional organizations involved in management, who need to develop skills measurement system for educational managers to acquire effective management skills necessary for the performance of their tasks. Finally, findings from this study would be replicated to other sectors in the country.

2. Literature Review

Managerial skills are critical for innovation and improvement of organizational performance (Mabey, 2003). A manager needs to have balanced skills on technical, human and conceptual aspects of management (Jones and George, 2009; Samson and Draft, 2009). An environment supporting effective, satisfying, and growth-producing human interactions requires efficient use of human skills (Carmeli, 2006; Pfeffer, 1998; Pfeffer and Jones, 1972; Winter, 2003). Managers are expected to be the task maker, mediator and motivator for the employees (Carmeli, 2006). Furthermore, human capital and managerial skill are important to formulate and implement sustainable and competitive strategy for the business (Guest, 2007; Harvey and Buckley, 2002; Mabey, 2003; Rukstad and Collins, 2001). Organizational performance significantly depends on relationships between workers and managers. It requires in developing managerial skills in order to motivate worker and bring positive changes in work attitude.

2.1. Leadership Skills

Koontz and Wehrich (1998) define leadership as the art or process of influencing people so that they strive willingly and enthusiastically toward the achievement of group goals. They add that people should be encouraged to develop not only willingness to work, but also, with zeal and confidence. Stodill (as cited in Rono, 2002) says that leaders exhibit certain characteristics such as

intelligence, initiative, self-assurance and socio-economic position. All the traits which appear more frequently, intelligence, energy and resourcefulness are the most representative. A head teacher who possesses such traits is more likely to steer the school to produce good results.

Charismatic leader refers to a leader who has the ability to motivate employees to transcend their expected performance (Samson and Draft, 2009). It also refers that personality and actions of an enthusiastic, self-confident leader to influence people to behave in certain ways. There are five characteristics that differentiate charismatic leaders from a non charismatic one. They have vision, are able to articulate that vision, are willing to take risks to achieve that vision, are sensitive to both environmental constraints and follower needs and exhibit behaviors that are out of the ordinary (Conger and Kanungo, 1998). Charismatic leadership is correlated with high performance and satisfaction among followers (Conger and Kanungo, 1998). However, charismatic leadership may not always need to achieve high levels of employee performance; it may be appropriate when follower's tasks have an ideological purpose or when the environment involves a high degree of stress and uncertainty.

It is evident that a head teacher who properly exercises his or her leadership responsibility will enable his or her school to realize good academic achievement. This augments the fact that effective management and organization is a prime contributory factor in achievement (Chitiavi, 2002). Indeed, the better education one is exposed to, the higher his/her chances are of future success. This is perhaps why the public debate about educational quality is largely reduced to a consideration of the effectiveness of schools as production units. The concern for efficiency by the clients of education reflect an interest in minimizing inputs to achieve a maximum level of output and that schools should be viewed as units of production whose performance is regulated by the mechanism of consumer choices based on information about their efficiency (Norris, 1993). Poor performance in some of the schools is not as a result of lack of learning resources but rather lack of commitment to the task, the school personnel were called upon to perform.

2.2. Conceptual Skills

Conceptual skills result in the mental ability to integrate and coordinate the organization's interests and activities. It is the executives' ability to see the organization as a whole to understand how the different parts fit together and depend on each other and to realize how a change in one part can affect other parts and subsequently the whole organization. This set of skills enables managers to see the various factors involved in any given situation and to conceptualize the inter-related pattern of relationships among them so that the most effective possible course of action can be taken in the best interests of the organization. This aspect is not only the ability to specify why something occurred, but also the ability to develop certain speculations in what-if situation. The conceptual skills, on the other hand, entail effective mapping of interdependence for each of the components of the school as an organization. Relating this to performance in departments, HODs need to be acquainted with what goes on in the departments, work well with the departmental teachers and take note of all the factors that are related to and affect the science subjects.

Okumbe (1999) says that although educational organizations are bureaucratic, the teachers who occupy the bottom of the hierarchy are highly educated professionals, sometimes even more educated than the head- teachers. Thus teachers are supposed to be effectively involved in decision making in their schools due to their specialized training. According to Koontz and Weinhrich (1998), HODs should be receptive and willing to give other peoples' ideas a chance. They further say that decision-making involves some discretion and the subordinate's ideas may differ from the Managers. Therefore, the manager must not only be able to welcome ideas of others but also help them and compliment them on their ingenuity.

Lack of, or poor delegation in schools is a possible cause of poor performance in National examinations. Orora (1997), notes that in Kenya today, talents, skills and abilities of almost all the employees in most organizations lie fallow because of lack, or inadequate involvement, of staff members in task performance and decision-making. Consequently, productivity and employee satisfaction remain extremely low, Schools are no exception. If the head teacher over-delegates, under-delegates or fails to delegate to the head of department, poor results could be the outcome. Studies have shown that many managers fail in their duties because of poor delegation. Koontz and Weinhrich (1998) say that just in the same way one cannot do all the tasks in an enterprise necessary for accomplishment of group purpose, it is impossible for one person to exercise all the authority for making decisions in an enterprise. Orora (1997), adds that poor delegation makes the chief executive the only member of an enterprise. In addition, an enterprise' plans, decisions and tasks are enormous and any attempt by anyone to operate them singly leads to failure. Absence of a well structured department, where there is no teamwork and participatory decision-making leads to poor performance.

2.3. Human Skills

Human skills are seen as an expression of an executive's ability to work effectively in cooperation with other people. This requires them to understand, motivate and lead other people individually or in a group. Human skills also include the ability to delegate and develop subordinates and staff. It is also the ability to appraise effectively and to guide and control the behaviour of subordinates towards better quality performance. These skills are more difficult because interpersonal relations involve consideration of the differences in attitudes, emotions and cultural characteristics of peers, subordinates and superiors. Human skills are thought to be important for every level of management though the greatest demand for such skills is expected to be among first line supervisors and middle managers where the highest number of interactions with subordinates is likely to take place. Managerial skills are critical for innovation and improvement of organizational performance (Mabey, 2003). A manager needs to have balanced skills on technical, human and conceptual aspects of management (Jones and George, 2009; Samson and Draft, 2009). An environment supporting effective, satisfying, and growth-producing human interactions requires efficient use of human skills (Carmeli, 2006; Pfeffer, 1998; Pfeffer and Jones, 1972; Winter, 2003).

Leaders are expected to be the task maker, mediator and motivator for the employees (Carmeli, 2006). Furthermore, human capital and managerial skill are important to formulate and implement sustainable and competitive strategy for the business (Guest, 2007; Harvey and Buckley, 2002; Mabey, 2003; Rukstad and Collins, 2001). Organizational performance significantly depends on relationships between workers and managers. Leaders are playing the key role in achieving the best organizational performance (Carmeli, 2006). The productivity and efficiency depend on manager's ability, skill and performance (Carmeli, 2006). Porter and Ketels (2003) also noted that quality of management is the most important determinant of economic performance. Thus, for schools to perform well, HODs should possess human skills in order to motivate staff and organize tasks within their departments.

2.4. Technical Skills

Technical skills are primarily used by lower-level managers who follow a process with proficiencies and expertise using tools, techniques and procedures in a specialized field. Middle and lower level managers place a high degree of importance on the behaviors that are descriptive of the leader's role. These behaviors include motivating, guiding and developing subordinates as well as developing improvements in work, methods, identifying ways to improve performance and evaluating the outcomes of new projects. Interpersonal counseling behaviors are only one aspect of the leader role that contribute to its overall perceived importance to mid-and lower level managers. According to Paolillo (1981), the leader's role is perceived by lower and mid-level managers as important for success. When the organization is relatively young, organic and operating in a relatively unstable environment, innovative behaviors on the part of the mid-and lower level managers should well be encouraged and rewarded. Managers who continue to emphasize technical activities may be doing so at the expense of other managerial activities and hence tend to receive lower performance appraisals.

2.5. Head of Department's Performance

Aguinis (2009) described that "the definition of performance does not include the results of an employee's behavior, but only the behaviours themselves. Performance is about behaviour or what employees do, not about what employees produce or the outcomes of their work". According to Shirley, H.J (2006), Perceived employee performance represents the general belief of the employee about his behavior and contributions in the success of organization. Employee performance may be taken in the perspective of three factors which makes possible to perform better than others, determinants of performance may be such as "declarative knowledge", "procedural knowledge" and "motivation" (McCloy et al., 1994). HR practices have positive impact on performance of individuals. Huselid (1995) has argued that the effectiveness will transfer on the behavior of employees as a result of human resource management, which also proves a positive association. Carlson et al. (2006) proposed five human resource management practices that affect performance which are setting competitive compensation level, training and development, performance appraisal, recruitment package, and maintaining morale. Teseema and Soeters (2006) have carried out study on eight HR practices including recruitment and selection practices, placement practices, training, compensation, employee performance evaluation, promotion, grievance procedure and pension or social security in relation with the perceived performance of employees. They concluded that these HR practices have positive and significant associations with the perceived performance of employees.

Some people mistakenly assume that performance management is concerned only with following regulatory requirements to appraise and rate performance. Actually, assigning ratings of record is only one part of the overall process (and perhaps the least important part). Brandi and Joanna, (2005) defined it as "A strategic and integrated approach to increasing the effectiveness of organizations by improving the performance of the people who work in them and by developing the capabilities of teams and individual contributors". Richard A. Swanson, (2003), in *Performance Improvement Theory and Practice*, explains an effective performance improvement process must follow a systems-based approach while looking at outcomes and drivers. Otherwise, the effort produces a flawed picture. For example, laying off people will likely produce short-term profits. However, the organization may eventually experience reduced productivity, resulting in long-term profit loss due to reduced employee performance.

Supervisors must manage employee performance well in order for organizations to accomplish their missions and achieve their goals. Consequently, performance management is one the most important parts of a supervisor's or team leader's job. According to Buchner (2007), developing skills in performance management is a wise investment for organizations an investment that will help them achieve their strategic goals. Grimaldi (2005) explains that managing employee performance includes: planning work and setting expectations, monitoring and measuring performance, developing the capacity to perform, periodically rating performance in a summary fashion, and recognizing and rewarding good performance.

Practicing good employee performance requires proficiency in certain competencies. Competencies are observable, measurable patterns of skills, knowledge, abilities, behaviors, and other characteristics that an individual needs to perform work roles or occupational functions successfully. According to Huselid (2005), employee performance reminds people that being busy is not the same as producing results. It reminds us that training, strong commitment and lots of hard work alone are not results. The major contribution of performance management is its focus on achieving results -- useful products and services for customers inside and outside the organization. Performance management redirects our efforts away from busyness toward effectiveness.

The TSC code of regulations (1996), states that a head teacher is responsible for the day-to-day assigning of duties to and supervision of teachers. A head teacher needs to supervise teaching of subjects, right from planning for instruction to classroom teaching, evaluation and reporting.

Armstrong and Baron (2005) agree that work performance management for teams is inherently the same as for individuals. However, the difference between individual employee and team performance management lies in the actual measurement and reward approach.

They base the ethos of performance and performance management on the assumption that if the performance levels of individuals can be raised somehow, better organizational performance will follow as a direct result. Organizational performance means that the organization has to achieve or accomplish its goal, which is ultimately to maximize the value of the organization and the success of any enterprise is marked by the level to which it achieves what it set out to do in the world (Glaser. 2005).

According to Armstrong and Baron (2005), performance management is about encouraging productive discretionary behaviour, and has as its goal to achieve human capital advantage. They continue to support the believe that people are the most important source of competitive advantage, and recognize that, as opposed to other forms of competitive advantage resulting from improving factors such as design or process, the people factor is very difficult to reproduce or replicate, making it so valuable to organizations. Robbins (2003), states that self evaluation is consistent with values such as self management and empowerment. He argues that despite the fact that employees tend to inflate their own ratings, self evaluation lessens their defensiveness about the appraisal process, and it serves very effectively to stimulate job performance discussions between employees and their superiors.

On the same topic, Mello (2003) appreciates self evaluation for its effect as a motivating factor because it allows the employee to participate in a critical decision that impacts on their employment and career. He also raises the point that self evaluations could provide insights, examples, and a more holistic assessment of performance than provided by any other observation which is often only performed for a limited amount of time. Both Mello and Robbins (2003) recognize the fact self evaluations often suffer from over-inflated results and self-serving bias, and sees it as tool better suited to developmental uses than for evaluative purposes. According to Armstrong and Murlis (2004), people will channel their discretionary effort into their work when they believe that it will have meaning, is worthwhile and appreciated. They argue that people will feel less motivated in an environment where they don't have any control over the pace or quantity of work. This issue links across to work / life balance as well as perceptions of freedom and autonomy. They have noticed that employees in high-pressure jobs, who enjoy their work but not the constant pressure, often are found to seek parallel rewards by restricting their time on the job or to even take sabbaticals or additional time off in order to get proper breaks.

Commitment in strengthening the teaching in schools by enhancing skills and delivery capabilities is required. These efforts should include ensuring that a teacher is well placed to deliver the concepts and content in a way that is understandable to the learners. In view of students' poor performance in KCSE, principals should empower HODs to carry out supervisory activities in order to promote teamwork among teachers and support staff. Therefore, there was need to establish the influence of managerial skills on the performance of HODs in Kisii County.

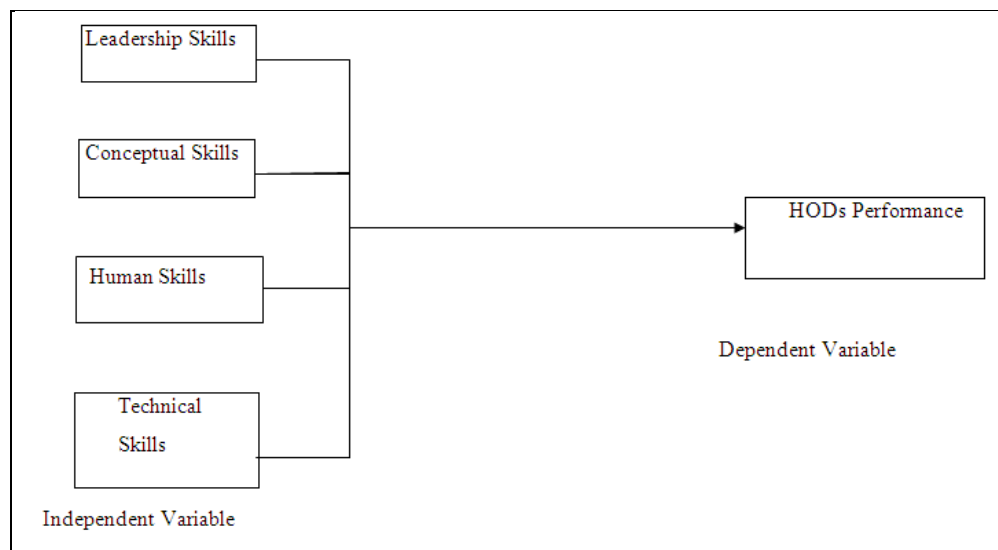


Figure 1

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Research Design

The research design used in this study was descriptive research. The design was adopted because, according to Kothari (2003), descriptive design is a method of securing information concerning an existing phenomenon from all or a selected number of respondents of the concerned universe. The study adopted the design because it aimed at collecting information from respondents on their attitudes and opinions in relation to how managerial skills influence HODs' performance in public secondary schools.

3.2. Target Population

The study targeted all HODs, Principals and teachers in Kisii central district from 21 public secondary schools totaling to 373 respondents to find out the influence of managerial skills mainly: leadership skills, conceptual skills, human skills and technical skills on HODs' performance.

3.3. Sampling Design and Sample Size

In this study, employees were sampled from each institution to fill the questionnaire where by 1 principal and 5 HODs will be sampled from each school using stratified random sampling to give each respondent an equal chance of participation as they possessed vital information regarding managerial skills (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999) from 5 departments namely: Academic, Science, Language, Humanities and Technical for they are commonly found in most schools, and 10 teachers per school sampled randomly 2 per department from each school. Out of the target population of 21 public secondary schools in Kisii County, 7 schools were sampled randomly representing 30 percent of the target population according to (Roscoe, 1975) in Uma Sekaran and Roger Bourgie's book (2009) which is a representative number for the study.

3.4. Data Collection Tools

A Questionnaire was the main instrument of data collection with both closed-ended and open-ended questions which were consistent to the objectives of the study administered to the respondents. The questionnaire was used since it is easier to administer, economical in terms of time and money and also permit a greater depth of response (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999).

3.5. Validity and Reliability of Research Instruments

In order to ensure validity and reliability, the questionnaires composed of carefully constructed questions to avoid ambiguity and to facilitate answers to all the research questions. The questionnaires were then pre-tested in a pilot study through a sample of 30% of selected sample on public secondary schools in Nyamira County to avoid respondent contamination (Kothari, 2003), after which corrections and adjustments were done; this ensured reliability. The validity of the research instrument will then be tested for internal consistency by use of Cronbach's Alpha with a 70% acceptance level. The instrument was then presented to supervisors to ascertain its face validity.

3.6. Data Processing and Analysis

Completed questionnaires were coded and analyzed to ensure accuracy of information, and then the data collected was then summarized and classified both qualitatively and quantitatively. Qualitative analysis of opinions was organized into patterns relevant to the research using judge mental method. F-test was used as a statistical tool to confirm the Null hypothesis that managerial skills do not influence the performance of HODs in secondary schools at $\alpha = 0.05$ significance level. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mean and frequency. Frequency distribution tables and graphs were used to organize and give a summary of the collected data.

4. Research Findings and Discussions

4.1. Introduction

This chapter entails both qualitative and quantitative analysis of data. The aim for qualitative section in this study was to provide more information of the underlying issues pertaining to HODs performance. The study benefited from a rich qualitative data through key information obtained in the questionnaires. This section relied mainly on hypothesis testing process and basic exploratory statistics to interpret and structure the meanings that could be derived from the data collected. The sole objective of this section was to use qualitative data in a process of hypothesis testing within the context of management at secondary school level in order to generate ideas.

4.2. Leadership Skills on Performance of Heads of Department

Leadership skills are essential to managers to help them supervise subordinates and effectively lead them to achieve organizational goals. Respondents' opinions towards the role of leadership skills on performance were sought and the results are tabulated below;

	SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
Improves performance	5	17	15	45	30
Improves Commitment	12	20	10	20	50
Leads to Curriculum based Department	4	8	10	30	60
Improves Policy Making	2	6	8	30	66
Improves Honesty & Integrity	30	20	3	40	19

Table 1: leadership skills on performance of head of department

From table 1 it can generally be seen that most respondents agreed that leadership skills influence performance of HODs as opposed to those who disagreed. This is due to the fact that, leadership skills enables the HODs to exert influence on their teachers within the department to work towards a common goal of achieving the institutions' goals and objectives through timely and efficient communication. However, thirty (30) respondents strongly disagreed that leadership improves honesty and integrity as opposed to

nineteen (19) who strongly agreed. The study attributed the disagreement and agreement on the type of leadership styles adopted by each department.

These results were in agreement to white (2000) who recognized the work of Brown and Rutherford (2000) that the HODs leadership was situational and that HODs demonstrate a range of different leadership skills appropriate to particular demands and different circumstances.

4.3. Conceptual Skills on Performance of Heads of Department

These are mental abilities to acquire, analyze and interpret information received from various sources. These skills include analytical, entrepreneurial, decision making and allocation skills. For the purpose of the study, entrepreneurial skill was not studied. The respondents were asked to give their opinion regarding conceptual skills and the results were interpreted qualitatively.

- (i) **Analytical Skills:** Includes ability to divide complex situation into component parts and study their characteristics in order to understand characteristics of the whole situation. At school level, the study found that, HODs have delegated part of their responsibility to subject heads in order to enhance their performance. This was witnessed as 70 respondents agreed representing 66.96% of the sample. On the other hand 40 respondents disagreed implying that either the subject heads were incompetent or lacked adequate autonomy. However, 2 were neutral suggesting that they were not fully engaged at the departmental issues
- (ii) **Decision-Making Skills:**
Seventy (70) respondents agreed that decision making skills were vital for performance and 40 respondents disagreed while 2 were undecided. The study established that HODs make decisions to a certain degree based on their span of control.
- (iii) **Allocation Skills:** HODs should possess these skills because schools have limited resources available to achieve their goals. Out of 112 respondents who participated in the study, 80 respondents agreed that HODs should possess allocation skills to enhance their performance while 20 respondents disagreed that it does not. The other 12 were undecided.

The study findings were in line with another Research which identified a positive relationship between employee creativity and the emotional intelligence of their immediate manager (Rego et al. 2007). In an effort to explain this relationship, researchers speculated that emotionally intelligent leaders create an environment of trust and respect that encourages workers to feel free to propose unconventional and goal-oriented ideas.

4.4. Human Skills on Performance of Heads of Departments

As to whether human skills enhance performance of HODs at school level, the following data was generated

	SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
Leads to cooperation with other people	7	7	5	13	80
Leads to Proper delegation	22	5	0	20	65
Leads to effective Performance Appraisal	12	25	0	12	63
Important for innovation	5	5	2	10	90

Table 2 Human Skills and Performance of Heads of Departments

Most respondents from the table were of the idea that human skills influences performance of HODs as more than half (56) of the sample respondents strongly agreed to this fact. This was attributed to the fact that, human skills motivate employees to channel their effort towards their tasks which in turn leads to overall improvement of institutional performance. In addition, delegation of tasks which is associated with human skill gives employees autonomy to work which makes them to embrace teamwork, cooperation and satisfaction leading innovativeness which results to effective performance within the institution. As to whether human skills lead to performance appraisal and delegation, none of the respondent was undecided; indicating that they were better informed of these aspects and was practiced in the department.

The findings concurred to other researchers that established that an environment supporting effective, satisfying, and growth-producing human interactions requires efficient use of human skills (Carmeli, 2006; Pfeffer, 1998; Pfeffer and Jones, 1972; Winter, 2003). Managers are expected to be the task maker, mediator and motivator for the employees (Carmeli, 2006).

4.5. Technical Skills on Performance of Heads of Department

They include the ability to use knowledge, tools and techniques of a specific functional field. As regard to the role of Technical skills on performance of HODs, the information from respondents was presented graphically as shown.

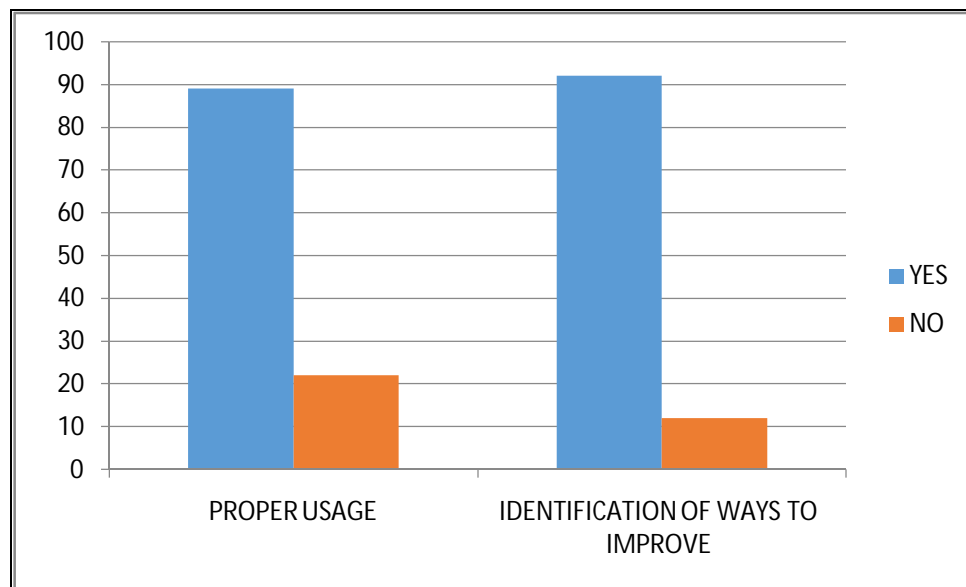


Figure 2: A graph of Technical Skills on Performance

It can be seen from the graph that possession of Technical Skills by HODs improves their performance. This was arrived at as 89 respondents agreed that technical skills enable proper usage of techniques and procedures against 22 respondents who disagreed. In addition, 92 respondents agreed that technical skills leads to identification of ways to improve their performance against 12 who disagreed. This was due to the fact that technical skills relies on knowledge and techniques of employees. Technical skills are vital due to adoption of technology by schools and other institutions.

4.6. Managerial Skills on Performance of Heads of Departments

Heads of departments need to have skills in order to carry out their managerial responsibilities most effectively and efficiently. Respondents were asked to answer to the questionnaire regarding how each skill influenced performance of HODs and the following results were generated.

4.7. F-test for Managerial Skills on Performance of Heads of Departments

Respondents were asked to respond to the question as to whether managerial skills influence performance of heads of departments and the results were coded into two categories of yes and no options tabulated in the table 4.4

Managerial Skill	Performance	
	YES	NO
Leadership Skills	70	25
Conceptual Skills	80	20
Human Skills	75	10
Technical Skills	65	40

Table 4: F-Test for Managerial Skills and Performance of HODs

When the findings were subjected for statistical test to confirm the hypothesis that managerial skills do influence the performance of HODs at $\alpha=0.05$ significance level, the observed value of $F(3, 5)$ was 0.306409. The critical value of $F(3,5)$ at $\alpha=0.05$ significance level is 5.41, which is greater than the observed value of 0.306409. Hence, there was statically significant difference between the means of groups and the Null hypothesis of no difference between the groups was rejected. The researcher then adopted an Alternative hypothesis that managerial skills influences performance of HODs at secondary school level.

These findings concurred to Sometip (1984) whose study on the perceived importance of managerial skills of educational administrators in public schools and post-secondary educational institutions argued that educational staff administrators perceived that both management skills and employee orientation skills as more important to their position and hence their performance. However, these findings contradicted those of Opadokun (2004) who opined that managerial skills do not have significant relationship with students' academic achievement. Other studies also were in line to these findings that Managerial skills are critical for innovation and improvement of organizational performance (Mabey, 2003). A manager needs to have balanced skills on technical, human and conceptual aspects of management (Jones and George, 2009; Samson and Draft, 2009). Performance significantly depends on relationships between workers and managers (Nankervis et al, 2002). It requires in developing managerial skills in order to motivate worker and bring positive changes in work attitude (Nankervis et al, 2002). Managers are playing the key role in achieving the best organizational performance (Carmeli, 2006). The productivity and efficiency depend on manager's ability, skill and performance

(Carmeli, 2006). Many researchers emphasize on the development of managerial skills to foster performance for the organization (Guest, 2007; Carmeli, 2006; Samson and Draft, 2009).

5. Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1. Introduction

Heads of departments are not part of school administration, yet they have a unique role to play in secondary schools. HODs are responsible for leadership and management of specific departments. Hence, the role carries some degree of independence in the running of specific departments. According to White (2001), HODs are curriculum strategists by providing direction for teachers in their curriculum area. This requires that they adopt and implement a vision for their curriculum area and work to achieve a vision that reflects the whole staff, encourage self-reflection and build on what departments do successfully. Schools have experienced devolution of roles and to some degree power through implementation of school based management in the recent past. In nutshell the role of principals has grown and changed significantly which in turn has had an effect on HODs. Hence, for the HODs to perform successfully, they must possess some skills vital for attainment of organizational goals.

5.2. Summary of Findings

5.2.1. Leadership Skills on Performance

From Table 2, it can generally be seen that most respondents agreed that leadership skills influence performance of HODs as opposed to those who disagreed. However, thirty (30) respondents strongly disagreed that leadership improves honesty and integrity as opposed to nineteen (19) who strongly agreed. These results were in agreement to White (2000) who recognized the work of Brown and Rutherford (2000) that the HODs leadership was situational and that HODs demonstrate a range of different leadership skills appropriate to particular demands and different circumstances.

5.2.2. Conceptual Skills on Performance

- (i) At school level, the study found that, HODs have delegated part of their responsibility to subject heads in order to enhance their performance. This was witnessed as 70 respondents agreed representing 66.96% of the sample. On the other hand 40 respondents disagreed implying that either the subject heads were incompetent or lacked adequate autonomy. However, 2 were neutral suggesting that they were not fully engaged at the departmental issues
- (ii) Decision-Making Skills:
Seventy (70) respondents agreed that decision making skills were vital for performance and 40 respondents disagreed while 2 were undecided. The study established that HODs make decisions to a certain degree based on their span of control.
- (iii) Allocation Skills: HODs should possess these skills because schools have limited resources available to achieve their goals. Out of 112 respondents who participated in the study, 80 respondents agreed that HODs should possess allocation skills to enhance their performance while 20 respondents disagreed that it does not. The other 12 were undecided.

5.2.3. Human Skills on Performance

Most respondents from the table were of the idea that human skills influences performance of HODs as more than half (56) of the sample respondents strongly agreed to this fact. As to whether human skills lead to performance appraisal and delegation, none of the respondent was undecided, indicating that they were better informed of these aspects. The findings concurred to other researchers that established that an environment supporting effective, satisfying, and growth-producing human interactions requires efficient use of human skills (Carmeli, 2006; Pfeffer, 1998; Pfeffer and Jones, 1972; Winter, 2003). Managers are expected to be the task maker, mediator and motivator for the employees (Carmeli, 2006).

5.2.4. Technical Skills on Performance

From the graph 4.1, that possession of Technical Skills by HODs improves their performance. This was arrived at as 89 respondents agreed that technical skills enable proper usage of techniques and procedures against 22 respondents who disagreed.

In addition, 92 respondents agreed that technical skills leads to identification of ways to improve their performance against 12 who disagreed.

In general, the study established that managerial skills were prerequisite skills that should be possessed by HODs in order to enhance their efficiency and effectiveness at school. This was after subjecting the data obtained to a statistical tool to confirm the hypothesis that managerial skills influence performance of HODs.

5.2.5. Conclusion

From the foregoing discussion, it is evident that managerial skills influence performance of departmental heads in schools. This was witnessed as information obtained from respondents involved in the study revealed the same. The findings seemed to concur to Harman (1995) in his study on factors influencing principals' effectiveness in Niger whose findings revealed that communication and

motivational skills have significant influence. White (2001), identifies HODs as information conduit between the department and school administration, the department and a variety of school forums, the department and the environment beyond the school.

Leadership skills were identified to be crucial in enhancing the performance of HODs at secondary schools as data revealed. These findings also concurred with white (2000) who argued that HOD leadership was situational and that they should demonstrate a range of different leadership skills appropriate to particular demands and different circumstances. The study also established that HODs needed to conceptual skills to assist them in planning and organizing departmental activities for effective performance. These results matched with White (2001) who perceived HODs as administrative leaders who ensure that learning area continues to operate by ensuring that departments are resourced, budgeting, maintenance and correspondence.

To crown, managerial skills influence performance of HODs. Thus, those who possessed such skills demonstrated high level of performance characterized by effectiveness, efficiency, honesty and integrity, excellent communication and proper delegation unlike their counterparts who did not possess these managerial skills. Therefore, though the study was done in secondary schools, it is important for the findings to be replicated in all private and public sectors for enhancing performance.

5.2.6. Recommendations

From the study, it was established that heads of departments were not offered a proper training on their roles as HODs and this led to role conflict among the peers. Hence, the study recommended that school management should sponsor their departmental heads to workshops, seminars and in service training to update their skills.

The study also established that HODs were not fully delegated to in making decisions regarding management as they were only allowed to supervise and monitor daily activities of their respective departments. The study recommended that should be given autonomy to run and make decisions even in the entire school activities.

In some schools, the study established that HODs were using manual system to keep their records even in this digital era and they were not motivated in doing their work efficiently and effectively as expected. The study recommended that, all departments to be installed with internet and HODs to be fully motivated by using incentives to enhance their performance.

5.2.7. Areas for Further Research

Finally, the findings from this study forms a basis for further research to establish how to integrate information systems and technology into managerial skills to enhance performance of HODs in secondary schools.

The study also forms a basis for further research on determination of the extent to which these managerial skills influence performance in business enterprises using longitudinal design in order to replicate the results to other sectors.

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