

Staff Development and Training Needs That Teachers of English Desire to Participate In: A Survey of Secondary Schools in Kericho County

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ABSTRACT: *The main purpose of this study was to investigate the staff development and training needs that teachers of English desire to participate in with reference to Kericho County. The objective of the study was to identify the staff development and training programmes that teachers of English desire to participate in, In doing this, the study adopted the needs assessment theory. The theory talks of the need for continuous training of staff in order to increase their productivity. Both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies were used in the study. The study used a survey research design. A total of 25 schools, 50 teachers of English, 25 heads of department and 25 head teachers took part in the study. Simple random sampling technique was used to select the 25 schools out of which two teachers of English from each of the participating schools were randomly picked. Te study used questionnaires to collect data from the 50 teachers of English. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics like percentages and presented using tables, charts and figures. The study established that there is a discrepancy between the training needs of teachers of English and what was offered through the existing staff development and training programmes. Most of the teachers fell short of the expected competencies under investigation, an indication of the need for more in-service training for serving teachers. The study recommends that a thorough needs assessment should be carried out to clearly establish the training needs of teachers before implementing any training programmes.*

KEY WORDS: *Staff development, Desire*

I. INTRODUCTION

Background Information : In Kenya, pre-service teacher training is offered in teacher training colleges and in most universities. Teachers are trained in both content and methodology. However even the best of pre-service teacher training cannot equip one for a lifelong career as a teacher. There is need for continuous staff development and on the job training for both professional and personal growth. Thus continuous training and staff development is necessary to equip the practicing teachers with the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes to perform their duties effectively in an ever changing educational environment. This is because any effort to improve the performance of English has to address the quality and effectiveness of teachers as they play a big role in the attainment of the goals of education. This is captured in the Kenya Education Sector Support Programme (2005:27) which says that “teacher in -service training is one intervention that can help in the improvement of the quality of education in Kenya.” This will be achieved through institutionalizing and regularizing in-service training programmes for all categories of teachers and education managers in Kenya. This is because change will always occur in the education system and it’s therefore important that teachers as the implementers of the curriculum are continuously trained and re-oriented to meet the demands of any changes in the education system. A study by the Kenya Institute of Education published in the Daily Nation (Daily Nation, 2010) found out that less than half of the secondary school teachers have been trained on the current curriculum leading to poor subject mastery which affects the teachers classroom delivery. This has been noted as a contributing factor to the continuing dismal performance in national exams as noted by the KNEC reports over the years, (KNEC 2008-2010).

Statement of the Problem : It has been established that staff development programs and training can improve the quality of teachers in Kenya. Eshiwani, (1993) notes that it is this realization that led to the establishment of the Kenya Education Staff Institute (KESI) to provide staff development programs for teachers and education managers. There have been complaints about the initial training of secondary school teachers in Kenya with ‘The report of the Working Party on Education and Manpower Training’ for the next Decade and Beyond

(Republic of Kenya 1988:63), noting that “the three year training period did not provide adequate time for the coverage of degree subject content and foundation course in education and pedagogy”. Although this was later increased from three years to four year degree course in education, the complaints about teacher quality have not been fully addressed. To remedy this shortcoming, staff development programmes are therefore necessary to address the deficiency in the initial training of secondary school teachers. As Widen (1987:13) clearly observed; “Even the very best of pre-service teacher education cannot equip one for a lifelong career as a teacher. Continuous professional growth and development is always necessary”. In order to improve the quality of school education, current in-service programmes need to be improved for all teachers and educational managers (Wanzare and Ward, 2000).

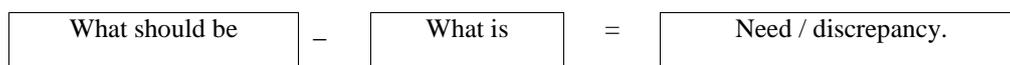
Objective of the Study : To identify the staff development and training programmes that teachers of English desire to participate in

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Review of theory : The study adopted the ‘Needs Assessment Theory’ as discussed below:

Needs Assessment Theory : Needs assessment is an information gathering process which results in the identification of the needs of an individual, institution or society. Needs assessment can be used in determining the future need of local, regional and national education systems. In the case of Kenya where curriculum reviews and evaluation are common, needs assessment can be used to determine the training needs of teachers when planning for new and relevant training programs. The identified needs can be used for further planning or to remedy in order to improve an education situation (Sagimo, 2002). Needs assessment has also been used by curriculum developers to determine the validity of the behavioural objectives in the implementation of the curriculum. The difference or discrepancy between the desired and actual needs of teachers of English will constitute the training needs. This discrepancy model can be expressed as seen in figure 1.1:

Fig 1: The Gap between Desired and Actual Needs of Teachers



(Adopted from Ogembo, 2005:10)

Staff Development Programs and Quality of Education : Several researchers have carried out research to establish the link between teachers’ participation in staff development programs and the quality of education. In a research done in DRC formerly Zaire on improving the standards of the French language in secondary schools, Kolvokari, (1987), concluded that the efficient development of skills may require more training on other issues other than mastery of the content. The conversation in an in-set programme of 36 hours in two months involving 12 teachers of French language spread to other areas like cognitive development, psychology of learning and ideas on transactional analysis. Using direct observation, Kolvakari claims to have detected changes in teacher’s classroom questioning styles with an increase in the use of open question and reduction in the use of closed questions. He also reports better scores from the students. For successful and effective in-service programmes Esu ,(1991) in his research findings in Ebue state of Nigeria, reports that teachers should decide their own needs based on their experiences in the classroom and school, changes in teachers practice are evaluated systematically, there is an assessment of learning outcomes and budgetary provision must be in- built into the program The study concurs with another done by Lariden, (1990), who reports that for good results and positive improvement in the quality of education, it’s not enough to throw money and equipment at teachers without first retraining them. In his research on teachers working with computer assisted instruction he found out that teacher experienced many problems and tended to deal more with how to operate the system than actual delivery of content and skills. His conclusion was that no programme should be introduced into the curriculum without first training and re- training of teachers. Brown and Read, (1990) found out in their research that school heads and managers need continuous training if they are to manage educational changes effectively. School heads should receive training first as they are agents of change in their institutions. The coordination of in-service education and training for personnel at sequential points in line management needs to be in-built into in-service education, starting with the head teachers, and heads of departments then teachers. This is important because any changes must start from the top. Brown and Reed report that teachers who were in-serviced and returned to environments where change was not possible were frustrated and in despair.

Hankridge, (1991) also reports that teachers and educational managers who are not regularly in-serviced tend to resist change. This was mainly due to lack of confidence, fear of losing control and lack of appropriateness of the curricula. He recommends constant, regular and continuous in-service training of all educational personnel to handle any challenges and changes in education. Omoro, (2001) in his research on staff development needs of teachers recommends that in order to widen acceptance of staff development programmes, promotions to any position of leadership should be strictly done on the attendance and participation in in-service training programmes.

Only then can there be teachers, education managers and administrators who are up-to date with the modern trends in the education sector and who can handle the changes and challenges in the education sector. There is need for continuous training of staff if they are to continue to perform better in their jobs. Bishop, (1986) says that there is a dilemma inherent in an attempt to increase teachers' effectiveness. This is because teachers sometimes fear change. There is therefore need for training of teachers to overcome the reluctance to change brought about by the teachers' lack of awareness that change is needed and knowledge that change will make a difference. There is also need to provide support for implementation through provision of opportunities to teachers to learn from their mistakes and from others.

Sagimo, (2002) says that training is a continuing process right from the initial induction at entry, through education and training in specific skills, to the security of maximum effectiveness in managerial and senior administration position. He stresses the need for continuous training of all employees at all levels. Allan, (2002) also notes that the overall aim of managers is to bring about the required changes in a planned way by creating situations and circumstances whereby desired change could occur and be sustained. This includes taking action as individuals or groups to alter or improve an existing practice. Education managers therefore have a role in the change process through planning and strategizing about change. They should optimize the achievement of results through motivating and responding to the actual against planned activities. Koontz, (1984) states the on the job training must be based on needs analysis derived from a comparison of actual performance and behaviour with required performance and behaviour. On this, he emphasizes that on the job training should be for the purpose of filling into the gap between actual; and expected performance.

Achieving meaningful and consistent change within any organization takes time. Allan, (2002), says that even when there are visible signs that change is occurring, there is still a long delay before one can ascertain whether the changes are resulting in the anticipated efficiency. Most managers and consultants agree that deciding why change needs to be made and what needs to be changed is not the most worrying problem. The most worrying problem lies in the consistent implementation of the changes because implementation is a process that spreads over time. However, with well planning, change need not be chaotic but can be smooth resulting in increased efficiency and effectiveness of an education organization, (Fullan, 1993). Management should support the development and training of their subordinates and determine job related knowledge, skills, abilities and experiences employers need to effectively accomplish the work in the organisation. The management is also supposed to ensure an organizational structure exists that supports the acquisition of the required knowledge, skills, abilities and experiences by providing the required resources and time. It must also be noted that professional development cannot be viewed as an event that occurs on a particular day of the school year but it must become part of the daily work of education managers and teachers, (Lauter 1997).

III. METHODOLOGY

Research Design : The study adopted a survey research design. According to Orodho and Kombo (2006), 'in essential of education and social science research', research design is the plan, structure and strategy of investigation conceived so as to obtain answers to a research questions and to control variables. A survey research describes the existing research concern by asking individuals about their perceptions, attitudes and values or through observation. Surveys are also used to assess the existing status of two or more variables at a given point in time. This study aimed to investigate the staff development and training needs of the teachers of English in secondary schools in Kenya. Since the research problem under investigation was descriptive in nature, a survey research design was considered appropriate for collecting, analyzing and presenting the data. A survey therefore allowed the researcher to interview and administer questionnaires to a sample of individuals.

Target Population : The study involved a survey targeting all the teachers of English, heads of departments of languages and head teachers of secondary schools in Kisii Central County. Kericho County had 67 secondary schools and 184 teachers of English as at 2009. All the teachers of English, heads of the language departments and all heads of schools in the 67 secondary schools within the County comprised the study population for this study.

Sampling Size and Techniques : Since it was not possible to administer questionnaires and conduct interviews for all the study population in the entire County, a sample was therefore considered necessary. According to Kerlinger, (2003), a sample in a survey should represent at least 30% of the target population. This is considered easy to work with in terms of time and resources and is also representative enough of the entire population. This sample was therefore considered appropriate considering the time and money constraints. Simple random sampling technique was used to select twenty five schools from the 67 secondary schools in the County. Walliman, (2005) says that simple random sampling ensures that each member of the target population has an equal and independent chance of being included in the study sample. From the twenty five schools, a total of 100 respondents comprising 50 teachers of English, 25 heads of departments and 25 head teachers were selected. Two teachers of English from each of the participating schools were randomly selected to participate in the study. All the heads of English department and the head teachers of the twenty five participating schools took part in the study.

Table 1: The Sample size for respondents

Respondents	Population	Sample size
Teachers of English	180	50
HODs	67	25
Head teachers	67	25
Total Sample population	314	100

Data Collection Methods : A research permit was sought from the National Council for Science and Technology (NCST). On obtaining the research permit, the researcher sought permission from the DEO's office to visit schools. Selected schools were thereafter visited by the researcher after an appointment had been made with the school administration. Questionnaires and the interview schedules were administered personally by the researcher to the teachers and interviews conducted with heads of department and head teachers. Adequate instruction and assurance of confidentiality was provided to all participants. Thereafter, the questionnaires were collected by the researcher after being filled.

Validity and Reliability of the Instruments : Kothari, (2006) defines content validity as the extent to which a measuring instrument provides adequate coverage of the topic under study. According to Mugenda and Mugenda, (2003:99), "content validity of the measuring instrument refers to the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences which are based on the research results". It is the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of the data actually represent the phenomenon under study. In order to determine the content validity of the instruments, the researcher discussed the items with colleagues and experts in the department of curriculum and instructional media who helped to determine the relevance and content validity of the questionnaires developed. Besides, the tools were piloted and the weaknesses therein found to exist were rectified. Reliability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trials, (Mugenda and Mugenda 2003). Reliability is concerned with precision and accuracy. For research to be reliable, it must demonstrate that if it is carried out on a similar group of respondents in a similar contact, then similar results would be found (Cohen et al, 2000). There has been debate whether the canons of reliability of quantitative research apply to qualitative research. Cohen et al, (2000) says that in qualitative research replicability can be achieved by the researchers' choice of informants, social situations and conditions under investigation and the methods of data collection. One way to ensure reliability in qualitative data is by use of measures that have proven themselves in previous research, (Babbie, 1992). Test-retest technique was used during piloting to establish the reliability of the questionnaires and interview schedules. The responses from the pilot study were compared and found to be reliable.

II. DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis entails the separation of data, to distinguish its component parts, or elements separately or in relation to the whole (Oso and Onen, 2008). In this study data was analyzed using quantitative techniques. Quantitative data collected was tabulated and pie charts, bar graphs and frequency tables developed. The frequencies were converted to percentages to illustrate relative levels of opinions. Qualitative data from the HODs and head teachers' interview schedules were coded and analyzed to establish thematic patterns from

which useful conclusions were drawn. The statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) assisted to analyze the data collected.

VI. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Programs that Teachers of English Desire to Participate In : The study took concern to find out the programmes that teachers of English desired and actually participated in or desired but did not actually participated in. Results of the responses are presented in table 4.2.

Table 2: Programs that Teachers of English desire to participate in

Program	Desire	Not desired	Total
Continuing education while on paid leave.	45	5	50
Continuing education while on unpaid leave.	0	50	50
Continuous in-service courses to award of certificates and taken during school holidays.	35	15	50
Participation in curriculum reviews.	43	7	50
Academic visit to other learning institutions to gain new ideas concerning teaching.	48	2	50
Attending educational seminars as a listener.	37	13	50
Using audio – visual and other learning aids to learn issues on education .	40	10	50
observing other teachers learning then discuss the lesson with the teachers .	8	42	50
Participating in educational research collaboration with teacher training Institutions.	31	19	50

This information reveals that 45 (90%) of the teachers desired to continue with Education while on paid leave. Only 5(10%) expressed a desire not to participate in this program. On the same note, none of the 50 (100%) respondents desired to continue with education while on unpaid leave. Therefore they did not actually participate in such programs. Thirty five (70%) of the respondents indicated that they desired to participate in continuous in-service courses leading to award of certificates and the course taken during school holidays while 15 (30%) did not desire to participate in such a programme. Out of the 50 respondents 43 (86%) indicated that they desired to participate in curriculum reviews while 7 (14%) did not desire to participate in the programmes. The questionnaire also sought to find out if teachers desired to participate in academic visits to other learning institution to gain new ideas concerning teaching. A total of 48(96%) of the respondents indicated that they desired to participate in such programmes while 2 (4%) did not desire to participate in such programmes. On the same note, 37 (74%) of the respondents expressed their desire to participate in educational seminars as listeners while 13 (26%) did not desire to participate in such programmes.

The use of audio –visual and other learning aids to learn issues on education was listed as one area that teachers desired to participate in from their responses. A total of 40 (80%) respondents said that they actually desired to take part in such a training programme while 10 (20%) did not desire the programmes. The respondents were also asked to indicate whether or not they desired to participate in observing other teachers teaching then discussing the lesson with the teachers. Only 8 (16%) indicated that they desired to participate in such a program, whereas 42 (84%) teachers indicated that they did not desire to participate in such a programme. Interestingly, even the 8 respondents who indicated that they desired to participate in such programs did not actually participate in the said program. On whether or not the teachers desired to participate in educational research in collaboration with teacher training institutions, 31 (62%) respondents indicated that they desired to participate in such programmes and 19 (31%) indicated that they had no desire to participate in such programmes.

The data categorically reveals that most teachers expressed their desire and interest in participating in the various programmes in order to enhance their competence in service delivery. However, the lack of opportunities to participate in such programs is evident and it is unfortunate that the teachers' desires go unsupported. Since teachers are the implementers of the curriculum, the failure or lack of opportunities to

participate in curriculum development and review programmes was seen as an impediment to teachers desire to have a say in the improvement of the curriculum they were expected to implement. They felt that they could appreciate more the elements of the curriculum if they participated in its formation and reviews. From the information available in Table 4.11, it was deemed necessary to establish the specific training needs that the teachers of English desired to acquire through the participation in the various staff development and training programmes. Some of the specific needs cited included integration skills, assessment skill, management skills and library skills. Many teachers and departmental heads felt that the acquisition of these skills was important in enhancing their performance both in the classroom and outside. This is because besides teaching, a teacher is also a manager and a counsellor. Heads of language departments talked of the heavy responsibility of teaching and managing their departments. This required good management skills, motivation and teamwork if they were to succeed in this important role of supervising and coordinating the language departments. HODs for languages are also in charge of the library. This is a sensitive area where skill, care and sensitivity are needed and therefore they required the library management skills. Unfortunately, none of the HODs interviewed had undergone any training on library management skills. Another specific training need desired by teachers of English was the integration of language and literature.

This called for more training on appropriate methodologies of handling the integration in English language teaching. Both teachers and HODs also expressed the need to acquire assessment skills that could help them better handle the re organized English syllabus. The reason for this was the new requirements in the English syllabus that introduced new areas like the testing of the oral skills, pronunciation and the integration of language and literature. There was also the need to acquire examination setting and marking techniques in order to assist their learners. This information is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Specific Training Needs for Teachers of English

Skill Area	Curriculum Component	Intervention
Integration.	Methodology.	Further studies, short courses Seminars, and training on Teaching methodologies.
Assessment skills.	Setting and marking of exams.	short courses , Seminars, and training with KNEC.
Management and leadership skills.	Classroom management	Refresher courses and in-services training.
	Departmental management	Further education and training.
	Supervision.	Promotions to leadership positions.
Library skills.	Library management and organization.	Specific training in library skills.

The need to acquire these skills reveals why teachers for instance have enrolled for further education in such big numbers. It also explains why teachers were willing to pay twenty thousand shillings for a one week course in management at KESSI. The data also reveals the gap that remains unmet between the desire to acquire the required skills and what is offered through the existing staff development and training programs. Having established the specific training needs of the teachers, it was therefore necessary to establish whether the existing staff development programs met the training needs of teachers' of English . Thus Table 4 presents a summary of cumulative actual participation frequency as a percentage of the cumulative desired participation frequency for each program. An existing program would be said to meet staff development needs if the percentage is very close to 100% for that programme (Owens, 1987). This is presented in table 4.

Table 4: Actual and Desired Teacher’s Participation in Various Staff Development Programs

Program	Desired participation	Actual participation
Continuing education while on paid leave	45	5
Continuing education while on unpaid leave.	0	0
Continuous in-services courses leading to award of certificates and taken during school holidays.	35	17
Participation in curriculum reviews.	43	11
Academic visits to other institutions.	48	22
Attending educational seminars as listeners.	43	37
Use of audio –visual & other aids to learn issues in education.	40	11
Observing other teachers teaching followed by discussion of the lesson with other teachers.	8	3
Participation in educational research in collaboration with teacher training institutions.	19	6

Among the categories of the staff development programs presented above, 43 (86. %) of the respondents who desired to participate in attending educational seminars as listeners actually participated in such a programme. This was followed by continuous in-service courses leading to the award of certificates and taken during school holidays. This category had 35 (70%) of respondents. Teachers also expressed their desire to participate in academic visit to other learning institutions to gain new ideas concerning teaching. This category had 48 (96%) of respondents who desired to participate but 22(44%) actually participated in this program. These three categories were thus seen to be close to meeting teachers’ staff development needs. However continuing education while on paid leave emerged as the most affected category of the programmes that teachers desired to participate in but did not actually participate in. This programme had 45(90%) who desired to participate in the training program but a paltry 5(10%) was able to take part in the program. This means that such programs do not bring teachers close to meeting their staff development needs.

Based on the above data, the study was interested in establishing the existing gap between the desire to participate in staff development programs and actual participation in such programs. To achieve this, cumulative actual participation frequency was subtracted from cumulative desired participation frequency for each programme. Hence Table 5 is a summary of the gap between cumulative actual participation frequencies and desired participation frequency for each program. An existing staff development program would be said to meet staff development needs if the gap between cumulative desired participation frequency and cumulative actual participation frequency is close to zero percent. As shown in Table 4.13, the gap is wide for most of the programs. This therefore implies that teachers are not close to meeting the staff development needs that they desire.

Table 5: Gap between Actual and Desired Teachers’ Participation in Staff Development Programmes

Program	Desired	Actual	Difference (gap)
Continuing education while on paid leave.	45	5	40
Continuing education while on unpaid leave.	0	0	0
Continuous in-service courses leading to award of certificates.	35	17	18
Curriculum reviews.	43	11	32
Academic visits to other learning institutions.	48	22	26
Attending educational seminars as a listener .	43	37	6
Use of audio –visual and other teaching Aids.	40	11	29
Observing other teachers teaching.	8	3	5
Participating in educational research in collaboration with other institutions.	19	6	13

It is important to note that in Tables 4 and 5, the computation only concentrated on the respondents who experienced the desire to participate in the various staff development programs and those who actually participated in the programs. The respondents who did not express any desire to participate in the programs are not included in the figure shown in the two tables.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

Secondary school teachers of English generally expressed a strong desire to participate in all the listed staff development programmes and other in-service training courses. These courses include furthering their education, attendance of seminars and workshops, participating in educational research and curriculum reviews, sensitivity training, and educational visits to other learning institutions. The study recommends that the ministry of education should carry out training needs assessment regularly to determine the training needs of teachers of English and also assess the relevance, effectiveness and cost of the existing training programmes

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