



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HEADTEACHERS' COMMUNICATION COMPETENCIES AND EFFECTIVE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN NAROK COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relationship between headteachers' communication competencies and effective school management in public primary schools in Narok County, Kenya. The target population was 665 headteachers, 25 Curriculum support officers and County Auditor. The study sample comprised 85 Headteachers, 25 Curriculum Support Officer and County Auditor. This study used the convergent mixed method research design. Data were collected using questionnaires, interviews and checklists of observations. Piloting was conducted in Kericho County. Validity was established by with the help of university supervisors. Split half technique and Cronbach Alpha coefficient test was used to test reliability coefficient. A score of 0.7 was acceptable. Analysis of quantitative data was by use descriptive statistics and inferential statistics with the aid of SPSS Version 23. Qualitative data collected from open ended questions was analyzed using descriptive analysis. These were analyzed through summarizing the set of observations drawn from the respondents. The study findings show that in most of the public schools headteachers communication competencies had a positive influence on effective school management. However, this was not the case in some of the schools in the county. The study recommended that the headteachers should consider scaling up their application of acquired communication skills for instance, by setting and communication of targets to both teachers and pupils, sharing schedules of lesson observation for all teachers, and ensuring that the curriculum is effectively delivered.

KEYWORDS: Headteachers' communication competencies, effective school management, public primary schools

INTRODUCTION

Competence can be described as the collection of demonstrable features and skills that enable and improve the efficiency of a job performance. Its first appearance was in an article by R.W. White in 1959 as a concept for performance motivation (Ali, Bin, Piang & Ali, 2016). Studies around the world show that competence in

education creates an environment that develops empowerment, response and evaluation. School leaders' competence is the means to achieve the sustainable development goals (SDGs) of ensuring quality education for all (Watson, Thwaites, Griggs, Kestin & McGrath, 2014). The 1970s was a period that saw the development of leadership skills for industry leaders and the essence of leadership competencies in the

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United States of America and the rest of the developed world (Giles, 2016). Abari-Ibolya and Barath (2010) have demonstrated the central role of school leadership in Central Europe to increase the effectiveness of school management. In these countries, organizational success has been greatly attributed to leadership competencies.

Bitterová, Haková and Pisonová (2014) in Slovakia found that the practicing headteachers considered managerial competencies as significant for the effective performance of their mandate. Headteachers had put in place motivational strategies based on shared values of the school, and competency to create and develop a conducive learning environment. The success in Slovakia is a clear indication that managerial competencies influence the functioning of educational institutions. The current study established this association in the context of headteachers' competencies and effective school management of public primary schools

Dobre (2013) conducted several studies on managerial expertise. The studies show that efficiency has been sought for workplace efficiency and creates nine key competencies for managers and represents many secondary subgroups for each one. Efficiency refers to the extent to which the goals are met or the basis of their goals. Efficiency alludes to the degree to which the objectives are met or the basis of their goals.

Furthermore, Norman (2010) suggests that school administrators must have the skills to manage accurate, efficient, timely and effective financial reports; provision of management papers; guide to annual and semi-annual reporting processes; development of effective internal and financial controls; managing budget processes and managing bank accounts and company accounts and cash flows. Norman's suggestion brings to the fore the essence of such competencies, with a mindset that they have an influence on school management effectiveness.

Herrera (2010) states that today's school headteacher is confronted with challenges such as cutbacks, school security, contract management, supervision, data management and marketing. Leadership style is the way and approach to direct, implement plans and motivate people. The three most important leadership styles are Autocratic, Democratic (participating) and Laissez-faire. Good leaders use all three styles, one of which is usually dominant, while bad leaders tend to stick to one style (Oluremi,

2013). In other words, Herrera and Oluremi implied that the headteachers' management competencies dictate the leadership style employed, and subsequently school management effectiveness.

According to Griffin (2014), good management starts and can withstand a slow but steady spiral of growth, but poor management lowers standards with lifting speed. The success of the school depends on the effectiveness of the school leader as an administrator. The school head's status is very central and very complex. They perform managerial tasks because in their management they try to achieve the school's goals and tasks. Education management involves the sensible use of staff, funds and equipment to improve the effectiveness of providing high quality education. According to Umoh (2013) in Nigeria, the headteacher is a school leader, axis where many aspects of the school turn around, and the person responsible for every detail of the school, both academic and administrative.

Education is the most expensive service in the country and priceless for many Kenyans (Republic of Kenya, 2003). According to the report of the Presidential Working Group on Education and Workforce, training for the next decade and other senior lecturers are crucial for effective management. The report also recommends that all heads of education finance be trained in financial management and regularly update their skills (Republic of Kenya, 2003). Senior teachers should be involved in making major of school decisions because they are leaders, thinkers and decision makers. A smart master will apply teamwork as a work strategy. The headmaster must be well-prepared and equipped with the skills needed to manage the school more efficiently and effectively.

The Ministry of Education has a Quality Assurance and Standards (QAS) Headteacher authorized by the Education Act. Provide Kenya Cap 211 to handle quality and standards through independent examination (Onjoro, 2019). After the introduction of the free primary education (FPE) by the government in 2003, school fees did not impede the access of poor children to primary schools. During the year, the number of primary schools increased by 17%. Lower education was streamlined in 2005, therefore the scope of the headteachers' responsibilities was extended, requiring the acquisition of additional management competencies. The recognition of education as human rights and the Kenyan government's commitment to the EFA, the SDGs and the 2030's vision and the enforcement of the

Child Act 2001, Cap 586 and the Sexual Abuse Act 2006, and the same community sensitivity, require solid efficiency managers by head teachers. All these new developments require effective management of schools, and as such the associated managers' competencies need to be identified and promoted.

Karisa (2015) in Kilifi County, Kenya found that the role of school managers in improving students' learning performance and enabling improved overall school performance is needed later to gradually and further expand their knowledge, skills and competences, focusing on going to the program professional development. A study by Wawira (2013) in the Kenyan district of Mbeere showed that most headteachers lacked the necessary financial skills and thus could not reconcile financial records. The current study aims to analyze the influence of the headteachers managerial competencies on effective school management in public primary schools in Narok county, Kenya.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The quality of education in public primary schools in Kenya has remained unimpressive year after year. This situation represents a huge waste of human and financial resources. Consequently, educational objectives are not achieved. The complexity of the headteachers' school management tasks requires them to have requisite competencies. Reforms have been introduced, making managerial competencies obligatory, if schools are to achieve set goals. Despite the fact that there is FPE, education standards in public primary schools have shown a decline (UNICEF, 2016; UWEZO, 2016). Furthermore, there is little information about how the capabilities of headteachers are consistent with the effectiveness of the school. Unfortunately, School Headteachers in Kenya have inadequate formal training in management competencies. They are appointed among the teaching staff with five years of teaching experience. The government has introduced a Diploma management course at the Kenya Education Management Institute (KEMI). The training is not compulsory and headteachers pay fees on their own. Once completed, the employer does not recognize these qualifications.

In 2018, the Teachers Service Commission reported that it had dismissed and deregistered 32 teachers over cases of defiling and impregnating primary school girls in Kenya. In Narok County, studies show that teachers in Narok County continue to deliver content in a

disorganized manner, poor financial management practices, and there are many cases of staff indiscipline in the county. Kenya Union of Post-Primary Education Teachers (Kuppet) shows that many cases go unreported. There are still unresolved issues related to staff motivation, academic performance, and financial performance. This raises questions with regard to the influence of headteachers' competencies in the areas of leadership, human relation, technical and communication. However, much of the research available focuses on Headteachers' management competencies in secondary and higher education institutions, leaving a gap at the initial level. This study is therefore aimed at filling this gap by evaluating the headteachers' managerial competencies and effective school management of public primary schools in Narok County, Kenya.

Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypothesis were tested at 0.05 alpha level: -

H₀ There is no statistically significant relationship between headteachers' communication competencies and effective school management in public primary schools in Narok County, Kenya

LITERATURE REVIEW

Headteachers' Communication Competencies

According to Thangavel, Rajan, Rajan, Saravanan and Lokesh (2015) communication serves four noteworthy jobs. First is the enlightening job. The job of correspondence here is to give data to the individuals in the organization. This data empowers them to do their work for instance headteachers need information for compelling basic leadership and usage of projects. Correspondence empowers the administration to make it saw unmistakably all through the association or foundation. The understudies can comprehend the administration or organization and the strategies of the association obviously. Without correspondence no directions or data can be given or got consequently there could be no contact between managers, understudies and subordinates.

An examination directed by Marzano, Waters and McNulty (2005) found that viable principals build up solid lines of two-route correspondence all through the school network. It is essential for the vital to make inquiries, be honest, and energize criticism from individuals from the school network (Bolman and Deal, 2002). Headteachers correspondence capabilities are along these lines critical for the accomplishment of the student and

the school in meeting set instructive objectives. Extra investigations recognized the significant jobs of successful school principals in basic leadership and building profitable associations with guardians and the more extensive network (Leithwood and Riehl, 2005). The key cooperates with understudies, staff, and guardians all the time.

Research by McEwan (2003) found that fruitful principals are imparting 100% of the time by tuning in, talking, composing, and perusing. Frequently the vital will utilize composed correspondence to guardians, understudies, and staff. The significance of right language structure and spelling is critical (Holman, 1997).

One of the positions of authority of effective leaders is to demonstrate attention to the requirements and desires of their associates, staff individuals, the guardians, and the understudies served by their schools. They are delineated as talented communicators with profoundly psychological adaptability to listen cautiously to different thoughts, which they apply to their critical thinking. Bolman and Deal (2002) explained the possibility of clashing leaders' qualities that may rise in the administration procedure as being hard to oversee. Then again, the work by Leithwood and Steinbach (1995) and Wong (2002) concur that the passionate affectability of leaders requires consideration.

The powerful central makes the best decision, remembering that the understudy's welfare is the main concern (McEwan, 2003). As affirmed by Begley and Johansson (2003), the qualities and the ethics of school principals fortify their job as school leaders. Business related interchanges are another critical territory in the job of the school main. Extensions (1977) expressed that around 70% of the headteachers' time includes up close and personal correspondence with others. For instance, principals manage nonstop conditions of feelings. Bothered guardians, energized understudies, and insubordinate staff are natural scenes experienced by the main. School principals must realize how to immovably convey their scholarly and managerial choices to guardians who may not be co-working or who need formal instruction.

In a period of such fast changes, principals are relied upon to assume numerous jobs and set in motion various undertakings and duties identified with instructing, educational programs changes, instructive improvement, understudies' learning encounters, proficient development, and relationships with guardians and with the network. Others desires that are determined to

the school headteachers' shoulders are to guide and execute programs that support and build up the superior of their teachers and understudies. Jantzi and Leithwood perceived six angles basic in the act of authority, the principal perspective is recognizing and articulating a reasonable vision. Odhiambo (2005) considered headteachers' correspondence systems and their consequences for scholarly performance in open optional schools in Nyando District, Kenya.

Spellbinding review was utilized in the investigation that focused 30 open auxiliary schools and utilized an example of 30 headteachers, 150 teachers and 270 understudies. The examination uncovered that School congregations, staff gatherings, correspondence through head of division are the most favored strategies while least inclination is given to outward appearance and school magazines. The examination additionally settled that the relationship between scholastic performance and correspondence is legitimately relative. All the more along these lines, students who perform better are the individuals who are successfully conveyed to by their headteachers. The teachers expressed that staff gatherings, composed reminders, staff reports, conferences and holding staff gatherings for the two understudies and teachers are the best specialized techniques. They additionally expressed that empowering the acknowledgment of gathering objectives, giving individualized upgrade, giving scholastic and scholarly inspiration, giving a legitimate model, and Setting superior desires all of which include successful correspondence as a decent initiative practice.

Adapting to this origination, Beane and Apple (1999), Furman and Starrat (2002) and Woods (2005) displayed the issues confronting leaders who want to be law-based standards and the difficulties of imparting that longing to their school network. Research has recognized the primary concerns and needs of majority rule school leaders as: upkeep of an open stream of considerations that empowers individuals to be as completely learned as would be prudent, usage of basic reflection and criticism notwithstanding examination to survey contemplations, ideas, emergencies, situations, and arrangements, backing of the prosperity of others and the 'benefit of everyone' and care for the poise and benefits of the entire resident and of minorities (Moos, 2008).

School authority assignments can be outlined along these lines. Authority is setting and examining headings despite the fact that schools

in certain frameworks are represented in some detail with regards to results estimated by benchmarks, examinations, and tests. They should distinguish the approaches to achieve these results themselves. Viable correspondence empowers school leaders to make requests and flags from the external world clear and to choose the route by which they need to react to them. It is a test to class initiative to decipher markers and make them into accounts about contrasts which structure the justification for the resulting choices in the network (Weick, 1995 and 2001). Principals, inside a basic appraisal of recognitions and perquisites of their work, have chosen four ideas that structure difficulties to the normality of action that correspondence is accepted to achieve. They are: talk, appropriated authority, professionalization and information the board. Gronn, (1983 and 1985) states that through two essential examinations that crafted by executives is embraced through talk. Talk induces understanding but then intervenes among structure and organization, influencing both. Talk happens amid discussions, relationships, and gatherings with others and these shapes one of the disseminated realities of work. Organization is viewed as talk. This originates from crafted by Gronn (1983) however reflects other research that reached out back to that of Mitzberg and includes numerous others from Sergiovanni to Leithwood, who distinguished crafted by the overseer as disconnected, riotous, and incongruent (Gronn, 2003).

Headteachers are required to set course. Proof investigated by Leithwood and Riehl, (2005) proposed that effective initiative makes a convincing feeling of direction in the establishments by creating and imparting a common vision of things to come, helping assemble understanding about related momentary objectives, and speaking to exclusive standards for associates' work. They concur that heading setting is firmly connected with perquisites for duty and shared dreams accentuating learning over the lifetime.

In controlling the instructive procedure, many related issues rise to clarify the bearing of the association. For instance, vote based standards and goals are underlined all through discussions about school headings. The school headteachers verify that those standards direct the usage of institutional goals. Just having vision and mission declarations on the divider isn't adequate for fruitful authority. Satisfying arranged objectives in a responsibility setting thusly require direction

and advancement which sets up the school's capacity to discharge approach duties and build up the contribution of ranking staff individuals and different teachers in the basic leadership process; this is finished by circulating administration among all individuals from the group (Law et al., 2010).

Leithwood, (2005) groups school administration as a mission appropriated in the whole school network for it depends on a principle of initiative described as astute, flexible, responsive, and setting explicit not recommended by jobs, which are unyielding, various leveled and status driven. This idea of administration isn't various leveled, yet government and draws in lucidity of bearing, structures, and upgrade. Concerning school administration as an appropriated errand, school initiative is an activity that is reached out through school network.

Schools that are covetous of consistent development and headway are required to outfit their human and social resources that are their primary possibilities, producing and sharing the administration openings that give the fitness to accomplish this (Leithwood, 2005). Broadly dispersed school authority is significantly more compelling with schools and understudies and is reflected in the school vision. In extra, individual attributes are not unmistakable elements of the variety in authority adequacy. Setting course for the school is one of the primary elements of school leaders. It is likewise comprehended along these lines in the exploration of Leithwood and Riehl, (2005), where it is discovered that fruitful principals set and convey the heading for their schools. Successful leadership creates a compelling sense of purpose in the organizations by developing a shared vision of the future, helping build consensus about relevant short-term goals and demonstrating high expectations for colleagues' work (Leithwood, 2006).

EFFECTIVE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

Effective management has been defined differently over the past decades, different authors, each gave a different definition in their works, and there have been numerous attempts to arrive at one single definition of this dependent variable (Buter, 2012; Analoui et al., 2010). There is agreement that effective management occurs when a manager's effort results in the ongoing satisfying of organizational goals (Buter, 2012). Therefore, many writers defined effective management as the extent to which the stated goals of an organization are achieved (Hatten, 2012). Consequently, effective management is a

measure of the match between stated goals and their achievement.

According to Robbins and Coutler (2012), effectiveness is concerned with the ends, results, consequences or attainment of organizational goals. The school managers of primary schools are said to be effective if they use and manage school resources in different and difficult situations appropriately and select the correct approaches to achieve the goals of their schools. In other words, effective school management is one in which there is proper utilization of resources to yield expected educational outcomes efficiently.

Banerjee (2012) argues that school managerial effectiveness is very important for the survival and growth of the school in the contemporary education sector, especially in the case of increasing competition for resources. Managers need to develop more effective processes and strategies not only to compete but also to survive. In other words, effectiveness is the foundation of success. As pointed in Comite (2011), the principle of good performance is commonly described as an expression of efficiency and effectiveness. However, (Bamel et al., (2011) was quick to notice that regardless of its increasing importance, managerial effectiveness has been neglected as compared to other issues of management. Effectiveness of school managers is significant for the success of the school because of the critical role of school managers in the formulation and implementation of schools' goals and strategies. Despite of this, the effectiveness of senior managers has not been fully explored

Döş and Savaş (2015) observe that today's school managers are accountable for the oversight of teaching, curriculum, and assessment cycles, evaluation of teachers, fostering relationships with teachers and other stakeholders, evaluating and implementing discipline plans, developing a multi-year plan for needed resources, all while still managing the school building (Michigan, 2013).

The extensive responsibilities of today's school leaders require a depth of understanding in finance, curriculum, child development, human resource management, time management, community and public relations, and effective communication skills. Some leadership traits and practices may be more effective than others when guiding a school through these challenging times.

Bao (2010) opines that effectiveness of managers is an important element in current

contemporary organizations, as they need effective and competent managers to be able to reach their objectives and goals both efficiently and effectively. Moreover, managerial effectiveness is a key component which enables effectual operation and delivery of complex initiatives.

Saad and Khan (2014) in Pakistan noted that the managerial functions executed by school managers included planning, organizing, coordinating, commanding and controlling. School management effectiveness entailed performing these tasks meritoriously. The effective manager therefore, wants things to be right under the process of chain of command.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study adopted two theories by Katz theory of administrative abilities and Mintzberg Managerial Roles Classification Model.

Katz Theory of Managerial Skills

The research was based on managerial capacity theory by Katz. Katz (1974) implemented an order of administrative skills which became the primary significant arrangement of these kinds of skills which all supervisors deemed as essential. In his article named "abilities for a viable executive" which was distributed in the Harvard Business Review in 1974, he featured the essential arrangements of administrative aptitudes that were required for expanded viability by headteachers. Of late, administrative abilities have been conceptualized regarding fundamental discernible interrelated classifications that are named; task, individuals related and self and profession improvement sets (Analoui, 1993). The exploration work by Katz (1974) brought up that headteachers required three basic aptitudes to be specific specialized abilities, human abilities and applied abilities. Specialized skills consisting of learning and expertise in a particular field of practice, e.g. design, PCs, money-related and administrative bookkeeping, or manufacturing, and this expertise was usually slowly urgent for lower board measurements because these head teachers were legally included or supervised members doing the work of the association.

Human aptitudes spoke to the capacity to work agreeably with different people both at the individual or gathering level. These aptitudes were essential since headteachers managed the general population and in this manner supervisors who had great relationship building abilities had the capacity to get the best out of

their workers. These supervisors realized how to impart, persuade, lead, and rouse eagerness and trust (Gana, and Ifah, 2012). In this manner, these abilities will be similarly required at all dimensions of the executives. Theoretical aptitudes are the abilities administrators required in order to contemplate unique and complex circumstances.

Utilizing these abilities administrators can see the association in general, comprehend the relationship among different subunits, and envision how the association fitted into its more extensive condition. These aptitudes are the most imperative particularly in headship level. This hypothesis will consequently frame the premise of the examination since it features three imperative administrative aptitudes that influence the viability of administrators for this situation.

Mintzberg Managerial Roles Classification Model

The study will likewise utilize Mintzberg Managerial Roles Classification Model. Mintzberg (1974) looked to give the required order of administrative aptitudes. He directed the investigation by acquiring the individual data around five CEOs, a logbook of their booked arrangements for a month just as more data with respect to their associations. In light of the data he gathered, he arranged seven days of organized perceptions in which he gathered two sorts of information in particular narrative information and auxiliary information. From the perceptions, Mintzberg (1974, pp 28-48) found that managers dealt with persistent pace where they had an expansive assortment of undertakings and were regularly exposed to visit intrusions. He noticed that they regularly favored taking a shot at explicit very much characterized exercises of current significance instead of on progressively broad capacities which might be less sure and whose prompt pertinence was misty. He set up that they supported verbal as opposed to composed contact with others. The successful school the executives depends totally on the headteachers' administrative capabilities to accomplish the set objectives. The theoretical system is created to demonstrate how viable school the board influences the results of the school. From the model the autonomous factors, for example, authority capabilities, human relationship skills, specialized abilities and correspondence skills influences the reliant factors to be specific compelling school the executives for example Staff and understudy discipline.

Students enlisted, take an interest, held, finishing, and traveling to next dimension rely upon the administrative skills of a head teacher. The interrelationship between these factors inside the school setting will include distinctive outcomes inside the school (yield). Headteachers administrative skills will have direct effect on the viable administration of the school.

This affected him to propose that administrative exercises or jobs could as a rule be ordered into three classifications (Shapira and Dunbar, 1980). Mintzberg (1974) characterizes a job as a sorted-out arrangement of practices that are related to a particular administration position and is estimated by what people do in their everyday work. He characterized these jobs into relational which incorporates nonentity, pioneer and contact; instructive that incorporates screen, disseminator and representative and; basic leadership that incorporates business visionary, unsettling influence handler, asset allocator and arbitrator. He further declares that every job is regularly impacted by four factors to be specific; Environment which are the association qualities; work suggesting its dimension and the capacities administered; individual (administrator's attributes and circumstance which is a transient element. Fundamentally, all administrators play out all jobs however somewhat and these jobs change unimportantly as headteachers being specific require performing specific arrangement of particular jobs (Ghalandari, 2012). This theory will be pertinent in this investigation as it features one of the key skills in the examination.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study used convergent mixed methods design. This design is appropriate since it allows the researcher to handle both quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell, 2014). Data can be collected using triangulation approach. This examination configuration is picked in light of the fact that the researcher gathered and dissected both subjective and quantitative data in the midst of a comparative time of the investigation methodology and after that association the two approaches (qualitative and quantitative) of results into general conclusions.

The study was conducted in Narok County, Kenya. The county occupies an area of 2,884.4 Km². Nakuru County comprise of Trans Mara West, Trans Mara East, Narok North, Narok West, Narok south and Narok East sub-counties. Despite the county being rich in resources, the academic performance in public schools is low as compared to other counties in the national

examination results recording a total mean score of 251 (KNEC 2018) Hence, the county is deemed fit for the study.

The target population of the study comprised of 665 public primary school headteachers in Narok County, Kenya and 25 Curriculum Support Officers (CSOs) and County Auditor. There are 665 public primary schools with a total enrolment of 199,500 pupils and a teaching staff of 5,320 and an average teacher pupil ration of 1:40 (County Education Office, 2017).

The sample size of this study was calculated using a scientific formula by (Kothari, 2004) as outlined below;

$$n = \frac{Z^2 pqN}{e^2(N-1) + Z^2 pq}$$

Where:

n = the sample size for a finite population

N= size of population which is the number of primary school head teachers.

p = population reliability (or frequency estimated for a sample of size n), where p is 0.5 which is taken for all primary school head teachers population

p + q= 1 e: margin of error considered is 10% for this study. Z α /2: normal reduced variable at 0.05 level of significance z is 1.96

According to the above formula, the sample size for all the primary schools is:

$$\begin{aligned} n &= \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.5 \times 0.5 \times 665}{(0.1)^2 (665 - 1) + [(1.96)^2 \times 0.5 \times 0.5]} \\ &= 84.03057734 \\ &85 \text{ primary schools} \end{aligned}$$

In summary the study utilized a sample of 85 Headteachers from 85 public primary schools and the 25 Curriculum Support Officers. The research employed cluster sampling approach, by which the population was divided into geographic / administrative units. Thus, five clusters were formed, namely sub-counties Narok North, Narok East, Narok South, Narok West, Trans-Mara and Trans-Mara East. The 85 schools were selected from the clusters using simple random sampling technique.

The research also employed stratified sampling technique, using three strata namely: Headteachers, Curriculum Support Officer, and County Auditor. The next stage was collection of the samples. A census approach was used in the identification of the Curriculum Support Officers, whereby all the 25 Curriculum Support Officers were used for the study. Purposive sampling technique was used in the selection of the CSOs as well as the County Auditor.

The study used three research instruments to collect data namely: questionnaires, interviews

and observation checklists. The questionnaire; one designed for Head teachers and an interview was used for the Curriculum Support Officers and the County Auditor of education to collect primary data. A pilot study was conducted in 10 percent of the study sample in Kericho County in 9 public primary schools amongst 9 school headteachers as suggested by Mugenda, (2008). The study ensured that the respondents participating in the pilot study do not form part of the study. The pilot study revealed deficiencies in the questionnaires before the final data collection is carried out. The information collected was used to improve the quality of the research instruments. Content and construct validity were conducted with the guidance of assigned research experts. The headteachers' questionnaire was adopted upon scoring a reliability Instruments yielding a correlation coefficient of correlation coefficient of 0.749.

The data was collected after receiving a letter from the board of graduate studies Kabianga, University which allowed aid in seeking permit from National Council for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) after ascertaining the reliability of the research instruments. The researcher visited the sampled schools to request the headteachers to participate in the study. Letters requesting them for their involvement were dispatched during that pre-visit. The researcher conducted the interview sessions with the CSOs and County Auditor after booking for an appointment. Questionnaires were delivered to the respondents by the researcher with the assistance of research assistants on that day and they were collected after one week or as per agreement with the respondents.

Quantitative data collected from closed-ended questions were coded and keyed into SPSS computer software databases; organized and cleaned of any errors that may have occurred during data collection. The questions were then coded for easy referencing. Analysis of quantitative data was by use of descriptive statistics and inferential statistics with the aid of SPSS Version 23. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, means and percentages were used. Data was grouped into tables according to responses of various respondents. Pearson's correlation coefficient analysis and regression analysis were carried out to establish the relationships between managerial competencies and effective school management. Qualitative data collected from open ended questions was analyzed using content analysis. These were analyzed through summarizing the set of

observations drawn from the respondents. These data were classified and analyzed according to categories and sub categories or themes and sub themes based on the study objectives and research questions thereafter inferences and conclusions drawn.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study was able to obtain a response from 83 headteachers, thus translating to 97.60% response rate, for the Curriculum Support Officers (100%) and for the Auditor 100%. This was sufficient to enable the researcher to come up with reliable conclusions and recommendations. Dommeyer, Baum, Chapman, and Hanna, (2002) reported that the acceptable response rate for on-paper surveys is 75%, therefore the attained percentage was good and found acceptable to the researcher.

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Gender: The results in Table 1 show that 83.1% of the headteachers were female, while 16.9% were male. The results suggest that there were more male headteachers than female headteachers in public primary schools in Narok County. There were few females occupying managerial positions in school. The results are

similar to those in a study by Likwop (2016), where it was established that there were more male headteachers than females in the County.

Level of Education: The results in Table 1 show that 61.45% of the respondents indicated that their highest level of education was Certificate in Primary Teacher Education (P1) level, 25.30% had attained the diploma level, 9.64% had attained the degree level, while 3.61% indicated that their highest education was Masters level of education. This implied that the highest attained level of headteachers in most of the schools was the certificate level, P1. The results of this study are in agreement with those in a study by Sankale (2015), who found that the highest level of education attained by majority of the headteachers in Narok County was the P1 level.

Working Experience: The results in Table 1 show that 55.4% of the respondents indicated that they had worked in the current school for a period below 5 years, 13.3% indicated a period of 5 to 7 years, while the rest had worked in the current school for a period of 8 years or above. The implication is that majority of the headteachers in Narok County had not been in their schools for longer periods. This could be because of the employees transfer policy in force across the country.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

		F	%
Gender	Male	69	83.1%
	Female	14	16.9%
Age	Below 30 years	1	1.2%
	30-35 years	11	13.3%
	36-40 years	5	6.0%
	Over 40 years	66	79.5%
Highest Level of Education	Primary level	0	0.00%
	Secondary level	0	0.00%
	Certificate level (P1)	51	61.45%
	Diploma level	21	25.30%
	Degree level	8	9.64%
	Masters level	3	3.61%
How many years have you worked in this school?	Below 5 years	46	55.4%
	5 – 7 years	11	13.3%
	8-10 years	7	8.4%
	10-13 years	6	7.2%
	Over 14 years	13	15.7%

School Management Effectiveness

The results in Table 2 show that, staff discipline effectiveness scored a mean score of 3.0482, with 16.9% of the headteachers rating the staff discipline effective. This value was slightly above the neutral mean score at 3.0 (fairly effective). This implied that staff discipline was not effective in most of the school, but instead was fairly effective. The study are in line with a report by Mureithi (2019) which revealed that the TSC is grappling with increased indiscipline cases among teachers in Kenya, and this explains this situation in Narok County.

Data results in Table 2 show that staff motivation effectiveness scored a mean score of 3.3012, with 31.3% of the headteachers rating the staff motivation effective. The results suggest that staff discipline was not effective in most of the school, but instead was fairly effective. The results are in agreement with a study by Bennell and Akyeampong (2007) who revealed that sizeable percentages of primary school teachers are poorly motivated in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. Ackers (2017) who pointed out that, developing effective human relation skills is crucial to establishing and maintaining productive business relationships, and subsequently employee motivation.

The results in Table 2 show that, 18.1% of the headteachers considered financial performance to be effective, while the rest 81.9% rated it otherwise. The indicator scored a mean score of 3.0482. This value was slightly above the neutral mean score at 3.0 (fairly effective). The results suggest that head teachers' competence were not effective in steering good financial performance. The findings are in agreement with a study by Magak (2013) who found that limited headteachers' competencies in most schools had negatively affected the schools financial performance. For instance, there were cases of over spending and under-spending, and poor maintenance of books of accounts. This was attributed to incompetent procurement committee, and inadequate auditing knowledge by the head teacher.

The results in Table 2 show that 15.7% of the headteachers rated the management of selected school functions, while the rest described it as ineffective. The indicator recorded a mean score of 3.1566. This implied that school management was ineffective in many schools. The findings are in line with a study by Wambugi (2014), where it was established that school management remained unimpressive across the country and this was mainly due to limited headteachers' competencies.

Table 2: School Management Effectiveness

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	% of Effectiveness
Staff Discipline	83	2.00	5.00	3.0482	.58233	16.9%
Staff Motivation	83	2.00	4.00	3.3012	.48728	31.3%
Good Financial Performance	83	2.00	4.00	3.1687	.40783	18.1%
Academic Achievement	83	2.00	4.00	3.1566	.36566	15.7%
Valid N (listwise)	83					

The results in Figure 1 show that the indicator with the highest rating of effectiveness was staff motivation, followed by good financial performance, then academic achievement and

staff discipline. None of the indicators was able to attain the 4.0 mean score, the equivalent of the "effective" score.

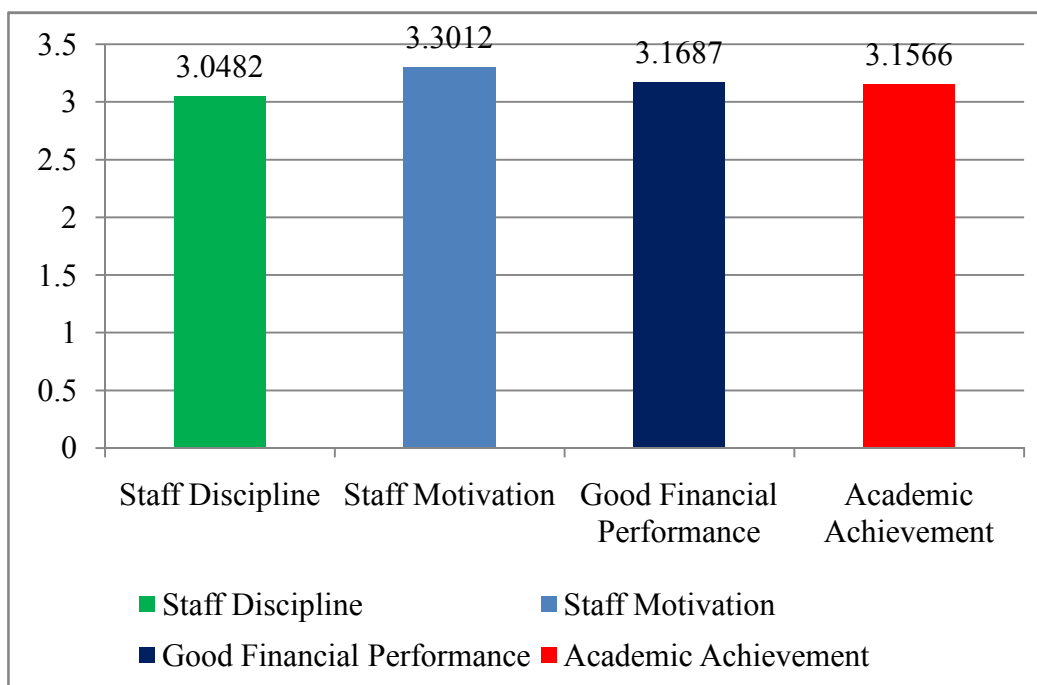


Figure 1: Rating School Management Effectiveness
Headteachers Communication Skills on School Management Effectiveness

Availability and Utilization of Suggestion Box

The results in Table 3 show that 15.7% indicated that the headteachers were effective in ensuring availability and utilization of suggestion box, 47% indicated that the headteachers were fairly effective in the use of this communication skill, while 37.4% indicated that they were ineffective. This implied that most of the headteachers were

not effective in ensuring that that suggestion boxes were available and used appropriately. According to Ssenyonga (2010) effective utilization of suggestion boxes in schools offered learners an opportunity to air out their views, suggestions, complaints or any other information they deem necessary for the school administration, and this helped them raise issues that were inhibiting effectiveness in school management.

Table 3: Availability and Utilization of Suggestion Box

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very Ineffective	15	18.1
Ineffective	16	19.3
Fairly Effective	39	47
Effective	12	14.5
Very Effective	1	1.2
Total	83	100

Communication of Targets to Teachers

The results in Table 4 reveal that 50.6% indicated that the headteachers were effective in ensuring that targets are set and communicated to both teachers and pupils, 37.3% indicated that the headteachers were fairly effective in the use of this communication skill, while 12% indicated that they were ineffective. This implied that most of the headteachers were effective in ensuring setting and communication of targets to both

teachers and pupils. Odhiambo (2005) observed that the headteacher is required through appropriate communication pattern, to realign and modify the attitude of teachers, students and the whole school community towards achievement of set targets in a school. However, it appears that in the case of primary schools in Narok County, a sizable percentage had not been effective in accomplishing this task.

Table 4: Communication of Targets to Teachers

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very Ineffective	2	2.4
Ineffective	8	9.6
Fairly Effective	31	37.3
Effective	31	37.3
Very Effective	11	13.3
Total	83	100

Sharing Schedules of Lesson Observation for All Teachers

The results in Table 5 reveal that 49.4% indicated that the headteachers were effective in sharing schedules of lesson observation for all teachers, 37.3% indicated that the headteachers were fairly effective in the use of this communication skill, while 13.2% indicated that they were ineffective.

The results suggest that many of the headteachers were not effective in sharing schedules of lesson observation for all teachers. This was against the OECD (2009) findings which demonstrated the importance of sharing schedules of lesson observation for all teachers, which is enhancing teacher effectiveness, and subsequently school management effectiveness.

Table 5: Sharing Schedules of Lesson Observation for All Teachers

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very Ineffective	2	2.4
Ineffective	9	10.8
Fairly Effective	31	37.3
Effective	23	27.7
Very Effective	18	21.7
Total	83	100

Ensuring Effective Delivery of the Curriculum

The results presented in Table 6 show that 54.3% of the respondents indicated that the headteachers were effective in ensuring effective curriculum delivery in the schools, 26.5% indicated that the headteachers were fairly effective, while 19.2% were ineffective. The results suggest that in a number of primary

schools (45.7%) in the County, the curriculum was not effectively delivered. Döş and Savaş (2015) observe that today's school managers are accountable for effective curriculum delivery in schools. It suffices that many primary schools in Narok County had not achieved this task as expected by the Ministry of Education.

Table 6: Ensuring Effective Delivery of the Curriculum

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very Ineffective	10	12
Ineffective	6	7.2
Fairly Effective	22	26.5
Effective	32	38.6
Very Effective	13	15.7
Total	83	100

Ensuring Teacher Preparedness

The results in Table 7 show the 47% of the respondents indicated that the headteachers were effective in ensuring improved teacher preparedness to teach, 32.6% indicated that the headteachers were fairly effective, while 20.4% were ineffective. The results suggest that in most of the primary schools (53%) in the county, the

headteachers were not effective in ensuring improved teacher preparedness. The results are in line with the findings in a study by Taipale (2012), where the essence of teacher preparedness by headteachers was highlighted, as it positively contributed to effectiveness in content delivery, and subsequently effectiveness in school management.

Table 7: Ensuring Teacher Preparedness

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very Ineffective	10	12
Ineffective	7	8.4
Fairly Effective	27	32.6
Effective	26	31.3
Very Effective	13	15.7
Total	83	100

Timeliness in the Preparation of Teacher duty roster

The results in Table 8 show that 50.3% of the respondents indicated that the head teachers were effective in preparing teacher duty roster,

21.7% indicated that the head teachers were fairly effective, while 18% were ineffective. This implied that the task of preparing duty roster was not taken seriously in most of the schools.

Table 8: Timeliness in the Preparation of Teacher Duty Roster

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very Ineffective	6	7.2
Ineffective	9	10.8
Fairly Effective	18	21.7
Effective	16	19.3
Very Effective	34	41
Total	83	100

Supervision of Teaching and Learning activities

The results in Table 9 show that 53% of the respondents were of the opinion that the head teachers were effective in supervising teaching and learning activities in the classroom, 24.1%

opined that head teachers were fairly effective, while 22.9% considered them ineffective on this aspect. This implied that even though in most schools the head teachers had taken this task seriously, this was not the case in many other schools (47%) and this was still a problem. Alabi

(2017) mentions the duty roster as one of the most important records that need to be prepared

by the school headteacher for effective administration of secondary schools.

Table 9: Supervision of Teaching and Learning Activities

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very Ineffective	4	4.8
Ineffective	15	18.1
Fairly Effective	20	24.1
Effective	24	28.9
Very Effective	20	24.1
Total	83	100

Effective Communication with the Staff

The result in Table 10 show that 67.4% of the respondents were of the opinion that the head teachers were effective in communicating with the staff, 20.6% indicated that they were fairly

effective while 12% indicated that the head teachers were not effective on this aspect. This implied that in most of the schools, the headteachers were effective in communicating with the staff.

Table 10: Effective Communication with the Staff

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very Ineffective	6	7.2
Ineffective	11	13.4
Fairly Effective	10	12
Effective	30	36.1
Very Effective	26	31.3
Total	83	100

Effectiveness in Motivating Staff

Data results presented in Table 11 show the 51.8% of the respondents indicated that the headteachers were effective in motivating, encouraging and cajoling their staff, 26.5%

indicated that the headteachers were fairly effective, while 21.7% were ineffective. The results suggest that in many of the primary schools (51.8%) in the County, the headteachers had been successful in motivating their staff.

Table 11: Effectiveness in Motivating Staff

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very Ineffective	5	6
Ineffective	13	15.7
Fairly Effective	22	26.5
Effective	29	34.9
Very Effective	14	16.9
Total	83	100

Supervision of Teachers' Lesson Plan

The results in Table 12 show the 48.2% of the respondents indicated that the headteachers were effective in supervising the teachers' lesson plan, 30.1% indicated that the headteachers were

fairly effective, while 21.7% were ineffective. The results suggest that in most of the primary schools (48.2%) in the county, the headteachers were effective in supervising the teachers' lesson plan.

Table 12: Effectiveness of Supervision of Lesson Plan

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very Ineffective	5	6
Ineffective	13	15.7
Fairly Effective	25	30.1
Effective	28	33.7
Very Effective	12	14.5
Total	83	100

Assisting Teachers to try New Research Findings

The results in Table 13 show that 38.6% of the respondents indicated that the headteachers were effective in assisting teachers to try new research findings, 37.3% indicated that the

headteachers were fairly effective, while 22.9% indicated that they were ineffective. This implied that in majority of the schools, the headteachers had not done enough to assist teachers to try new research findings.

Table 13: Effectiveness in Supporting Teacher Utilization of Research Findings

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very Ineffective	12	14.5
Ineffective	8	9.6
Fairly Effective	31	37.3
Effective	21	25.3
Very Effective	11	13.3
Total	83	100

Communication Records

The results in Table 14 show that academic performance records were available in 85.5% of the schools. There were no Internal Memos on Notice Boards in the schools visited. The study also found that only 14.50% (12) of the primary

schools had regular parents meeting and 59% (49) of the schools had school meeting minutes. The results suggest that most schools did not have communication records in place. This is further illustrated diagrammatically in the Figure below.

Table 14: Availability of Communication Records in schools

Communication Record	Schools having the records	% of schools having the records
Academic Performance Records	71	85.5%
Internal Memos on Notice Boards	0	0.00%
Regular parents meeting	12	14.50%
School meeting minutes	49	59.00%

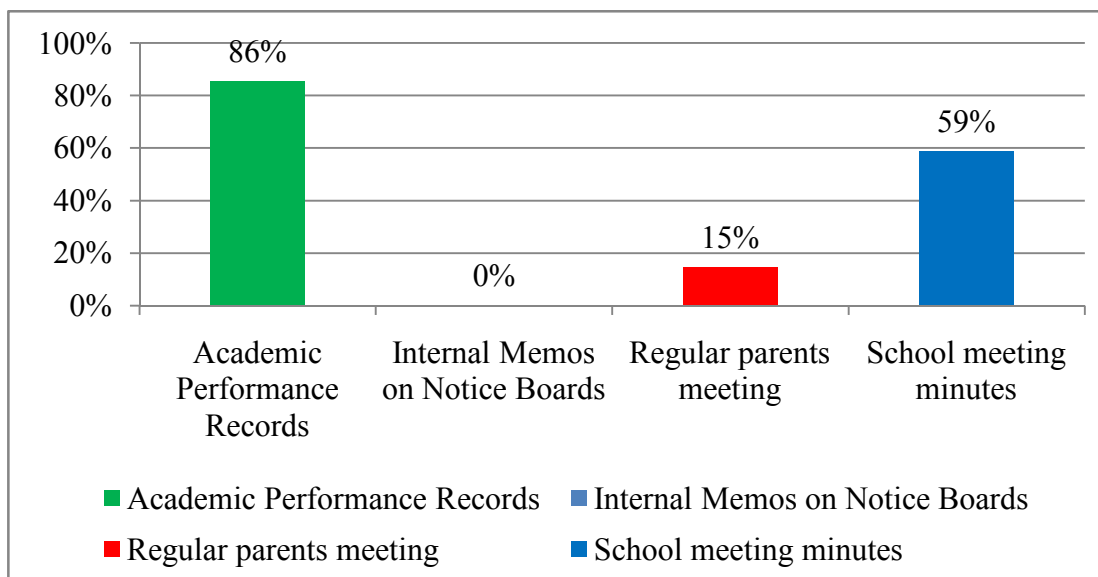


Figure 2: Communication Records

CORRELATIONS

Correlations between Headteachers' Communication Skills and Effective School Management

Data results presented in Table 15 show that the Pearson correlation results between headteachers communication competencies and effective school management were as follows: ($r = 0.256$, $p = 0.020$). This shows that there was an association between headteachers technical skills and effective school management. Given that, the p value (0.020), was less than the test significance level ($p < 0.05$), and thus, this relationship is statistically significant. The findings are in agreement with a those in a study by Nyagaka and Odongo, 2013) who observed that

for the headteachers who employ participatory leadership style among them open communication in setting goals and an inclusive approach in decision making, performance in examinations have been found better than dictatorial leadership style. Best practices of the human resource manager increase productivity and efficiency of an organization (Mugera, 2015) through effective communication, inclusive decision making as well as motivational practices. Head teachers capable of handling staff and students' issues end up reporting good performance compared to their counterparts in the national examination, an indicator of effective school management

Table 15: Correlations between Headteachers Communication Skills and School Management Effectiveness

		Headteachers Communication competencies	School Management Effectiveness
Headteachers Communication competencies	Pearson Correlation	1	.256*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.020
	N	83	83
School Management Effectiveness	Pearson Correlation	.256*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.020	
	N	83	83

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Multiple Regressions

Linear regression analysis was done to establish the relationship between the independent and dependent variables and the results are presented. The R Square value in the model summary in table 16 shows the amount of variance in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variables. The independent variable (Headteachers Communication Skills) accounted for 8.5 percent of the variability in effective school management. In other words, the total variation in school management effectiveness, that can be explained by headteachers communication

competencies is 8.5%. This percentage is low indicating low variability is present in the data. A contributory factor could be because of the difficulty in predicting human behaviour, in this case utilization of headteachers' communication competencies.

The R-value (.292) is the linear correlation coefficients between the entered independent variable and the dependent variable. The R value represents the simple correlation, which indicates a low degree of correlation between headteachers communication competencies and school management effectiveness.

Table 16: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.292 ^a	.085	.074	.45587

a. Predictors: (Constant), Headteachers Communication competencies

Analysis of Variances (ANOVA)

In the study, the predictors are significant when Sig. (p value) $p < 0.05$. The findings in Table 16 show that p value was 0.007. Since the p values are less than 0.05 (confidence level), we can conclude that the influence of headteachers' communication competencies is significant. As $p < 0.05$ our predictors are significantly better than

would be expected by chance. The regression line predicted by headteachers' managerial competencies explains a significant amount of the variance in the level of effectiveness of school management. This is reported as follows: $F(1, 81) = 7.571$; $p < 0.05$, and therefore can conclude that the regression is statistically significant.

Table 17: Analysis of Variances (ANOVA)

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	1.573	1	1.573	7.571	.007 ^b
Residual	16.833	81	.208		
Total	18.407	82			

a. Dependent Variable: effective school management b. Predictors: (Constant),

b. Predictors: (Constant), Headteachers Communication Skills

BETA COEFFICIENTS

The results in Table 7 show that Headteachers Communication competencies recorded a Beta value of (Standardized Coefficients $\beta = 0.292$; $p = 0.007$) and a thus a predictor of school management effectiveness. The hypothesis stated that "H₀: There is no statistically significant relationship between headteachers' communication competencies and School Management Effectiveness in public primary schools in Narok County, Kenya." The decision

rule was to reject the null hypothesis if p value calculated is less than the confidence level $p = 0.05$. Since the p value associated with headteachers' communication competencies and School Management Effectiveness was 0.007, a value less than the 0.05 significant test, the null hypothesis is rejected and thus, the results suggest that headteachers' school management effectiveness has a significant influence on financial performance.

Table 18: The Beta Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1 (Constant)	2.596	.194		13.376	.000
Headteachers Communication Competencies	.151	.055	.292	2.752	.007

a. Dependent Variable: School Management Effectiveness

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that in most of the public schools headteachers' communication competencies had a positive influence on school management effectiveness. The study also concludes that there were many schools where, Headteachers Communication Skills were not positively influencing school management effectiveness. This was mainly due to factors such as: the headteachers' ineffectiveness in ensuring that suggestion boxes were available and used appropriately, ineffectiveness in ensuring setting and communication of targets to both teachers and pupils; and in sharing schedules of lesson observation for all teachers. Moreover, in a number of primary schools in the County, the curriculum was not effectively delivered, and the headteachers taken lightly the aspect of teacher preparedness, and that of preparing duty roster was not taken seriously in most of the schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends as follows:

The Ministry of Education should consider strengthening the monitoring and evaluation aspect to ensure that the headteachers' are executing their mandate as required by law and that efforts are made to ensure that there is total adherence to set communication standards and practices.

The Ministry of Education should consider organizing update trainings for headteachers to enhance their communication competencies as well as encouraging the utilization of these competencies in promoting management effectiveness.

The head teachers should consider putting in place strategies geared at promoting teacher preparedness in their schools. Such strategies can include organizing update trainings for teachers and availing adequate requisite teaching and learning materials on time.

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