

## Influence of school based quality assurance practices on academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Subukia sub County, Kenya

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**ABSTRACT:** The purpose of this study was therefore to examine the influence of school based quality assurance practices as performed by the head teachers on pupils' academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Subukia sub county, Kenya. The study was based on the value added theory and the production function theory of education. Using the *ex post facto* research design, the study used census methodology to gather data from all the 42 head teachers of public primary schools in subukia Sub County using structured questionnaires. Validity of the instrument was done based on expert judgment from the department of curriculum and education management of Laikipia University for determining face and content validity. The reliability of the instrument was determined through a single test administration by use of the cronbach alpha coefficient of which an alpha coefficient of 0.791 was obtained and considered acceptable. Nominal scale data was analyzed using frequency counts and percentages. Hypotheses were tested at the .05 level of significance using simple regression analysis. The study found a strong positive significant relationship between head teachers' planning activities  $r=.573$ ,  $p=.00<.05$ , coordinating practices  $r=.618$   $p=.00<.05$ , staffing practices  $r=.689$   $p=.00<.05$  and controlling practices  $r=.667$   $p=.00<.05$  and academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Subukia sub county, Kenya. The head teachers in public primary schools in Subukia should hold meetings as a quality assurance practices as a means of filtering how various schools stakeholders view quality assurance and implement them in the various aspects in the school management. Particularly, the PTA meetings should be used to moderate administrative processes in order to facilitate effective teaching and learning. PTA and educational administrators make concerted efforts initiate and sustain new projects, rehabilitate dilapidated infrastructures and initiate professional development through staff training. The findings of the study will be beneficial to Quality Assurance and Standards policy makers as they will offer useful suggestions on enhancing quality assurance and standards in primary schools for qualitative improvement of basic education in the country in general and Subukia Sub County in particular. Other researchers will also find the study useful as it will add to the body of existing literature in the field of educational quality assurance and standards.

**KEYWORDS:** Quality Assurance, Curriculum Implementation, Education Management.

### 1 INTRODUCTION

The provision of quality education has been a major area of concern to government and educators ever since Kenya gained independence in 1963. All the major education commissions and taskforces since independence (Republic of Kenya, 1964; 1976; 1988 and 1999) have alluded to the importance of provision of quality and relevance in education through the curriculum. In keeping with the spirit of providing quality to the consumers of education, the government has over the years endeavored to ensure that the recipients of the products of knowledge are offered services which are of the right quality and standards.

Formal educational services in schools are provided through a curriculum that is designed by the Ministry of Education (MoE). The right curriculum is that which is in tandem with the wider social and economic environment. According to Bishop

(1989) curriculum is a service product. Therefore, a child who is the consumer of this product should receive an educational service that is of reasonable quality and right standards (Republic of Kenya, 2010). In order to ensure quality education is provided in schools, the government of Kenya through the Basic Education Act (2013) has provided for the establishment of the Quality Assurance and standards assurance council whose mandate among others is to supervise and oversee curriculum implementation and delivery (Ministry of Education, 2013).

The function of quality assurance is a continuous process and should not be periodic. In cognizance, the Ministry of Education recognizes two types of supervision namely external supervision that is performed by the QUASOs from the ministry and Internal Supervision that takes place in the school on a regular basis under the auspices of the head teacher or principal and is popularly known as school based supervision (Abebe, 2014). It is worth noting that supervision can have a potentially positive impact on student learning owing to reduction of teacher absences, increased student attendance, improvements in teaching and better flow of information to central authorities thus leading to improved educational achievements (Verspoor, 1989; Warwick, 1992). One of the major indicators of quality education in schools is the performance of pupils normally in National Examinations such as KCPE and KCSE. Over the years in Kenya, stakeholders such as parents, the community and ministry of education official have tended to associate poor performance to lack of educational quality.

According to Subukia Sub County, KCPE examination performance over the past years has been plummeting with an average Mean Standard Score (MSS) of 226 out of a possible 500 marks. This poor performance calls for an audit of the school based quality assurance practices as pointers of quality education provision in the sub county. At the school level, the head teacher is charged with regulating the frequency of internal school inspection and assessment that culminates with summative end of year examinations. There is therefore need to examine some of the school based quality assurance management practices as carried out by the head teachers in order to understand their influence on academic performance.

**Table 1: National and Subukia Sub-County KCPE Mean Score (2009 – 2013)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Subukia Sub-County Mean</b>	<b>National Mean</b>
2010	225.93	291.72
2011	225.32	288.52
2012	225.94	277.23
2013	228.09	291.51
2014	229.13	295.32

*Source: Kenya National Examination Council (2009-2013)*

According to the KCPE results between 2009-2013, Subukia Sub County performed below the National mean because of many factors among which these study intends analyze the influence of school based quality assurance practices as performed by the head teachers on academic performance.

### **1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Performance of national examinations in Subukia sub county has been below the average mean score (MSS) of 250 marks out of the possible 500 marks. There is a general concern about the quality of education in Public Schools in Kenya. Quality in most cases is compromised at the implementation stage in the learning cycle. This is why Quality Assurance and Standards is important in enhancing students' performance at KCPE examination. However, the extent to which the below average performance is being influenced by school based factors in relation to internal quality assurance practices by headteachers in Subukia Sub County is not yet known. Since performance is often associated with quality of education, it is imperative to examine the relationship between quality assurance practices employed by the head teachers of primary schools in the Sub County and academic performance of the pupils in the sub county.

### **1.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of school based quality assurance practices is to improve instruction, to strengthen classroom management, and to ensure that the curriculum is followed. Quality assurance practices ensure and help teachers to be more effective in curriculum delivery. In the light of this, the study is believed to have the following benefits: It may serve as an input for different levels of educational experts' such as quality assurance officers, education officers, teachers and the ministry of

education to understand the effectiveness of the practices adopted by head teachers in ensuring quality education in primary schools; It may assist the external and school-based (internal) quality assurance officers to know their weaknesses and strengths on supervisory practices and then encourage them to give more attention to implement supervisory activities in primary schools; This study may be a springboard for other researchers who want to conduct further research in the area of supervision and quality assurance for effective learning and teaching in order to improve pupil learning outcomes in public primary schools in Kenya.

## 2 LITERATURE

### 2.1 THE CONCEPTS OF QUALITY ASSURANCE

The internal quality assurance is based on the theory of value-added in education quality, assuming that the larger the improvement of internal process of teaching and learning, the larger the value-added to education quality (Cheng, 1997). If the internal process including different components and their relationships can be improved during a time period, the value added in quality will increase as the achievement of the planned goals is increased. The assumption is that the larger increase in achievement of planned goals is due to the larger improvement of internal process. Therefore, based on this theory, the component quality approach, the relationship quality or the total internal quality approach can add value in quality if it can improve some or all aspects of the internal process of education. This theory is relevant to this study in the sense that the internal processes for quality control as practiced by the head teachers including planning, coordination, controlling, organization and staffing when improved, will lead to effective schools. In other words, when the head teacher improves on the quality management practices as espoused, the internal processes of teaching and learning are likely to improve thus leading to improved academic performance of the learners.

Quality Assurance (QA) is a way of preventing mistakes or defects in manufactured products and avoiding problems when delivering solutions or services to customers (ISO, 2008). The ISO 9000 defines quality assurance as part of quality management focused on providing confidence that quality requirements will be fulfilled (ISO, 2008). In the field of education, Quality assurance relates to the achievement of educational program standards established by institutions, professional organizations, government, and/or standard-setting bodies established by government (Eurostat, 2010). Therefore, quality assurance mechanisms are the processes by which the achievements of these standards are measured (Eurostat, 2010). The measurement of quality is done either internally or externally. External Quality Assessment (EQA) is a system for objectively checking an institutions quality using an external agency. In Kenya, this is done by the ministry of education through the quality assurance council (Basic Education Act, 2013).

Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) in education refers to the efforts for improving the internal environment and processes such that the effectiveness of learning and teaching can be ensured to achieve the planned goals of education (Cheng and Tam, 1997). There are two approaches to ensuring that internal quality assurance is achieved. These include component quality approach and the relationship quality approach (*ibid*)

The Component Quality assurance approach focuses on improving the quality of some components of the structure with a hope to enhance or ensure the quality in student learning outcomes. For example, many improvement initiatives take teacher competence as the key factor for internal quality and make effort to improve teacher competencies such as language skills, pedagogic knowledge, subject knowledge, and use of information technology in education (Cheng, 1997). In this regard the internal quality efforts target improvements in school management, classroom environment, teaching, learning, curriculum, evaluation, and teacher education.

The Relationship Quality Approach on the other hand focuses mainly on improving the quality of relationship between components of the effectiveness structure (Cheng, 1997). It is assumed that the better relationship between components, the better impacts of components on the quality in student learning outcomes. This means that improvement of relationship between components is the key for ensuring education quality in classroom. The overall goal of this approach is to ensure that the teacher adapts his/her teaching performance to the classroom characteristics (such as class size, student composition, social climate, etc. ) and the curriculum features (such as learning objectives and tasks, subject content, etc. ) in order to maximize the learning opportunities for different students (Cheng, 1997).

### 2.2 QUALITY ASSURANCE IN KENYA'S EDUCATION SYSTEM

In 2003, the inspectorate department was renamed the Quality assurance directorate after the rationalization of the operations of the Ministry of Education (*ibid*). The education act of 2013, envisions the establishment of the quality assurance council whose mandate among others is to maintain quality and standards and supervise and oversee curriculum

implementation and delivery in schools (Basic Education Act, 2013). The act further gives the council authority to appoint quality assurance officers whose functions include but not limited to: Carry out regular and full panel quality assurance and standards assessment of all education institutions on a regular basis; Advise on the provision of proper and adequate physical facilities in all educational institutions; Ensure that the appropriate curriculum is operational in institutions; Organize and administer co-curricular activities with a view to developing an all-round child; Monitor the performance of teachers and educational institutions in accordance with all-round standard performance indicators (Basic Education Act, 2013; sec 64).

The functions performed by the QUASO officers from the ministry of education are generally considered external quality assurance functions since they are conducted by external agents outside the school.

According to the basic education act (2013), the role of internal quality assurance is a function of the school boards of management (BOM). The education act (2013) stipulates that the role of BOM is to promote quality education for all pupils in accordance with set standards and to supervise curriculum implementation and delivery on a day to day basis. Ordinarily, the functions of the BOM are delegated to the secretary who is the head teacher or principal of a basic education institution (Basic Education Act, 2013). This then implies that the head teachers are the principle internal quality assurance officers of the ministry through the BOM of the respective schools.

While performing the chain of command role, the head teacher is the centre of both the teaching and administration processes. This means that he or she is the middle man between staff members and the school board of management (BOM). He or she plays a bureaucratic role in the following ways: Organizes all school tasks to be accomplished; Upkeep of cleanliness of the buildings and all classrooms in the school; provision and maintenance of equipment such as desks and writing materials; distribution of duties among the teachers such as subject teachers and heads of departments; appointment of counselors to advice students with their problems; transmitting relevant information and policies to different persons; transmission of orders from the school board to the teachers and the community; delegates decision making and responsibility to members of both the teaching and non-teaching staff (MOE, 2004).

As a professional, the head teacher: is a consultant for his staff members by giving legal and professional advice to the teaching and non-teaching staff. He or she provides a democratic atmosphere where his staff, students, and community feel at ease to compose and discuss their problems; pays attention to problems affecting teachers who must be given attention as students; ensures that the School operates within certain policy guidelines so there must be consultation; He or she is to be a facilitator who listens to staff members during staff meetings and encourages them to do most of the talking in resolving issues and in discussing how to implement decisions; he/she will have to go along with his or her teachers when a communal decision is made; orients new teachers who join the school; is the master teacher of both teachers and the students; He or she functions as an official who prepares reports to take to the ministry of education on how the school is running (MOE, 2004)..

With regard to accountability the head teachers performs general and specific duties such as: supervising teachers and the school at large; taking responsibility for the management and development of the school; attending meetings both local and national levels to the benefit of the school; planning for the running of the school by ensuring that there are enough personnel, equipment and enough physical facilities before the school opens; meeting with the staff to make them ready before the school starts; during the school term, the head teacher makes sure that the school is operating as planned and he/she monitors teaching and activities to ensure that the school runs smoothly in accordance to the rules set by the minister of education and the teachers' service commission (MOE, 2004).

In view of the foregoing, the functions of the head teacher in ensuring quality can broadly be classed as: organizing, staffing, controlling and planning and coordination. All these functions have either a direct or indirect impact on students learning outcomes (Seyfarth, 2008). The following sections present literature on each of these functions and how they are likely to influence academic performance in schools.

### **2.3 INFLUENCE OF SCHOOL BASED QUALITY ASSURANCE PRACTICES AS PERFORMED BY THE HEAD TEACHERS ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE**

Mworia (1993) points out that the school head teacher and staff must always keep the ministry of education, DEB, Committee members and general public full informed of the policies, programmes and the school state of affairs at a given time of the year. The head teacher should see to it that staff is inducted and retrained as teachers are supposed to be equipped with relevant skills, attitudes values and abilities to identify and deliver the educational needs of the child. In addition, head teachers must identify the most competent teachers with a specific knowledge, skills and abilities to account for higher performance (Raph, 2005). Patterson and Patterson (2004) define a head teacher as someone who works with colleagues for improving teaching and learning whether formal or informal. Q'Hair and Rietzig (1997) agree that teacher

leaders exhibit common qualities for example they perform consistently on professionals learning curve, demonstrate expertise, share that knowledge with teachers- and mentor new teachers. Thus teachers work with administration under shared leadership to create a school environment more conducive to academic achievement performance. Wayne (2004), Duke (2004) and Sledge, Morehead and Powers (2007) add that shared decision making and community building often strengthens the role of teachers. Empowered teachers often become leaders and their contributions can yield positive change within the school.

Glickman and Gordon (1990) also observe that one way to help teachers improve instruction is through coordination. Glickman and Gordon (1990) Model of clinical supervision presents a cyclical sequence of events that should be coordinated well in order to achieve positive results. The sequence includes teacher pre-conferencing to determine method focus, and duration of observation, classroom observation with categorical frequencies, physical and performance indicators, visual diagramming, space utilization, detached open-ended narratives participant observation, focused questionnaire and educational criticism, interpretation of observation (either interpersonal or directive analysis), post conferencing result, remedial action and critique (Glickman & Gordon ,1990).

The school manager must ensure that everything is in conformity to the established plans as a quality imperative. The control function is achieved through summative and formative evaluation programmes. The head teacher of a school can appraise the performance of the teacher and the student alike. Both formative evaluation and summative evaluations help the learners improve their academic performance and teachers too can improve their teaching effectiveness (Seyfarth, 2008). Among the various ways through which an educational manager can exercise the controlling functions in schools is through; checking of records of work; checking pupils notebooks assignments and home works; arrangement for regular assessment through CATs and Mocks etc and demanding regular feedback from teachers about performance of pupils ( MOE, 2004). Control involves efficient use of resources, greater performance incentives, and continuous learning and adaptation. Rather than concentrating on spending more, schools must learn to consider trade-offs among programs and operations and must evaluate performance and eliminate programs that are not working (Hanushek, 1996).

Studies have shown a more positive relationship between planning at the institutional level and academic performance. For example, Odufowokan (2011) conducted a study that examined the relationship between school plant planning and students` academic performance in south west Nigeria secondary schools. The study revealed that the levels of school plant planning and students` academic performance were relatively close, and as such students` academic performance was significantly related to instructional space planning, administrative space planning, circulation space planning, planning for accessories and space for convenience planning. Nyaboga (2012) has also noted that regular meetings and having school strategic plans has a positive impact on academic performance.

#### CONCEPTUALIZATION

The conceptual framework presents the preconceived relationship among variables that are subsumed in the study. The quality management practices such as frequency of organizing meetings, planning, coordination, controlling and staffing are the independent variables while academic performance is the dependent variable. The study further presumes that the influence of quality management practices ( IVs) on pupils academic performance (DV) can be moderated by factors such as quality of the teacher, the IQ of pupil, school factors and pupils socio-economic background by intervening in the relationship to influence the outcome effect.

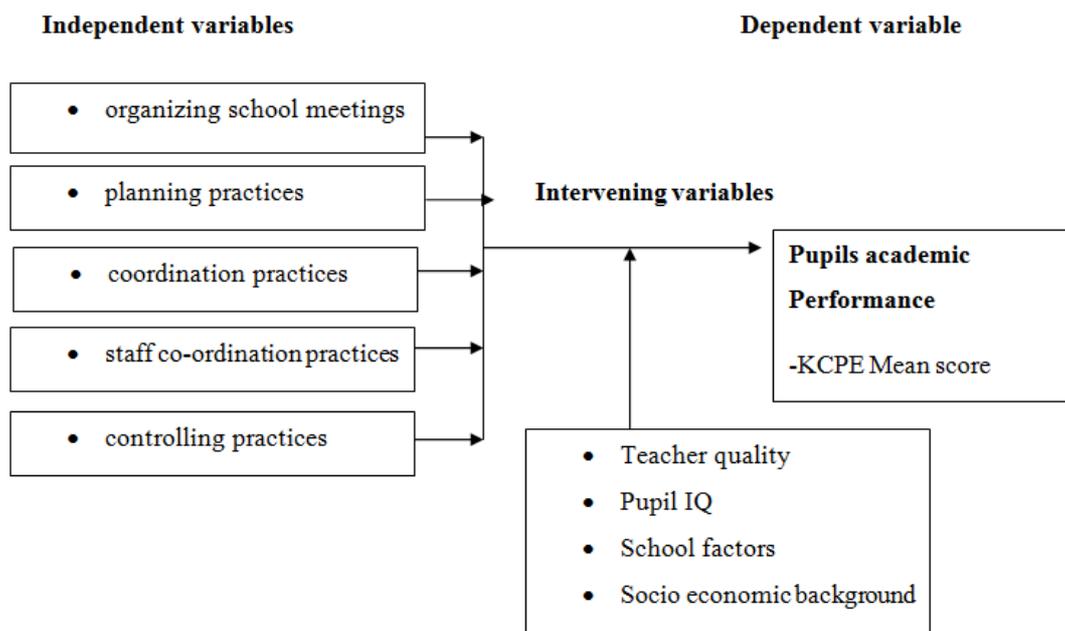


Figure 1: Interrelationship between variables subsumed in the study

### 3 METHODS

This study adopted an *ex post facto* research design of the predictive type since it will seek to find answers to the hypotheses through the analysis of variable relationships. The target population therefore constituted all the 42 head teachers in the County Public Primary Schools. ). Since the population in this study was relatively small, the researcher will take all the 42 head teachers in Subukia Sub-County.

Data was collected using structured questionnaires administered to the selected respondents to elicit information related to demographic information, organization of meetings, planning, staffing, coordination, and controlling practices. The questionnaire also solicited information regarding examination performance of each school for the past five years. The questionnaire responses yielded ordinal scale data set that was transposed to continuous scale for data analysis purposes.

The information from the questionnaire was sorted and entered into a computer programme (SPSS Version 20) for analysis using both descriptive and inferential data analysis techniques. Descriptive analysis will involve use of frequencies, percentages, the arithmetic mean, and standard deviation. Hypothesis was tested using Pearson Product Movement correlation analysis technique at the 0.05 level of significance. The effect of combined effect of all quality assurance practices on academic performance was done using linear regression analysis.

### 4 PARAMETER ESTIMATES RESULTS

#### 4.1 DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS ON FREQUENCY OF SCHOOL MEETINGS

This section analyzes the frequency of which the head teachers organized school meetings which is school based quality assurance practices meant to be performed by the head teachers. The analysis was used to determining the influence of frequency of organizing school meetings by the head teachers on academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Subukia Sub County, Kenya.

**Table 1: Frequency by which Head Teachers organized for school meetings**

<b>Meetings</b>	<b>Very Frequent</b>	<b>Frequent</b>	<b>Occasionally</b>	<b>Less Frequent</b>	<b>Least Frequent</b>
Staff meetings	3(7%)	27(64%)	0(0%)	11(26%)	1(3%)
PTA meetings	4(9%)	7(17%)	26(61%)	3(8%)	2(5%)
Class/Educational Days	1(2%)	5(12%)	15(36%)	17(41%)	4(9%)
Candidates meetings	14(34%)	21(50%)	6(14%)	0(0%)	1(2%)
Class representative meetings	7(16%)	14(33%)	12(29%)	6(15%)	3(7%)
BoM Meetings	6(14%)	11(26%)	22(52%)	2(4%)	2(4%)

Source: Field Data (2016)

Table 1 presents the analysis on management practices in relations to the frequency by which head teachers organize different school meetings. The school meetings organized by the head teacher included; staff meetings, PTA meetings, class/educational days, meetings with candidate class, meeting class representatives and school board management meetings. The frequency of the meeting was rated from very frequent to least frequent.

The study established that majority of respondents 30(71%) observed that head teachers frequently called for staff meetings as quality management practice used to achieve school based quality assurance practices compared to 12(29%) who observed that such meetings were less frequent. Majority of the respondents 26(61%) observed that head teachers occasionally called for PTA meetings compared to 11(26%) who observed that such meetings were frequent and 5(13%) who observed that the meetings were less frequent. Majority of the respondents 21(50%) observed that call for class/educational days meeting by the head teachers were less frequent, 15(36%) observed that such meetings were occasionally called and 5(14%) who observed that the meetings were frequently called. Majority of respondents 35(84%) observed that the head teachers frequently held meetings with candidates compared to 6(14%) who observed that such meetings were held occasionally and 1(2%) who observed that the meetings were held less frequently. Majority 21(49%) observed that the head teachers frequently held meeting with pupils' class representative compared to 12(29%) who observed that such meetings were occasionally held and 9(22%) who observed that such meetings were less frequently held. Last, majority of the respondents observed that the head teachers 22(52%) occasionally held meetings with the schools' Board of Management, 17(40%) observed that such meetings were frequent and 4(8%) who observed that the meetings were less frequent.

This finding indicated that primary schools head teachers held staff meetings, meetings with candidate class and class representatives frequently whereas PTA meetings and BOM meetings were occasionally held. Class/educational days were less frequently held. The finding furthered showed that the frequent staff meetings could give the head teachers a chance to listen to staff members feedback on issues affecting staff performance and as a matter of quality assurance try to resolve them where possible. The study also established that head teachers frequently held meetings with candidates to encourage them on the forth coming extermination and also assert their commitment in ensuring that the schools did well in the exterminations.

The school head teachers did not hold PTA meetings frequently. The Parents Teachers Association (PTA) is the agent of the Ministry of Education and head teachers must work in conjunction with them through regular consultations. The parents' teachers association were established under Education Act (1968), revised in (2012) and conferred with the responsibility of promoting health working relationships between teachers and parents. PTA serves as a channel of communication between the school and the community. They advise on educational needs as perceived by the parents and promote quality teaching and learning. They are expected to identify their schools short, medium and long term priorities and quantify the resources required towards the achievement of the school goals. In support of the role of PTA, Okumbe (1999) states that the PTA formulates school policies towards the achievement of the school objectives. They should identify the sources of funds, physical facilities, and the human resources available. They organize and coordinate the activities of the school with the prime function of achieving objectives of the school with maximum efficiency and effectiveness. They should influence and stimulate the human resources, provide appropriate organizational climate at the same time integrating the school and its activities with the society setup. In addition, they should evaluate the school activities in accordance to the blue print evaluation which enables the school to determine the achievement of predetermined goals.

Head teachers also did not hold class/educational days which are important occasions where students can reflect on what they learn in class with exactly what happens in a real work environment. They also did not frequently held meeting with pupils' class representatives. Class representatives play a leading role of giving positive feedback on aspects to the schools administration on concerns about issues which negatively affect the pupils' experience. They also report back to their class

mates the main points of discussions that take place at staff-student liaison and other meetings, and they share information about any action that is decided as result of the discussion. Failure to hold such important meetings affect school performance as is observed by Nyaboga (2012) who noted that regular meetings and having school strategic plans has a positive impact on academic performance.

As established from the study, head teachers occasionally held BOM meetings which is the sole decision making body in the development of schools. Educational management in Kenya’s Primary and Secondary schools is the responsibility of the school management committees (SMCs), the Board of Governors (BOGs) and the institutional head teachers (Education Act, 1968). The Kamunge Report (1988) recommended that members of the SMCs be appointed from among the persons who have the qualities of commitment, competence and experience. According to the basic education act (2013), the role of internal quality assurance is a function of the school boards of management (BOM). The education act (2013) stipulates that the role of BOM is to promote quality education for all pupils in accordance with set standards and to supervise curriculum implementation and delivery on a day to day basis. Ordinarily, the functions of the BOM are delegated to the secretary who is the head teacher or principal of a basic education institution (Basic Education Act, 2013). This then implies that the head teachers are the principle internal quality assurance officers of the ministry through the BOM of the respective schools. This finding indicated that the head teachers in the public primary schools in Subukia Sub-County where not implementing the Education Act (2013) recommending frequent BOM meetings.

**4.2 DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF HEAD TEACHERS PLANNING PRACTICES**

This section presents the analysis of the head teachers planning practices as an important components of school based quality assurance practices meant to be performed by the head teachers. The analysis was used to establish the influence of head teachers planning of school activities on academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Subukia sub county, Kenya.

**Table 2: Head Teacher Planning Practices**

<b>Planning component</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>MA</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
Teachers involvement	15(36%)	20(48%)	6(14%)	1(2%)	-
School timetable	25(60%)	12(29%)	4(9%)	1(2%)	-
School and class register	23(55%)	14(33%)	-	3(7%)	2(5%)
Scheme of work	24(57%)	16(38%)	-	1(3%)	1(2%)
Lesson plan	24(57%)	16(38%)	-	1(3%)	1(2%)

Source: Field Data (2016)

Table 2 presents head teachers planning of school activities as school based quality assurance practices that academic performance of pupils in public primary schools. The planning activities presented in the table include; involving teachers when planning calendar for school activities, keeping a copy of the school timetable, ensuring teachers prepare schemes of work at the beginning of the term, ensuring maintenance of school and class registers by teachers and ensuring teachers prepare lesson plans regularly. Likert scale was used to present head teachers planning of school activities presented as SA – Strongly Agree, A – Agree, MA –Moderately Agree, D – Disagree and SD – Strongly Agree.

As per Table 6 majority 35(84%) of the respondents agreed that head teachers involved teachers when planning school activity calendars compared to 6(14%) who moderately agreed and 1(2%) who did not agree. Concerning school time table, majority 37(89%) of them agreed that head teachers kept a copy of school timetable as a planning tool compared to 4(9%) who moderately agreed and 1(2%) who disagreed. As far as keeping the school and class register is concerned, majority 39(88%) of them agreed that head teacher ensured that teachers maintained school and class register as a management tool compared to 3(12%) who disagreed. on scheme of work and lesson plan, majority 40(95%) of them agreed that head teachers ensured that teachers prepared scheme of work and lesson plans at the beginning of every term respectively compared to 2(5%) who disagreed.

Head teachers in public primary schools in Subukia Sub-County involved teachers when planning school activity calendars and ensured that a copy of school timetable was kept as a planning tool. They ensured that teachers’ maintained school and class register and also ensured that teachers prepared scheme of work and lesson plans at the beginning of every term as a management tool.

Studies have shown a more positive relationship between planning at the institutional level and academic performance. For example, Odufowokan (2011) conducted a study that examined the relationship between school plant planning and students' academic performance in south west Nigeria secondary schools. The study revealed that the levels of school plant planning and students' academic performance were relatively close, and as such students' academic performance was significantly related to instructional space planning, administrative space planning, circulation space planning, planning for accessories and space for convenience planning. Nyaboga (2012) has also noted that regular meetings and having school strategic plans has a positive impact on academic performance.

#### 4.3 DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF HEAD TEACHERS' CO-ORDINATION PRACTICES

Head teachers co-ordination practices as an important component of school based quality assurance practices meant to be performed by the head teachers. The analysis was used to establish the influence of head teachers planning of school activities on academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Subukia sub county, Kenya.

*Table 3: Head Teacher Co-ordination Practices*

Co-ordination component	SA	A	MA	D	SD	Mean Score
Provision of teaching resources	17(41%)	22(52%)	-	1(2%)	2(5%)	43
Ensures discipline	19(45%)	17(42%)	-	3(7%)	3(6%)	43
Corporation and Teamwork	18(42%)	17(40%)	5(12%)	-	3(6%)	42
Staff and pupils discipline	15(36%)	18(43%)	-	4(9%)	5(12%)	41
Guidance to teachers	15(36%)	17(41%)	-	5(13%)	4(10%)	41
Staff performance	12(29%)	22(52%)	-	5(11%)	3(8%)	41

*Source: Field Data (2016)*

Table 3 presents head teachers' co-ordination practices as one of the key element of school based quality assurance practices. The co-ordination practices analyzed included; enhancing co-operation and teamwork among staff members, providing for adequate teaching and learning resources, ensuring that there is discipline among the teachers and students, judging issues relating to discipline of teachers or students with fairness, encouraging excellence in staff performance through constructive suggestions and giving instructional guidance to teachers appropriately.

The foregoing discussion presents the findings of the co-ordination practiced by the head teachers in Subukia Sub-County. Majority 39(93%) of respondents agreed that head teachers provided adequate teaching and learning resources compared to 3(7%) who disagreed. In terms of discipline, majority 36(87%) of respondents agreed that they ensured that there was discipline among the teachers and students compared to 7(13%) who disagreed. As far as cooperation and teamwork is concern, majority 35(82%) of respondents agreed that the head teachers judged issues relating to discipline of teachers or students with fairness compared to 17(17%) who disagreed. In terms of providing guided direction to teachers, the study established that 32(77%) of respondents agreed that they gave instructional guidance to teachers appropriately compared to 10(23%) who disagreed. On issues of staff performance, majority 34(81%) of respondents agreed that they encouraged excellence in staff performance through constructive suggestions compared to 8(19%) who disagreed. The researcher, using mean score attempted ranked the head teacher co-ordination practices. The ranking showed that head teachers coordinated school based quality assurance in the following order; The co-ordination practices analyzed included; enhancing co-operation and teamwork among staff members, providing for adequate teaching and learning resources, ensuring that there is discipline among the teachers and students, judging issues relating to discipline of teachers or students with fairness Giving instructional guidance to teachers appropriately and encouraging excellence in staff performance through constructive suggestions.

This finding is supported by a study conducted by UNESCO (2009) which observes that coordination is a key task in schools but it can only raise the standards if all teachers continue to collaborate and work together with the school coordinator (UNESCO, 2009). This means that the head teacher has the task of coordinating teachers in order to achieve high levels of academic performance. The head teacher normally delegates jobs, tasks responsibility and initiatives of which he/she must take responsibility (Smith, n.d). It is through coordination that the head teacher ensures that the delegated roles are done for the achievement of school learning outcomes. A study by Bowers (1992) also supports this study by observing that highly coordinated teams achieved higher levels of performance. Research studies have also shown that organizational coordination has a positive impact on performance (Sanders, 2008).

**4.4 DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF HEAD TEACHERS STAFFING PRACTICES**

Head teachers staffing practices is an important components of school based quality assurance practices meant to be performed by the head teachers. The analysis was used to establish the influence of head teachers staffing practices on academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Subukia Sub County, Kenya.

*Table 4: Head Teacher Staffing Practices*

<b>Staffing Practices</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>MA</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
INSET programme	10(24%)	16(38%)	12(28%)	1(3%)	3(7%)
Staff induction	12(29%)	19(45%)	-	6(15%)	5(11%)
Staff development	15(36%)	21(50%)	-	3(6%)	3(8%)
Teaching methodology	11(26%)	20(48%)	-	5(11%)	6(15%)
Staff reward	11(26%)	17(41%)	-	7(17%)	7(16%)

Source: Field Data (2016)

Head teachers staffing practices analyzed included; recommending INSET programmes for teachers to increase their effectiveness, Induction of new staff through provision of collegial atmosphere, encouraging staff to participate in staff development activities, holding teaching methodology meetings with members of staff and rewards to effective teachers by recommending them for promotion.

Table 4 above presents the results of analysis of head teachers’ staff co-ordination practice. As can be seen in table 8 majority 26(62%) of respondents agreed that head teachers recommended INSET programmes for teachers to increase their effectiveness compared to 12(28%) who moderately agreed and 4(10%) who disagreed. Concerning staff induction, majority 31(74%) of respondents agreed that head teachers induced new staff through provision of collegial atmosphere, encouraging staff to participate in staff development activities and also held teaching methodology meetings with members of staff compared to 26% who disagreed respectively. On the issue of staff development activities, majority 36(86%) agreed that head teachers encouraged staff to participate in staff development activities compared to 6(14%) who disagreed. As far as staff reward is concern, majority 28(67%) of respondents agreed that head teachers offered rewards incentives to effective teachers by recommending them for promotion compared to 14(33%) who disagreed.

The finding showed that head teachers’ staffing practice enabled them to; recommend INSET programmes for teachers for purposes of increasing their effectiveness, induct new members of staff through provision of collegial atmosphere and also to hold teachers methodology meetings with members of staff respectively, ordination practice enabled them to induct, encouraged staff to participate in staff development activities and teachers promotion as an effective reward system.

This finding is further supported by Okumbe (2001) who refers induction as placement. It is “the process of matching a teacher or educational personnel to both the content and context of the job when an employment offer has been made”. Induction could be for a new staff, transferred staff or old staff, depending on the purpose of the programme. A study carried out by Dawo (2011) on the “key to quality teaching in Kenyan schools”, acknowledged that induction is a vital step in the professional growth and development of a teacher because it acts as a bridge between preservice training and the actual teaching job. Induction therefore helps Newly Appointed Teachers (NATs) to quickly adjust to the academic, social, and sometimes political environment in the new job with the guidance of the more experienced mentors. Dawo went further to say that induction of NATs was more crucial considering that in Kenya, immediacy of post-training employment was not always guaranteed.

Wanzare (2007) supports this finding by explaining that the need for induction is obvious especially as teachers at work-place face challenges such as work over-load, inadequate professional support, culture shock and inadequate resources. The response to these challenges by the school principals through induction course can help boost teachers’ self-confidence and knowledge at their assigned teaching duties. Simatwa (2010) conducted a study on induction needs of beginning teachers in public primary schools in Kenya. Dawo (2011) observes that an induction programme should provide systematic and sustained assistance to the beginning teachers. Such programme of induction can only be properly formulated and achieved when the induction needs of beginning teachers are identified and met through the supervisory role of the principals. Thus, the school principals need to ensure that induction courses are designed to help retain teachers; stimulates their need for development and enable them to be integrated into the educational institution (Okumbe, 2001).

#### 4.5 DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF PERFORMANCE ENHANCERS AND KCPE RESULTS 2010 -2014

Students' performance was the dependent variable set out in the study. This section presents the descriptive analysis of enhancers to students' performance at KCPE level and the actual KCPE performance between 2010 to 2014.

##### 4.5.1 KCPE PERFORMANCE ENHANCERS

Performance enhancers analyzed in table 5 included; head teacher always ensures that he plans for improved performance, ensuring that meetings are geared towards performance, encouraging co-ordination activities that are geared towards performance and implementing controlling activities that are geared towards performance

*Table 5: Head Teacher view on Enhancers to Students' Performance at KCPE level*

Performance component	SA	A	MA	D	SD
Plans for improved performance	19(45%)	21(50%)	-	1(3%)	1(2%)
Performance oriented meetings	19(45%)	21(50%)	-	2(3%)	1(2%)
coordinated performance	17(41%)	20(47%)	-	3(7%)	2(5%)
Controlling oriented performance	23(54%)	13(31%)	-	4(9%)	3(6%)

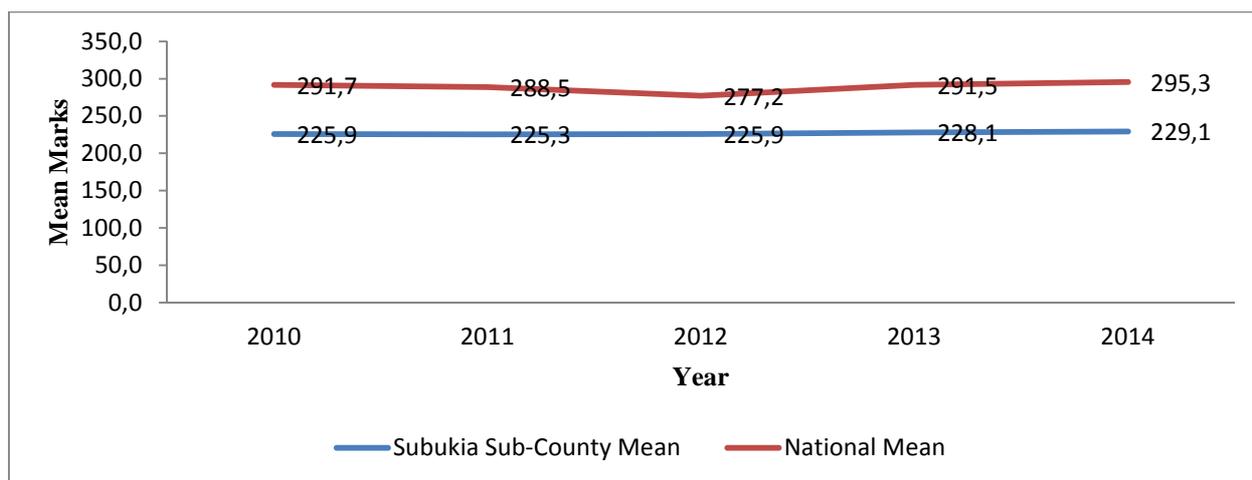
*Source: Field Data (2016)*

Concerning improved performance, majority 40(95%) of respondents agreed that head teacher always ensured that plans for improved performance were implemented and that meetings were geared towards performance respectively compared to 2(5%) who disagreed. On conducting co-ordination oriented meetings, majority 37(88%) of respondents agreed that head teachers encouraged co-ordination activities that were geared towards performance compared to 5(12%) who disagreed. As far as controlled performance was concern, majority 36(85%) of the respondents agreed that head teacher implemented controlling activities that are geared towards performance compared to 6(15%) who disagreed.

The finding indicated that school based quality assurance practices equipped the head teachers with skill that enabled them develop plans geared towards performance. They were also able to hold productive meetings targeting pupils' performance. Head teachers' coordination and controlling skills were mapped on students' performance. In Kenya, primary level of education is measured by Kenya Certificate of Primary Education. Pupils undergo eight-year course and at the end of it the candidates are exposed to KCPE which is tested nationally. The examinations are used to place the learners in secondary level of education which in turn is used to place candidates in the training colleges and universities. Therefore KCPE is a very important component in education system.

##### 4.5.2 2010-2014 KCPE PERFORMANCE

This section presents the analysis of KCPE performance in the Public Primary Schools in Subukia Sub-County between 2010 to 2014.



**Figure 2: National and Subukia Sub-County KCPE Mean 2010-2014**

The national KCPE mean through the 5 years remained higher than Subukia Sub-County Mean. Out of the 500 possible marks at KCPE, Subukia Sub-County scored below the average 250 marks indicating poor performance.

The finding is supported by Obiero (2010) who explored the effect of administrative practices on KCPE performance in Maseno Division in Kisumu. The study revealed that curriculum implementation and assessment, teacher professionalism and work related behavior and management practices predict KCPE performance. However materials and equipment as well as school environment and facilities have no significant influence on performance. The finding is further supported by Morumbwa (2006) who identified that understaffing of teachers, teacher and pupil de-motivation, poor time management, poor discipline standards, negative impacts of the community and lack of adequate teaching and learning materials. However these factors differ depending on the region under study as well as school. There is therefore need to carry out studies in every region to ascertain the individual factors that affect KCPE performance in the region.

**4.6 PEARSON CORRELATION BETWEEN SCHOOLS BASED QUALITY ASSURANCES PRACTICES ON PUPILS ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE**

**Table 6: Correlation Coefficient Table**

		Organizing	Coordination	Staffing	Controlling	Planning	Performance
Organizing	Pearson Correlation	1	.235	.281	.213	.079	.181
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.134	.072	.175	.620	.252
Coordination	Pearson Correlation	.235	1	.685**	.519**	.685**	.573**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.134		.000	.000	.000	.000
Staffing	Pearson Correlation	.281	.685**	1	.660**	.561**	.599**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.072	.000		.000	.000	.000
Controlling	Pearson Correlation	.213	.519**	.660**	1	.691**	.618**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.175	.000	.000		.000	.000
Planning	Pearson Correlation	.079	.685**	.561**	.691**	1	.667**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.620	.000	.000	.000		.000
Performance	Pearson Correlation	.181	.573**	.599**	.618**	.667**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.252	.000	.000	.000	.000	

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

There was non-significant correlation of 0.181 ( $p=0.252>0.05$ ) between head teachers organizational practices of meetings and academic performance. Further finding indicated head teachers planning practices as a school based quality assurance and performance were correlated  $r=0.573$ ,  $p=0.000<0.05$  indicating that head teachers' planning practices had significant positive influence on academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Subukia sub county, Kenya. Head teachers' coordination practices and academic performance of the pupils were significantly correlated  $r=0.618$ ,  $p=0.000<0.05$ . Staffing practices and pupils academic performance were significantly correlated  $r=0.698$ ,  $p=0.000<0.05$  indicating that head teachers' staffing practices had positive significant influence on academic performance of the pupils. Head teachers controlling practice and pupils' academic performance were significantly correlated  $r=0.667$ ,  $p=0.000<0.05$  indicating that head teachers' controlling practices had positive significant influence on academic performance of the pupils. The finding indicated significant relationship between head teachers' organization for meetings, planning activities, coordinating, staffing and controlling practices and academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Subukia sub county, Kenya.

#### 4.7 REGRESSION ANALYSIS BETWEEN SCHOOLS BASED QUALITY ASSURANCES PRACTICES ON PUPILS ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

The results of the analysis are presented in Tables 10, 11 and 12.

*Table 7: Model Summary*

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.730	0.533	0.468	0.347

The  $R^2$  value indicates how much of the dependent variable, "pupils academic performance", was explained by the independent variables, "school based quality assurance practices which included; organizing for meetings, coordination practices, staffing practices, controlling and planning". In this case, The results of the regression indicated that the four predictors explained 53.3% of the variance ( $R^2=0.533$ ), which was averagely large indicating that the data collected was fairly fitted to the regression line.

*Table 1: ANOVA*

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	4.950	5	.990	8.221	0.00
Residual	4.335	36	.120		
<b>Total</b>	<b>9.286</b>	<b>41</b>			

Source: Field Data (2016)

Predictors: organizing for meetings, coordination practices, and staff coordination practices, controlling and planning. The Dependable variable: pupils' academic performance. Table 13 indicated that the regression model predicted the outcome variable significantly  $F(5, 36) = 8.22$ ,  $p = .000<0.005$ , and indicated that; overall, the model statistically and significantly predicted the outcome variable.

*Table 9: Full Regression Model*

Model	Unstd. Coef.	Std. Error	Std.Coef.	t	Sig.(P)
(Constant)	1.258	.578		2.177	.034
Organizing	0.032	0.101	0.038	0.311	0.758
Coordination	0.440	.097	.193	1.434	.040
Staff coordination	0.587	.187	.189	1.278	.026
Controlling	0.675	0.624	0.394	1.999	0.02
Planning	0.701	0.151	0.378	1.984	0.04

The first hypothesis of the study was that there is no statistically significant influence of frequency of organizing school meetings by the head teachers on academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Subukia sub county, Kenya. This was determined by;  $Y = \alpha_1 + \beta_1 X_1 + e$ , where Y was pupils academic performance enhancers,  $X_1$  was the organizing for

meeting as a practice by head teachers, and  $\beta_1$  coefficient. The variables; coordination practices, staffing practices, controlling and planning were held constant. The analysis shows that organizing for meetings practices by head teachers did not significantly predict pupils' academic performance (Beta = .038,  $t=.311$ ,  $p= .758>.05$ ) therefore accepting hypothesis that there is no statistically significant influence of frequency of organizing school meetings by the head teachers on academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Subukia sub county, Kenya.

The second hypothesis of the study was stated as; there is no statistically significant influence of head teachers planning of school activities on academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Subukia sub county, Kenya. The relationship was determined by regression equation;  $Y=\alpha_2 +\beta_2 X_2 + e$ , where Y was pupils academic performance,  $X_2$  was the head teachers' planning for school activities and  $\beta_2$  was the coefficient. The analysis established that planning of school activities practices by head teachers significantly predict pupils' academic performance (Beta = .0378,  $t=1.984$ ,  $p= .040<.05$ ) therefore rejecting the hypothesis that there is no statistically significant influence of head teachers planning of school activities on academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Subukia sub county, Kenya.

The third hypothesis of the study was stated as; there is no statistically significant influence of head teachers coordination practices and academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Subukia sub county, Kenya. The relationship was determined by regression equation;  $Y= \alpha_3 +\beta_3 X_3 + e$  where Y was the pupils academic performance,  $X_3$  was the coordination practice and  $\beta_3$  was the coefficient. The analysis established that coordination practices by head teachers significantly predict pupils' academic performance (Beta = .194,  $t=1.434$ ,  $p= .040<.05$ ) therefore rejecting the hypothesis that there is no statistically significant influence of head teachers coordination activities on academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Subukia sub county, Kenya.

The fourth hypothesis of the study was stated as; there is no statistically significant influence of head teachers' staffing coordination practices and academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in subukia sub county, Kenya. The relationship was determined by regression equation;  $Y= \alpha_4 +\beta_4 X_4 + e$  where Y was the pupils academic performance,  $X_4$  was the staffing practice and  $\beta_4$  was the coefficient. The analysis established that staffing activities practices by head teachers significantly predict pupils' academic performance (Beta = .189,  $t=1.278$ ,  $p= .026<.05$ ) therefore rejecting the hypothesis that there is no statistically significant influence of head teachers' staffing practices and academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Subukia sub county, Kenya.

The fifth hypothesis of the study was stated as; there is no statistically significant influence of head teachers controlling practices on academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in subukia sub county, Kenya. The relationship was determined by regression equation;  $Y= \alpha_5 +\beta_5 X_5 + e$  where Y was the pupils academic performance,  $X_5$  was the controlling practice and  $\beta_5$  was the coefficient. The analysis established that staffing activities practices by head teachers significantly predict pupils' academic performance (Beta = .394,  $t=1.999$ ,  $p= .020<.05$ ) therefore rejecting the hypothesis that there is no statistically significant influence of head teachers controlling practices on academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in subukia sub county, Kenya..

From the unstandardized coefficients, the following equation was developed:

$$y= 1.258+0.032x_1+0.701x_2+0.440x_3+0.587x_4+0.675x_5+\epsilon$$

the equation meant that pupils academic performance increased by 3.2% by improving head teachers organization of meetings by a unit, performance increased by 70.0% by improving head teachers planning practices, performance increased by 44% by improving head teachers coordination practices by a unit, performance increased by 58.7% improving head teachers staffing practices by a unit and that performance increased by 67.5% by improving head teachers controlling practices by a unit.

## **5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 CONCLUSIONS**

The main aim of the study was to examine the influence of school based quality assurance practices as performed by the head teachers on academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Subukia sub county, Kenya. The study established that apart from head teachers organizing meetings in school all other aspects of school based quality assurance practices positively influenced pupils academic performance. The study established that head teachers planning, coordination, staffing and controlling practices contributed significantly to pupils' academic performance of pupils in public

primary schools in Subukia sub county, Kenya. This was statistically evident by pupils' academic performance which was significantly correlated to head teachers planning, coordination, staffing and controlling practices.

## 5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE AND POLICY

On the basis of the findings of this study, the following recommendations are important as far as examination of the influence of school based quality assurance practices as performed by the head teachers on academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Kenya is concerned. First, the head teachers in public primary schools in Subukia should hold meetings as a quality assurance practices as a means of filtering how various schools stakeholders view quality assurance and implement them in the various aspects in the school management. Particularly, the PTA meetings should be used to moderate administrative processes in order to facilitate effective teaching and learning. PTA and educational administrators make concerted efforts initiate and sustain new projects, rehabilitate dilapidated infrastructures and initiate professional development through staff training.

Secondly, the study recommends that the schools should continuously evaluate their strategic plan process in order to come up with a plan that promote benchmarking of best pedagogical practices which can act as references to the teachers in learning successful and practically working teaching pedagogies, students should be involved in learning how to adopt to such successful pedagogies and also parents to appreciate the pedagogies as key stakeholders in the schools success. The plan should be developed and implemented around customers' service delivery. This can be achieved through aligning teachers, parents' students and other school stakeholders towards satisfying the schools primary customers who are the students through superior service delivery. There should be academics clinics to sensitize and entice all the key stakeholders to bring them fully on board on the issues in the strategic plans.

Thirdly, Ministry of Education should provide a participative, holistic school management training to increase head teachers' awareness of and understanding about the nature and responsibilities of in coordinating all the school activities. The training may motivate head teachers to increase their coordination roles as they fulfill their range of duties and responsibilities. Continuous professional training and development is important for head teachers because those experiences could enhance their knowledge and capabilities in their coordination roles in the management of schools. Head teachers can nurture a culture of shared instructional leadership. Instructional leaders can observe teachers and provide them with constructive feedback so that they improve and strengthen teachers' classroom management and instructional practices. In ensuring effective coordination by the head teachers, the Ministry of Education should strengthen of the key areas such as the decision-making process, teacher participation, support and involvement in the schools since features might have a significant influence on performance.

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