



RESEARCH ARTICLE

PHYSICAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES AS DETERMINANTS OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN CENTRAL NYANZA REGION, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to examine the relationship between provision of sufficient physical and human resources and academic performance in primary schools. The paper is based on a study conducted in Central Nyanza Region, in the Counties of Siaya and Kisumu. The study employed the mixed methods approach and was conducted using descriptive survey design. The instruments used to collect data included questionnaire, interview guides and observation checklist. The sample was selected using stratified and simple random sampling. Data was collected from 136 schools where 136 head teachers and 493 teachers were respondents. The researcher interviewed 36 teachers. The unit of analysis was primary schools. The data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics, such as measures of central tendency and percentages, were used to analyse the data. Eta square was used to test the hypothesis. The level of significance was 50%. It was established from the study findings that school-related factors such as poor condition of physical facilities such as classes, inadequate teachers, inadequate text books, poor supervision of teaching/learning process contributed to the poor schools' achievement in Central Nyanza region. It was thus recommended that schools should be provided with all resources required for curriculum implementation such as adequate teachers, classrooms, text books and exercise books. Moreover, head teachers should adequately supervise teaching/learning in their schools. They should ensure that teachers and pupil absenteeism are reduced to the minimum.

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INTRODUCTION

Goyal (2007) explains that in studying determinants of academic achievement among schools, availability of physical facilities and human resources can provide answers as to why some schools do well and others do not do well. Some of the resource related factors which can provide answers include: the head teacher, resources, books and classes.

Human Resources and Schools Achievement

It is said that the school is the head teacher. Shahida (2008) explains that head teachers as instructional leaders in a school should be at the forefront of supervising, instruction and providing academic leadership in the institution. She observes that poor supervision of the teaching especially syllabus coverage is the cause of differences in academic achievement among learners. The focal point of Shahida's (ibid.) observation is the variable of school leadership especially the role it plays in enhancing effective learning in schools. The observations about school leadership are important as leadership is the key driving force in the management of

human resources. It should interact with other variables in class and parent/community to influence achievement in schools. Experience has shown that when pupils in a school do not do well it is the head teacher who is blamed and has to suffer the consequences. Cyeze (2010) has studied effectiveness of head teachers in supervision and found that in schools where head teachers are always visible, they provide effective supervision of the curriculum. This includes interaction with the staff through individual and group counselling. Cyeze (ibid.) further notes that effective head teachers are expected to be effective supervisors of teachers. The head teachers' office should be strengthened to deal with errant teachers who take their work for granted. The principal as the head of human resources in a school should supervise the teachers regularly and not be slow in effecting discipline. The bureaucracy surrounding the implementation of disciplinary procedures should be simplified. The Quality Assurance Officers should support head teachers in effecting discipline (Mulkeen & Chen, 2008). The Task Force on Re-alignment of the Education Sector to the Constitution of Kenya 2010 recommended to the government that in order to improve performance in primary schools, head teachers should be empowered with skills to monitor the staff. They should also be enabled to serve as internal quality assurance officers in their schools instead of depending on

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quality assurance officers (GoK, 2013). Similarly, the Basic Education Act (GoK, 2013) provides for the formation of Board of Management for primary schools. This organ needs to work with head teachers and County Education Board to ensure that there are adequate teachers in primary schools to enable learning to take place. In particular, they should advise and counsel staff. They should also encourage teachers, non-teachers and parents from the community to provide voluntary services to the primary schools (GoK, 2013).

Moreover, Jephumba (2010) explains that for a school to excel, the head teacher should provide high expectations for teachers. The head teacher should also ensure that there is high morale in the work place and ensure that disorder and disillusionment is reduced. Reche *et al.* (2012) posits that quality of administration is vital in academic performance of a primary school. They indicate that head teachers should frequently organize staff meetings, check teachers work such as schemes of work and lesson plans. Levin *et al.* (2008) observe that the reason some schools achieve better performance than others is the fact that the head teachers of achieving schools have more time to supervise instruction as compared to schools where performance is poor. Supervision is the key to effective teaching and learning and there is need to investigate how often the head teachers supervise instruction by checking pupils' exercise books, teachers' schemes of work, progress records and lesson plans in primary schools, including those in Central Nyanza Region. Nyamboga (2011) examines the leadership qualities of head teachers observes that head teachers as instructional leaders must have a vision for their institutions. They should have a picture of what they want the schools to be academically. They must use this vision to challenge the parents, pupils and teachers to support the school. He further points out that head teachers should be goal oriented. They need to develop a school mission which will provide instructional focus for the teachers and pupils. In many occasions head teachers overlook the fact that achievement of their schools is determined by a combination of several factors such as the pupils, community and the curriculum content and these variables interact. Unless this shortcoming is addressed, pupils' poor achievement is bound to be recorded for many years to come.

Ornestein and Hunkins (1998) observe that the purpose of teaching and learning reforms is to improve achievement. If there is poor supervision, poor communication, lack of problem solving, the changes proposed will not filter to the ground and there will be no any improvement in performance. Leaders must understand the Force Field Model. The driving forces should overwhelm the restraining forces. The head teachers must overcome restraining forces that work against academic achievement of pupils in primary schools. Head teachers must provide resources needed by teachers, adopt curriculum innovations and get rid of status quo in primary schools. Inertia is the biggest barrier to change and it must be countered. Achievement at primary school level of education can be enhanced through effective supervision of instruction. Effective teaching/learning does not take place, because the teachers are not supervised. Glickman (1985) observes that successful schools are those that link their instruction, class management and discipline with direct assistance to teachers.

Supervisors need to work with teachers the way teachers work with students. Glickman (*ibid.*) notes that for improved performance, school supervision needs to be functional. It should provide support, knowledge and skills to enable the teachers to become successful teachers. Glickman (*ibid.*) further asserts that teachers must be supervised regularly. A school system that supervises its teachers effectively will experience the following benefits: teachers are assisted to think abstractly about their work, teachers are stimulated to plan common purpose and actions, they are provided with opportunities to participate in curriculum development and teachers' sense of efficacy is promoted.

Playko and Daresh (1995) point out that in many schools supervisors face many obstacles as they perform their duties. They also observe that supervision practice faces other challenges which include the following:

- a. Poor relationship between teachers and supervisors
- b. Supervisors view teachers as incompetent and an untrustworthy lot

As applied to this paper, these ideas are important as they assist in suggesting ways in which supervisors can be assisted to overcome the challenges they face as they supervise teachers.

Levin *et al.* (2008) indicate that the education system should not over rely on Quality Assurance Officers from outside the school. They assert that head teachers should support learning. In these authors' perspective, the best way to get head teachers to participate fully in supervision of instruction is to employ school administrative managers in elementary schools to handle administrative matters. The person will handle most of the administrative issues and give the head teacher freedom to supervise instruction and to interact with students. Head teachers will also have time to emphasize instruction which is the core business of the school. The authors specify the curriculum support activities which the head teacher can engage himself in as:

- a. Instructional leadership
- b. Demonstrate support for teachers
- c. Classroom visitation
- d. Observing and modelling instruction
- e. Discussing curriculum and assessment
- f. Regular meetings with teachers at the department level

In schools where head teachers carry out these activities students' performance improves tremendously. According to Leithwood (2004), leadership plays a great role in ensuring that effective teaching and learning takes place. Leaders need to do a lot to improve learning in their schools by doing the following. The class sizes need to be reduced, when the number of pupils is reduced, the teacher is able to enhance pupil performance. Masha (2011) observes that recurrent poor achievement by pupils is caused by shortage in the number of teachers. The country is experiencing a massive shortage of teachers which has led to poor results. Mbiti (2007) argues that management of the human resources is key to the success or failure of a primary school. Schools should have a system of training, guidance, discipline and counselling to enable the teachers to deliver quality learning which would lead to high

achievement. Teacher adequacy is also a problem that needs to be dealt with if we expect to have good achievement in primary school education. Since the introduction of free primary education, the number of pupils joining primary schools has been increasing steadily but the number of teachers has not been increasing. Statistics show that the number of teachers has not been increasing. It has also been observed that teacher distribution is a problem in the country. The Teachers' Service Commission (TSC) has allowed concentration of teachers in urban centres as opposed to rural areas (www.elimuyetucoalition.org). The article explored the effect of Free Primary Education on quality of primary education. It agrees with the other writers on the effect of teacher adequacy on achievement in primary schools.

Matano (2010) says that introduction of free primary education saw significant achievement in enrolment in primary education. However, the high enrolment has affected the ratio of teachers to pupils. He indicates that in some schools it is 1:100. This has eroded standards in primary schools and increased the gap between different public schools. There is need to give further attention to this issue in order to establish how physical resources have influenced academic achievement in primary schools in Kenya. According to Reche *et al.* (2012), inadequate teachers in primary schools can contribute to persistent poor performance because teachers are overloaded and do not have enough time to teach effectively and follow up learners assignments. They further indicate that the situation can further be worsened off if there is high turnover of teachers in a particular school. Namunga and Otunga (2012) contend that teachers are key pillars in education and therefore there is need to provide them with effective education to enable them carry out their responsibilities in the changing world. This calls for re-energizing the education sector so that it can be aligned to changes that are taking place in Kenya and beyond. Hawes (1979) explains that a professional qualification of teachers is important in determining teacher quality. He also indicates that initial teacher training is not enough. Any time the curriculum is changed the teachers should be subjected to regular in service courses or special training for implementation of the curriculum content. This makes the curriculum clearer to the teachers who implement it. These observations are important to this study as they clarify the relationship between the curriculum content and the teaching/learning process.

Wardlaw (2008) blames the teacher colleges for producing teachers who have poor pedagogical skills. He observes that this is bound to cause differences in pupils' achievement in schools. He indicates that: Hong Kong is currently doing very well in Primary International Reading Literacy Skills (PIRLS) because the school system puts a lot of emphasis on skills acquisition. The study by Wardlaw (*ibid.*) is of great significance as it highlights the need to invest in teacher training to enable pupils to acquire excellent skills.

Physical Facilities and Primary Schools academic Achievement

Huitt (1994) observes that lack of critical resources necessary for learning like books and adequate classes can affect learning leading to poor results. He observes that in schools which have

inadequate books and classes, achievement of learners is bound to be poor. Learners in such schools cannot compete with other learners which have a higher book ratio. The schools are supposed to avail adequate resources which will contribute to effective learning and therefore heightened pupils' academic achievement.

According to Luchali (2007), lack of physical facilities in schools is a major determinant of academic achievement among schools. He observes that the situation in Kenyan primary schools has been worsened by the introduction of Free Primary Education in 2003 (FPE). This has led to shortages in classes and other facilities. Oluoch (2006) explains that curriculum implementers need to be aware of the phenomena of over-enrolment in primary schools as it leads to overstressing the teachers and overcrowding the classes. He also argues for the need to provide resources uniformly in the whole country. It does not mention other support variables such the community and how they should be involved in providing resources required by schools in curriculum implementation. Lack of these resources can influence achievement of pupils in primary schools.

Aijaz (2002) has looked into the availability of physical facilities such as classes. He found out that the classes were overcrowded classrooms and this affected teaching and learning. According to Bishop (1985), the effective implementation of the curriculum requires that teachers should be provided with materials and facilities for learning to be successful. According to Abagi (2012), inadequate facilities contribute to some schools performing well in Kenya Certificate of Primary Examinations (KCPE) as compared to others. He observes that it is illegal to frog March teachers and beat them up when the schools they are teaching or heading don't do well in KCPE examinations. Oluca and Okurot (2008) have found out in Uganda that the conditions of classes contributed to poor performance in examinations. They further observe that in schools where material resources were improved such as repairing class roofs, providing textbooks, the pupils' scores improved tremendously. The study was general in nature as it did not look at how the adequacy of the physical facilities in the primary school and how it affected learning. A recent World Bank report shows that though it is the intention of the government to have all school age going children in primary schools system the governments and communities have not done much to build classrooms. This has affected teaching and learning process in schools. Curriculum content should contribute to transformation of the individuals. For this to happen, necessary basic infrastructure in form of classes, desks, chairs and tables should be available to the teachers (World Bank, 2008).

Onyango (2013) indicates that during poor weather primary schools physical facilities such as classes can be destroyed by the floods and this can have an effect on teaching and learning in primary schools. He observes that in May 2013, learning was interrupted in about 15 primary schools in Kisumu County because the classes were damaged and schools had to relocate to higher grounds. The teachers and pupils could not access the primary schools. Psacharopoulos and Woodhall (1985) propose that communities should partner with the government to put up

classes instead of waiting. This initiative worked very well in Kenya during the Harambee days. The comments contribute to this study which is seeking information on ways in which parents can be involved in improving academic achievement. Mbiti (2007) explains that for teachers to effectively teach in schools, text books, visual aids should be supplied. He observes that introduction of FPE introduced capitation grants to enable the schools acquire supplies on time, so as to improve teaching and learning standards. The Task Force on Re-alignment of Education sector to the Constitution of Kenya and vision 2030 noted the challenges facing primary schools in Kenya and recommended that capitation grants for primary schools should be increased and the funds should be remitted on time. It also recommended that there was need to improve physical facilities in primary schools. The report further noted the need to equip all the schools to ensure that all the schools meet minimum quality standards of teaching and learning (www.moe.go.ke).

Class Sizes

Leithwood (2004) points out that one area where teachers, parents/community can work together is by ensuring that classes are not overcrowded. He observes that school leadership should ensure that teachers handle acceptable class size. Teachers who handle small class sizes are able to improve performance of learners. In lower primary, if a teacher handles a large number of pupils they become ineffective. Smaller classes improves the morale of the teacher, enables the teacher to spend more time on individuals, enables the teachers to monitor discipline of learners, enables learners to be fully engaged in instruction and reduces learners repetition rate. Goyal (2007) posits that mathematics and reading classes requires good pupil to teacher ratio. Good teacher to pupil ratio contributes to improvement in scores by 2% in Math and reading. Goyal (ibid.) further observes that the higher pupil to teacher ratio has a negative effect on acquisition of reading skills by 1.4% in primary 4 and 5. The study by Goyal (ibid.) explored determinants of achievement in primary 4 and 5. There is need to investigate determinants of achievement in class eight and use the results of a national examination as a basis of investigation.

Introduction of Free Primary Education has faced the challenge of overcrowded classrooms leading to inability of teachers to monitor learners and shortage of learning materials. As a result, the school has posted very poor results. Goyal (ibid.) raises very serious concerns about the dangers of having large classes in primary schools, which needs to be dealt with if pupils' performance in primary schools is to improve. Oluka and Okurut (2008) explain that large classrooms affect student achievement in mathematics. The study disagrees with other scholars who claim that teachers can do nothing when they are handling large classes to improve achievement. The teachers who handle big classes can, with a positive attitude, still lead the pupils to do well. Bruneforth (2011) explains that the best way to reduce teacher shortage in primary schools in Africa is to increase teachers annually by 20%. He says this would cater for natural attrition and contribute to learning effectiveness. In an attempt to answer the questions as to why some pupils do better than others classrooms academically, Huitt (1994) claims

that teachers are an important cog in the achievement of learners. He observes that because they are important in the learning process, they should be adequately trained, motivated and given a reasonable load to enable them to be effective (Huitt, 1994). There is need to single out variables such as teacher absenteeism and how they determine learners' achievement. Dinham (2010) argues that for a pupil to excel in academics there should be quality teaching, professional learning and good school leadership. Educational leadership should make teaching and learning the central purpose of the school by ensuring that the pupils welfare are taken care off so as to improve performance. There is need to discover the interaction between teachers and other factors which influence pupils' achievement such as pupils.

Statement of the Problem

Poor achievement in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education Examination in Kenya continues to concern parents, teachers, educational authorities and pupils. This paper intends to establish how physical and human resources in school have influenced academic achievement and to further understand how these factors have contributed to inadequate learning in Central Nyanza Region, Kenya.

Limitations of the Study

The study design was descriptive survey which enabled the author to describe and explain various variables that have influenced schools academic achievement in Central Nyanza Region, Kenya. However, several data collection methods were used which made it possible to describe the problem effectively. Movement during the data collection from one school to another was a challenge due to the heavy rains which pounded the research area. The author thus visited the schools in the morning before the rain started to fall in the afternoon.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted in Kenya, Central Nyanza region. The area was selected because there are serious concerns from the parents, teachers, learners and politicians about achievement of primary schools in Kenya Certificate of primary Education (Ministry of Education, 2011; Abagi & Odipo, 1997). The study used cross-sectional survey where current perceptions, beliefs about academic achievement were collected from primary schools in Central Nyanza Region. The design of the study was descriptive survey which allowed large amounts of data to be collected over a short period of time. It provided for numeric descriptions of some part of the population. It enabled the author to describe and explain relationships as they are. The target population was primary schools in Central Nyanza Region. The author employed probability sampling procedure. The sampling techniques selected for the study were stratified sampling and simple random sampling. These sampling techniques were used to select the schools from the target population. The primary schools in the region were grouped into counties and districts using the existing counties/administrative districts in the region. This was done to ensure equitable representation of the population in the sample. It further ensured that there was

proportionate representation in the sample with a view of accounting for differences between the districts. Proportionate sampling was used to allocate a sample of 69(10%) primary schools to each district (strata) in the region. In the second stage the simple random sampling technique was used to draw samples from each district.

The study used questionnaires, observation, checklists, and interviews guide as the main tools for data collection. The mixed methods approach was used in data analysis - the study combined both qualitative and quantitative approaches in the analysis of data. The initial step in qualitative data analysis involved reducing dimensionality of the data. This was done by arranging the data in categories and themes. The process of data reduction also involved editing, coding and classifying data collected through the instruments. Quantitative data reduction involved summarizing the data by use of descriptive statistics such as percentages and measures of central tendency such as the, means, standard deviation, kurtosis and skewness. The questionnaire data was subjected to preliminary analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS version 20).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Location of School and Ownership of Schools

The study sought to establish the location and ownership of primary schools in the study area. The results show that 386(78.9%) of schools were located in the rural areas and 105(21.9%) were located in urban centres. This shows that majority of the primary schools are located in rural areas. The results also indicated that 63(96.9%) of the primary schools were public primary schools while 3(3.1%) were private schools. The findings further indicated that 447(90.7%) were mixed day primary schools, while 18(3.7%) were mixed boarding primary schools.

Human Resources and Physical Facilities

The study sought to investigate the influence of physical facilities and human resources on pupil's academic achievement. The findings were as indicated on Table 1. The table shows that there was overwhelming agreement among the teachers (mean = 4.42) and head teachers (mean = 4.66) about how inadequate text books in the schools have contributed to poor academic achievement in the region. According to these findings, the physical resources available to schools have affected learning in the region, which has resulted in poor academic achievement. Teachers in schools require adequate classrooms where they can conduct teaching. In schools where there are inadequate classrooms, teachers are forced to conduct teaching outside the classes which affects learning.

The findings on Table 1 are consistent with observations made by Huitt (1994) in his transactional theory of teaching and learning. In this theory, Huitt (ibid.) argues that pupils' achievement is a product of school characteristics and school processes. A school that does not support effective teaching and learning process in classrooms should not expect quality learning and good pupil academic achievement. He proposes that schools should provide learners and teachers with required inputs such as adequate text books and learners will excel in learning and then do well in examinations. The findings further indicate that human resources have heavily contributed to poor achievement in the region. The findings show that there are major problems with human resources in the region which has contributed to poor achievement in primary schools. These human resources challenges include; inadequate supervision of teaching/learning process and shortage of teachers. The results are supported by observations by Levin *et al.* (2008) who argue that for learners in a school to do well, head teachers must supervise the teaching/learning process. Schools where teachers are supervised to do well as compared to schools where there is no consistent supervision of teachers. The findings on regular meetings between head teacher and teachers is supported by Levin *et al.* (2008) who observe that head teachers should check teachers' professional documents such as schemes of work, lesson plans and progress records. They should also conduct classroom visitation, engage in clinical supervision and conduct staff meetings which would focus on academic matters.

The findings are also consistent with the findings of Nyamboga (2011) who says that in schools where head teachers have a vision for their schools, the schools do very well in teachers/learning programmes. The findings of the study also agree with observations by Huitt (1994) who reports that teacher characteristics are a very important input in the pupils' achievement. He suggests that teachers' behaviour which are detrimental to learning process should be dealt with through supervision to enhance learn achievement.

The Status of the Resources Necessary for Primary School Curriculum Implementation

The study further sought to establish the adequacy of the physical and human resources that are necessary for the effective teaching and learning in primary schools. The results regarding this were presented in the Table 2 below. Table 2 indicates that most of the resources necessary for teaching and learning in primary schools are available but not adequate. Majority of the schools, 112(82.3%), report that they lacked teachers, while 75(55.1) indicated they lacked adequate desks. The table shows that most of the schools lacked adequate resources necessary for teaching and learning. This implies that although most of the resources highlighted are available, they

Table 1. Human Resources and Physical Facilities

	Mean(head teachers)	Std. Deviation	Mean(Teachers)	Std. Deviation
Poor text books ratio affects achievement	4.66	0.713	4.42	0.983
Promotion of poor performers to next class affects performance	4.38	0.995	4.34	1.004
Inadequate classes affect Achievement	4.08	1.035	4.16	0.959
Head teachers inability to supervise Curriculum delivery contributes to poor performance.	4.31	1.067	3.64	1.259
Shortage of teachers causes poor achievement	4.55	0.952	4.40	1.069

are not adequate. This means that the teachers have a hard time teaching which, in turn, contributes to poor achievement of the pupils.

Data collected using the observation checklist indicated that majority of the physical facilities available in the primary schools such as classes were in a poor state. Most of the classes had not been painted for a long period. A few schools in some of the districts in the region were still using semi permanent classes with mud walls. In some of the schools, the floors of some of the classes were in bad state. The cracks were all over the floors. The condition of classrooms is very important in effective teaching and learning. A poor learning environment in a long run affects schools achievement.

Table 2. The Availability of the Resources Required in Teaching and Learning in Primary Schools

Resource	Availability and adequacy	Frequency	Percent
Trained primary school teachers	Available	112	82.3
	Not available	24	17.6
	Adequate	46	33.9
Classes	Not adequate	90	66.0
	Available	108	79.0
	Not available	28	21.0
	Adequate	44	32.0
Recommended pupil to book ratio	Not adequate	92	68.0
	Available	86	63.2
	Not available	50	36.8
	Adequate	28	20.0
Chalkboards	Not adequate	108	80.0
	Available	116	85.2
	Not available	20	14.0
	Adequate	73	53.6
Charts	Not adequate	63	46.4
	Available	99	72.8
	Not available	37	27.2
	Adequate	30	22.0
Exercise books	Not adequate	106	78.0
	Available	117	86.0
	Not available	19	14.0
	Adequate	57	49.9
Teachers reference books	Not adequate	79	50.1
	Available	108	79.4
	Not available	28	20.6
	Adequate	67	49.3
Desks	Not adequate	69	50.7
	Available	110	80.8
	Not available	26	19.2
	Adequate	61	44.9
	Not adequate	75	55.1

These findings are consistent with those by Reche *et al.* (2012) who observe that inadequate resources like desks are detrimental to the learning process. World Bank (2008) also avers that for a school to do very well, it requires excellent buildings, a library, adequate curriculum materials other than text books and attractive grounds. Based on data from the observation checklist, it appears that majority of schools are in the lowest level where the condition of classroom and desks is poor.

Availability of Documents

The availability of documents which aid the head teacher in the supervision of the implementation of the primary education

curriculum is vital for any school. The head teacher also requires official documents released by the national examinations council. The study sought to ascertain the availability of these documents in the primary schools. The results were as presented in the Table 3.

Table 3. Availability of Documents

Type of Document	Frequency	Percent
Class register		
Yes	104	76.4
No	32	23.6
KCPE Analysis		
Yes	98	72.1
No	38	28.0
Progress Records		
Yes	117	86.0
No	19	24.0
KCPE Newsletter		
Yes	80	58.8
No	56	41.2
Scheme of Work		
Yes	108	79.4
No	28	20.6
Lesson Plans		
Yes	101	74.3
No	35	25.5
Learner Diaries		
Yes	31	29.5
No	105	70.5
Syllabus Availability		
Yes	108	78.0
No	28	22.0

Table 3 shows that 104(76.4%) of the schools had class registers, while 23(35.4%) did not have class registers. The results also indicate that 108(78%) of the schools had syllabuses while 28(22.0%) of the schools indicated that the syllabuses were not available. The findings show that majority of the schools had the necessary documents required in administration. These results indicate that most of the schools kept track of the performance of the pupils using the relevant documents such as progress records. This would enable them to study the trends in the performance of the pupils in the schools. The documents may be available but if they are not used effectively there may not be high pupil academic achievement in the primary schools.

Table 4 further shows that majority of the documents were available in the schools under study. However, some documents were not available in all the schools such as the KCPE newsletter, 80(58.8%), and the learner diaries, 31(29.5%). The absence of these documents in some schools was an indication that the teachers in this particular schools did not benefit from feedback given by Kenya National Examinations Council every year about teaching weaknesses in various subjects taught in primary education curriculum and are examined by Kenya National Examinations Council. The reports further highlight performance in each subject (Kenya National Examinations Council, 2007). The learner diaries are critical in enhancing communication between the school and the parents. Through them, the teacher/head teacher can communicate to parents about the performance of pupils. The absence of the learner diaries would imply that the schools are not able to communicate with parents/guardians about the

academic progress and attendance of the learners. Lack of these documents would mean the head teacher cannot quickly communicate any weaknesses that may have been observed during the learning process. Farrant (2007) observes that pupils work should be closely monitored and communicated to parents. There is a need to encourage as all primary schools to acquire this document.

Frequency of Checking Teaching/Administrative Documents

Since the study had established that the given documents were available but not adequate, the research further sought to determine how often the head teachers checked the documents and how often the teachers used the documents. The results were as presented in the Table 4 below. Table 4 indicates that the two most unchecked and unused documents in majority of the schools were the KCPE newsletter and the learners' diaries (mean = 3.72 and standard deviation = 1.039, and mean = 3.66 and standard deviation = 1.305, respectively). This confirms the result about the availability of these two documents. However, all the documents exhibited less than average usage and checking within the various schools. This is shown clearly by the coefficient of skewness which in all the documents under scrutiny was negative, showing that the usage or checking of these vital documents was below average, i.e. they were underutilized and rarely checked.

Table 4. Frequency of Checking Teaching/Administrative Documents

Type of Document	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
Class register	4.92	0.269	-3.251	0.297
KCPE Analysis	4.75	0.439	-1.158	0.302
Progress Record	4.77	0.527	-2.228	0.299
KCPE Newsletter	3.72	1.039	-0.191	0.314
Scheme of Work	4.82	0.497	-2.744	0.297
Lesson Plans	4.83	0.417	-2.449	0.297
Learner Diaries	3.66	1.305	-0.297	0.304
Syllabus	4.89	0.312	-2.591	0.297

These documents, as seen earlier, are vital in the supervision of teachers. Their regular use would be proof that teachers' work is being monitored in key area such as syllabus coverage. They should thus be constantly checked and used in order to monitor all the variables which contribute to pupil achievement such as syllabus coverage by teachers, and pupil attendance.

Staff Meetings with Teachers

Communication among the staff of the school is a vital tool in ensuring that consensus exists and that everyone within the teaching staff is wary of the mission of the school and are able to chart a way forward for the school as a team. The study sought to establish whether or not the head teachers, as supervisors, had regular staff meetings to discuss issues, including regular attendance, syllabus coverage, class attendance, lesson planning and academic performance of learners.

From the results, majority of the head teachers, 134(98.5%), revealed that they had a one-on-one talk with teachers about regular attendance, syllabus coverage, class attendance, lesson planning and academic performance of learners. This implies that majority of the head teachers enabled the sharing of ideas in order to enhance school pupil achievement. The observations are consistent with findings by Mbiti (2007) who asserts that the head teachers use the staff meetings to co-ordinate various academic activities in the school. The study also sought to establish the frequency of meetings between the primary school head teachers and the teachers. The results regarding this were as presented in the Table 5 below.

Table 5. Frequency of Staff Meetings

	Frequency	Percent
Never	2	1.4
Once a week	90	66.2
Twice a week	25	18.4
Thrice a week	19	14
Total	136	100.0

Table 6 shows that majority of the heads, 90(66.2%), had staff meetings with their teachers once a week. This implies that majority of them communicated with their teachers during the weekly staff meetings. Although this is the case, it is worthy to note that less monitoring and reporting of the progress of the schools activities by the teachers can be a factor contributing to poor performance in national examinations.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings, it was concluded that school-related factors such as poor condition of physical facilities such as classes, inadequate teachers, inadequate text books, poor supervision of teaching/learning process contributed to the poor schools' achievement in Central Nyanza region. As such, it is recommended that schools should be provided with all resources required for curriculum implementation such as adequate; teachers, classrooms, text books and exercise books. In addition, head teachers should adequately supervise teaching/learning in their schools. They should ensure that teachers and pupil absenteeism are reduced to the minimum. The physical facilities such as classes should also be maintained regularly.

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