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## **Influence of parental empowerment and engagement on management of primary school curriculum implementation in Embu county, Kenya**

*Luke Murithi Katheriya, Peter Kimanathi, Charles Kiptum & Eric Mwenda*

*Chuka University-Kenya*

*lukekatheriya@gmail.com; pnyaga@chuka.ac.ke; emichen Mwenda i@chuka.ac.ke*

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### **ABSTRACT**

The researcher determined influence of parental empowerment and engagement on management of primary school curriculum implementation in Embu County, Kenya. Parental empowerment and engagement are key concepts that need to be fully utilized; for complete realization of effective competence based curriculum management in Kenyan schools. The concern was that the idea of parental empowerment and engagement are underutilized in competence based curriculum implementation in Kenya. The objective of the study was to determine influence of parental empowerment and engagement on management of primary school curriculum implementation in Embu County, Kenya. The researcher used Krejcie and Morgan sample determination table to determine 364 respondents from 7000 target population. The study utilized descriptive design. The study respondents were: teachers, subject panel heads, head teachers and parents' association representatives. The research tools were questionnaires and interview guides. Inferential statistics was analyzed using

Pearson's chi-square tests. The study established that there was significant influence of parental empowerment and engagement on management of primary school curriculum implementation in Embu County, Kenya. Following study findings, the researcher concluded that parental empowerment and engagement are valuable concepts in management of primary school curriculum implementation in Kenyan schools. Therefore, the researcher recommended that ministry of education should encourage parental empowerment and engagement for efficient curriculum implementation management in primary schools in Kenya.

Keys words: Parental Empowerment, parental Engagement, Parents school, primary, Curriculum Implementation and Management

## **INTRODUCTION**

Parental empowerment and engagement are unique aspects that need to be fully applied; for successful realization of effective competence based curriculum management in Kenyan schools. Parental empowerment constitutes authority entrusted to parents to participate in school management or general running of schools. Parental engagement on other hand entails parental involvement to take part in managing or running school programs. The idea of parental empowerment and engagement is underutilized in managing competence based curriculum implementation in Kenyan schools. According to Morant, (2017) study on in-service education within the school, denoted that although parents are expected to help learners fit better in their families and communities, the hands-off parenting approach alienates the children from own families and communities. Many parents do not get the opportunity to bond with their families and therefore become strangers in their own homes and communities. The ideas of Morants (2017) showed that some parents failed to participate fully in learning affairs of their children in and out of school. A study by Şenol and Lesinger(2018) on the influence of instructional leadership style, trust and school culture, proclaimed parents can directly and indirectly have raised a hue and cry over how the parental component in competence based curriculum is being under utilized in managing school programs. Being a major concept in the implementation process, parental empowerment and engagement concepts are vital for the policymakers to lend them an ear and address the issue of curriculum implementation management in learning institutions. Teachers have misinterpreted the philosophy of parental empowerment. A study by Smith and Arendse, (2016) in South Africa on South African curriculum reform: Education for active citizenship, suggested that parental empowerment and empowerment call for active participation by the parent in child's education, for instance, in management of homework and improvisation of instructional resources in competence based curriculum. Parental empowerment requires full engagement by the parent in managing curriculum activities in the school, where children are learning. A study by Ngina (2017) in Kenya on head teachers' supervisory role on pupils' academic achievements, noted that parental empowerment and engagement have been limited to providing the basic necessities for children in an

endeavor to promote curriculum implementation management. In school matters, parents and guardian have assumed the responsibility of paying school fees, providing school uniform and attending meetings called by the boards of management; but is not clear especially in Kenya how parental empowerment and engagement interrelates with efficient management of curriculum implementation.

Parental empowerment and engagement are key concepts that need to be fully utilized; for complete realization of effective competence based curriculum management in Kenyan schools. However, the ideas of parental empowerment and engagement are underutilized in competence based curriculum implementation in Kenya; rising concern on efficiency of new competence based curriculum system in Kenya.

**The objective of the study is to determine influence of parental empowerment and engagement, on management of primary school curriculum implementation in Embu County, Kenya**

## **THEORETICALFRAMEWORK**

The study was guided by contingency theory (1978). According to the contingency theory, managerial leadership style, decision-making involvement, job design and organizational structure are situation a variables that have a significant impact on how well managers perform in general; especially in learning institutions. The implication of the theory to the study was that parents are empowered and engaged in managing curriculum implementation processes in learning institutions.

## **RESEARCHMETHODOLOGY**

The researcher utilized descriptive design. The descriptive design describes the state of affairs as it exists in a natural and unchanged surrounding so as to establish present condition of the items under study.

The researcher used Krejcie and Morgan sample determination table (statistical table with definite population and their correspondent sample sizes) to determine 364 respondents from 7000 target population. According to Krejcie and Morgan table, 364 respondents under study are adequate to represent the total of 7000 individuals. The researcher proportionally sampled 53 head teachers and 4 parents' association representatives using purposive sampling technique from 531 target head teachers and 77 target parents' association representatives respectively. According to Crews Well (2016), purposive technique is a sampling approach where researcher identifies respondents with most appropriate information needed in a given study. Some head teachers and parents' association representatives were selected since they had adequate information on influence of parental

empowerment and engagement; and management of primary school curriculum implementation. The researcher also proportionally sampled 187 teachers and 120 subject panel heads from 4084 target teachers and 2308 target subject panel heads respectively using simple random technique.

The sample size was 364 respondents comprising 187 teachers, 120 subject panel heads, 53 head teachers and 4 parents' association representatives.

The researcher employed questionnaires and interview guides for head teachers, subject panel heads, teachers and parents' association representatives. Self-completion questionnaire was less expensive and saved time for the researcher. The non-structured interview guides used in the study, aided researcher to acquire first-hand data from the respondents.

First researcher conducted pilot study in Tharaka Nithi County. Then, researcher employed research assistants. The researcher conducted actual study in Embu County; by collecting data starting with teachers, subject panel heads, head teachers and finally parents' association representatives; using questionnaires and non-structured interview guides respectively.

Researcher ascertained research tools validity by getting relevant information on specific tools from experts and professionals in ministry of education. The respondents were given questions with similar characteristics; basing on specific objectives of the study. The reliability of research tools was determined by cronbachalphaco-efficient; which computed to 0.742. The researcher maintained ethical issues by adhering to assured confidentiality, non-discrimination, anonymity to maintain privacy of participation in the study. Researcher also observed principles of informed consent by obtaining ethical clearance from the Chuka University ethics review committee and permission from National Council of Science Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) to carry out study in Embu County, Kenya. The researcher utilized NACOSTI letter to seek permission from Embu county commissioner and county director of education to carry out study in selected school

The data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistic approaches of data analysis. The descriptive statistic looked for patterns in a data set to summarize the information revealed in a data set to present study information in a convenient form that is easy to understand. The inferential statistic was analyzed using Pearson's chi-square test to estimate influence of parental empowerment on management of primary school curriculum implementation in Embu County.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The study hypothesis stated that parental empowerment and engagement has no statistical significant influence on management of primary school curriculum implementation in Embu County. Teachers, subject panel heads, head teachers and parent’s association representative gave responses on parental empowerment on management of curriculum implementation in Embu County. The data were analyzed and findings recorded. The researcher utilized Chi-square tests to determine influence of parental empowerment on management of primary school curriculum implementation in Embu County, as per responses of teachers. The results were analyzed in Table 1.

Table 1: Chi-Square Tests of influence of Parental Empowerment and engagement on Management of Primary School Curriculum for Teachers

	Value	df	p-value
Pearson Chi-Square	46.541	6	0.000
No. of Valid Cases	184		

Pearson chi-square test was performed to investigate whether there was parental empowerment and engagement influence on management of primary school curriculum implementation for teachers.  $\chi^2(6,184)$

=46.541,  $p=0.000$  indicated that there was significant influence of parental empowerment and engagement on management of primary school curriculum implementation for teachers.

Table 2: Chi-Square Tests of influence of Parental Empowerment and engagement on Management of Primary School Curriculum Implementation for Subject Panel Heads

	Value	Df	p-value
Pearson Chi-Square	2.075	2	0.354
No. of Valid Cases	118		

Pearson chi-square test was performed to investigate whether there was significant influence of parental empowerment and engagement on management of primary school curriculum implementation for subject heads.  $\chi^2(2,118) = 2.075$ ,

$p=0.354$  indicated that there was no significant influence of parental empowerment and engagement on management of primary school curriculum implementation for subject heads. The study findings contradicted with ideas of Smith and Arendse (2016) who stressed that when parents are engaged in child’s learning; they work closely with the school management and the school to impart knowledge, skills, values, competencies and attitudes to learners. Parents monitor the academic progress of

competence based curriculum children, identifying areas of weakness and put together interventions to ensure improvement in the children achievement in core competences.

Table 3: Chi-Square Tests of influence of Parental Empowerment and engagement on Management of Primary School Curriculum for Head Teachers

	Value	df	p-value
Pearson Chi-Square	16.634	6	0.011
No of Valid Cases	53		

Pearson chi-square test was performed to investigate whether there was significant influence of parental empowerment and engagement on management of primary school curriculum implementation for headteachers.  $\chi^2(6, 53) = 16.634, p = 0.011$  indicated that there was significant influence of parental empowerment and engagement on management of primary school curriculum implementation for head teachers.

#### **Hypothesis Testing on influence of Parental Empowerment and Engagement on Management of Curriculum Implementation, In Embu County**

The study hypothesis stated that parental empowerment and engagement has no statistical significant influence on management of primary school curriculum implementation in Embu County. The researcher utilized Chi-square tests to determine overall Chi-Square Tests of influence of parental empowerment and engagement on management of primary school curriculum implementation in Embu County. The results were analyzed in Table 4.

Table 4: Overall Chi-Square Test of influence of Parental Empowerment and engagement on Management of Primary School Curriculum

	Value	df	p-value
Pearson Chi-Square	47.941	8	0.000
No of Valid Cases	360		

Pearson chi-square test was performed to investigate whether there was significant influence of parental empowerment and engagement on management of primary school curriculum implementation for all the groups.  $\chi^2(8, 360) = 47.941, p = 0.000$  indicated that there was significant influence of parental empowerment and engagement on management of primary school curriculum implementation in Embu County. Since p-value was less than 0.05, researcher rejected the hypothesis and concluded that there was a statistical significant influence of parental empowerment and engagement on management of

primary school curriculum implementation in Embu County. The study findings correlated with views of Kamoche (2019) in Uganda on sociological paradigms and human resources; who indicated that the general roles of parents are to support the learning and management of child in schools to provide and manage basic necessities, protect children from physical and emotional harm as well as instilling and nurturing morals and values.

The researcher gave the descriptions of responses on influence of parental empowerment and engagement on management of primary school curriculum implementation in Embu County. The responses were reflected in excerpt 1; as per non- structured interview guides for parents' association representatives.

### **Excerpt1**

**Researcher:** How does parental empowerment and engagement support management of primary school curriculum implementation in schools?

**Respondent 1:** *Parents empowerment and engagement in school may facilitate payment of school fees to enable management of curriculum learning activities.* The study findings related with a survey study by Ngina (2017) in Kenya on head teachers' supervisory role influence on pupils' academic achievements; that reviewed that in school matters, parents and guardian have assumed the responsibility of paying school fees, providing school uniform and assisting learners to do home based assignments.

**Respondent 2:** *Parents' empowerment can aid management and resolution of teachers and learners' conflicts in learning situation.*

**Respondent 3:** *Parents improvise teaching and learning resources using locally available materials.* The study findings were in line with a cross-section study by Smith and Arendse (2016) in South Africa on South African curriculum reform: Education for active citizenship, comprising 482 respondents; who suggested that parental collaboration and empowerment calls for active participation by the parent in child education, for instance, in management of homework and improvisation of instructional resources incompetence based curriculum. Parental empowerment requires full engagement by the parent in the activities of the school where children are learning.

*School managers also give moral guidance to learner in school.* The study findings were in agreement with study of Owojori and Asaolu (2015 ) in Kenya on critical evaluation of personnel management problems; who indicated that instructional extension was formed between the school and the home

setting and such facilitates modeling of behaviors that position children to appreciate the purpose of education; as learners attempt to imitate the behaviors depicted by the parent. Parental empowerment and involvement help in enhancing the learners' confidence, mental health, motivation, self-esteem, communication skills and interest in education as a worthy undertaking. *School managers organize parents to take care of school environment.* The study findings supported a survey study by Rotich and Mutisya (2014) on competence of head teachers in primary school management in Kenya; who suggested that the learner can do homework without engagement of the parent and guardian, but the parental or guardian activity informs parental and guardian facilitation to demand parental or guardian input especially in maintaining safe environment for studies.

**Respondent 4:** *Parents develop learners' real life-skills after day schooling and guide learners on how to handle competence based curriculum assignment on daily basis given by teachers.* The findings correlated with ideas of Smith and Arendse (2016) who stressed that parents are engaged in child learning; and work closely with the school management and school to impart knowledge, real-life skills, values, competencies and attitudes to learners. Parents are engaged in resolving learners' conflicts in school and act as source of authority for learners in and out of school.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Following study findings, the researcher concluded that parental empowerment and engagement are valuable concepts in education; and significantly relates with management of primary school curriculum implementation in Kenyan schools.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The researcher recommended that ministry of education should encourage parental empowerment and engagement in all schools for efficient curriculum implementation management in primary schools in Kenya.

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