



## Assessment of relationship between management policies and transfer of skills: A case of public secondary school heads in Nyeri County, Kenya

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### ABSTRACT

Despite heavy investments in training and development, low-quality education standards and challenges in management practices have been a sticky problem in the Kenyan education sector. Organization Theory guided the main aim of this study in establishing the relationship between management policies and transfer of skills for public secondary school headteachers in schools management. The study adopted a descriptive research design. Questionnaires were used to collect quantitative and qualitative data. Data were analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics. The study population comprised 226 headteachers. A mixture of stratified random sampling and census study was adopted in sampling 69 respondents. The results established that management policies explained a 23.4% variation in the transfer of skills for school heads.  $F_1 = 0.536$  and  $p\text{-value} = 0.000$  ( $p < 0.05$ ) indicated that management policies had positive and significant effects on transfer of skills. The study established that unsupportive policies like the Students Council, two centers of power, strict policies, and lack of inclusivity in policy formulation adversely affected school heads in implementing learned skills. The study recommends fair representation of all categories of education stakeholders in policies review and formulation to alleviate challenges associated with management policies to enhance the transfer of skills. The Government should address the issue of two centers of power in the public basic education sector. The paper sought to call the attention of the professional development trainers to exercise follow-ups to assess post-training behavioral outcomes in the context of organizational climate.

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## Introduction

The objective of the workplace training and employee development programs is to increase productivity, increase product quality, and improve customer service. However, the achievement of the training and development objective is determined by the extent to which the acquired skills are transferred in the job setting. One way of signifying that training is indeed effective is to exhibit that the skills acquired are actually transferred to the workplace and used by the staff on their job (Armstrong, 2015). The degree to which transfer of skills occurs affects performance excellence (Barnard, 2013).

Transfer of training is the effective and continued implementation of learned set of knowledge, skills and attitudes in the background of academic development in the workplace (Feixas, Fernandez & Zellweger, 2014). Further, Abujazar and Saleh, (2004) defined transfer of skills as the ability of a trainee to apply the behavior, knowledge, and acquired skills in one learning situation to another. It is the process of successfully moving knowledge, skills attitude from classroom to workplace, which is the ultimate goal of training. In this study, the term 'transfer of skills' is used interchangeably with 'transfer of training', 'training transfer' or 'learning transfer' (Burke & Hutchins, 2007).

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Transfer of skills has been observed to involve two main processes: first generalization and second, maintenance (Blume, Ford, Baldwin & Huang, 2010). Generalization is the degree to which the skill and knowledge acquired in a training setting are applied to different situations. Maintenance is the degree to which changes that result from a training experience persist over time. For organizations, this transfer of skills is a vital influence point through which management activities will have an effect on relevant outcomes. Latham (2007) opines that resources dedicated in development of competencies are mostly wasted if the trainee does not consequently apply those competencies when executing their work. If there is success in training transfer, the training is really worthy of investment. Organizations are therefore beginning to realize that training without transfer of skills is a waste of time and resources.

Despite heavy investment, effectively designed and delivered training programs may fail to produce positive transfer outcomes (Maung & Chemsripong, 2014). This may be caused by unsupportive work environment (Grossman & Salas, 2011). Among work environment barriers to learning transfer in education setups are the organizational policies, procedures and management practices. In support of this, Musyoka (2018) stated that head teacher's management role is prone to a variety of challenges and can be influenced by factors such as financial challenges, restrictive policies, and lack of stakeholders support.

Management policies refers to a set of basic principles and associated guidelines, formulated and enforced by the governing body of an organization, to direct and limit its actions in pursuit of long-term goals. Management policies may also refer to the process of making important organizational decisions, which may include the identification of different alternatives such as programs or spending priorities, and choice of these alternatives on the basis of the impact they will have (Business Dictionary.com, 2017). On the other hand, management is the "utilization of physical and human resources through cooperative efforts and it is accomplished by performing the function of planning, organizing, staffing directing and controlling" (Musee, 2018).

On this background, the school head teacher is a planner, director, controller, coordinator, organizer, adviser and a problem-solver. He is the person on whose shoulders rest the entire administration, success or failure of the school. In this connection, the Ministry of Education (MoE) is responsible for national policies and programmes that help Kenyans access quality and affordable school education, post-school, higher education and academic research. The Ministry therefore being the custodian of the education sector curriculum taps and utilizes the skills of school heads as key implementers of the curriculum as well as supervisors of the whole school program (Musee, 2018).

According to Commonwealth Secretariat (1996), as cited by Karani (2013), educational system has continued to grow in complexity and expansion. Therefore, the role of public school head teachers who are education managers and leaders has risen considerably in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The duties and responsibilities of head teachers comprise curricula organization and management, control of stores and finances, management and maintenance of human and physical resources, teaching and acting as the secretary to the Board of Management and the Parents Association (Ministry of Education, Kenya, Sessional Paper No. 14 of 2012; The Basic Education Act of 2013). This has generated great demand towards improving education quality through advancing knowledge, skills and attitude in management of schools. To enhance management and leadership in education sector, institutions which would develop training programmes have been formulated. Among the pioneers in development of school heads were Canada, UK, USA, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore and Hong Kong. These countries have well developed systems to train education leaders and managers such as the National College of Schools Leadership (NCSL) in UK. In Africa, there are bodies such as Advanced Certificate in Education: schools' leadership (ACE) in South Africa, the Agency for the Development of Educational Management (ADEM) in Tanzania and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) in Ethiopia (Karani, 2013).

In Kenya, four agencies deliver professional development service to head teachers: the Kenya Education Management Institute (KEMI), the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MoEST), the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) and Teachers Service Commission (TSC) (Bulimo, Maiyo & Ndiku, 2016). (Bulimo, 2017) asserts that to enhance resource management competency, these agencies have the responsibility of providing Continuous Professional Development (CPD) trainings to school managers in liaison with the TSC policy on human resource management (TSC Act, 2012). The failure to provide relevant and adequate professional training for institutional administrators had formerly led to mismanagement which resulted to decline in education standards. CPD is defined as the development of knowledge and management skills and competencies throughout a manager's working life (Bulimo et al., 2016). KEMI is required to offer in-service training to all education managers (Legal Notice No.19/2010 of the Education Act (CAP 211); Paper No. 1 of 2005 and Republic of Kenya, 2011). In addition, MoEST through the Kenya Secondary Schools Heads Association (KESSHA) occasionally organizes capacity building workshops for secondary school head teachers. KESSHA is the body comprising of secondary school principals which was formed primarily to discuss educational issues affecting schools like financial management, human resource management among others, through in-service programmes (Kamau, 2010). Capacity building programmes focus on various themes like Strategic Management of Emerging Challenges in secondary schools, Project Management, Procurement Management, Strategic Planning Management, Discipline in schools, Intelligence Gathering and Disaster or Crisis Management, Safety and Health in schools, Education Management Policies among others (KEMI, 2014). The acquired competencies are tailored to enhance management of schools by helping the school heads in implementing management policies, procedures and reorganization in the education sector as well as utilization of modern management tools in education institutions.

The Kenyan Government emphasizes the importance of effective school management with an aim of realizing the Kenya Vision 2030 together with the Global Development Goals (GDGs) (Bulimo, 2017). For that reason, managers should be kept up to date on

the techniques of planning, organizing, directing and controlling finances and human resources the end result being to provide quality education to its citizens. In the light of this, the Ministry of Education (MoE) has the mandate to organize capacity building programmes for the head teachers. The head teachers' capacity building budget of financial years 2013/14 to 2017/18 amounted to Ksh.316 million (RoK, 2015). Further, Ksh.1.436 billion was spent to finance capacity building of school heads and other education stakeholders like Board of Management, Parent Associations, and Education Officers in various capacities in the same period. Head teachers' budget alone for professional development amounted to Ksh.88 million for financial year 2017/18. Owing to the enormous effort and resources used in training, managers are therefore under pressure to show the training effectiveness.

Despite the Government's increased financial support, efforts and resources towards commitment to continuous professional development of education managers, the quality of education in Kenya is still a challenge. Trends in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) performance for the period 2013 to 2018 shows that most of the candidates attained grades that could neither allow them to proceed to higher education, nor secure gainful employment (MoE, 2018). During 2017 and 2018 academic years, more than half of the candidates attained grades D and below, which almost disqualified them from pursuing any professional course. In addition to poor performance, management practices have remained a major challenge. In Nyeri County, a research by Wamunyu (2012) established that despite being trained in project management, principals still experienced challenges related to management of project constraints, financial management, among others. Among the key indicators of these challenges were delayed project completion, rising of the project costs and existence of many stalled projects. Further, Githiari, (2017) found out that despite acquisition of competencies, principals in Kenya had faced heavy criticism in the last two decades due to some serious cases of mismanagement which resulted in some of the worst institutional disasters and tragedies, accidents, unrests and even economic and social crimes that Kenya has witnessed. These studies did not capture the aspect of the influence of management policies in implementation of management skills acquired in training. The lack of transfer is documented as an important factor in the literature, as it is not only unproductive training for the individual and the employing organization but also vast amounts of money get wasted (McDonald, 2014). Transfer research has consistently documented that work environment can influence worker ability as well as opportunity to execute learned behavior on the job (Kupritz, 2002). Since work environment factors are numerous to be addressed on a single research, which might reduce research effectiveness (Ahmad & Adamu, 2014), the researcher chose management policies as one of the pertinent work environment factor affecting transfer of skills in the public basic education sector. Management policies as one of organizational factors have been identified as impeding or facilitating transfer (Hughes, 2016; Maina, 2016). Caires, (2013) stated that managers are likely to apply the new knowledge when there is a favorable organizational environment.

In this background, this study sought to assess the relationship between management policies and transfer of skills for public secondary school heads as education managers. Management policies components explored in this study are TSC and MoEST policies, Board of Management, Parents Association and Students Council. Indicators of transfer of skills are effective implementation of management policies and procedures and quality education. Since no study has explored the influence of management policies as an independent variable on transfer of skills in basic education sector in Kenya, this prompted the researcher to address the untapped gap as to what extent management policies influence transfer of skills for the school heads through testing the following hypothesis:

*Ho: There is no significant relationship between management policies and the transfer of skills for the school heads in Nyeri County.*

Organization of this study comprise of literature review which explores literature related to management policies and transfer of skills. The study also captures methodology of data collection and analysis, presentation of results, discussion of the findings, implications and conclusions.

## **Literature Review**

### **Theoretical and Conceptual Background**

This study was based on Organization Theory (Kozlowski & Salas, 1997). This theory describes organizational climate supporting transfer of training. According to this theory, the need for change, execution of interventions and the transfer of skills are embedded in the context of subunit, work team, and organization levels. Subunits are bound by higher level system controls. In addition, individual performance is contextually bound by contextual constraints at higher levels. Organization theory therefore improves the identification of tangible, important and meaningful work environment characteristics like organization structure and decision autonomy that are stimuli that underlie context perceptions influencing individual reactions through their perceptions of the organizational environment. Organization Theory focuses on organizational context supporting or contradicting trained individual skills; individual differences of individuals or teams across a context and the way these differences affect critical behaviors; nature of individual contributions across people who comprise higher level entities as well as the form of their combination. The individual should be considered as a part of a broader configuration of contextual elements that can either facilitate or inhibit training transfer.

In connection to the current study, Board of Management BoM, Parents Association (PA) and Students Council are under the control and bound by policies formulated by the MoE and TSC. Individual performance of the head teacher is bound by constraints of MoE and TSC and surrounded by the environment of work teams, the BoM, PA and Student Council. For effective management, the head teacher needs to cultivate a good working relationship with these subunit levels (Mutuku, 2011). This implies that policies at different organizational levels are critical to support transfer of learned skills for effective school management.

## **Empirical Review**

### **Transfer of Skills**

Transfer of training is defined as the “effective and continuing workplace application of the knowledge, skills, and conceptions gained during professional development programs” (De Rijdt, Stes, Van der Vlieten, & Dochy, 2012). According to Pham, Segers and Gijsselaers, (2013), trainees should have to come into terms with the workplace changing environment that might restrain or support the utilization of learned knowledge and skills. The ultimate goal of training should be positive transfer to the workplace (Lim & Morris, 2006). However, training programs fail to produce positive transfer outcomes despite them being effectively designed and delivered (Grossman et al., 2011). This may be caused by unsupportive work environment in components like support, transfer climate, opportunity to perform and follow-up. In fact, in every industry, effective skill transfer to the workplace is the major challenge for training management (Sookhai & Budworth, 2010). Khan, Mufti, and Nazir, (2015), stated that what cruelly affected the transfer of skills were the constraints caused by work environment. In their findings, employees were not motivated to transfer competencies as a result of too many constraints in the work environment. A study by Nazir, Sipons, Zumrah and Abdullah, (2014), stated that according to the annual report of Human Resource Development Corporation (Pembangunan Sumber Manusia Berhad, (PSMB), Malaysia, a total of 783,296 training sites with financial support amounting to RM506.14 million had been approved, and payment of RM407.65 million was made all through the year ending 2013. This indicated that a variety of trainings were carried out at high cost to increase workers’ level of skills, knowledge and competence (Saks, Salas, & Lewis, 2014). Unfortunately, most of the workers who attended the trainings demonstrated lack of skill transfer. The study noted only 10 per cent of trainings had successfully established positive transfer of acquired skills. Yasin, Nur, Ridzwan, Bekri, Azwin, Arif, Mahazir and Ashikin, (2013) identified that “less than 15 to 20 percent of the knowledge and skills acquired in trainings were actually applied in workplaces”. In agreement, Ongori, Kitainge and Kipkoech, (2018), noted that research conducted across the world specify that just a small percentage of what is learned is actually transferred to the workplace despite so much investment spent in training.

According to Bulimo et al. (2016), noteworthy reports have revealed that despite the continuing professional development programmes in Kenya, competencies are still not matching with tasks. This may have led to mismanagement of resources resulting in failure towards improving the quality of education. Importance of the subject of transfer of skills in organizations is clearly evidenced by regular publication reviews by various scholars like (Kopp, 2006); (Burke, et al., 2007); (Cheng & Hampson, 2008); (Blume, et al., 2010); (Grossman, et al., 2011) and (Khan et al., 2015). Hence, without doubt, these signify that research findings on transfer of skills are valuable to management, and there is still a lot to be done to arrive at a conclusion.

### **Management Policies and Transfer of Skills**

According to Nikandrou, Brinia & Bereri (2009), the management policies shape an organizational culture which will or will not allow the employee to experiment on his new skills in his working position. A formal structure made up of strong hierarchy of management levels operates differently to that of decentralized lean management structure (Edwards, 2013). Aspects related to the social and national norms and regional culture in which the organization exists in also shape and influence its cultural footprint. In this concept, organizational management policies represent the social-relational interactions of the members of an organization that can either support or prevent effective transfer of skills. According to Burke et al., (2007) and Perryer and McShane, (2008), organizations may contribute to the lack of skills transfer through establishing policies, procedures, and managerial practices which may be inappropriate or not conducive to the creation of a developmental organization. Therefore, the management policies used by an organization and its members along with the impact upon the transfer process remain significant. Variable organizational support originates from the idea of social support said to be influential once employees consider that other client systems not only support, but also provide them with opportunities for practicing newly acquired skills in the job situations (Caires, 2013). A study carried out by Hughes (2016), established that a barrier arising in work environment factors like a non-supportive organization culture, for instance, policies and procedures was identified to be among the top contributors to failing to transfer skills to the workplace. Maina (2016) stated that organizational culture and good policies are critical factors that can influence individual ability and opportunity to transfer acquired skills. Luhangala and Anyieni, (2019) asserted that a school’s organization structure provides the necessary processes and systems crucial for successful implementation of strategies in schools.

A school is a social institution which is responsible for promoting social interests (Mutuku, 2011). Muthui, Barchok and Muthaa, (2017), noted that the management of secondary schools is under the responsibility of stakeholders who comprise of MoE, the school administration, Parents Association, student leaders, teaching and support staff. These stakeholders ensure that the funds, human resources, curriculum and physical facilities are well managed in schools (Republic of Kenya, 2015). That implied that all stakeholders are vital in enhancing the effectiveness of every school. Thus, head teachers should seek to cultivate a good working relationship with the Parents Association and Board of Management (Mutuku, 2011) and (Musee, Gathumbi & Mwanza, 2017).

### **The Board of Management**

The BoM comprises school community members who are the highest school management body responsible in encompassing management of physical resources, finances, discipline and ensuring policy related to school education is implemented. Mutuku (2011) noted that they have a direct responsibility for the quality of education provided in the school. A study carried out by Indiazzi, (2018), established that among administrative challenges that head teachers encountered in everyday school operation included high

Board of Management drawings, lack of parents support in collection of fees, students' indiscipline and management of school finances. This undermined effectiveness of school administrators in ensuring smooth teaching and learning process which finally translated to students' poor academic performance.

### Parents Association

The Parents Association is a committee of selected parents who discuss and inform parents on matters arising within the school activities. According to Maina (2016), support services are weak in most schools. Therefore, National Education Sector Plan recommends that more responsibilities in the administration and management should be given to the Parent Associations of the schools to enable head teachers to concentrate on core functions (Republic of Kenya, 2014). Further, Muasya (2012) also noted that the school head has a big role to play especially in coordinating PA to raise funds for school's development.

### TSC and MoEST

Devolution governance in Kenya formed two centers of power, TSC and MoEST, which supervise the head teachers (Musyoka, 2018). These centers result in role conflicts that can influence head teachers' ability in curriculum leadership plus education standards and discipline. The study also established that Ministry of Education release policies with inadequate consideration and without consulting on their practicability with policy implementers. These policies should be indisputably applied by the head teachers an issue that creates a gap between policy formulation and implementation resulting to management challenges for the head teachers. The study recommended on coordination of TSC and MoEST policies in order to avoid policies conflict from Ministry and TSC. In addition, Maina (2016) indicated that approximately half, 48%, of the respondents felt that the MoEST and schools failed to sufficiently recognize and reward those who applied at work competencies and skills learnt in training.

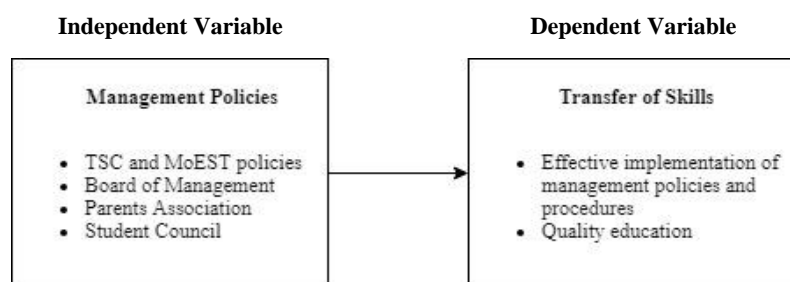
### Students Council

In Kenya, the Student Councils are the communication link between the students and the school administration (Wango, 2009). Their role is to report any matter that could compromise the security and safety of students to school management (Kamuri, 2014). Ogol and Thinguri, (2017) noted that the students' leadership council was formed in 2009 with the view to make schools leadership more participatory. It was intended to play a role in facilitating learners to interact in a formal partnership with school administrators, teachers and parents in the functional activities of the learning institution. It was meant to improve the discipline in school setting through enhancing communication between staffs, board of management, parents and the students' body. Despite it having existed almost in all secondary schools, indiscipline cases have persisted. There is a contradiction on the students' council leadership roles, the administrators' role as well as teaching staff, an issue if not addressed would lead to increase of indiscipline. The study recommended effective student involvement in administrative matters through effective student council and establishment of educational policies to guide the roles of students' councils in secondary schools.

Due to rising cases of students' unrests in secondary schools in Kenya, Muthui et al., (2017) sought to investigate the effectiveness of participation of student councils communication to enhance effective management of public secondary schools. They established that majority (61%) of respondents disagreed that the student councils were effective in communication in enhancing management of schools. It was further revealed that the students and the administration did not trust the student councils because they were not always truthful.

These studies bring to the light the management policies challenges encountered in management of schools. However, the studies did not conceptualize on the extent these policies influenced transfer of acquired skills in school management.

### Conceptual Framework



**Figure 1:** Relationship between Management and Transfer of Skills: Adapted and modified from: Baldwin and Ford Training Transfer Framework (1988)

Figure 1 illustrates the independent variable, management policies, whose study dimensions include TSC and MoEST policies, Board of Management, Parents Association and Students Council. Management policies play a fundamental role in determining whether trainees will exhibit learned skills once they return to workplace. The study hypothesized that management policies would influence transfer of skills in enhancing effective implementation of management policies and procedures as well as provision of quality education. Maina (2016) argued that organizational culture and policies are critical factors that can influence individual ability and

opportunity to transfer acquired skills. The study posited that transfer of skills may be effective or not depending on the relationship between the two variables.

## Research & Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive research design a research process that entails collection of data so as to test questions or hypotheses relating to the current status (Gay, 1992). This research design does not allow manipulation of the variables under investigation. Independent variable was studied in retrospect to assess its possible relationship to the dependent variable (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2010). The research study was conducted in Nyeri County to represent rural socio-economic setup regions. It also covers a wide area inclusive of all school categories from National to Sub county schools.

The study population comprised of 226 public secondary school head teachers. Those were targeted because they were specialists and managers in public secondary education and had participated in continuous professional development programmes as organized by the Ministry of Education. Table 1 illustrates the target population.

**Table 1:** Target Population

Category	Head teachers
National schools	2
Extra-county schools	16
County schools	24
Sub-county schools	184
<b>Total</b>	<b>226</b>

**Source:** County Director of Education Office (2019)

Table 2 illustrates the sampling techniques and sample size for the study. Census sampling was adopted for all the National secondary school heads since their population was very small. The census sampling method permits the researcher to consider the whole target population thus enhancing the data reliability as well as its representativeness to the entire population (Olive & Abel, 2010). On the other school categories, the researcher used stratified random sampling to sample representatives of different schools from Extra-county to Sub-county. Stratified sampling technique assists in attaining a high degree of representativeness in each stratum thus decreasing the probability of committing a sampling error (Babbie & Mouton, 2011). Sample size for Extra-county, County and Sub-county schools was determined by using the formula  $n = 0.3N$  where  $n$  is the sample size and  $N$  is the population (Best & Kahn, 2004). This sampling model is suitable where the population is small and finite (Sapsford, 2007).

**Table 2:** Sample Size Distribution

Category	Head teachers	Percentage	Sample size	Sampling Techniques
National schools	2	100%	2	Census
Extra-county schools	16	30%	5	Stratified, then simple random
County schools	24	30%	7	Stratified, then simple random
Sub-county schools	184	30%	55	Stratified, then simple random
<b>Total</b>	<b>226</b>		<b>69</b>	

Primary data was collected from the head teachers by means of closed-ended and open-ended questionnaires which aided in collection of quantitative and qualitative data respectively. A piloting of research instrument was conducted to pre-test the validity and reliability of the research tool. More than 10% of the questionnaires were pre-tested through subjects that were not included in the final study (Kothari, 2004). Content validity ensured that the questions and statements used fully represented every element of the research hypotheses and objectives of the study. Construct validity ensured that the questions and statements were correctly and clearly stated. In addition, the author's research supervisors provided their input in enhancing data validity. To test reliability, SPSS software (version 20) was used to analyze data from piloted questionnaires. Cronbach alpha index yielded a coefficient of  $r = 0.843$  which was acceptable. The closer the Cronbach alpha coefficient is to 1.0, the larger the internal consistency of the items on the scale (Johanson & Brooks, 2010). The research tool was thus considered fit for the study.

## Data Analysis and Presentation

After acquisition of research permit, the author distributed the questionnaires to the respondents and collected them after two weeks. Data on returned questionnaires was coded and keyed into computer system and a Statistical Package for Social Sciences (IBM SPSS Statistics 20) was used to generate descriptive and inferential statistics for qualitative and quantitative data respectively. The qualitative data originating from the multiple response data was analyzed using thematic content analysis technique. The qualitative data enriched the discussion of quantitative results (Howitt, 2010). Description statistics included frequencies, percentages and means. Inferential statistics involved measurement of relationship between the management policies and transfer of skills through correlation testing, hypothesis testing and regression analysis (Bell, 2007). The study adopted simple regression model expressed by Equation below:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + e$$

Where  $Y$  is the dependent variable (transfer of skills),  $\beta_0$  is the constant,  $\beta_1$  is the beta coefficient, and  $X_1$  is the independent variable (management policies) and  $e$  is error term (identically, independent and normally distributed with a mean of zero (0) and variance of one (1)). Results were presented using tables and graphs.

## Results and Discussions

### Response Rate and Demographic Variables

Sixty-three (63) out of sixty nine (69) distributed questionnaires responded to the study. This translated to 91% response rate which is considered sufficient (Best & Kahn, 2011; Kothari, 2014). Table 3 illustrates the breakdown of the respondents' response rate:

**Table 3:** Response Rate

Category	Population	Sample size	Number (n)
National schools	2	2	2
Extra-county schools	16	5	5
County schools	24	7	5
Sub-county schools	184	55	51
<b>Total</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>63</b>

**Table 4:** Demographic Statistics

Variable	Frequency (N = 63)	Percentage
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	40	63.5
Female	23	36.5
<i>Age</i>		
Below 30 years	0	0
31 – 40	4	6.4
41 – 50	38	60.3
51 and above	21	33.3
<i>Education</i>		
Post Graduate Diploma in Education	9	14.3
Bachelor of Education	37	58.7
Master in Education	15	23.8
PHD	2	3.2
<i>Length of Service as Head Teacher</i>		
5 years and below	10	15.9
6 – 10 years	23	36.5
Over 10 years	30	47.6
<i>Professional Development</i>		
Male	40	63.5
Female	23	36.5

**Source:** Author's survey data (2019)

Table 4 illustrates results of demographic variables of the respondents. Demographic data is very important since the findings are pivoted on the respondents' demographic characteristics as well as for the authenticity and generalization of the results (Bernard & Ryan, 2010). The results established that male respondents were 63.5% and female representation was 36.5%. This was an indication that majority of public secondary school head teachers were males. This might be contributed by the fact that most mixed public secondary schools were headed by males. The results agree with Musee et al. (2017), in that there is male dominance in the leadership of schools. 93.6% of the respondents were above 41 years of age. This could be contributed by the reason that a school head must have served for a reasonable number of years as a classroom teacher, as a head of department or a deputy head to acquire a credible teaching experience before being appointed as a head teacher. Majority of respondents (58.7%) held Bachelor degree in Education, 27% Master degree in Education and above and 14.3% held Post Graduate Diploma in Education. This implied that the head teachers had the required academic qualifications and well equipped to undertake school management responsibilities. 15.9% of respondents indicated to have a headship experience of 5 years and below, 36.5% had headship experience of 6 – 10 years, and the majority (47.6%) having over 10 years experience as head teachers. This indicated that the respondents were well experience and acquainted with the issues related to academic management and thus information obtained from them was reliable. Finally, all respondents (100%) had attended capacity building programmes to enhance school management practices. This was an indication that the head teachers had the required competencies for school management and for quality leadership as required by the TSC policy.

**Descriptive Analysis**

The objective of this study sought to assess the relationship between management policies and transfer of skills of school heads in public secondary schools in Nyeri County. A total of four items presented in form of statements were subjected to a 5-point Likert-type scale. Table 5 below illustrates the results of the findings:

**Table 5:** Respondents’ perceptions on management policies and transfer of skills

Management Policies Statements	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mean
TSC and MoEST enhance transfer of skills in school management	0.0%	36.5%	11.1%	47.6%	4.8%	3.21
The Board of Management is supportive in school management thus enhancing transfer of skills	1.6%	1.6%	6.3%	71.4%	19%	4.05
Parents Association promotes transfer of skills in management of schools	1.6%	11.1%	14.3%	69.8%	3.2%	3.62
Students Council is an incentive in the implementation of skills in school management	1.6%	57.1%	12.7%	23.8%	4.8%	2.73

N = 63

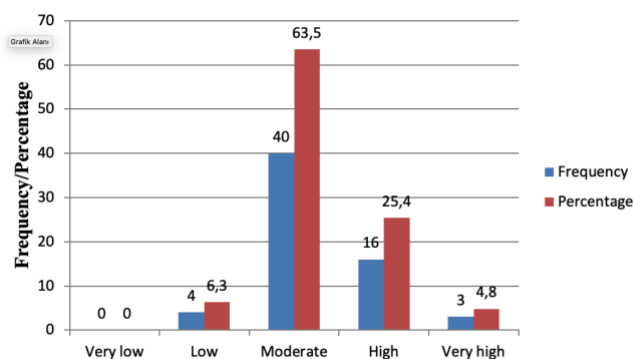
**Key:** SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

As shown in Table 5, the results reflect that the mean scores ranged between 2.73 and 4.05. The majority of respondents (52.4%) agreed that TSC and MoEST enhance transfer of skills in school management as reflected by a Mean of 3.21. A further 36.5% of the respondents disagreed and 11.1% were neutral. These results indicate that approximately half of the respondents were of opinion that TSC and MoEST enhance transfer of learned skills. This could be attributed to the reason that these are two centres of power that control management activities of the head teachers. These findings coincided with Musyoka (2018) that these two centres of power results in role conflicts. Majority of respondents (90.4%) strongly agreed that the Board of Management is supportive in school management thus enhancing transfer of skills as shown by a Mean of 4.05. 3.2% of the respondents disagreed and 6.3% were neutral. Further, majority of the respondents (73%) agreed that Parent Association promotes transfer of skills in management of schools as shown by a Mean of 3.62. 12.7% of the respondents disagreed and 14.3% were neutral. These results established that policies under the BoM and PA were supportive in school management thus enhancing transfer of acquired skills for the head teachers. This could largely be attributed to the good relationship between these stakeholders and head teachers, as well as their role in ensuring policies related to school education, management of physical resources, finances and discipline were implemented (Musee et al., 2017). However, majority of the respondents 58.7% disagreed on that Student Council is an incentive in the implementation of acquired skills in school management as reflected by a Mean of 2.73. 28.6% of the respondents agreed and 12.7% were neutral. These results could be associated with the presence of contradiction of the students’ council leadership roles with that of the administrators’ role as earlier established by Ogol et al., (2017). The results also reaffirm findings by Muthui et al. (2017), who established that majority (61%) of respondents disagreed that the Student Councils were effective in communication in enhancing management of schools. The study also found out that there was lack of trust for the student councils because they were not always truthful.

The findings of this study agree with Maina, (2016) and Ma, Bai, Y et al. (2018), that organizational culture and good policies are critical factors that can influence individual ability and opportunity to transfer trained skills. The findings of this study reaffirm that when manager trainees are assigned to units with a more positive organizational transfer climate, they become better performers in implementing learned behavior.

**Respondents’ Rating of Management Policies on Transfer of Skills**

The respondents were asked to rate their perception on contribution of management policies on transfer of skills in school management. Figure 2 illustrates the findings.



**Figure 2:** Respondents’ view on contribution of management policies on transfer of skills



As illustrated in Figure 2, majority (63.5%) were of the opinion that management policies contributed moderately in facilitating implementation of skills in management of schools. 36.5% of the respondents had different views as illustrated in Figure 2. This agrees with (Hutchins, et al., 2007), that the trainees’ perceptions of the transfer climate influences transfer outcomes.

**Challenges associated with management policies in implementation of skills in school management**

The study sought to establish if the head teachers experienced challenges associated with management policies in implementation of skills in school management. The responses are provided in table 6.

**Table 6:** Responses on challenges of management policies experienced in skills transfer

Responses	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
YES	41	65.1
NO	22	34.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 6 shows that majority of the respondents, 65.1% indicated that they experienced challenges associated with management policies in implementation of skills in school management, while 34.9% experienced no challenges. Funding of public secondary schools in Kenya is based on students’ enrolment as controlled by National Education Management Information System (NEMIS). This is a funding policy formulated by MoE. Therefore, schools with low numbers of students receive inadequate funds from the government (Musee et al., 2017). Since most schools in this study were small schools, the most challenging problem might be attributed to lack of adequate resources posed by the funding policy, thus management challenges in implementing competencies.

**Head teachers’ identification of challenges associated with management policies in implementation of skills**

The respondents were requested to identify the challenges associated with management policies they experienced in implementation of skills in school management. The results are summarized in table 7.

**Table 7:** Summary of challenges associated with management policies

Statement	Response Frequency	Percent	Percent of cases
Difficult to control discipline of students due to too much rights given to them by Ministry of Education	38	9.9%	60.3%
MoEST and TSC form two centers of power thus interfering with effective school management	43	11.3%	68.3%
Use of NEMIS policy to admit and finance students is cumbered with challenges as some students are not financed at all	51	13.4%	81%
Presence of students council in board meetings end up leaking most sensitive issues to the students	41	10.7%	65.1%
Students leaders often pose competition with the school heads in voting rights	48	12.6%	76.2%
Most BOM and PA members not sensitized of their roles	25	6.5%	39.7%
Failure of parents to support financially	32	8.4%	50.8%
There are frequent changes of policies	24	6.3%	38.1%
Several policies are more theoretical than practical	17	4.4%	27%
Strict policy deadlines like in data transmission	34	8.9%	54%
Existence of double standards between large and small schools as decision making is not all inclusive	29	7.6%	46%
<b>Total</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>606.5%</b>

As shown in Table 7, head teachers experience a variety of management policies challenges in implementation of acquired skilled, the highest being NEMIS policy framed by Ministry of Education scoring 81% of statements. The challenges are confirmed by Ministry of Education Policy Framework for Reforming Education and Training that states that *NEMIS is faced by challenges that are organizational, technical and capacity in nature* (MoE, 2019). The results of the descriptive analysis established that supportive management policies are necessary for a successful transfer of skills in school management.

**Regression Analysis**

Regression analysis helped in understanding how the transfer of skills (dependent variable) will change with changes in management policies. This section presents results of the findings of the equation  $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + e$  which was adopted to test the hypothesis  $H_0$ : *There is no significant relationship between management policies and the transfer of skills for the public secondary school head teachers in Nyeri County*. The parameters used to measure the management policies were aggregated by computing the average so as to test the hypothesis. Regression results for the influence of management policies on transfer of skills are illustrated in Tables 8 – 10.

**Model Summary**

**Table 8:** Model summary of coefficients of relationship between management policies and transfer of skills

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.483 <sup>a</sup>	0.234	0.221	0.50575

<sup>a</sup>Dependent variable: Management Policies

The model summary in Table 8 revealed that management policies explained 23.4% ( $R^2 = 0.234$ ) variation in transfer of skills for school heads when other factors were held constant. This R-square value is slightly lower than 0.25 deemed acceptable for studies examining social phenomenon (Gera, 2015). This meant that 76.6% of transfer of skills was influenced by other factors. The R value of 0.483 depicted a positive linear association between management policies and transfer of skills for secondary school head teachers.

**Analysis of Variance**

**Table 9:** Test of management policies and transfer of skills Model fit

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	4.757	1	4.757	18.598	0.001 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	15.603	61	0.256		
Total	20.359	62			

<sup>b</sup>Predictors (constant): Management policies

Analysis was carried out to establish whether the model was significant in explaining on the effects of management policies on transfer of skills of head teachers in management of schools. The outcome of ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) in Table 9 indicated a statistically significant model ( $F_{(1,61)} = 18.598, p = 0.001 < 0.05$ ). This indicated that the regression model of management policies and transfer of skills was significantly better prediction of the level of transfer of skills for secondary school head teachers. These results mean that the quality of management policies in schools would have a positive influence on transfer of skills.

**Regression Coefficients**

**Table 10:** Beta coefficients of management policies and transfer of skills

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2.087	0.447		4.665	0.000
Management Policies	0.536	0.124	0.483	4.312	0.000

Significance level: < 0.05

Model coefficients present unstandardized and standardized coefficients that explain regression model direction, and thus establish the level of significance of the study variables. The outcome in Table 10 revealed that management policies significantly positively predicts the transfer of skills for the head teachers ( $t = 4.312, p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ). The study therefore rejected the null hypothesis and concluded that management policies is a key component in determining the level of transfer of skills for secondary school head teachers as indicated in the predictor model in equation below:

Transfer of Skills  $2.087 + 0.536X_1$

Where 2.087 is the constant,  $X_1$  is the management policies index, which indicates that improvement of management policies by one unit would yield to a 0.536 increase in the scores of transfer of skills of secondary school head teachers. At 95% confidence level, the p-value of the management policies at 0.000 indicates a statistically significant effect as it is less than 0.05. Thus, management policies have a significant influence on transfer of skills.

The results of regression analysis established a low level of relationship between management policies and transfer of skills that could be contributing to poor quality of education and challenges in effective implementation of policies and procedures in school management. The findings agree with Caires (2013), that managers are likely to apply the new knowledge when there is a favourable organizational environment. The findings further concur with Organization Theory that identifies more complex horizontal and vertical relationships across levels that are associated in transfer of skills and subunits are bound by higher level system constraints. There exists a horizontal relationship between head teachers, BoM and PA, whereas vertical relationship exists between head teacher with TSC and MoEST being on the higher level and Students' Council is on the lower level. The theory emphasizes that performance of an individual or team depends on a minimum contribution from one or more members.

## Conclusion

The findings of this study revealed that despite the previous finding that TSC and MoEST form two centres of power, it is still a sticky problem that interferes with effective transfer of management skills in management of schools. The use of NEMIS policy to fund students limited resources for small schools whose enrolment of students is very low. The findings also revealed existence of double standards between large and small schools regarding decision making which was not all inclusive. In addition, strict policy deadlines like data transmission adversely impacts on effective implementation of skills in management of schools. Further, the study established that policies associated with student councils to a large extent did not support transfer of learned skills in school management. Most respondents felt that it was difficult to control discipline of students due to excessive rights given to them by MoE. The findings also established that frequent changes of policies by MoE adversely interfered with transfer of skills in management of schools.

Based on the findings, the study concludes that management policies influences transfer of skills in public education sector. In addition, the management policies statistically and positively affect transfer of skills for public secondary school heads. The results suggest that improving the management policies would enhance the level of transfer of skills for head teachers. Thus, the results of the current study led to the rejection of the null hypothesis that “*there is no significant relationship between management policies and transfer of skills for the public secondary school head teachers in Nyeri County*”.

This study aimed at contributing to the additional literature on management policies as a factor influencing transfer of training in public basic education. Thus, the study has endorsed management policies as an ideal model in determining the success of transfer of skills in school management.

It was hoped that the findings of this study might provide a deeper insight to MoE, TSC and other education stakeholders like the Board of Management, trade unions, Parent Associations and sponsors, in understanding the influence of management policies in implementation of learned skills in school management. The new knowledge would also sensitize the Government on recognizing the role played by management policies as an important catalyst in training transfer to promote quality education. Thus, the Government would review policy formulation machineries to enhance skills maintenance so as to justify the huge investments in continuous professional development programmes. Training is evaluated through positive change, which is successful transfer of skills at workplace (Kirkpatrick, 1976). It is therefore anticipated that the professional development trainers would assess post-training behaviour by exercising follow-ups to ensure that organizational climate support systems promote implementation of skills for effective school management and quality education (Brown, Weissbein & Kozlowski, 1998). It could be a system problem but not skill-deficiency problem (Kirkpatrick, 1976).

To promote improvement of transfer of skills in school management, the study recommends that there is need for the Ministry of Education to review NEMIS policy to alleviate the challenges associated with its application in school management. Despite past recommendation to harmonize TSC and MoEST policies, the problems still persist. This study calls for an urgent need for the Government to address the issue of two centres of power in public education sector probably through appropriately merging the functions of the Commission and the Ministry towards a common goal. In addition, the Ministry of Education should consider fair representation of all education stakeholders from big and small schools in policy formulation and decision making. Communication and implementation deadlines posed by MoEST should be fairly considered. Further, the policy of Student Councils in school management needs to be reviewed with the participation of school heads.

This study concentrated on influence of management policies on transfer of skills using four components; this study calls on further research to establish other (76.6%) influencing factors. Future studies can employ methodologies not employed the current study. Comparative studies can be undertaken in other counties especially the marginalized or Arid and Semi-Arid Land (ASAL) counties for the generalization of this study.

## Conflict of interest

Authors declare no conflict of interest.

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