

The Effect of Parents Teachers Association Motivation Strategies on Academic Performance of Public Secondary Schools: A Case of Voi District, Kenya

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Abstract

This study investigated the effect of PTA motivational strategies on academic performance in public secondary schools in Voi District. This research was necessitated by concerns raised by education stakeholders, leaders and public outcry over persistent dismal performance of secondary schools from Voi district in national exams yet parents, local communities and teachers continue to remain insensitive towards this problem. The study was guided by the following objectives: identify motivation strategies used by parents and students and determine the effect of motivation strategies on academic performance. A descriptive survey research design was employed in the study. The study was based on Brophy, J., Eccles, Expectancy-Value Theory. A sample size of 540 respondents was selected from all the 11 public secondary schools with a population of 3,421 people. Purposive sampling was used to select the 11 head teachers of the 11 public secondary. While, stratified random sampling was used to select PTA members, students, and teachers. Primary data was collected using questionnaires and interviews, and the secondary data was collected using document analysis. Chi-square was used to analyze the results to establish whether there was relationship between PTA motivational strategies and academic performance. The study found out that there was significant association between PTA motivation strategies and academic performance. For instance, motivation of teachers and students by parents led to improved discipline and work responsibility, early syllabus coverage and boosted their self-esteem to perform well. In conclusion, in most schools, there was still low parental participation in motivation of teachers and students. This was evident in the way parents neglected providing their children's educational needs. They showed very little commitment or were not involved in school matters, hence hindering the schools' academic progress and performance.

Key words: parents teachers association, motivation strategies, academic performance, public secondary schools

1. Introduction to the Study

It has been noted that parental participation has reduced (Sessional Paper No.1, 2005) at the inception of free education. Moreover, the centralized system of education in Kenya does not fully involve local communities in managing schools (World Bank, 2005). In Kenya, teachers viewed the ban on extra-tuition payment under FPE as detrimental to their motivation. It had previously served as incentive for them, and allowed teachers to have additional time to cover the syllabus. (UNESCO, 2005). According to the MOE Circular 2008, what constitutes remedial

lessons is professional extra-coaching to learners and does not involve payments by parents. Eshiwani (1983), argues that the quality of education is seen in terms of the numbers of students passing examinations.

The Ministry of Education Schools Management Handbook (2003) outlines the roles of the PTA as follow: assist the school administration on discipline from home and around the school; participate in developing fees/levies guidelines and payment arrangements; having a higher say when deciding

development projects; ensure teachers in their schools are well looked after to motivate them to teach; provide required physical facilities, equipment and materials for teaching and learning; approve and finance as appropriate school development plan; elect parents representatives on BOG; maintain a register of parents; draw up regulations governing the conduct of the business and members, and participating in school functions such as prize giving.

1.1 Statement to the Problem

Wlodkowski and Jaynes(1990) argue that teachers do make a difference to motivate students in learning even though teachers are not as powerful as parents who are the first teachers to a child. Kitogo(2009) observed that in Tanzania, Standard Seven Final Exams were poorly done due to lack of motivation of teachers and poor teaching and learning environment. It was noted that teachers living in rural areas led a pathetic life, which demoralized them. In Kenya, teachers expressed concern over parents' lack of involvement in post fee abolition. Parents no longer come to school to engage with teachers regarding students' performance and do not give in-kind contributions, (UNESCO, 2005).

Kiyapi (Personal communication, August 27th 2011), a former permanent secretary in the Ministry of Education, decried that parents in coast province have neglected their children education to teachers, and is the major cause of dismal performance in national exam. During the Voi District Head teachers Strategic Plan Meeting (2010), complaints were raised over parents who never turn up for school meetings and their indifferent and resigned attitude towards their children education and performance. Consequently, teachers felt demotivated in their work while students were disinterested in learning.

1.2 Summary of Literature Review

Ofoegbu (2004) argues that teachers motivation is anything done to make the teacher happy, satisfied, dedicated,

committed in such a way that they bring out the best in their places of work. Sergiovani(1987) found out that teachers get a lot of satisfaction by reaching out and affecting students, experiencing recognition and feeling responsible. Majority of administrators(head teachers) named three policies which affected their morale: shared governance in service, education and systematic supportive evaluation.

Epstein (1997) studied the moral and financial involvement of parents in their children academic motivation. It was concluded that parental moral involvement included: creating suitable home environment; expectations about children's academic performance; praise and appreciate children's academic performance; encourage children's participation in co-curricular activities; and evaluating and signing students' progress reports regularly. Parental financial involvement included: arranging proper tuition for children; providing transport facility, for example, school bus; proper healthcare facility; gifts or prizes for better performance; exposure trips and assisting in education daily life needs.

Epstein (1997) research on parental involvement in their children academic motivation in rural areas concluded that most of the parents are not well aware of their role in children's education. In addition, their attitude is of irresponsible type, they do not take interest in their children education nor help children in their homework. They do not make arrangements for their tuition nor encourage their children to participate in co-curricular activities. Instead of positive reinforcement, the parents use negative reinforcement on their children. Musila's (2010) study found out that motivational practices available for teachers were extrinsic rewards such as token and gifts. In a few schools, intrinsic rewards such as recognition motivated some teachers, however, poor working conditions led to dissatisfaction, low motivation and low

pupils achievement in most of the schools.

2. Methodology and Design

The researcher used descriptive survey research design because it was appropriate to collect practical information and divergent views from quite a large group of respondents who are directly involved and affected in the running of schools. These respondents could provide consistent and reliable information on the ground based on their experiences in school. A sample size of 30 per cent of 3,421 was selected. Teachers, students, PTA members and head teachers were selected for the study. They formed a sample size of 540 respondents. The study included all 11 public mixed boarding and day secondary schools in Voi District. Simple random was used to select 478 students, and 40 teachers. Purposive sampling was used to select the 11 head teachers. Purposive sampling was also used to select only 11 PTA members who were literate and able to respond to the questionnaire written in English. The researcher used interviews schedule, questionnaires and document analysis guide as the main tools for collecting data. The content validity was used to

measure the degree of accuracy in the data collected using the questionnaires. The instruments were presented to colleague students, supervisors and other experts within the School of Education, Moi University for verification. Their comments were found useful in modifying the instruments. The study used the test re-test reliability on the research instruments to ascertain their reliability. Descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution tables, percentages, and means were used to summarize data collected. Thematic analysis for qualitative data was carried out.

3. Data Analysis, Presentation, Interpretation and Discussion

3.1 Student-Teacher Motivational Needs

The study sought information from respondents on the education needs for both teachers and students in school in order to identify student and teacher motivational needs. The results are shown in table (i):

ACTIVITY	RESPONDENT	SA		A		U		D		SD		TOTAL	
		frq	%	frq	%	frq	%	frq	%	frq	%	frq	%
Library well equipped With books	Student	265	55.4	193	40.4	06	1.3	09	1.9	05	1.5	478	100
	Teacher	23	57.5	12	30.0	01	2.5	03	7.5	01	2.5	40	100
	Parent	02	18.2	05	45.5	02	18.2	01	9.1	01	9.1	11	100
Safety facilities e.g accommodation	Student	255	53.3	203	42.5	07	1.5	11	2.3	02	0.4	478	100
	Teacher	20	50.0	11	27.5	05	12.5	02	5.0	02	5.0	40	100
	Parent	02	18.2	04	36.4	03	27.3	01	9.1	01	9.1	11	100
Scholarship e.g. fees	Student	287	60.1	170	35.6	12	2.5	06	1.3	03	0.6	478	100
	Teacher	24	60.0	09	22.5	04	10.0	02	5.0	01	0.2	40	100
	Parent	07	63.6	02	18.2	01	9.1	01	9.1	-	-	11	100
Laboratory well equipped	Student	258	54.0	195	40.8	07	1.5	11	2.3	06	1.4	478	100
	Teacher	21	52.5	11	27.5	03	7.5	03	7.5	02	5.0	40	100
	Parent	02	18.2	04	36.4	02	18.2	02	18.2	01	9.1	11	100
Recognition e.g. praise	Student	253	52.9	167	34.9	21	4.4	17	3.6	20	4.2	478	100
	Teacher	24	60.0	05	12.5	07	17.5	02	5.0	02	5.0	40	100
	Parent	06	54.5	03	27.3	02	18.2	-	-	-	-	11	100
Moral Support	Student	255	53.3	193	40.4	13	2.7	11	2.3	06	1.3	478	100
	Teacher	22	55.0	10	25.5	02	5.0	04	10.0	02	5.0	40	100
	Parent	02	18.2	06	54.5	02	18.2	01	9.1	-	-	11	100
Incentives / Rewards	Student	261	54.5	192	40.2	07	1.5	13	2.7	05	1.0	478	100
	Teacher	20	50.0	14	35.0	04	10.0	01	2.5	01	2.5	40	100
	Parent	01	9.1	02	18.2	05	45.5	02	18.2	01	9.1	11	100
Meals e.g. Tea, lunch, Supper	Student	275	57.5	195	40.7	02	0.42	04	0.84	-	-	478	100
	Teacher	25	62.5	11	27.5	-	7.5	01	2.5	-	-	40	100
	Parent	04	36.4	06	54.5	-	9.1	-	-	-	-	11	100
Transport Facilities e.g. school bus	Student	268	56.0	194	40.6	06	1.3	10	2.1	-	-	478	100
	Teacher	25	62.5	10	25.0	03	7.5	02	5.0	-	-	40	100
	Parent	05	45.4	02	18.2	03	27.3	01	9.1	-	-	11	100
Health care Facility e.g. Dispensary	Student	273	57.1	167	34.9	07	1.5	25	5.2	06	1.3	478	100
	Teacher	23	57.5	12	30.0	01	2.5	04	10.0	-	-	40	100
	Parent	01	9.1	05	45.5	01	9.1	04	36.3	-	-	11	100

The study found out that students and teachers crave for various needs that motivated them towards academic performance. They included the following categories of needs: need for sponsorship in terms of school fees or bursary; free meals such as tea, lunch or supper provided by PTA for teachers in school; transport facilities e.g. school bus for travel conveniences; medical or health care facility like school dispensary and medical personnel; safety need like adequate housing for teachers, and accommodation for students e.g. dormitories, dining hall, classrooms and ablution; well-equipped library and

laboratory; encouragement and moral support e.g. parents checking students and school progress; Monetary rewards or incentives, and recognizing their efforts.

3.2 Motivation Methods Used by Parents in School

The study sought to find out from respondents how parents motivate teachers and students with the objective of identifying methods of motivation used by parents in school. The results are presented in table (ii).

Table (ii): Motivation Methods Used By Parents

ACTIVITY	RESPONDENT	SA		A		U		D		SD		TOTAL	
		frq	%	frq	%	frq	%	frq	%	frq	%	frq	%
Contribute and participate in Workshops	Student	25	5.2	147	30.8	16	3.3	237	49.6	53	11.1	478	100
	Teacher	04	10.0	13	32.5	01	2.5	20	50.0	02	5.0	40	100
	Parent	02	18.2	06	54.5	01	9.1	02	18.2	-	-	11	100
Participate in target setting with Students	Student	29	6.1	225	47.5	11	2.3	145	30.3	68	14.2	478	100
	Teacher	03	7.5	12	30.0	04	10.0	04	10.0	17	42.5	40	100
	Parent	01	9.1	05	45.5	02	18.2	01	9.1	02	18.2	11	100
Pay remedial fees at the required time	Student	26	5.4	186	38.9	07	1.5	205	42.9	54	11.3	478	100
	Teacher	01	2.5	12	30.0	02	5.0	20	50.0	05	12.5	40	100
	Parent	01	9.1	04	36.4	02	18.2	03	27.3	01	9.1	11	100
Contribute and participate in field trip	Student	22	4.6	130	27.2	07	1.5	261	54.6	58	12.1	478	100
	Teacher	02	5.0	12	30.0	01	2.5	21	52.5	04	10.0	40	100
	Parent	01	9.1	06	54.5	01	9.1	02	18.2	01	9.1	11	100
Coach/teach Students e.g. homework	Student	25	5.2	73	15.3	15	3.1	240	50.2	125	26.2	478	100
	Teacher	02	5.0	06	15.0	02	5.0	20	50.0	10	25.0	40	100
	Parent	01	9.1	05	45.5	03	27.2	01	9.1	01	9.1	11	100
Contribute to education Needs e.g. Library and supplementary books	Student	21	4.4	83	17.4	11	2.3	251	52.5	112	23.4	478	100
	Teacher	05	12.5	08	20.0	03	7.5	20	50.0	04	10.0	40	100
	Parent	01	9.1	06	54.5	03	27.3	01	9.1	-	-	11	100

The findings on table (ii) indicated that a number of motivation strategies were implemented by some parents, namely: Parents paid school fees at the required time; thus encouraged teaching-learning without interruptions, and also ensured smooth operations of school programs. They facilitated meetings and workshops, and co-

curricular activities for both teachers and students by paying PTA levies for their travel. In addition, few parents were willing to contribute to field or exposure trips for students and teachers; paid remedial fees for extra-tuition; set academic targets with their children; offered guidance in students homework

and subject choice, and checked students academic and school progress.

3.3 PTA involvement in Motivation of Teachers and Students

The study sought information from

respondents on parents' participation in various school matters with the objective of determining parental involvement in motivation of teachers and students. The results are indicated in table (iii).

Table (iii): PTA involvement in school matters

ACTIVITY	RESPONDENT	SA		A		U		D		SD		TOTAL	
		frq	%	frq	%	frq	%	frq	%	frq	%	frq	%
Pay school fees at required time	Student	36	7.5	91	19.0	19	4.0	270	56.5	62	13.0	478	100
	Teacher	01	2.5	05	12.5	01	2.5	23	57.5	10	25.0	40	100
	Parent	01	9.1	05	45.5	01	9.1	03	27.3	01	9.1	11	100
Participate in school meetings	Student	26	5.4	83	17.4	21	4.4	245	51.3	103	21.5	478	100
	Teacher	02	5.0	08	20.0	03	7.5	21	52.5	06	15.0	40	100
	Parent	01	9.1	04	36.3	03	27.3	02	18.2	01	9.1	11	100
Pay PTA levies at the required time	Student	34	7.1	89	18.6	22	4.6	297	62.1	36	7.6	478	100
	Teacher	01	2.5	04	10.0	03	7.5	27	67.5	05	12.5	40	100
	Parent	01	9.1	05	45.5	01	9.1	02	18.2	02	18.2	11	100
Contribute to school as role models	Student	15	3.1	110	23.0	31	6.5	286	59.9	36	7.5	478	100
	Teacher	02	5.0	11	27.5	01	2.5	22	55.0	04	10.0	40	100
	Parent	02	18.2	06	54.5	02	18.2	01	9.1	-	-	11	100
Participate in School/class Activities	Student	23	4.8	59	12.3	48	10.0	107	22.4	241	50.5	478	100
	Teacher	02	5.0	04	10.0	05	12.5	09	22.5	20	50.0	40	100
	Parent	-	-	02	18.2	03	27.3	05	45.4	01	9.1	11	100
Uphold School with Pride	Student	84	17.6	166	34.7	46	9.6	157	32.9	25	5.2	478	100
	Teacher	06	15.0	13	32.5	02	5.0	16	40.0	03	7.5	40	100
	Parent	02	18.2	06	54.5	02	18.2	01	9.1	-	-	11	100
Encourage Co-curricula Activities	Student	19	4.0	151	31.6	21	4.4	231	48.3	56	11.7	478	100
	Teacher	02	5.0	12	30.0	03	7.5	18	45.0	05	12.5	40	100
	Parent	01	9.1	07	63.6	02	18.2	01	9.1	-	-	11	100

The study found out that there was low parental participation in motivating teachers and students in school matters. First, majority of parents delayed in payment of school fees and other levies, hence, interrupted teaching-learning time and operations of school programs. Secondly, majority of parents infrequently attended school or class meetings, therefore did not contribute to decision making to come up with school policies that would improve performance. Majority of parents were also unwilling to sustain and support co-curricular activities because they failed to pay for activity fees at required time; buy new sports kits for student, and did not contribute towards other activities like drama and music. There was very little or lack of parental support in offering guidance over students' homework

and subject choice; monitoring students, and schools progress, resulting in laxity of students towards academic work, and reduced morale in teachers towards their work.

In addition, parents were reluctant to provide education needs of students such as a school library with reading and revision materials; transport e.g. school bus, and a school dispensary with medical personnel. Parents also neglected their children education entirely on teachers whom they did not appreciate in terms of offering in-kind contributions such as free meals; thus, teachers were demotivated in their work. As a result, the operation of school and academic progress were adversely affected.

3.4 Role of Motivation on Academic Performance

The study sought the views of respondents on how motivation strategies used by parents influence academic performance

with objective of establishing the role of motivation on academic performance of schools. The results are shown in table (iv):

Table(iv): Role of Motivation on Academic Performance

ACTIVITY	RESPONDENT	SA		A		U		D		SD		TOTAL	
		frq	%	frq	%	frq	%	frq	%	frq	%	frq	%
Encourage student attendance and completion	Student	285	59.6	171	35.8	08	1.7	11	2.3	03	0.6	478	100
	Teacher	23	57.5	09	22.5	05	12.5	03	7.5	-	-	40	100
	Parent	07	63.6	03	27.3	01	9.1	-	-	-	-	11	100
Boost self -esteem to perform	Student	279	58.4	159	33.3	11	2.3	17	3.5	12	2.5	478	100
	Teacher	22	55.0	10	25.0	02	5.0	04	10	02	0.5	40	100
	Parent	01	9.1	05	45.5	03	27.3	02	18.2	-	-	11	100
Improved discipline and work responsibility	Student	281	58.8	187	39.1	03	0.6	05	1.0	02	0.4	478	100
	Teacher	24	60.0	14	35.0	02	5.0	-	-	-	-	40	100
	Parent	01	9.1	05	45.5	04	36.3	01	9.1	-	-	11	100
Early syllabus work/ Coverage	Student	253	53.0	168	35.1	17	3.6	25	5.2	15	3.1	478	100
	Teacher	23	57.5	13	32.5	02	5.0	02	5.0	-	-	40	100
	Parent	01	9.1	03	27.2	05	45.5	02	18.2	-	-	11	100
Higher grades to further education & future career	Student	289	60.5	177	37.0	09	1.9	03	0.6	-	--	478	100
	Teacher	27	67.5	11	27.5	02	5.0	-	-	-	-	40	100
	Parent	02	18.2	06	54.5	03	27.3	-	-	-	-	11	100

The findings indicated that majority of the respondents were aware that parents play a pivotal role in encouraging students' attendance, completion, and transition in education. In addition, teachers and students felt motivated to improve work responsibility and discipline when parents offer guidance and support, and monitor academic progress in school and at home. Moreover, the respondents were aware that when parents were committed to paying school fees, PTA levies, and remedial fees, then teachers and students would have sufficient time to cover the syllabus and revision, pay attention to weak students in order to perform well. Teachers and students desired to be appreciated for their efforts as it boosted their confidence to perform well academically.

4. Conclusions

From the above findings, it was concluded that:

Majority of parents failed to address education needs of teachers and students owing to low social-economic background

and negligence. For example, teacher craved for housing units and free meals, moral support or encouragement from parents. While, students needed adequate accommodation in the dormitories and classrooms; well-equipped school library and laboratory. Other needs included transport e.g. school bus for travel conveniences; medical facility and medical personnel; monetary incentives or rewards and recognition e.g. opportunities for personal growth such as exposure trips. Failure to address educational needs in schools discouraged teachers and students; hence, performed dismally.

Majority of the parents ignored and were non-committal to a few measures or strategies put in place to achieve academic performance in schools. For instance, very few parents contributed to field or exposure trips for students and teachers; payment of remedial fees for extra-tuition; setting of academic targets with their children; offering guidance

to students' homework and subject choice, and checking students' progress in school. Moreover, there was low parental participation in motivation of teachers and students evident from parental negligence in providing education needs and very little or non-involvement in school matters e.g. parents failure to participate in school meetings or functions, hence, hindering operations of the schools and academic progress.

Furthermore, majority of the parents had resigned attitude and were insensitive about their role in encouraging school performance. They were unwilling to monitor school work responsibility and discipline; payment of remedial fees, PTA levies and school fees promptly to provide sufficient time for teaching-learning in order to cover the syllabus and carry out revision on time. They were also reluctant to appreciate teachers and students efforts in school to boost their confidence to perform well.

5. Recommendations

From the findings discussed, the following recommendations were reached:

i) Other education stake holders e.g. CBOs and CDF should sensitize and support parents on their education role for both the children

and schools through workshops or education forum in order to provide educational needs for schools apart from parenting role.

ii). Parents should be informed on motivation methods that have been used in performing schools across the country to improve academic performance in PTA meetings, newsletters, chiefs' barazas and have them sign commitments to that effect.

iii) The school administration should enlighten parents to participate in school matters by establishing proper channels and policies on school functions or meetings, open or visiting days, infrastructure development, and diverse ways of income generating for schools in the form of school fees with penalty on defaulters.

iv.) There is urgent need for awareness on parents to re-dedicate their efforts towards supporting the government commitment on education beyond just enrolling their children in school for free education but also to improve and sustain academic achievement and educational gains in schools for their children future aspirations.

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