



EXAMINING ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF TEACHER TRAINING IN PUBLIC PRIMARY TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGES IN KENYA

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Abstract: *This study intended to examine the alternative strategies that could help improve the quality of teacher training in public primary teacher training colleges in Kenya. The study used descriptive survey design with a target population of 12,285 comprising 11, 525 and 1,050 college principals, subject tutors and teacher trainees respectively. Simple random sampling was used to obtain a sample size of 1,586. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected using pretested structured questionnaires. Collected data was coded and analyzed using SPSS version 28 and results presented in form of tables, frequencies and percentages. About 50% principals and tutors cited tutors' overstay in one single college while 50% trainees cited lack of students' freedom and lack of employment for teacher graduates. From these findings it is concluded that lack of students' freedom, tutors' overstay in one single college and lack of employment for teacher graduates do affect quality training in PPTTCs in Kenya. The study recommended that the government should involve all key stakeholders in the process of improving quality of teacher training by overhauling teacher training curriculum in relation to its structure, content and scope, subject tutors' professional development specifically for PTTCs in Kenya, unlike the case at the moment where subject tutors trained for secondary education are employed in PPTTCs. These will enhance quality teacher training in PPTTCs in Kenya.*

Keywords: *Alternative Strategies, Improve Quality Teacher Training, Primary Teacher Training Colleges, Teacher Training*

INTRODUCTION

Quality teacher training therefore is a crucial ingredient of education and critical to both understanding and addressing global and regional issues of reducing economic and social disparities (Furlong, 2013). Quality teacher training is attached to diverse cultures' and societies' consumption of significant economic resources (Wamai, 2010). According to

Ng'ethe (2010), Quality teacher training enhances knowledge driven growth, economic strategies, poverty reduction as well as a qualified and adaptable labor force for local use.

The inability to roll out adequate TPD in teacher training colleges positively affects the teaching strategies and acquisition of new knowledge required to combat the quickly changing world in the 21st century (Andiema, 2017). Kafu (2011) notes that teacher professional development is useless practically unless teacher educators are given access to ICT resources and have adequate time and essential support to integrate the learnt skills and knowledge.

The reviewed literature indicated, key alternating strategies for enhancing quality teacher training in PPTTCs in Kenya including; ensuring the availability of strong, and relevant teacher education policies for qualified teacher educators with sound knowledge of relevant pedagogies and qualified teacher trainees with passion for teaching as a profession. This discourse has also revealed that teacher educators and their trainees should be equipped with competency in using ICT to improve the quality of teaching and learning. In this regard, primary teacher training colleges can ensure appropriate investment in Information Communication Technology, (Kitta & Fussy, 2013). Public primary teacher training colleges can also facilitate the development of relevant learning strategies for the use of ICT in the teacher education. This kind of investments would help Kenya to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Vision 2030, The Big Four Agenda, and other development goals. The current study therefore intended to examine the alternative strategies that could help improve quality teacher training in public primary teacher training colleges in Kenya.

METHODOLOGY

Research design is the overall strategy chosen to integrate the different components of the study in a coherent and logical way. It constituted the blueprints for collection, measurement and analysis of data with relevance and purpose to the research study (Kothari, 2016). The study employed the descriptive survey design. Descriptive survey design involved the collection of quantitative and qualitative data by use of questionnaires followed by the description of characteristics of the sample population based on the collected data. These characteristics included people's attitudes, opinions, habit, relationships or any other education social issues (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). This design allowed the researcher to gather information, summarize, presents and interpret for the purpose of clarification (Orodho, 2002).

The target population in this study was twelve thousand two hundred and eighty-five (12285) altogether. This comprised of all the thirty-five (35) college principals, all the one thousand seven hundred and fifty (1750) college subject tutors and all the ten thousand five hundred (10500) teacher trainees in the thirty-five (35) DPTTCs in Kenya.

With reference to the sampling procedure, the study adopted probability sampling, specifically simple random sampling. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), thirty percent (30%) of the target population can be selected from a population for a study. Since PTTCs use the same curriculum, eleven (11) colleges were selected using simple random sampling to enhance equal and independent chance of being a member of the sample. The selection criterion was as a result of the widely dispersed PPTTCs in the republic of Kenya. Gay (1996) argues that limitation of time and financial resources may influence researcher's choice of study area. To select eleven (11) colleges from thirty-five (35) PPTTCs in Kenya, the researcher wrote the names of all PPTTCs on pieces of papers, shook them and then picked randomly the required number. All the principals of the randomly selected colleges were included in the study as key participants. The teacher trainees were further selected using simple random sampling based on the ratio of the student population in each college. The total proposed sample of the student population was 10% of the accessible population (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The sample size of the study consisted of 11 principals, 525 tutors and 1050 teacher trainees in the eleven selected colleges as indicated in table 3.1 below:

Table 1
Sampling Matrix

Category	Population	Sample size	Percentage
PPTTCs	35	11	30.0
Principals			
Subject tutors	1750	525	30.0
Teacher trainees	10500	1050	10.0
Total	12285	1586	12.9

Source: MoE 2021

With regards to the data collection instruments, the study used questionnaire and document analysis. The questionnaires which were the main tool for data collection consisted of series of structured questions. In this study questionnaires were convenient because they have the ability to collect large sum of population data, helped in accurate analysis, provided anonymity of the participants, and offered convenience due to the fact that the participants were knowledgeable and literate, (Orodho, 2009). Questionnaires were also safe with online administration via emails due to the COVID 19 health guidelines. Document analysis instrument was also used to get relevant information about teacher trainees' performance in PTE examinations.

About data collection procedures, the researcher sought an introductory letter from the Department of Education at the Presbyterian University of East Africa which was used to obtain a permit from the National Council for Science and Technology (NACOSTI) in

Kenya to get clearance to visit the eleven PPTTCs, and college principals' permission. Structured questionnaires were prepared to obtain quantitative data. The researcher then assured the participants of confidentiality. The researcher advised the respondents not to write their details on the instruments the distribution of the questionnaires and collection of raw data took two weeks.

Regarding data analysis procedures, descriptive statistics were used to analyze both the quantitative and qualitative data obtained, the researcher cleaned, coded all the data and entered in the computer for analysis using the SPSS version 28 which is able to handle large amount of data, given its wide spectrum of statistical procedures purposefully designed for social sciences, it is also quite efficient and quick in analyzing data (Gastwirth *et al.*, 2009). After analysis, the results were presented using frequencies, percentages and tables.

RESULTS

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The study sought to examine the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The characteristics included the following: gender distribution, age bracket, and education level. In terms of gender, slightly more than a third (36.4%) of the principals were female, 63.6 % of them were male. However, subject tutors registered 41% males, and 59% females, while teacher trainees also recorded 34% males, and 59.0% females.

With reference to the age bracket, majority of the teacher trainees were aged between 18 to 30 years while majority of the principals were aged between 40 to 51 years. About half of the subject tutors were aged between the ages of 31 to 40 years.

About their educational background, half of the principals had a master degree and the rest had bachelors. There were no PhD degree holders. These were indicators that they were well qualified to teach in PPTTCs. Analysis emerging from the principals and subject tutors qualifications, revealed, that this target group was well grounded, and this, further helped the researcher to obtain vital data on the quality of teacher education in public primary teacher trainings in Kenya.

Alternative Strategies that Could Help Improve Quality Teacher Training in Public Primary Teacher Training Colleges

This research objective aimed at establishing the strategies that might help to improve the quality of teacher training in public primary teacher training colleges in Kenya. The researcher formulated six items, from which the participants were free to choose. These items were: Provision of adequate teaching and learning materials, provision of adequate infrastructure, and

provision of adequate number of qualified tutors, creating awareness on importance of education, barring subject tutors from stay for too long in one station, and increasing salaries for tutors. All the target groups; principals, tutors, and trainees responded to the items. Table 1, 2 and 3 show the distribution of responses from principals, subject tutors, and teacher trainees.

Table2

Distribution of principals' responses on strategies that might help to improve teacher training

Strategies Suggested [N=11]		Count	%
1	Provide adequate teaching and learning materials/aids	11	100
2	Provide adequate infrastructure	11	100
3	Provide adequate number of qualified tutors	11	100
4	Create awareness on importance of TPD	11	100
5	Tutors should not stay in one college for a long time	5	46
6	Increase salary for primary school teachers	11	100

Table 3

Distribution of subject tutors' responses on strategies that might help to improve teacher education

Strategies Suggested [N=525]		count	%
1	Provide adequate teaching and learning materials/aids	525	100
2	Provide adequate infrastructures	525	100
3	Provide adequate number of qualified tutors	525	100
4	Create awareness on importance of TPD	525	100
5	Tutors should not stay in one college for a long time	200	38
6	Increase salary for primary school teachers	525	100

Table 4

Distribution to trainees responses on strategies that might help to improve teacher education

Strategies Suggested [N=1050]		count	%
1	Provide adequate teaching and learning materials/aids	1050	100
2	Provide adequate infrastructures	1050	100
3	Provide adequate number of qualified tutors	1050	100
4	Create awareness on importance of TPD	1000	95
5	Tutors should not stay in one college for a long time	1020	97
6	Increase salary for primary school teachers	1030	98

DISCUSSIONS

The study investigated three key variables in respect to their impact of implementation of ministry of education policies on quality teacher training in public primary teacher training in Kenya. The variables included; Effects of Implementation of Ministry of Education policy, Diploma level qualification policy on quality teacher training among teacher trainees in PPTTCs in Kenya and alternative strategies that could help improve the low quality teacher training in PPTTCs in Kenya. With respect to the variables; 11 (100%) principals cited inadequate teaching/learning materials and teaching aids, inadequate infrastructures, inadequate number of qualified subject tutors, lack of creating awareness on importance of TPD, and meagre tutors' salaries. Five (50%), cited that a tutor should not be allowed to stay for a long time in one single college.

Five hundred, and twenty five (100%) subject tutors cited, inadequate teaching and learning materials, and teaching aids in teacher training colleges, inadequate infrastructures, inadequate number of qualified tutors, lack of creating awareness on importance of education, and meager tutor' salaries. 38% of them, cited that a tutor should not be allowed to stay for a long time in one single college. All the trainees cited inadequate teaching and learning materials, and teaching aids in teacher training colleges, inadequate infrastructures and inadequate number of qualified tutors. One thousand (95%), one thousand and twenty (97%), and 98% students, cited creating awareness on the importance of TPD, tutors staying for a long time in a station, and meager tutors' salaries respectively.

These findings are consistent with (MOEST, 2005), that emphasized major educational reform to cater for the ever changing system of education. The findings are also in line with KICD (2016), outlines that, there should be all-round curriculum that is friendly not only to the trainees, but primary education stakeholders in general. According to one respondent, the strategies to help improve the quality of training must have a direct bearing on the eradication of corruption in Kenya. The respondent argued that, the provision of more funds would not help to improve the quality of teacher training, thus, suggested that there are a lot more, the country ought to do in order to put thing in the right position, as suggested below: The provision of funds to the teacher training colleges will not change anything, as far as improving the system is concerned. We have witnessed donors injecting a lot of money into teacher training colleges' projects in Kenya, with the UK, as a leading donor in the past, yet things remained the same. There is no possibility of any qualitative change without significant reforms, and ultimately, the eradication of corruption in the country. (Footnote, Response Section E).

Similarly, abrupt change of the curriculum in the teacher education has also been mentioned by a respondent at the footnote of questionnaire. This respondent suggested that an abrupt introduction to education system, such as the CBC has adverse effects on the nature and quality of education. The respondent suggested that changes should be introduced, gradually, taking into account the faculties. The respondent also said that the implementers of change must also be well motivated, and said: "If we want to improve primary training, we must be relevant and concurrent with the needs of the primary schools in a given paradigm in education sector and the wider society. Also, tutors must be well paid, so as, to engage them in research, and related activities.

This chapter has dealt with the analysis of the questionnaires, and the discussions on the implications of the results of quality training, based on the objectives of the study. It established that quality training is affected by a wide range of variables which are related to policies and alternative strategies of training among teacher trainees in public primary teacher training colleges in Kenya. These included; degree of preparedness, qualifications of subject tutors' and their remunerations among other severe challenges.

CONCLUSION

The results of this research revealed that; effects of implementation of pre-service and in-service, diploma level qualification and strategies (independent variables) are directly linked to quality teacher training in public primary teacher training colleges in Kenya (dependent variable). There is a direct interplay between "effects" related to implementation of education policies and strategies of teacher training (independent variables) on quality training (dependent variable) in public primary teacher training colleges in Kenya. Based on the findings of this study, subject tutors should be allowed to handle manageable workloads by ensuring staff. The government should also post adequate teaching staff to the

PPTTCs. Further the training period should be increased to three years to increase the trainee – tutor contact hours.

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