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ISSUES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS PROCUREMENT POLICY IN KENYAN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS: THE CASE OF WARENG DISTRICT, UASIN-GISHU COUNTY, KENYA.

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Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to examine issues in the implementation of instructional materials procurement policy in Kenyan Public Primary School. The study was prompted by the recent loss of Ksh. 1.3 billion meant for text books under the Free Primary Education (FPE) programme which raises questions about the functionality of the procurement policy. The study was conducted in Wareng District of Uasin Gishu County. A descriptive survey design was adopted utilizing both quantitative and qualitative approaches. A sample size of 152 respondents comprising 38 head teachers, 76 panel heads, and 1 DQASO were drawn from 38 public primary schools to participate in the study. Purposive and stratified simple random sampling techniques were used to select the respondents. Questionnaires, interviews, and document analysis were used to collect data. Research instruments were tested for validity and reliability. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the findings. The study revealed that, SIMSC's lack of knowledge and skills in the procurement process and that un-procedural procurement practices adopted by schools compromised the implementation of the procurement process. Finally, the study established that, the level of compliance to the procurement process is still low and majority of schools still flawed procurement rules. The study recommends that proper monitoring and evaluation mechanisms on procurement be put in place to ensure proper implementation of the policy.

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INTRODUCTION

The economic and social benefits of providing universal primary education are now widely recognized. Mondoh (2004) noted that there is no tool for development that is more effective than the education of the household and that no other policy is likely to raise economic productivity, lower infant and maternal mortality, improve health and nutrition as the education policy. Education is one of the effective instruments a nation has at its disposal for promoting sustainable social and economic development (Republic of Kenya, 1999). The growing demand for education has led to increased expenditure on education. World Bank (2003) estimated that the proportion of Gross National Production (GNP) devoted to education in the developing countries, particularly in Asia, Latin America and Africa rose on the average, from 2.3% in 1969 to 4.5% in 1984.

The need to provide all Kenyans with Education is based on the perceived contribution of education in overall development. This perception was captured by Eshiwani (1993:39), where he noted that, "Education stimulates and empowers people to participate in their own development". Education plays a critical role not only in expanding further educational opportunities, but also in fostering basic intellectual abilities such as literacy that are crucial to success in a world where power is closely linked with knowledge. Sifuna (1980) concurs with the view when he

asserts that the numerous changes on Kenya's educational systems are as a result of the government's appreciation of the fact that education is key to national development. The Kenya Government declared full free primary education in all public primary schools in the country in January, 2003. Up to end of 2002, education at all levels in Kenya was a cost-sharing venture between parents and the government (Kamunge Report, 1988, Sessional Paper No. 8). Quality education had thus become almost unaffordable by most poor families, a situation that contributed to the high level of illiteracy, high school drop-out rates and child-labour in the country.

The influence of instructional materials in promoting students' academic performance and teaching and learning in educational development is indisputable. Students learn better when most of the senses are appealed to the instruction and use of instructional materials in education has added a new dimension in the positive promotion of the teaching and learning process. It provides the much needed sensory experiences needed by the learners for an effective and meaningful behavioural change. Instructional materials are meant to improve the quality of education for effective academic performance of agricultural science students in schools. The performance of the students on the intended learning outcome provides the validation loop on the success of the interaction and instruction (Bakare, 1986).

Instructional materials have been defined by various authors. For example, Obanya (1989) viewed them as didactic materials which are supposed to make learning and teaching possible. According to Abdullahi (1982), instructional materials are materials or tools locally made or imported that could make tremendous enhancement of lesson impact if intelligently used. Isola (2010), referred to them as objects or devices, which help the teacher to make a lesson much clearer to the learner. Instructional materials are also described as concrete or physical objects which provide sound, visual or both to the sense organs during teaching (Agina-Obu, 2005). In this study, instructional materials refers to any instruments, devices or materials used to transfer and hand over the knowledge, information, news and skills to learn from teachers/instructors to learners or students. Principles in using the instructional instruments and materials in teaching are that they must be suitable in terms of contents and learning objectives set by the teachers. The teaching materials must be accurate and suitable for the students to learn, and practice their analytical skills. They must help expose the students to sufficient experiences. The instructional materials must also be suitable to the school sizes and educational policy as stated by each educational area (Bergeson, 2008).

The benefits of the educational instruments and teaching materials are to facilitate learning and understanding, to save time in teaching and learning, to transfer accurate learning contents to the students, to make the lessons or concepts to be learned more concrete and therefore easy to understand and to develop learning potential of the learners (Supanika, 2010). Evidence from studies by the World Bank and other international organizations on the quality of learning achieved in the developing countries points to the great importance of the following school inputs: teachers (class size, teacher training and morale); instructional materials (textbooks and other reading materials; writing implements (radio and other instructional media); school buildings and facilities; nutrition and health of children; language of instruction; and examinations.

Given this background, educationists, policy makers and even parents have raised pertinent issues related to the FPE policy and particularly of improvement on the quality of education as envisaged in the policy. UNESCO (2005), in its assessment report on Kenya's Free Primary Education programme noted that; FPE was meant to reduce school drop outs, reduce the number of street children, and child laborers, boost girls education and increase the quality of Education. The same UNESCO (2005), report praises the Free Primary Education in Kenya for the provision of learning and teaching materials, citing it as probably the greatest positive impact of FPE, the continuous attendance of lessons as pupils are no longer sent home for fees. In the same report, issues of increased enrolment in classes which could impact negatively on the quality education were also raised.

Though seen as the most successful project implemented by the government in 2003, the F.P.E programmes continue to draw increasing concern among many stakeholders (Ilahaka 2006). Primary school head teachers in many counties manage big budgets and are involved in procurement and accounting for funds in their charge. One immediate concern has been the ability of primary school head teachers together with the members of the instructional materials selection committees to effectively procure materials required for ensuring quality in primary education. It is against this background that this study seeks to evaluate the issues affecting the implementation of the procurement policy in public primary schools in Wareng District in Uasin-Gishu County.

Statement of the Problem

The need for and uses of the instructional materials are regarded as very important factors for successful teaching and learning. The schools should therefore lay more emphasis on the provision of modern and effective teaching instruments and materials to support the efficiency of learning activities. According to the Handbook for Management of Instructional Materials (2007), it is a policy requirement that every public primary school in Kenya constitutes a procurement body referred to as Schools Instructional Materials Selection Committee (SIMSC) for acquisition of Instructional Materials (IM). It is also a requirement that headteachers of primary schools submit accurate enrolment data to Ministry of Education for capitation purposes.

Despite all the efforts the government of Kenya (GOK) has put in place for effective procurement of instructional materials, some schools are still unable to attain the textbook-pupil ratio of 1:3 in lower and 1:2 in upper. It follows that there is inadequate supply of instructional materials in schools. A research carried out by Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ) in 2007 revealed that one in every five (22%) pupils did not have all the three basic learning items that were considered necessary for effective participation in classroom activities (SACMEQ, 2011). Similarly, in the same study which involved a sample of 4436 standard 6 pupils in 1993 primary schools in all the 8 provinces in Kenya revealed that only 15% of the standard 6 pupils in 2007 had sole use of mathematics books. This is in line with education for all (EFA) by the world conference on education held in Jomtien Thailand (1990) and reaffirmed in Dakar Senegal 2000. The government has given priority to education sector by allocating a substantial fraction of its expenditure on education which has accounted for 28.2% of the total government expenditure. This investment has seen the establishment of many schools both primary and secondary (Kimalu et al, 2001).

It is clear that, many schools are still faced by procurement challenges hence operate against the policy. In one occasion, it was noted through a press report that Ksh.1.3 billion meant for textbooks under Free Primary Education (FPE) programme had been wasted, that donors claim that books bought with the money were either stolen, lost or thrown away (Otieno, 2009). The losses covered a period of six years (2003-2008) with an average cost of Kshs 226 per book. Wareng audit report (MOE, 2009) revealed cases of school heads who made wrong entries on order and issue and receipt registers, besides cases where one supplier was used for many years against the procurement policy demand of annual review of all tenders. Further, the National Audit report on textbooks (MOE, 2009) revealed that, the district stands at a ratio of 1:4 textbooks per pupil in lower primary and 1:3 in upper which is high and against the National Policy of 1:3 in lower and 1:2 in upper.

From the above scenario, it is obvious that the procurement process may not have been adhered to and it seems there are many factors contributing to this, hence the need to find out the issues that influence compliance to the procurement process. In particular, the problem that this study sought to investigate was whether the present policy on procurement was functional in relation to the knowledge and skills of the School Instructional Material Selection Committee (SIMSC) and their level of compliance to the procurement process.

Studies from Nigeria indicate the importance of IM in teaching whereby, Afolabi et al (2006), Grant, (1978), Oyieran (2003), in their studies revolve around the usefulness of these resources in any instructional program but have not highlighted the key issues that need to be considered in order to make the resources available to students. UNESCO, (2005) recommends FPE as an avenue for the provision of IM in public primary schools in order to access quality instruction to Kenyan children. However, the study fails to look at how this resources are acquired hence do not mention those challenges that hinder the provision of the essential materials. Another study on FPE (G.O.K, 2008) reveal that there has been lack of sustained and comprehensive communication strategies in that education stakeholders are left in Limbo hence do not know what goes on in schools. The study has only pointed out one factor and fails to categorically address other factors that have hindered the implementation of the procurement process. Sifuna, (2005) points out that the government did not carry out situation analysis before implementing programmes under FPE resulting to confusion among the implementers and sponsors. The key issues pointed out that were not clearly addressed are unclear guidelines on various issues including procurement procedures.

The study however failed to clearly articulate in specific terms the main issues that have caused confusion to the procurement procedures in public primary schools. It was from this review that the study sought to unearth those challenges that have become a stumbling block in the implementation of the procurement policy hence provide sufficient information that can be used to promote adherence to the procurement process.

Justification of the study

Education in any country is the main consumer of public resources. In Kenya this stands at about 35% of the National budget. Primary education consumes about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the allocations (Siringi, 2010). With the implementation of free primary education the country has been compelled to spend even more besides generous support from the development partners. It is only fair that the intended recipient of this money (learners) get value for money spent.

This can only be possible if proper procurement procedures are followed in order to access learners to the necessary instructional materials since over 80% instruction takes place in classrooms hence the need to procure well such materials. However, research is the only sure way of getting true knowledge and skills through which practices can be informed. It was therefore important that a study of this kind be undertaken in order to inform education stakeholders on the kind of practices revolving around the procurement process hence improve on compliance.

The Procurement Procedure of Instructional Materials

Before schools acquire and use any resource, they need to consider their importance in relation to the teaching and learning process. For it to be of value, it must influence learning positively and facilitate the achievement of quality teaching and learning (MOE, 2008).

In line with the above, the Ministry of Education issued a comprehensive Primary School Instructional Material Management Handbook which is to serve as a guide to the school management committees at all the stages of procurement process including the establishment of a School Instructional Materials Bank Account (SIMBA) and the establishment of a School Instructional Selection Committee (SIMSC). All schools are required to have a SIMBA into which they receive funds from the MOE for the purchase of text books and other instructional materials.

The table below outlines the various processes involved in the procurement process of instructional materials for primary schools.

Composition of the School Instructional Materials Selection Committee (SIMSC)

According to a circular ref. MOE/PS/GA/1/10 dated 12/7/2003; each primary school in Kenya was to constitute a School Instructional Materials Selection Committee (SIMSC) comprising 15 members as follows:

- Headteacher-Chairperson
- Deputy Headteacher-Secretary
- 8 Class teachers-Members
- 1 Teacher representing SNE
- Chairman SMC
- Parents (male and female)
- Senior teacher

The circular further stipulated that the head teacher become automatic chair of the committee. The deputy head teacher equally assumes the position of the secretary. Each class is thereafter represented by one teacher and since there are eight classes the number automatically becomes eight. In addition, there is a teacher who represents the interest of Special Needs Education.

The chair of the School Management Committee becomes an automatic member. Two parents-male and female and the senior teacher are also incorporated as members. Head teachers of schools are required to ensure that a quorum is met before any proceedings are undertaken.

Methodology

This study was carried out in Wareng District of Uasin-Gishu County in Kenya. The target population of the study was all head teachers, parent representatives, panel heads and DQASO. The sampling unit was the school rather than the individual participant. Using formula for calculating sample size proposed for descriptive studies in Kothari (2005) of 30%, 38 schools were selected using stratified random sampling (to include all the divisions) from a population of 129 public primary schools in the district. Purposive sampling was used to select 38 head teachers, 38 parent representatives and one DQASO. Two panel heads from each of the selected schools were further selected using simple random sampling technique. Questionnaires were administered to all the head teachers, parent

representatives and the panel heads. In addition, the DQASO and 11(30%) head teachers were purposively sampled to be interviewed by the researcher. Experience in administration was the basis of their selection. The study adopted a descriptive survey design which was deemed appropriate as it intended to describe conditions as they were at that particular time. Data was analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative techniques.

Results and Discussions

The main objective of this study sought to assess SIMSCs' knowledge and skills in the procurement process and to establish their level of compliance of the procurement policy. Their responses are as in table 1.1 below.

Table 1.1: The First Stages of the Procurement Process of Instructional Materials (IM)

P r o c e s s D e s c r i p t i o n		Form to be utilized
P l a n n i n g		
1	The SIMSC makes a list of all the textbooks and teachers guides that the school currently has and compares this to the requirements of the schools such that the priorities can be identified. In identifying the textbooks required reference should be made to the MOE Approved	
2	After the priority text books and instructional materials have been identified, the SIMSC will determine the particular texts they wish to purchase. Reference may be made to the approved text book lists and advice sought from the DQASO. The criteria to be used in selecting the text books will take note of : syllabus coverage; The SIMSC will also make a list of pupils' readers and stationery required, taking note	
R e c e i v i n g t h e f u n d s		
3	Funds for text books and other instructional materials will be transferred directly by MOE into the School Instructional Materials Bank Account (SIMBA) and will be recorded in the receipts column of the SIMBA cashbook.	Official receipt issued to MOE for the funds
4	School community will be informed of the amount received and notice of the receipt and the amount is posted on the school's notice board.	
S e l e c t i o n o f t h e S u p p l i e r		
5	STC should pre-qualify text book suppliers competitively	Pre-qualification
6	Issue a Request for Supplier Quotation to at least 3 potential suppliers who have been pre-qualified. The request for quotation should include the details of all the textbooks and instructional materials the school requires	Request for Suppliers Quotation Proposed School Order
P r o c e s s D e s c r i p t i o n		Form to be utilized
S e l e c t i o n o f t h e s u p p l i e r (C o n t .)		
7	Suppliers who receive the request for quotation form will complete an offer for the supply of Instructional Materials form and indicate the prices and terms they will offer the school to supply the text books and instructional materials and deliver this to the school in plain sealed envelopes	Offer for the supply of Instructional materials
8	The STC will convene and select a supplier from amongst those who deliver their letters of offer within the time limit provided.	
9	The decision on the supplier selected should be recorded in the STC Minute Book.	

Table 1.2: The Second Stage of the Procurement Process of Instructional Materials

O r d e r i n g a n d C o n t r a c t i n g w i t h t h e s u p p l i e r		
10	The school will sign a contract with the selected supplier for the supply of the items of over Kshs.500, 000. This contract will indicate the Latest Estimate Delivery Date (LEDD) to assist the school in planning.	Supply contract
11	The school will prepare an order form and complete 4 copies of the same. The 1 st copy will be issued to the selected supplier, the 2 nd to the DEO, the 3 rd to the ZQASO and the 4 th to be kept in the school's Instructional Materials file.	
R e c e i v i n g , P a y i n g f o r t h e I n s t r u c t i o n a l M a t e r i a l s		
12	The supplier will deliver the Instructional materials to the school within the time stipulated in the supply contract and instructional materials order form. The SIMSC (represented by the head teacher, chairperson of the SMC and parents rep	
13	The Primary School Instructional Materials Management Handbook provides guidance on what the head teacher should do in the event that the supplier does not deliver the materials in full or within the stipulated time. The head teacher should prepare a list of all the instructional materials not delivered in the Instructional Materials file.	
14	Upon confirming that the order has been delivered in the correct quantities as per the order form and the supplier invoice and delivery note, the school will prepare and issue a receipted cheque written in the name of the supplier against the school's SIMBA for the value of instructional materials delivered to the school. The payment will be recorded in the expenditure side of the SIMBA cashbook.	
15	The instructional materials received will be stamped, dated and numbered and recorded in the school's stock receipt and issue register.	

Source: Ministry of Education (2007)

When the procurement process will have been adhered to, the following target ratios will be established in all public schools. Table 1.3 provides the guidelines.

**Table 1.3: Ratio of IM in Public Primary Schools.
Lower primary (standard 1---4)**

Basic minimum pack of school stationary	1 per student (including 12 exercise books-64pgs)
C h a l k s	5 boxes, per classroom, per year.
T e a c h e r ' s p r e p a r a t i o n b o o k s	1 per teacher (to last for 4 years)
Enrolment and attendance registers	1 p e r c l a s s .

6 c o r e t e x t b o o k s	1 textbook per 3 pupils for each subject and standard
8 c o r e t e a c h e r s G u i d e s	1 per subject per grade for each teacher
Supplementary reading Materials in English	1 reading book for each enrolled pupil
Supplementary reading books in Kiswahili	1 reading book for each enrolled pupils
Upper primary (standard 5---8)	
Basic minimum pack of school stationary	1 per student per year (including 12 exercise books-120pg)
C h a l k s	5 boxes per classroom per year.
Teachers preparation books	1 per teacher (to last 4 years)
Enrolment and attendance registers	1 per class per year.
6 c o r e T e x t b o o k s	1 textbook per 2 pupils for each subject and standard.
8 c o r e t e a c h e r s ' g u i d e s	1 per subject per grade for each teacher.
Supplementary reading materials in English	1 reading book for each enrolled pupil.
Supplementary reading books for Kiswahili	1 reading book for each enrolled pupil.
Wall maps of the world, Africa, East Africa and Kenya.	1 o f e a c h p e r s c h o o l .
E n g l i s h d i c t i o n a r y f o r s t d 8	Small class sets of 1 dictionary per pupils.
K a m u s i f o r s t d 6 - 8	Small class sets of 1 kamusi per 6 pupils.
A t l a s f o r s t d 6 - 8	Small class sets of 1 atlas per 6 pupils.
Source Ministry of Education, (2003)	

Table 1.4: Assessment of SIMSC's Knowledge of Procurement Procedures with Suppliers

	I t e m s	R e s p o n d e n t s	Frequencies & Percentages of Respondents		
			S A & A	S D & D	U
4	The suppliers gives 10% discount to the school	H e a d t e a c h e r s	25 (65.8%)	9 (23.7%)	4 (10.5%)
		P a n e l s h e a d s	37 (52.9%)	11(15.7%)	22 (31.4%)
		parent representative	12 (40%)	6 (20%)	12 (40%)
5	The 10% discount is received inform of additional IM	H e a d t e a c h e r s	27 (71%)	9 (23.7%)	2 (5.3%)
		P a n e l s h e a d s	21 (30%)	34(48.6%)	15 (21.4%)
		parent representative	2 (6.7%)	16(53.3%)	12 (40%)
6	The SIMSC advertises tenders	H e a d t e a c h e r s	21 (55.2%)	9 (23.7%)	8 (21.1%)
		P a n e l s h e a d s	22 (31.4%)	36(51.4%)	12 (17.1%)
		parent representative	8 (26.7%)	17 (56.6%)	5 (16.6%)
7	The SIMSC orders IM for the School	H e a d t e a c h e r s	26 (68.4%)	12 (23.7%)	0 (0%)
		P a n e l s h e a d s	24 (34.3%)	33 (47.1%)	13 (18.6%)
		parent representative	11 (36.6%)	6 (20%)	13 (43.3%)
8	Schools select suppliers through STC's	H e a d t e a c h e r s	27 (71.1%)	10 (26.3%)	1 (2.6%)
		P a n e l s h e a d s	27 (38.6%)	36 (51.4%)	7 (10%)
		parent representative	7 (23.3%)	21 (70%)	2 (6.7%)
9	STC's have the ability to select appropriate suppliers	H e a d t e a c h e r s	21 (55.3%)	6 (15.8%)	11 (28.9%)
		P a n e l s h e a d s	30 (42.9%)	23 (32.8%)	17 (24.2%)
		parent representative	10 (33.3%)	12 (40%)	8 (26.7%)
10	SIMSC receives IM orders for the school and verifies its quality and quantity	H e a d t e a c h e r s	28 (73.7%)	6 (15.8%)	4 (10.5%)
		P a n e l s h e a d s	38 (40%)	38 (54.2%)	4 (5.7%)
		parent representative	7 (23.3%)	22 (73.3%)	1 (3.3%)
11	SIMSC makes payment after delivery of IM	H e a d t e a c h e r s	26 (68.4%)	8 (21%)	4 (10.5%)
		P a n e l s h e a d s	26 (37.1%)	36 (51.4%)	8 (11.5%)
		parent representative	5 (16.7%)	21 (70%)	4 (13.3%)

Results indicate that majority of 60% SIMSC members agreed that suppliers give 10% discount to schools. However, a significant number of 31% panel heads, 10% head teachers, and 40% parents' representatives were undecided. This implies that although schools receive 10% discount, it can also be argued that some do not or if

they receive, some of the procurement members are not aware of it. This implies that, if some of the SMSC members are not aware, the head teachers and suppliers are the only ones who negotiate for school discounts. This means there is no transparency in the way discounts are awarded to schools and therefore schools may end up not benefitting from discounts as required.

Further, results also indicated that, the 10% discounts are received in form of additional IM. This is represented by 71% head teachers who strongly agreed, 35% panel heads and 26% parent representatives. Contrary to 23% head teachers, 48% panel heads and 53% parent representatives who strongly disagreed. A significant number of 21% panel heads and 40% parent's representatives were undecided. This therefore means that although schools received 10% discounts they may not receive it in form of additional IM as revealed by majority of respondents. This implies that schools may receive it in form of cash or may not receive it at all. This does not auger well with the policy requirement that demands that discounts awarded to schools should be in form of additional IM (MOE, 2007). When schools receive discounts in cash it may land in the wrong hands hence deny learners the benefit from additional IM aimed at boosting the already procured items. Moreover, it would be difficult to establish the amount of cash given to schools as discounts since it is pegged on the ability to negotiate. The disparity in the award of discounts to schools could be attributed to questionable integrity, lack of knowledge and skills by SIMSC members, opaque procurement practices, or suppliers who dictate terms and conditions of service to schools when they credit them with IM after disbursement of funds from the Ministry of Education delays.

In addition, results also revealed that, 55% head teachers agreed that SIMSC advertised tenders, contrary to 51% panel heads and 56% parents' representatives who disagreed. This implies that schools do not advertise tenders and therefore use the same suppliers for many years. The use of the same suppliers for long denies schools better terms of services that come with new tenders.

Further results also revealed that, 68% head teachers' 34% panel heads and 36% parents' representatives strongly agreed that SIMSC orders IM for their school. A significant number of 20% parents' representatives, 47% panel heads and 23% head teachers disagreed. Nevertheless, 43% parent representatives and 18% panel heads were undecided. This implies that schools order IM through SIMSC as supported by the majority of the respondents. However, it is clear that sometimes schools may not order IM through SIMSC as supported by a significant number of respondents who disagreed and those who were undecided. This means that, although some schools use the procurement committee to order materials, there are those schools that use other means. Schools that do not use SIMSC may not be in a position to provide the appropriate resources needed by learners as they may compromise quality and quantity. The same results were confirmed by the DQASO that schools are sometimes supplied with cheap materials that may not last long or may be supplied with less IM when payment was made for more hence deny learners preferably from low economic backgrounds access to the limited resources.

Further results also reveal that 71% head teachers, 38% panel heads and 23% parent representatives strongly agreed that schools select suppliers through STCs'. However, 26% head teachers, 51% panel heads, and 70% parents' representatives strongly disagreed. Since majority of 60% respondents disagreed, it means that schools do not select suppliers through STCs'. It also implies that schools do not have STCs' and that selection of suppliers is not done within the right procurement practices. Under normal circumstances, suppliers are selected by the STCs'. When schools do not have them, their tendering procedures will be compromised by procurement members who may be biased in their selection due to massive conflicting interests.

However, results also reveal that majority of 50% SIMSC agreed that STCs' have their ability to select their suppliers contrary to 30% SIMSC who strongly disagreed implying that schools should use STCs' to select suppliers. Siringi, (2004) notes that the major challenge of financial management at school level is that, those charged with the responsibility of handling finances in primary schools are untrained or are not qualified to do the job thus money allocated for procurement is either squandered or lies idle in school accounts while students suffer in the classrooms.

Further, results also revealed that 54% panel heads and 73% parents' representatives strongly disagreed that SIMSC receives IM orders for their schools contrary to 71% head teachers who strongly agreed. This implies that although SIMSC sometimes receive IM for their schools, they may sometimes not be present when IM is being delivered implying that sometimes IM received is not checked in order to cater for quality and quantity.

In addition, results also revealed that, 68% head teachers strongly agreed that payments was made after the delivery of IM contrary to 51% parents' representatives and 70% panel heads who strongly disagreed. A total of 10% parents' representatives, 9% panel heads, and 10% head teachers were undecided. This implies that, sometimes schools made payment to un- delivered IM. Some of the head teachers interviewed attributed this to late disbursements of funds from the government therefore forcing them to make payments in advance to suppliers who had given them IM on credit. The DQASO confirmed the same results and attributed it to late disbursements and the fact that some head teachers colluded with briefcase book sellers who did not have equipped stores thus depended on advance payments in order to supply IM to schools. Further it was noted that suppliers used established friends to supply IM on their behalf. Mbugua (2009) adds that, you can come across a cheque of Kshs 300,000 payments made in advance yet books received later is worth Kshs 200,000. The balance of kshs 100,000 is shared between the head teachers and suppliers. According to UNESCO, (2005) grant disbursements for text books and materials were untimely and that most arrived in the second or third terms when schools will have long been opened.

The Level of Compliance to the Procurement Process

The study also sought to assess the level of compliance to the procurement process in public primary schools. In order to achieve this objective the procurement committees were required to indicate whether they had functional SIMSC, chose IM for their schools or informed the community of money received in SIMBA account. Their responses are as indicated in table 1.5 below.

Table 1.5: Assessment of the Extent of Compliance of the Procurement Process

	Items	Respondents	Frequencies & Percentages of Respondents		
			SA & A	SD & D	U
1	There is a functional SIMSC in the school	Head teachers	26 (68.5%)	8(21.1%)	4(10.5%)
		Panels heads	48(68.6%)	12(17.1%)	10(14.3%)
		Parents' representative	17(56.7%)	10(33.3%)	3(10%)
2	The SIMSC makes a list of textbooks and teachers guides	Head teachers	26(68.5%)	6(15.8%)	6 (15.8%)
		Panels heads	30(42.9%)	27(38.6%)	13(18.5%)
		parent representative	24(80%)	1(3.3%)	5(16.7%)
3	The school community is informed of the amount of money received in the SIMBA account	Head teachers	24(63.1%)	12(31.6%)	2(5.3%)
		Panels heads	22(31.4%)	35(50%)	13(18.6%)
		Parents' representative	4(13.3%)	12(40%)	14 (46.7%)
4	The receipt of the amount is posted on the school notice board	Head teachers	20(52.7%)	8(21.1%)	10(26.3%)
		Panels heads	5(7.1%)	54(77.2%)	11(15.7%)
		Parents' representative	6(20%)	17(56.7%)	7(23.3%)

Results reveal that, majority (68%) head teachers, 68% panel heads and 56% parents' representatives strongly agreed that there are functional SIMSCs' in their schools. This means that schools have functional SIMSCs and therefore procurement procedures in schools are carried out by SIMSC members. Functional SIMSCs ensure that transparent procurement practices are followed hence the money schools receive is used for the right purpose. Further, results also revealed that, majority (69%) of the procurement members strongly agreed that the SIMSC make lists of text books and teachers guides for their schools. However, a significant number of 15% head teachers, 38% panel heads, and 3% parents' representatives disagreed whereas 15% head teachers, 18% panel heads, and 16% parents' representatives were undecided. This implies that although schools use SIMSC to select IM for their schools, sometimes some schools may not involve them in the selection of IM as revealed by a significant number of respondents who disagreed. This means that head teachers sometimes make lists without the knowledge of other SIMSC members (teachers and Parents' representatives).

As regards informing the community of the amount of money received in SIMBA accounts, 63% head teachers strongly agreed contrary to 50% panel heads and 40% parents' representatives who disagreed. A significant number of 18 % panel heads, 46% parents' representatives, and 5% head teachers were undecided. This implies that there may be no proper communication channels put in place in order to inform the community on the financial standing of their school.

In order to underscore the fact that schools use notice boards as communication zones, there was need to assess whether receipts of money received and spent were posted on the school notice boards. Results indicated that 52% head teachers strongly agreed contrary to 77% panel heads and 56% parents' representatives who strongly disagreed. This means that some schools never post receipts on schools notice boards and therefore the stakeholders and the entire community is not aware of the amount of money their schools receives and how the same is spent. Out of the 38 schools visited, it was observed that, only five (5) had the receipts of money received and spent posted on their school notice boards while the rest 33 did not have. This implies that schools do not adhere to the procurement policy which requires them to do so as a way of promoting transparency and accountability in their procurement process. Lack of transparent procurement practices may promote un-procedural transactions which may deny learners an opportunity to benefit from funds set aside for IM by the government. The same results were confirmed by the DQASO that head teachers carried out most procurement transactions without the knowledge of other SIMSC members hence compromising on the level of adherence. In addition, a report by SIDA through DFID acknowledges the importance of using community members to inspect purchases in schools and assess school accounts through posting receipts on school walls (notice boards) in order to facilitate for efficient and transparent systems of procurements ([http:// www.Unesco.Org](http://www.Unesco.Org)). Makori, (2004) asserts that some of the education stakeholders; sponsors, parents and the surrounding community members are left in darkness on issues of procurement.

Procurement Process with suppliers and the level of Compliance

The study also sought to assess the level of compliance of SIMSC when dealing with suppliers. In order to achieve this, the SIMSC were asked to indicate how they dealt with suppliers. Their responses are as indicated in table 1.6 below.

Table 1.6: Assessment of Practices and extent of Compliance

	I t e m s	R e s p o n d e n t s	Frequencies & Percentages of Respondents		
			S A & A	S D & D	U
5	the SIMSC prequalifies IM suppliers competitively	Head teachers	24(63.2%)	12(31.6%)	2 (5 . 3 %)
		Panel heads	11(15.7%)	49 (7 0 %)	10 (1 4 . 3 %)
		Parents' representative	9 (3 0 %)	18 (6 0 %)	3 (1 0 %)
6	The suppliers complete an offer for supply form of IM and indicate their terms	Head teachers	18(47.4%)	14(36.9%)	6 (1 5 . 8 %)
		Panel heads	28 (4 0 %)	35 (5 0 %)	7 (1 0 %)
		Parents' representative	3 (1 0 %)	25 (8 3 %)	2 (6 . 7 %)
7	The STC convenes to select the suppliers	Head teachers	23(60.5%)	12(31.6%)	3 (7 . 9 %)
		Panel heads	8 (1 1 . 4 %)	51(72.8%)	11 (1 5 . 8 %)
		Parents' representative	8 (2 6 . 7 %)	20(66.6%)	2 (6 . 7 %)
8	The school signs a contract with suppliers for items over Kshs 500,000	Head teachers	15(39.5%)	17(44.7%)	6 (1 5 . 8 %)
		Panel heads	3 (4 . 3 %)	43(61.4%)	24 (3 4 . 3 %)
		Parents' representative	2 (6 . 7 %)	26(86.6%)	2 (6 . 7 %)

Results revealed that, 72% of panel heads and 60% parents' representatives strongly disagreed that, SIMSC prequalified textbook suppliers competitively contrary to 63% head teachers who strongly agreed. Results also indicated that, 36% head teachers, 50% panel heads and 83% parents' representatives disagreed that suppliers filled an offer for supply form. Moreover, 60% head teachers strongly agreed that, STC's convened to select appropriate suppliers contrary to 72% panel heads and 66% parents' representatives who strongly disagreed. Further, majority of 64% respondents strongly disagreed that, schools signed contracts with suppliers. This implies that majority of schools did not subject suppliers to fill an offer for supply form, did not sign contracts with suppliers, and that their STCs' did not convene to select suppliers. This is an indication that schools use the same suppliers for long and therefore never compared terms and conditions for different suppliers hence would not benefit from better terms offered by new suppliers.

However, schools with low enrolments receive less than Ksh. 500,000 and are not obliged to sign any contracts with suppliers, MOE, (2007). Those with large enrolments tend to skip the process. When schools use the same suppliers for long they miss an opportunity to benefit from better quality services like; comparing prices, discounts, prompt deliveries among others. The DQASO confirmed the same results that, when schools stick to the same suppliers, IM is supplied in bits or is in less quantity; other cases reported are of suppliers who do not beat their timelines or unnecessarily hike prices. When this happens, schools incur unnecessary losses that could be avoided. Moreover, late deliveries subject learners to hardships of trying to cope with high text book ratios. UNESCO, (2005) acknowledges the fact that learners experience hard times doing home work in core subjects due to high text book ratios in schools. In addition, the Sessional Paper no.1 of 2005 highlights the government's intention to train management bodies in order to enhance their management and coordination capacities. Mahoney (1988), points out that training transforms management from being struggling amateurs to be more knowledgeable, confident and determined professionals. Gary (2005) adds that training is hallmark of good management, a task managers ignore at their own peril.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The study concludes that the level of education affected SIMSCs' roles in the procurement process. SIMSC had not been trained on financial management and were not in a position to implement the procurement process as required. It was also established that the procurement process has not been implemented as required due to limited knowledge and skills of SIMSC members in the procurement process. Lack of compliance to the procurement policy in most public primary schools also compromised the procurement process. The study recommends that proper strategies need to be put in place by the government in order to link QASOs directly to the procurement process in order to reduce chances of compromising with the implementation of the process. The trend should be to add the number of district Education auditors and that of the QASOs in order to facilitate frequent monitoring and evaluation of the procurement process in all public primary schools.

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