The influence of total quality management on performance of public secondary schools in Embu County, Kenya.

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Abstract:

The ministry of education is perpetually interested in good performance of schools in the national examinations. This is not always achieved in the many public secondary schools in the country. This performance in national examinations is realized as a result of a number of factors within the school set up that add up to the quality of the school system. Quality in all the facets of the school is what constitute total quality management, hence excellence performance in the national examinations. Empirical studies done, have not addressed the direct link between total quality management and school performance. The purpose of this study therefore, was to establish the influence of total quality management on performance of public secondary schools in Embu County. Specific objectives of the study included establishing the influence of top management commitment, employee empowerment, continuous improvement and customer focus on performance of public secondary schools. A review of related literature was carried out and a conceptual framework drawn to express the research premise. A purposeful sampling technique was applied to identify 30 secondary schools out of the 150 secondary schools in Embu County. Three categories of target groups were identified; these are the principals, Deputy Principals and HODs. Through simple random sampling 5 respondents were identified in each school to make a total of 150 respondents required. Data collection was done through questionnaires. The validity and reliability of the questionnaire were enhanced through piloting in two schools. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics and presented using frequency tables, pie charts and bar graphs. The major findings of the study were that: top management commitment to quality has a significance relationship to the school performance; Employee empowerment and involvement in the running of the school is minimal; Continuous improvement is not realized in many facets of the schools and that customer focus is low. Based on these findings, it is recommended that: the principals of the schools undergo training on total quality management in order to be committed to quality; Employees should be empowered through training and involved in decision making; Continuous improvement should be a culture in the schools; and that principals should value the customer (students, parents and the community) and endeavor to provide quality services.