

This study was designed to investigate through an institutional case study of Maseno Village Polytechnic the role it has played in the development of the socio-economic needs of the rural area where it is located. The study specifically sought to establish the extent to which the polytechnic's objectives in training young people to acquire relevant occupational trade skills to enable them to earn a living, had succeed. It also sought to establish the extent to which the graduates had been encouraged to utilize the acquired relevant technical and business skills within their rural community, thus uplifting rural standards of living by providing skilled services at low cost individually or in groups. Finally it sought to establish the extent to which these graduates have developed the rural community to interdependence according to the felt needs of the community.

The research being descriptive in nature, a case study design was adopted. The methodology used, which is common to most case studies, was that of seeking rather than testing. In order for the researcher to obtain sufficient information and draw together the diverse bits of information into a unified interpretation, the researcher stratified his population under the categories of Maseno Village Polytechnic manager, instructors, trainees, graduates, management committee members and the local community. In order to tap maximum information from the population, the researcher used both questionnaires and personal interviews as research tools. A part from the questionnaires of Maseno Village Polytechnic graduates which were posted to the respondents, the rest were administered either in the institution or field with the supervision of the researcher, and followed by verbal interviews.

A part from the data collected from Maseno Village Polytechnic graduates and trainees which was analysed with the help of a computer to determine frequencies, means and percentages, the rest of the data was analysed manually.

The results of the study found enough evidence to back the fact that Maseno Village Polytechnic as an institution has fulfilled the goal of training young people to acquire relevant occupational and business skills, and enable them to earn a living. The study also confirmed that despite a few problems being experienced by Maseno Village Polytechnic graduates, mainly economic in nature, they were found to be offering their goods and services to the rural community fairly cheaply. However, it was also established that the degree to which these goods and services were being offered by the graduates differed according to their sexes and also to the type of courses studies, with males exhibiting higher success than females. It was noted with appreciation that Maseno Village Polytechnic had succeeded in imparting positive attitudes both to trainees and graduates towards practical and agricultural work particularly in the rural areas. There is little doubt that to some considerable extent, Maseno Village Polytechnic graduates were developing the rural community to interdependence by introducing viable activities according to felt needs. On a rather negative note, the study established that the village polytechnic had failed to perform some of the most important functions of the programme. Specifically, the programme had not conducted its follow up process on her graduates to either find out how they are settling in the field or learn from their experiences to enable them modify their curriculum acquiring and arranging for contracts for her graduates and arranging for loans to enable the graduates to purchase tools and materials required to settle them into self-employment.

However, despite the spelled out areas of weakness above, it can be generalized without hesitation, that to a greater extent, Maseno Village Polytechnic has succeeded in fulfilling its objectives.

Recommendations accruing from the study were made to the Government through the Ministry of Culture and Social Services for appropriate action to be taken. In addition, some recommendations for further research on areas where the current study never focused were made.

It is hoped that the ideas generated in this study will enable the Government planners, curriculum developers and policy makers to plan and make more fruitful decision to promote their current status. Subsequently, it may attract donor agencies to allocate more aid in the form of funds, training facilities and staff to not only similar institutions, but also to help graduates surmount their current problems in the future.