

Ksh. 3,000

**EFFECTS OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND STANDARDS  
MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON PUPILS' PERFORMANCE IN  
K.C.P.E EXAMINATIONS IN MURANG'A EAST SUB-COUNTY, IN  
KENYA**

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF  
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FOR THE MASTERS DEGREE IN EDUCATIONAL  
ADMINISTRATION KENYATTA UNIVERSITY.**

**OCTOBER , 2015.**

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this project is my original work and has not been submitted for any other degree course in any other university or any other course of study.



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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my dear family which has been very supportive to me in my academic endeavours.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to express my gratitude to the Almighty God who has made it possible for me to pursue and complete this work. My family for supporting me tirelessly during this challenging situation of study and my colleagues for their moral support. Am greatly indebted to my supervisors Dr. Florence M. Itegi and Dr. Martin Ogola for the way they worked particularly to produce a refined product of a student and his project.

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AEO	-	Assistant Education Officer
DEO	-	District Education Officer
DQA	-	Directorate of Quality Assurance
EFA	-	Education for All
GoK	-	Government of Kenya
MDG's	-	Millennium Development Goals
MoE	-	Ministry of Education
UNESCO	-	United Nations Environment and Social Cultural Organization
USA	-	United States of America

## ABSTRACT

The study sought to find out effects of quality assurance and standards practices on pupils' performance in the K.C.P.E examinations in Murang'a East Sub-county. The study sought to establish the current levels of quality assurance and standards programmes, the factors affecting quality assurance and standards programmes, the mechanisms put in place to improve on the quality assurance and standards programmes and the practices used for quality assurance programmes. The study employed a descriptive design and the target population consisted of the head teachers and teachers in the public primary schools in the Murang'a East Sub-county who were all one thousand one hundred and seventy two. The random stratified sampling method was used for sampling purposes. The education zones in the sub-county acted as the strata in the sampling purposes. The data was collected by use of questionnaires which were administered to the teachers and head teachers. An interview schedule was served on District Quality Assurance and Standards Officer. The data was analyzed by use of quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative methods entailed descriptive and inferential statistics while the qualitative methods entailed aligning the collected information to the already documented data about the effects of quality assurance and standards programmes on the pupils' performance in the K.C.P.E examinations. The study had the following findings:-The respondents considered the visits by the quality assurance officers as rare. They deemed them as not having had the envisaged impact as envisaged. The feeling was expressed by the teachers and head teachers. Most of the education zones had only one quality assurance and standards officer. This depicted a situation of inadequate personnel to cover the areas. The transport facilitation was also considered inadequate to the extent of the officer using public service vehicles in the inspection visits. The respondents considered the visits carried out by the quality assurance and standards officers to have been often with regard to the frequency. The visits undertaken by the quality assurance officers were deemed to have had a fair impact on the realization of the quality standards. The respondents considered the conduct of round table meetings between the school administrators and the quality assurance and standards officers as a strategy which had been effectively employed to assure realization of quality standards. Holding of discussions between teachers and the quality assurance and standards officers was also considered as a strategy of standards enforcement. The study recommended that: - The Ministry of Education should facilitate the quality assurance and standards department. This is with an aim of empowering it for better performance of its field officers to ensure that they strictly enforce quality assurance and standards achievement in the study area. The Ministry of Education should equally seek to appropriate more budgetary resources for the purpose of enhanced quality assurance and standards enforcement. This will see to it that the staffing levels in the department are improved and the officers more readily available to carry out the inspection visits. The Ministry of Education should strictly enforce the practice of supervisory visits undertaken in the schools. It should strive to have the schools administrators and the quality assurance personnel develop tailor made practices specific for each school. The Ministry of Education should encourage the practice of regular interaction between the quality assurance and standards officers and the school administrators. This will ensure that there is synergy in terms of focus and singular purpose in the strategies formulated for the realization of quality assurance standards.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

The following chapter has the background of the study, statement of the problem; research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, limitations, theoretical framework, conceptual framework , the scope of the study and operational definition of terms.

#### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Education is the primary means of social mobility, national cohesion and social economic development. It is the best investment that one can bequeath a generation and it is considered as a primary tool of social economic growth and empowerment to the populace (Allan, 2011). The growth in information communication technology and trade is linked to education. It has a sure way of aiding foster economic growth and national outlooks.

Initiatives have been employed to ensure education for all. The Accra Accord of the year 2002 envisages education for all by way of making it accessible and affordable to everyone (UNESCO, 2011). The education for all however equally needs to be scaled up with the ensuring of quality achievement and guaranteeing the consumer's value for money in the wake of the substance expended. The indicators of quality education need to be factored in to ensure the achievement of quality standards expected of the system.

Assurance of quality can only be feasible in the wake of policy and conduct of regular follow-up and assessment of the teaching and learning processes. Effective evaluation, policy and supervision can only be feasible with putting in place of

systems, structures and institutions charged with the mandate of putting checks and balances in the learning process (Famuel, 2011). The policy systems in place should always ensure adequate evaluation and assessment based on tangible measurable indicators.

Focus on quality education is normally enshrined in the efforts aimed at realizing apt performances in the education sector. The quality of education attracts learners, ensures good results and satisfies the basic learning requirements of the persons undertaking the programmes (Fullman, 2011). This places the burden on ensuring the needs of the learners are met on the shoulders of governments in the quest of ensuring that they together with the development partners realize the much needed benefits of the learners.

The federal states of America have the function of standards and quality assurance management overseen by the individual states. The federal departments of education see to it that the quality demands are realized and adhered to (Pearce, 2009). This places the onus of decision making and the running, management and governance of the education systems and programmes on the federal states. The obligation of the individual departments overseeing the function of oversight as confirmed by the pertinent stakeholder boards ensures that quality standards are achieved and the programmes run on course.

In many countries in England, the function of quality assurance and standards management is the duty of the central government. This sees to it that the budgetary allocations to the education sector, employment of governance and oversight programmes is the mandate of the central bureaucratic governance structures (Knight, 2010). The responsibility of overseeing the education sector with regard to the

provision of quality standards and measures is thus guaranteed and provided for in the central governing systems and guided by the statutory provisions.

Decentralized systems of governance in Africa have come along with great expectations for the populace. This has been by way of greater demands for quality and standards in the programmes expended. Many countries have ensured that the access to basic education is guaranteed and provided for in their jurisdictions (Naido, 2010). On the other hand though, the function of assurance of quality and achievement of standards has been neglected. This has seen the plummeting of standards and non-realization of the envisaged benefits expected to trickle down from the programmes. This has had negative effects more so the poor performance by the learners who partake in the programmes.

In the Republic of Ghana, emphasis has been placed on the investment in the human and financial resources to support the public school systems. Similar efforts have equally been expended in the ensuring of quality in the programmes provided for in the education activities (Torado, 2010). The function of supervision and ensuing of quality in the teaching programmes has been bequeathed on the Ministry of Education. It plays a significant role in the designing of programmes and implementing them to ensure that the requisite standards as regards quality are achieved.

In Kenya, the education sector is managed by the Ministry of Education. It's governed and regulated by statute. The Bill of Rights as enshrined in the constitution provides for the right to education under Article 21 of the constitution (GoK, 2010). The ratification of the Accra Accord of the year 2002 providing explicit structures for the education for all (EFA) gives impetus to the education sector equally. The protocol

guiding and aligning the Republic of Kenya's development vision to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals by the year 2015 equally provides a framework and a yardstick for the achievement of good stride in the education sector nationally.

Various initiatives have been actualized in the Republic of Kenya geared towards maintaining of standards and achievement of the requisite levels in the development of education in the Republic of Kenya. The Kenya Education Commission Report of the year 1964, the presidential working party of the year 1981, the Koech Report of the year 2000 and the Sessional Paper Number 1 of the year 2005 have all emphasized on the provisions for the ensuring of quality standards and measures in the countries education sector (GoK, 2010). The constitution of Kenya which was promulgated in the year 2010 has been the most explicit document showing the commitment of the government towards achieving of education and assurance of standards.

The Ministry of education has a directorate of quality assurance and standards mandated by the Education Act of the Laws of Kenya Cap 211 to undertake issues of standards through independent assessment and inspection (GoK, 2013). The directorate has the function of establishing; maintaining and ensuring quality standards are advanced in all basic education institutions nationally. The directorate has the failure to have staffing inefficiencies which makes it heavily constrained in the carrying out of its functions, duties and responsibilities to the public. The decentralization of the education to the counties has equally been a great factor in resource allocation and mobilization towards ensuring the undertaking of successful functions by the directorate of quality assurance.

Developing and assuring standards in education is a challenge to many primary education systems the world over. Quality assurance to have high standards requisite in the sector satisfies the basic learning needs and enriches the lives of the learners (Khere, 2009). The link between the quality of the education provided and the retention rates in school cannot be understated. The need to assure quality education sees to it that the programmes are relevant to the learners and act as the best incentive to attract them to school.

The investment by the government of Kenya in the education sector is very heavy. It amounts to 6.4% of the Gross Domestic Product. Much emphasis should thus be placed in the ensuring of the learners getting value for the money. The advent of the free primary and secondary education has seen increased numbers of the pupils attending primary schools and those transiting to secondary school (GoK, 2013). On the other hand though, the application of measures to ensure that minimum quality standards are achieved has been a challenge to the Ministry of Education. Minimum quality standards are not achieved in many instances, schools are seldom inspected and teachers and head teachers managing them rarely taken in to account. This has had negative effects on the quality of education and standards from the systems (Gok, 2013).

One broad perception of quality assurance suggests that it is an attempt through second party intervention, to ascertain, maintain and improve the quality of work done. This is according to Storey and Housego (1993) in their book "New Perspective of Human Resource Management." Olembo et al (1999) reiterates Godhammers' sentiments which portray instructional supervision as including all activities by which education in the improvement of learning and teaching such as observation of classroom instruction, conducting of teachers meetings and group and individual

conferences. This includes the development and execution of plans towards increased effectiveness in reading, arithmetic and other areas of the school programme.

A study carried out by Kenyakisa (1990) identified that Teacher Advisory Centre tutors, zonal inspectors and assistant education officers were appointed from serving head teachers who had served for three years as head teachers and were in S1 grade. The study found out that most inspectors lacked the relevant resources to work with, the inspectors ratio to the number of schools was one inspector to thirty schools, inspectors tended to stick to the traditional inspectorial legacies which Kenya inherited at independence and most head teachers are left to conduct internal inspection and supervision of the curriculum implementation which they rarely do. In addition, he found out that the schools were faced with irregular inspection and inadequate follow-ups because of lack of adequate personnel, untrained personnel, lack of commitment and positive approach. This led to poor performance in K.C.P.E in many schools in Mumias District.

The objectives of primary school education are achievement of literacy, numeracy, creativity and communication skills. The primary education is also geared towards achievement of critical thinking, social moral and religious standards development (Khaemba, 2009). On the other hand though, the products of the primary school education system are not reflective of the envisaged standards. The performance in the K.C.P.E in most cases leaves a lot to be desired in terms of the academic prowess of the learners. Situations of diminished creativity, lack of critical thinking and the resultant moral decay mirror a situation diminished quality and standards achievement in the primary education system. There is thus need to find out the actual factors ailing the education standards in primary schools in Kenya.

The performance in the K.C.P.E examination in Murang'a East Sub-county has been declining over the past years. Anecdotes from the District Education Officer, Murang'a East Sub-county show a downward trend in the results posted (DEO, 2013). Many motivating programmes have been put in place to ensure improved performance. Provision of cash incentives, bursary programmes and the mentorship schemes notwithstanding the academic performance has still been on a downward trend. There was thus need to find out the effects of quality assurance and standards management practices on the performance of K.C.P.E examinations in Murang'a East sub-county.

**Table 1.1: Murang'a East Sub-county KCPE analysis 2009 – 2013**

Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average
Mean score out of 500 marks	252.44 50.4%	257.15 51.3%	256.19 51.23%	247.99 49.49%	248.5 49.7%	49.82%

Source: Murang'a East Education Office: 2014

The analysis for the K.C.P.E results shows a declining trend over the past five years. There is need to find out how the quality assurance and standards practices affect the performance. Studies by Irungu (2013) showed that the capacity of the quality assurance and standards department greatly contributed negatively to the achievement of optimum standards in the academic performance of primary school pupils in the K.C.P.E examination. The study called for equipping of the department and facilitation of the head teachers to be more efficient in the supervision as an avenue of quality assurance in the respective schools. This was confirmed by anecdotes from the ministry of education which depicted low frequencies of inspection visits to the schools and allied challenges making the quality assurance management practices in abeyance. It is against this background that the study sought to find out the effects of

quality assurance and standards management practices on the pupils performance in the K.C.P.E examinations in Murang'a East Sub County.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Quality assurance is an important medium of evaluation and measurement to gauge the realization of standards in varying facets. In the education sector, quality assurance and standards is an effective tool of assessment to ascertain the maintenance of the requisite parameters expected as regards upholding of standards. Assessment can be by way of evaluating how the delivery of the curriculum content is done by the practioners charged with the responsibility or any other agreeable measure, (Foster, 2011). The responsibility of undertaking quality assurance programmes is the mandate of an agency or a government directorate. The institution is subject to legislation and supervision by the parent ministry of education in the jurisdiction.

Massive investments have been made in the education sector in the Republic of Kenya. The budgetary allocation to the primary school education sector for the salaries and emoluments of the teaching staff, provision of accessories and infrastructure takes a lion's share of the education budget (GoK, 2013). The quality assurance and standards aspect which is critical to the satisfaction of basic learners' needs is equally a challenge. A study carried out by Reche et al (2012) failed to look at the other factors like the practices entailed in the actual supervisory visits and how they affected the academic performance of pupils in the sub-county. The study sought to fill this gap by way of finding out how the management practices carried out during the supervisory visits affected learners' performance in the KCPE examination. Similarly, a study carried out by Gakure et al (2013) did not place an emphasis on

establishing the extent to which other factors like interaction with technology by the quality assurance and standards officers played on the pupil' academic performance. The study sought to find out how access to resources which equally entailed technology affected the management practices carried out in the supervisory visits.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to find out the effects of quality assurance and standards management practices on the performance of K.C.P.E examinations in Murang'a East Sub-county.

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The following objectives guided the study:-

- i) To find out the perceptions about quality assurance and standards management practices in the public primary schools in Murang'a East sub-county
- ii) To explore the resources allocated to quality assurance and standards management in public primary schools in Murang'a East sub-county.
- iii) To find out the practices used to undertake quality assurance and standards programmes in Murang'a East sub-county.
- iv) To find out the strategies in place to improve quality assurance and standards practices in public primary schools in Murang'a East sub-county

### **1.5 Research Questions**

- i) What are the perceptions about quality assurance and standards management in Murang'a East Sub County?
- ii) What resources have been allocated for quality assurance and standards management in Murang'a East Sub County?

- iii) What are the practices used to carry out quality assurance and standards management in Murang'a East Sub County?
- iv) What strategies have been put in place to improve the quality assurance and management practices in Murang'a East Sub County?

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The study may have an impact on the capacity of the education management sector. This is with regard to understanding and appreciating the pertinent issues which affect the standards of quality assurance and management in the education sector. This may affect the level of quality assurance and standards administration and have an effect on the capacity of the public primary schools to perform better.

The realms of quality assurance and standards management are a rapidly evolving sector in line with current trends and practices. The study may give insights on the capacity of the public education sector to effectively regulate and assure itself of ability to meet and manage standards. The study may thus provide insights as regards the undertaking of the quality assurance and regulation function and improve on the policy situation.

The findings of this study may have an impact on the education systems. It may sensitize the Ministry of Education to increase the number of officers and to provide better facilities for the officers to work at ease. The study may motivate the Kenya government to increase funding for quality assurance sector and therefore promote efficiency of service delivery.

The study may influence future studies in the realms of quality assurance and standards management practices to use the reflective institutional theory while

undertaking the studies. This is because the theory has an emphasis on provision of value for money as a basis of quality geared towards transformation of the education programmes and realizes their success. Future scholars may thus have an emphasis on deriving value for money as a parameter for ensuring successful education programmes.

The use of a mixed methods approach which entailed quantitative and qualitative methods was of great essence in terms of facilitating collection of primary data and interrogation of secondary data. This was highly significant because it enabled realization of the situation on the ground as regards the parameters influencing the effectiveness of management practices and their impact on pupils' performance. Future scholars seeking to undertake studies in similar or related areas may be inclined to employ a similar approach as a basis to augment the study.

The study may be of great benefit to future researchers undertaking studies in similar or related fields. This is occasioned by the fact that it may contribute to the body of knowledge in similar or related fields thus conferring benefits to other researchers.

### **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

The researcher had no control over the respondent's attitudes, thoughts and beliefs. This may impact on the data collection exercise especially as regards the aspect of the authenticity of the data collected in the event of the arising of bias and allied motivations from the respondents. The researcher surmounted the challenge by way of imploring on the respondents to try as much as possible to be honest and truthful in the answers.

The researcher encountered the challenge of failure to access secondary records from the quality assurance and standards department office. This was motivated by the fact

that most of the government offices have a lot of bureaucratic red-tape as regards access to information which they consider as sensitive. The researcher surmounted the challenge by way of providing an introductory letter to the offices for the purposes of facilitating access to the information with ease.

### **1.8 Delimitations of the Study**

The study was further limited to Murang'a East sub-county. This was with a focus on determining the effects of quality assurance and standards practices, the factors affecting quality assurance and standards practices and the strategies employed to improve the levels of quality assurance and standards practices management. The study had the primary school head teachers, teachers and the District Quality Assurance and Standards Officer serving as the respondents who provided research information. The study did not cover private primary schools, parents and pupils who are critical stakeholders in the education systems. This was because it had an emphasis on the public schools as its core area of interest. It thus could not provide a true reflection of the quality assurance and standards management programmes in the primary schools.

### **1.9 Theoretical Framework**

The study was based on the reflective institution theory as premised by Lezzoate (2009) on providing value for money as a basis of quality, quality for the particular institutions programmes and quality as a transforming factor in the realization of education programmes. The theory articulates that the success of the academic programmes in place is dependent on their quality. The quality of programmes on the hand is hinged on the need to get value for money. The quality for money provides an avenue for accountability in the educational programmes. It gives the capacity for conformity to the requisite expected standards and having the institutions accountable

to the laid down provisions and capacities. The theory argues that a reflective institution should be able to provide value for money accruing from the programmes at hand and they should have ability to resonate with the intended objectives.

Quality is also based on the fact that the respective institutions have to prepare and fit tailor made programmes for the purpose of the institutions. These are geared towards the realization of the school programmes. This sees to it that the schools have capacity and ability to actualize the fruition of the standards envisaged in a clear and understandable manner. It ensures that the needs of the consumers of the learning programmes have the grasp and capacity to fully utilize the available opportunities to the optimum.

The maintenance of quality standards to the allowable levels ensure that the schools transform their abilities and provide the learners with a good environment. The theory is based on the tenets of espousing on quality teaching practices by way of quality enhancement which may entail staff development and the making of quality feasible by removing impediments to good teaching. This is through putting in place the right institutional policy and procedures. The theory captures the thrust of the effects of quality assurance and standards management on the academic performance in K.C.P.E. This is because quality assurance and standards management may greatly influence the capacity of the learners to perform. Varying underlying dynamics like the staffing levels in the quality assurance department, the availability of transport and allied concerns may greatly influence the quality assurance and standards practices.

Varying strategies may be put in place to influence maintenance of standards and their improvement. Continuous staff development, identification of skills gaps in the teachers. The strategies in place may greatly influence the quality standards and ability of the pupils to post good grades in K.C.P.E examinations.

### **1.10 Conceptual framework**

The quality assurance and standards practice employed in the public primary schools affect the capacity of teaching and learning in them. The capacity to effectively police and confer oversight to the schools is hinged on the level of quality assurance and maintenance of standards. The capacity to exercise regular visits for inspection and quality assurance may positively impact on the capacity of the teaching to duly discharge and exercise their duties. The level of quality assurance programmes highly influences the achievement of the desired academic performance by the pupils partaking education.

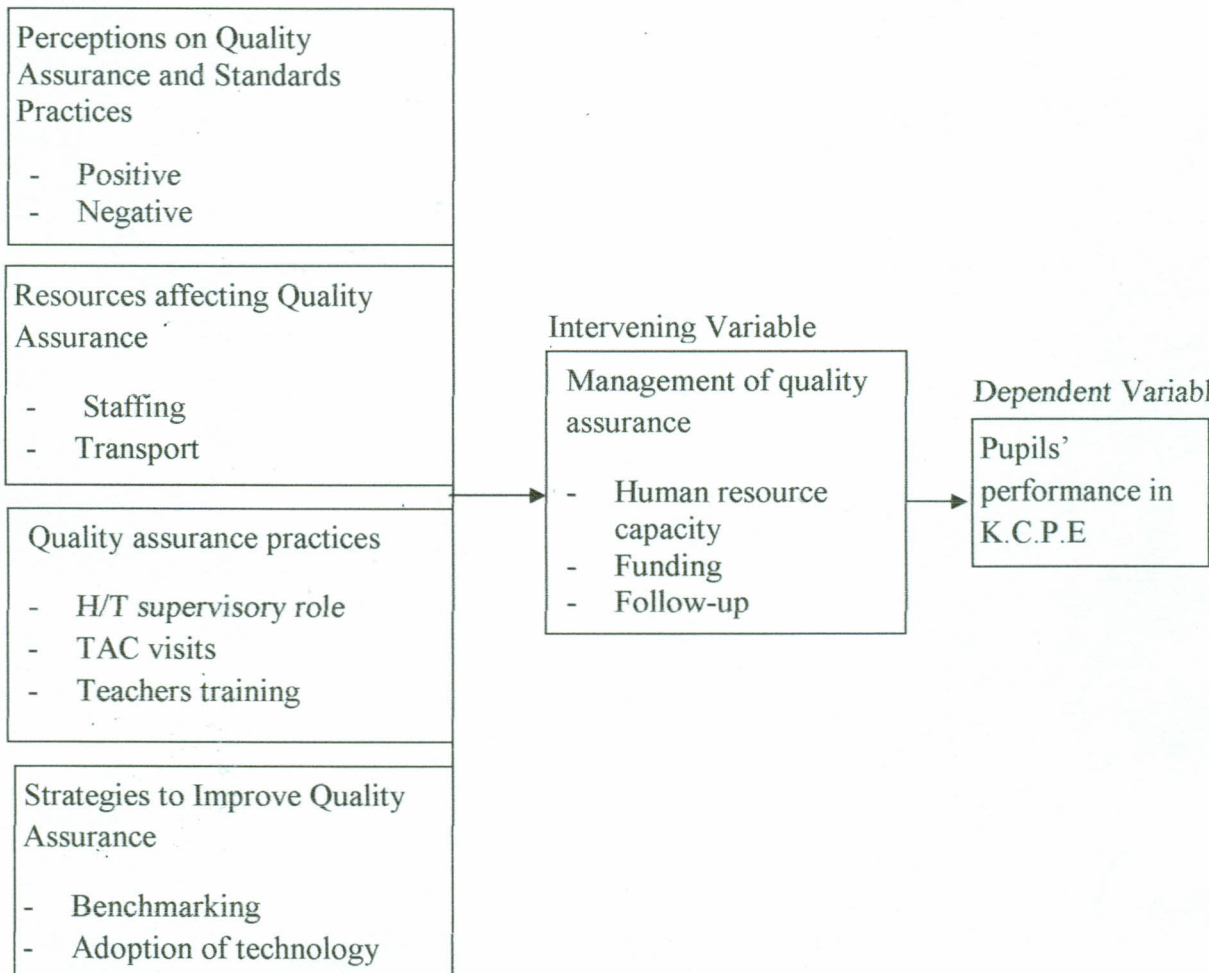
Different underlying factors affect the capacity of the quality assurance and standards department to undertake and actualize its mandate effectively. The factors include staffing levels for the quality assurance and standards department, the availability of transport and mobility of the officers and the liaison between the schools and the quality assurance and standards department. All the factors greatly influence the capacity of the department to discharge and effect its mandate. Varying factors influence the levels of quality assurance practices and on the other hand directly impact on the capacity of the pupils to perform and achieve in their K.C.P.E examinations.

There are different strategies that have been employed to enhance the effectiveness of the quality assurance and standards function. The Ministry of Education has placed emphasis on active quality assurance and standards programmes by way of enforcing regular inspection visits to the public schools. The function of management training for the head teachers and impartation of management skills has equally been a key strategy and attribute. The strategies in place may greatly work towards the realization

of sound performance in the K.C.P.E examination by the pupils partaking the academic programmes.

Different practices are undertaken and engaged in concert for the fruition of the quality assurance and standards practices. The headteachers supervisory role is a key practise in the ensuring of quality achievement in the school programmes. It is undertaken by the headteachers at the school level and they are empowered by the education act to carry out the mandate. The engagement of the zonal TAC tutors and personnel from the quality assurance and standards department is also a practice which assures the achievement of the requisite standards with regard to quality. This may positively impact on the realization of good results in the K.C.P.E examinations.

#### Independent Variables



**Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework Source: Author (2015)**

## 1.11 Operational Definition of Terms

- Best Practices - Envisaged parameters with regard to current industry expectations
- Funding - Budgetary provisions for achievement of required programmes
- Quality Assurance - Capacity to achieve the requisite standards
- Strategies - Mechanisms to assure realization of envisaged programmes

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The following chapter carries out a review of works carried to by other researchers in the field of the effects of quality assurance practices in the pupils' performance in the K.C.P.E examinations. It examines it according to its strengths and weaknesses and brings out the summary of the gaps to be filled by the study.

#### **2.2 Perceptions towards quality assurance and standards management practices**

Management and running of the education programmes in the Republic of Kenya is governed by statute. The function of quality assurance and standards is under the Ministry of Education which has a directorate of quality assurance and standards driven by the education act of the laws of the Republic of Kenya (GoK, 2013). In line with the envisaged targets outlined in the vision 2030, the assurance of quality in the education sector is key to driving and assuring the economy of sustained growth.

The management and assurance of quality standards has been a critical factor in the wake of realization of the basic education programmes. The varied capacities of the different primary schools influence the pupil's achievement. This is attributed to the fact that in the event of well endowed schools in terms of facilities, the performance cannot be like that of heavily deprived schools, (Muya, 2011). The disparities and exposure to a common summative assessment at the end of the programme may expose the learners to quality issues attributed to the varied teaching and learning environments. There is an urgent need to ensure that the maintenance of standards is adhered to in the learning programmes undertaken in the public and private primary schools.

The need to post good examination results has forced many school administrations to employ all sorts of tricks. This has culminated in the event of pupils trained and tutored to pass exams at the expense of knowledge acquisition (Khere, 2009). This goes against the philosophy of our countries education system and negates the import of the learning process. The underlying situation has been made possible by the low levels of standards and quality assurance programmes in the primary school education sector.

The need to acquire education as an instrument and avenue of social growth and mobility cannot be underscored. The relevance of education to the wide array of economic opportunities available should be related to its quality. The quality of education provided should be in tandem with the pertinent needs of the job market (Chweya, 2011). This is because the moment the pupils and parents perceive the link between the value of going to school and obtaining a job, then they will be naturally retained in the academic programmes. The quality of education has thus been confirmed to be the best incentive to retain the learners in school.

The introduction of free primary education has had a severe strain on the available resources. Many public primary schools have employed untrained teachers to bridge the staffing shortfalls. This has had the negative effect of affecting the quality of teaching and learning (GoK, 2008). The government policy of ensuring equitable distribution of teachers and introduction of continuous professional development programmes have equally been hampered by the budgetary constraints. This has been a great challenge as regards assuring the stakeholders in the public primary education sector quality programmes.

The review and enforcement of the minimum quality standards expected in the public primary education sector has been a mirage. This is attributed to varying underlying factors which include the rapid population growth which has not been matched with similar investments in the education sector. This has proved to be a serious challenge (Mukuria, 2013). This has seen the rising up of alternative education provision sector players in the informal settlements, nomadic communities and the arid and semi-arid areas. It has caused the enforcement of standards and ensuring of quality to become a hindrance to the public primary school sector owing to the diminished capacity of enforcement standards.

The visits to public primary schools by the directorate of quality assurance and standards officers are very few. This is occasioned by the aspect of having them covering wide and very dispersed areas thus limiting the number of schools that they manage to visit at particular instances (Ngaruiya, 2013). In a study carried out in Gatundu Division in Kiambu County, the study confirmed that the inhibited capacity of the quality assurance and standards department officers greatly curtailed and influenced their ineffectiveness. This led to the situation of poor academic performance in the K.C.P.E examinations in the division.

A study carried out by Nzomo, Onsume&Obiero (2008) equally found out that the conditions of schooling in many marginal areas were deplorable. The quality assurance and standards officers seldom had the capacity to effectively implement successful school assessment and evaluation programmes. This greatly incapacitated their ability to post good grades and affected the pupils' performance. The limited inspection visits also affected the quality assurance directorates' capacity to effectively identify skills gaps and offer solutions to the underlying challenges. It heavily impeded the learners' outlooks and prospects.

### **2.3 Resources affecting quality Assurance Management**

The Sessional Paper Number One of the year 2005 outlined various challenges bedevilling the education sector (GoK, 2005). The foremost challenge came out as lack of capacity by the officers charged with the ensuring of quality standards to deliver their mandate effectively. The sessional paper attributed the skills gap to the provisions which put the officers in their respective offices. Lack of skills and capacity was confirmed in many of the zonal TAC tutors in assessment of syllabus coverage and enforcement of an environment providing for teamwork and collegial teaching. This casts a shadow on the very institution in charge of enforcing quality on its diminished and restricted capacity.

The implementation of current best practices in education management and quality assurance has equally been found to be wanting. The skills deficiencies in the ICT sector in the affected teachers and the officers in the directorate of quality assurance are a big drawback to the education sector. A survey carried out by the World Bank in the year 2012 showed that a bulk of the quality assurance officers and teachers lacked basic skills in software use. In the light of the vision 2030, the sessional paper of the year 2005 and the millennium development goals emphasizing the role of ICT in education, the adoption levels were still low. It showed great shortcomings in the ensuring of quality in the primary education sector.

Studies by (Kimani, 2013) showed that the quality assurance directorate officers lacked the basic skills required to support the public primary schools to develop their development plans. Schools development planning is a critical aspect of quality assurance and standards detailing especially at the infrastructural level. The need to provide the schools with technical support can thus not be gainsaid. The skills gap in

the affected officers portends big danger as regards the schools capacity to effectively take charge and plan their development to assure them of the requisite quality standards.

The education sector review of the year 2002 vouched for the decentralization of decision making in the education sector (GoK, 2010). The sessional paper for the year 2005 equally reinforced a similar position. The decentralization of the quality assurance services to the zones and sub counties has however been a challenge attributed to the human resource component constraints and budgetary deficits. This has occasioned a huge strain on the available staff in the wake of realizing their mandate.

The Ministry of Education Strategic Plan for the year 2010 has a clear focus on the need to assure and confine quality standards. The strategic plan is explicit but the challenge of budgetary constraints in assuring the directorate of quality assurance capacity is inhibited by lack of funds. The strategic plan called for enhanced budgetary provisions to assure the capacity of policing and carrying out inspection visits to all the respective schools,

A survey conducted by Reche, Bundi, Riungu&Mbugu (2012)in the Maara Sub-county in TharakaNithi County found out that the quality assurance department in the county was heavily incapacitated. This was with respect to accessing transport to facilitate the officer's visits to the schools. The officers were forced to walk, hike lifts and use any available means to discharge their duties. This was a factor which greatly limited their capacity and exposed the learners to the risk of falling standards which the study attributes to the poor academic performance in the sub-county. The findings by the study depicted a situation whereby failure to provide resources to the quality

assurance department exposed the learners to situations of poor performance. The study failed to look at the other factors like the practices entailed in the actual supervisory visits and how they affected the academic performance of pupils in the sub-county. The study sought to fill the gap by seeking to authenticate and confirm whether the position in Maara Sub County identified with that in Murang'a East Sub County.

A report by the World Bank Kenya (Wanzare, 2008) showed that there was a serious need to re-think the teacher evaluation mechanisms employed. The report cited the inefficient capacity of many zonal TAC tutors owing to the fact that many were previously primary school teachers. The report was of the position that teacher evaluation would entail highly professional and better skilled persons than the present mechanisms used by the directorate of quality assurance. This brought to the fore the need for better equipping of the directorate of quality assurance and ascertaining the qualifications of the persons charged with the responsibility of evaluating teachers.

Onsumo et al (2008) reported that the conditions of schooling and the quality of evaluation in many Kenyan primary schools were deplorable. The report cited the relative non-existent inspection visits by the quality assurance department personnel attributed to low staffing levels in many parts of the country. This causes the officers to undertake office duties and general administrative functions in the Ministry of Education offices at the expense of carrying out inspection and supervision of schools within their areas. It thus greatly negated the import of supervision and the exercise of oversight by the directorate.

A study carried out in Gatanga sub-county found out that failure to exercise constant supervision was a factor which greatly affected the pupils' performance in the

K.C.P.E examinations (Gakure, Mukuria&Kithae (2013). The study noted that the sub-county which had taken the last position in the county for the previous four consecutive years had a highly incapacitated quality assurance department owing to diminished staffing levels. The department had one officer charged with the mandate of overseeing all the zonal inspectors and ensuring supervision was carried out. This greatly made the function ineffective and the officers resigned to the fate of waiting for the head teachers to look for them in their offices. The failure to have adequate staffing levels was a factor which caused the non-performance of the quality assurance and standards department in Gatanga sub-county. The study did not place an emphasis on establishing the extent to which other factors like interaction with technology by the quality assurance and standards officers played on the pupil' academic performance.

The Sessional Paper No. 1 of the year 2005 which served as a sector wide review of the Ministry of Education identified the failure to act on quality assurance recommendations as a factor which affected their performance (GoK, 2005). The paper cited the occasion of failure to act on recommendations as a drawback to the schools. It called for the empowering of the directorate to have the capacity to enforce the recommendations for the improved performance in the individual schools.

#### **2.4 Quality Assurance Practices**

The federal states of the United States of America have provisions for a common approach as regards carrying out quality assurance in the states. An agency charged with overseeing the management of quality assurance practices in all the states has been set up. It has jurisdiction over all the entities offering higher education programmes (Willis, 2011). The agency puts in place standards expected to be

adhered to in collaboration with all the stakeholder in the education industry with a view of seeing to it that the standards are realized. This has seen to it that the standards have a sense of balance and uniformity across board with regard to their realization. This has encouraged the upholding of standards and their attainment with ease in all the academic institutions.

In Canada the success of quality assurance programmes in the institutions of learning has been assured by the putting in place of rigorous benchmarking. This is by way of having systems and structures for continuous collaboration and sharing of ideas between varying regional jurisdictions. The activity of company notes and continuous development by the regional agencies charged with the mandate of quality assurance has always guaranteed the states capacity to uphold education standards at the optimum (Vale, 2010). It has served the country well with regard to assurance of practices which are in line with the evolving trends and current best practices. It has seen to it that quality is upheld and the standards do not fall owing to not being managed in the expected levels.

Development of quality assurance systems from a defined and synchronized manner has worked with regard to the harmonization of practices in the European Union. This has guaranteed the member countries of capacity to have quality assurance practices which are reflective of the regional economic block. The presence of a central moderating agency charged with the practice of overseeing the basic provisions are adhered to has worked well for the countries (Waburton, 2011). This has seen to it that teacher training standards and curriculum development and assessment are at par in many states across the region.

Ghana has had the benefit of developing a competitive edge in the provisions of quality assurance in the academic programmes. This has been by way of the country putting in place regulations that call for the continuous teacher training and upgrade. This assures the country of capacity to realize continuous growth and development of its human resource base in the education provision (Andika, 2011). It has assured the country of enhanced capacity with regard to conforming and adhering to the tenets of quality assurance and standards observation.

The Ministry of Education has put in place a framework which ensures the provision of an environment for regular quality assurance programmes. This is by way of having the zonal TAC Tutors undertaking the mandate of carrying out the task of inspection and regular quality assurance (GoK, 2012). The TAC tutors have been charged with the mandate of undertaking supervisory tasks in their respective zones. This is a fact which they have always undertaken with passion all geared towards the success of the academic programmes and ensuring that standards are maintained and enhanced.

The teacher training programmes equally have the requirement for the advancement of the basic minimum as regards quality. The training programmes are carried to assure that the rigours of the academic requirements are captured and undertaken by the teachers in the wake of their training. This sees to it that similar standards are exhibited nationally and the focus is on the achievement of timely deliverables as enshrined in the benchmarks for quality achievement. (GoK, 2008). This has ensured that the teacher training programmes have a focus on the realization of the envisaged parameters key to the guiding and enforcement of quality in all the public and private schools nationally.

Continuous training has equally been identified as a practice which can effectively forestall a fall in standards. This is because the dynamics of changing trends and realignments on the education sector calls for change of tact and the keeping abreast with changing trends. The presence of in-service training for school administrators and primary school head teachers can thus be a sure recipe for continued upholding of standards and achievement of the basic requirements. (Muteru, 2010). The putting in place of in-service training programmes can thus safely cushion all jurisdictions against the risk of plummeting standards and assure them of relevance and quality in the programs undertaken.

The head teacher's instructional- supervisory role has equally been called for as a requisite for the realization of involvement of head teachers in programmes which see to it that there is continuous liaison with the quality assurance and standards department may be a big boon to the realization of standards and current best practices (Irungu , 2013). The ability of the head teachers to enforce and supervise the preparation of professional documents like schemes of works, inspect and assess pupils notes, undertake classroom observation and engage in financial management of their institutions. These are supervisory practices which would greatly forestall the filling of academic standards.

Competitive benchmarking is a practice which may equally ensure that quality standards are enhanced and achieved. The putting in place of programmes which see to it that the schools have access and capacity to compute and compare practices may effectively take charge of quality standards achievement. Computation on the basis of sound systems of standards assurance is an apt practice of guiding the education sector towards good tidings and enhanced capacities nationally (Kimani, 2013). This

is a practice which may greatly influence the picking up of good tenets and employing them for the good of the respective academic institutions.

## **2.5 Strategies in place to improve quality assurance standards**

Quality assurance and standards management has been carried out consistently in the education sectors in Europe. The practices have been constantly reviewed with a view of gauging their relevance and capacity to identify with the dynamism and changing needs of the education sector. This has been a strategy employed by the EU member countries and has effectively worked towards assuring the alignment of the quality assurance practices with the envisaged standards (Calvert, 2010). It has thus served the European Union well with regard to aiding the members states keep abreast with the changing dynamics in the education sector. It has seen to it that standards are upheld by the member countries effectively.

Surveys carried out to explore the quality assurance standards employed in the Asian region indicated that competitive benchmarking was key to upholding standards. The states conducted regular peer review activities and crosschecked on the practices used by the different states. This effectively assured them of capacity to realize good practices in their jurisdictions. It had aided the upholding of standards and the creation of parity and uniformity as regards the quality assurance standards in place (Gale, 2010). The strategy worked in terms of ensuring the standards were upheld and best practices employed and replicated in other states geared towards assured improvement.

Effective collegial participation by all the federal states in quality assurance standards development has worked in the U.S.A. The strategy has ensured that harmonized standards and parameters act as the benchmark for quality assurance. It has seen to it

that similar evaluation mechanisms are used for assessment thus harmonization of programmes (Mellar, 2011). The strategy had ensured that the agency charged with the mandate of standards assurance had the goodwill and capacity to enforce them across all the federal states. This was attributed to the effective participation programmes

The Vision 2030 which is a blue print of the Republic of Kenya's development projections articulate the strategies that should be employed to ensure attainment of quality standards (GoK, 2010). The need to conduct an assessment of the teaching and learning processes is captured in the document. It calls for the regular evaluation and assessment of the transferable skills after every period of schooling to gauge the learners' capacities by the directorate of quality assurance to ensure that the envisaged standards have been achieved.

The Ministry of Education has put in place a policy framework to ensure that the directorate of quality assurance services is delivered and decentralized to the periphery. Centralized decision making has been a factor curtailing the decision making ability and standards of the education sector (GoK, 2013). The development of the decision making and policy function of quality assurance more so as regards the decision making ability has been vouched for and confirmed to be the most effective avenue of assuring standards are maintained across the country.

Constant and effective regulation of the institutions undertaking education programmes been called for. This is geared towards assuring the sector of the realization of the basic minimum requirements. This is because the proliferation of private schools and institutions offering education programmes has been confirmed to be a factor contributing to low quality and a dipping of standards (GoK, 2010). The thrust of the matter is captured on the need to put in place an effective directorate of

quality assurance as envisaged in the Sessional Paper No. 1 of the Ministry of Education. An effective directorate of quality and standards assurance may greatly raise the bar as regards upholding of standards and realization of effective quality management in the education sector.

The Ministry of Education strategic plan for the period of 2008-2012 calls for the retraining of quality assurance and standards officers as a strategy to ensure that quality is maintained. It has the premise which vouches for retraining the quality assurance officers to a level whereby they act as the Trainer of Trainers, TOTS for the primary school teachers, (GoK, 2012). The strategic plan also calls for the national training of head teachers and teachers in school based quality assurance. This is geared towards assuring and maintaining their effectiveness in the monitoring and evaluation process. Strengthening the national assessment system and building the capacity of TAC tutors to allow them provide support for primary school teachers has equally been educated from as a strategic objective aimed at ensuring achievement of standards.

Sub-Saharan Africa has been identified as an area with lapses in achievement of quality standards. The lapses on the other hand present an opportunity to the states with an avenue for effective self-accreditation, peer review and enforcement of the current best practices (Muteru, 2010). They have been identified as strategies which can effectively take charge of the underlying dynamics of the public education sector in Sub-Saharan Africa and see to it that they are effectively overcome and addressed.

The Ministry of Education has an aspiration of seeking to meet the provisions of the vision 2030 in its strategic objectives. They are equally a guiding benchmark geared towards the fruition and achievement of minimum quality standards (GoK, 2012). The government will accelerate the employment of teachers to ensure the acceptable

teacher-pupil ratio. It will also ensure the equitable deployment of teachers and introduce continuous professional development. A review of the minimum quality standards and its implementation is equally envisaged as a strategic objective aimed at ensuring quality of education standards is maintained.

## **2.6 Summary and gaps to be filled**

Several studies have been carried out in the field of educational supervision which was previously known as inspection. This is an exercise done by the quality assurance and standards officers who were previously referred to as school inspectors. The studies broadly classify the factors that influence performance of pupils in K.C.P.E. There are several factors which range from environmental, socio-economic and cultural background. Quality assurance however plays an important role in curriculum implementation and it is for this reason that the study sought to find out the effects of quality assurance and standards management practices on pupils' performance in K.C.P.E examinations in Murang'a East Sub County. A study carried out by Reche et al (2012) failed to look at the other factors like the practices entailed in the actual supervisory visits and how they affected the academic performance of pupils in the sub-county. The study sought to fill this gap by way of finding out how the management practices carried out during the supervisory visits affected learners' performance in the KCPE examination. Similarly, a study carried out by Gakure et al (2013) did not place an emphasis on establishing the extent to which other factors like interaction with technology by the quality assurance and standards officers played on the pupil' academic performance. The study sought to find out how access to resources which equally entailed technology affected the management practices carried out in the supervisory visits.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the research design, target population, data collection instruments and procedures, reliability and validity of instruments used as well as the data processing and presentation methods.

#### 3.2 Research Design

The study employed a descriptive survey research design to find out the effects of quality assurance and standards practices on the pupils' performance in the K.C.P.E examinations in Murang'a East sub-county. According to Orodho (2005), a descriptive survey is a method of collecting information by way of interviewing or the administering of a questionnaire from a selected sample. It is mostly used to collect information about people's attitudes, opinions, habits or any variety of social issues. This design was deemed appropriate for the study because the researcher collected, analyse and report information as it exists on the field without the manipulation of the variables under study.

#### 3.3 Study locale

The locale of this study was in Murang'a East sub –county, Murang'a County of the republic of Kenya. The choice of the study area was motivated by the deteriorating standards of the performance of primary school pupils in the K.C.P.E examinations in the sub county in comparison to the other parts of the county. Despite the quality assurance and standards practices officers having the responsibility of visiting the schools in a regular manner, the performance in KCPE examinations had continuously declined. This was an indicator that the efforts expended in terms of supervision in the wake of seeking to ensure teaching and learning in the public primary schools had

not borne the envisaged fruits. There was thus need to find out the effects of quality assurance and standards management practices on pupils performance in the study area.

### 3.4 Target Population

All people under consideration in any field of inquiry constitute a universe or targeted population (Kombo, 2006). The target population of this study consisted of all the 51 head teachers of the public primary schools in Murang'a East sub-county and 1,120 and the Quality Assurance and Standards Officer Murang'a East Sub-county. The total target population was 1,172 respondents.

**Table 3.1 Target Population**

Zone	No. of Schools	No. of Pry Sch. H/teachers	No. of Teachers
Municipality	16	16	348
Gaturi	17	17	360
Kimathi	10	10	220
Gikindu	8	8	192
Totals	51	51	1,120

Source: D.E.O's Office Murang'a East, 2014

### 3.5 Sample and Sampling Procedures

The stratified random sampling method was used for data collection purpose. The sampling method was preferred because the parent population was heterogeneous and there was need to stratify it as per the education zones. The education zones in the sub-county served as the stratum (Kombo, 2006), argued that a representative sample

of 10% and above is enough for providing the required information. The researcher picked 30% of the primary schools in each stratum and had a representation of the head teachers and teachers picked by way of simple random sampling method. The researcher marked some pieces of paper with the names of the schools and engaged pupils to randomly pick them to get the requisite percentage. The researcher equally sought out the Quality Assurance and Standards Officer who was deemed a key informant for the study. The respondents were picked by way of simple random sampling method to give equal chances to all in terms of the probability to participate in the study.

**Table 3.2 Sample Size**

<b>Zone</b>	<b>No. of Primary Schools</b>	<b>No. of Primary Schools H/Teachers</b>	<b>30% of Population</b>	<b>Sample Teachers</b>	<b>30% of Population</b>
Municipality	16	16	6	348	105
Gaturi	17	17	6	360	108
Kimathi	10	10	4	220	66
Gikindu	8	8	3	192	58
<b>Totals</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>1,120</b>	<b>337</b>

Source Author (2014)

The research thus had a sample size of three hundred and fifty seven respondents. This entailed 19 headteachers, 337 teachers and the District Quality Assurance and Standards Officer. This constituted 30% of the parent population.

### **3.6 Research Instruments**

The study used questionnaires and an interview schedule for the study. The study had two sets of questionnaires which was used to collect data from primary school head teachers and the teachers. The questionnaires were deemed suitable in that they could serve a large group of respondents; they had the benefit of self-administerability, anonymity and the standardization of questions for the purpose of easing the data analysis procedures (Orodho, 2005). The questionnaires had both closed and open-ended questions. The questionnaires were structured as driven by the objectives of the study with the chief aim being providing answers to the research questions. The study equally used the interview schedule for the purpose of having a structured interview with the Quality Assurance and Standards Officer. He was considered a key informant and a resource person of high value to the study. The interview schedule was structured according to the research questions. It was guided by the need to facilitate interaction between the researcher and the key informant.

### **3.7 Pilot Study**

Prior to embarking on data collection, the researcher pre-tested the questionnaires using two primary schools in Kahuro sub-county. This was for the purpose of improving the reliability and validity of the instruments. Changes were made on the questions deemed appropriate after the pilot study. The pilot study area had similar social demographic characteristics like the study area. Changes with a focus on improving the language in the instruments geared towards infusing clarity were done to ensure that the essence of the study was not lost.

### **3.7.1 Validity of Research Instruments**

Validity is the degree to which a test measures what it purports to be measuring. Validity can also be said to be the degree to which results obtained from analysis of data actually represent the phenomenon under investigation (Orodho, 2005). The researcher tested the face and content validity of the questionnaire. Face validity is in relation to the misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the question. This was checked by way of employing the pre-testing method.

Content validity on the other hand refers to the capacity of the instrument to provide adequate coverage of a topic. Adequate preparation of the instruments under the guidance of the supervisors, expert opinion and pre-testing of the open-ended questions helped establish the content validity.

### **3.7.2 Reliability of Research Instruments**

Reliability is a measure of the extent to which an instrument will consistently yield the same result after being administered several times to the same respondents (Orodho, 2005). To establish the reliability of the research instruments, the test retest method whereby the pilot study respondents were issued with questionnaires for them to fill and the same questionnaires were subjected to a retest to see how the response was. The reliability test entailed the test and retest method which was conducted for two consecutive days. The reliability coefficient was computed using Pearson's Product Co-relation Co-efficient which was 0.87 thus the instrument was approved.

Where  $r$  = Pearson co-relation co-efficient

$x$  = results from the first test

$y$  = results from the second test

$N$  = Number of observations

### **3.8 Data Collection**

Permission to conduct the research was sought from the National Council of Science and Technology with approval from Kenyatta University. The researcher sought a research authorization permit. The researcher thereafter visited the Murang'a East D.E.O's office and requested for an introductory letter to the target respondents after the presentation of the research authorization permit. The researcher hand delivered the questionnaires to the target respondents and collect them three days after dropping which will be adequate time for them to be filled in. The structured interview was conducted in one day after the researcher booked an appointment with the District Quality Assurance and Standards Officer.

### **3.9 Data Analysis**

After all the data had been collected, data cleaning followed for the purposes of identifying any incomplete, inaccurate or unreasonable data for the purpose of improving on quality through correction of detected errors and omissions. Coding of the data thereafter followed and the codes were entered into a computer for the purpose of analysis.

Qualitative data was analyzed by way of understanding the meaning of the information divulged by the respondents and comparing it to documented data from

previous research on the effects of quality assurance and standards practices on the pupils' performance in K.C.P.E examinations. It was presented thematically in line with the objectives of the study.

Data analysis involved both quantitative and qualitative procedures. Quantitative data analysis required the use of computer spreadsheets and the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used. Martin and Acuna (2002) observed that the SPSS package is able to handle a large amount of data and given its wide spectrum in the array of statistical procedures which are purposefully designed for social sciences; it is deemed efficient for the task. The data was coded and entered into the programme. This was with a view of establishing co-relations and the inter-relationships between the different variables in the study. The data was presented by use of frequency tables, percentages and statistical means which entailed pie charts and bar graphs.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

#### 4.1 Introduction

The study sought to find out the effects of quality assurance and standards practices on the performance of K.C.P.E examinations in Murang'a East Sub-county. All analysis used descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Frequencies were obtained and expressed in percentage form and varying statistical tests employed. The opinions were interpreted and their content analyzed and described. The same was used to answer the research questions put forth. The study sought to answer the following questions:-

- i) What are the perceptions about quality assurance and standards management in Murang'a East Sub County?
- ii) What resources have been allocated for quality assurance and standards management in Murang'a East Sub County?
- iii) What are the practices used to carry out quality assurance and standards management in Murang'a East Sub County?
- iv) What strategies have been put in place to improve the quality assurance and standards management in Murang'a East Sub County?

#### 4.2 Head teachers' demographic data

The study sought to find out the socio-demographic data as regards the headteachers' genders and length of service with a view of relating the information to their perceptions about quality assurance practices.

**Table 4.1: Head teachers' response rate**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Number of questionnaires returned by head teachers	19	100
Number of questionnaires not returned	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100</b>

The response as shown in table 4.1 indicates a willing participation from the sampled respondents owing to the fact that all of them filled and returned the questionnaires.

**Table 4.2: Head teachers' demographic data**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Male	11	58
Female	8	42
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100</b>

<b>Length of service</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Less than 1 year	3	16
1-5 years	7	37
6-10 years	5	26
11-15 years	3	16
16-20 years	1	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100</b>

It shows that most of the head teachers were of the male gender. The responses show that most of the teachers bestowed with the responsibility of leadership in the sampled schools were men (58%). This can be interpreted to mean that men were more aggressive in seeking the positions of leadership. The local community may have inclination towards recognizing the male gender as regards leadership prowess as opposed to the female gender.

The table equally shows the presence of varying time spans in terms of experience thus a reflection of different times of appointment to the head teachers' position. This equally was a good premise for the study in that the varied experience facilitated different insights with regard to the effects of quality assurance and standards practices on the performance of K.C.P.E examinations over the different periods.

### 4.3 Teachers' demographic data

The teachers' demographic data as regards the response rate, gender and length of service are as captured in table 4.3

**Table 4.3: Teachers' response rate**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Number of questionnaires returned by teachers	317	94
Number of questionnaires not returned	20	6
Total	337	100

The response was a reflection of an active participation from the sampled teachers with 94% of them filling and returning back the questionnaires. The response reflects a higher percentage of female respondents 58% serving as teachers from the sampled population and 42% male.

**Table 4.4: Teachers' demographic data**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Male	133	42
Female	184	58
Total	317	100

<b>Length of service</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Less than 1 year	42	13
1-5 years	123	39
6-10 years	63	20
11-15 years	35	11
16-20 years	28	9
More than 20 years	26	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>100</b>

The respondents had gained experience of varying periods in their teaching careers. This was an indication of informed personnel which had benefitted from adequate exposure to the evolving trends over time with regard to the effects of quality assurance and standards practices on the performance of K.C.P.E examinations.

#### **4.4 Perceptions on Quality Assurance Management**

The function of quality assurance and standards is under the Ministry of Education which has a directorate of quality assurance and standards driven by the Education Act of the laws of the Republic of Kenya (GoK, 2013). In line with the envisaged targets outlined in the vision 2030, the assurance of quality in the education sector is key to driving and assuring the economy of sustained growth. The study sought to find out the perceptions towards quality assurance and standards practices and their effects on the performance of K.C.P.E examination in Murang'a East Sub-county.

**Table 4.5: Frequency of school visits by quality assurance officers as stated by teachers and head teachers**

Frequency of school visits	Head teachers		Teachers	
	F	%	F	%
Often	7	37	134	42
Rarely	10	53	147	46
Not at all	2	10	36	12
Total	19	100	317	100

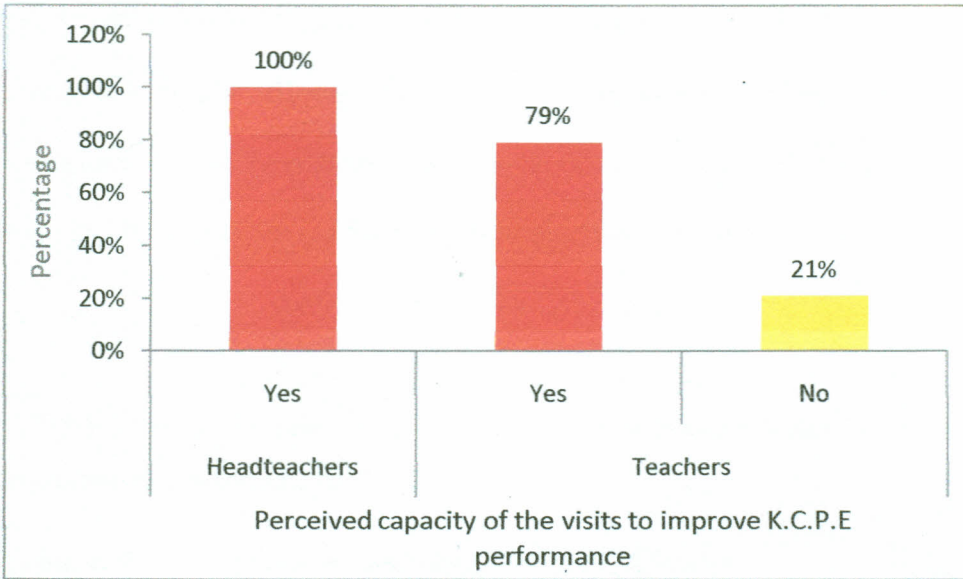
Table 4.5 shows that 53% (n=10) of the head teachers considered the frequency of visits by quality assurance officers as rare, 37% (n=7) considered them as often while 10% held the view that they were nonexistent. The responses denoted some level of dissatisfaction with the visits undertaken by the quality assurance officers in the sampled schools. This was an indication that they considered the visits as not meeting the requisite threshold in terms of frequency. It can thus be interpreted to mean that the head teachers did not consider the visits by quality assurance officers as adequate. In the event of higher frequencies in terms of the visits by the Quality Assurance and Standards Officers, the schools were bound to post better performance.

The teachers shared similar sentiments with 46%, of them considering the visits as rare whereas 42% deemed them as often while 12% held the view that they were non-existent. This was an indication that similar trends prevailed as pertains the visits by the quality assurance officers. A very significant number of respondents considered the visits as non-existent 12% (n=36). It was an apt indicator of dereliction of duty on the part of the quality assurance and standards officers. It can be interpreted to mean that the performance of the officers did not meet the expectations of the teachers.

The District Quality Assurance and Standards Officer was of the view that the infrequent inspection visits were occasioned by inadequate personnel in the sub county. He stated that there was only one officer manning the four education zones and this made him highly constrained in terms of capacity to effectively access all the schools. The prevailing situation rendered the office largely ineffective owing to the fact that a school should be visited for a minimum of three times per term but it was even impossible to visit them at least once in many cases. It equally exposed the schools to the risk of inconsistency with regard to supervision thus the risk of laxity on the part of the administrators and teachers.

The situation in Murang'a East identifies with a study carried in Gatundu Division by (Ngaruiya, 2005) which found out that the visits to public primary schools by the directorate of quality assurance and standards officers were very few. This is occasioned by the aspect of having them covering wide and much dispersed areas thus limiting the number of schools that they manage to visit at particular instances (Ngaruiya, 2013). In a study carried out in Gatundu Division in Kiambu County, it was found out that the inhibited capacity of the quality assurance and standards department officers greatly curtailed and influenced their ineffectiveness. This led to the poor academic performance in the K.C.P.E examinations in the division.

Figure 4.1: shows the responses on perceptions about the benefits of visits by QAS in improving K.C.P.E performance



**Figure 4.1: Perceptions about the Benefits of Visits by QAS in Improving K.C.P.E Performance**

The responses as shown in figure 4.1 are an indicator of the fact that all the head teachers valued the visits undertaken by the quality assurance officers and considered them as having capacity to influence good performance in the K.C.P.E examinations. It was thus a vindication of the essence of the visits carried out by the quality assurance officers in terms of their capacity to spur improved performance. It can be interpreted to mean that they all appreciated and acknowledged the essence of the visits by quality assurance officers on pupil performance.

Teachers shared similar sentiments with most (79%) (n=251) of them affirming though some (21%) (n=66) had a contrary opinion. It thus confirms the value accruing from the visits undertaken by quality assurance officers. Dissent expressed by some teachers was a pointer to the situation of resigning to fate as pertains the conduct of visits by quality assurance officers. This may be alluded to the fact that their schools have not been reached by the officers for inspection and supervisory visits. It can be interpreted to mean that they did not consider the visits as having capacity to influence the pupil's performance in any way. This was in tandem with Gakure et al (2013).

The District Quality Assurance and Standards Officer was of the view that the visits carried out by his officers had the capacity to positively affect the pupils academic performance. This he argued was because of the strategies that this office earmarked and agreed on with the teachers and school administrators.

Table 4.6 shows the responses on the usefulness of the schools' visits by the quality assurance and standards officers

**Table 4.6: Perceptions on usefulness of the QASvisits**

Usefulness of the visits	Head teachers		Teachers	
	F	%	F	%
Very useful	10	53	83	26
Useful	9	47	160	51
Not very useful	0	0	45	14
Not useful at all	0	0	29	9
Total	19	100	317	100

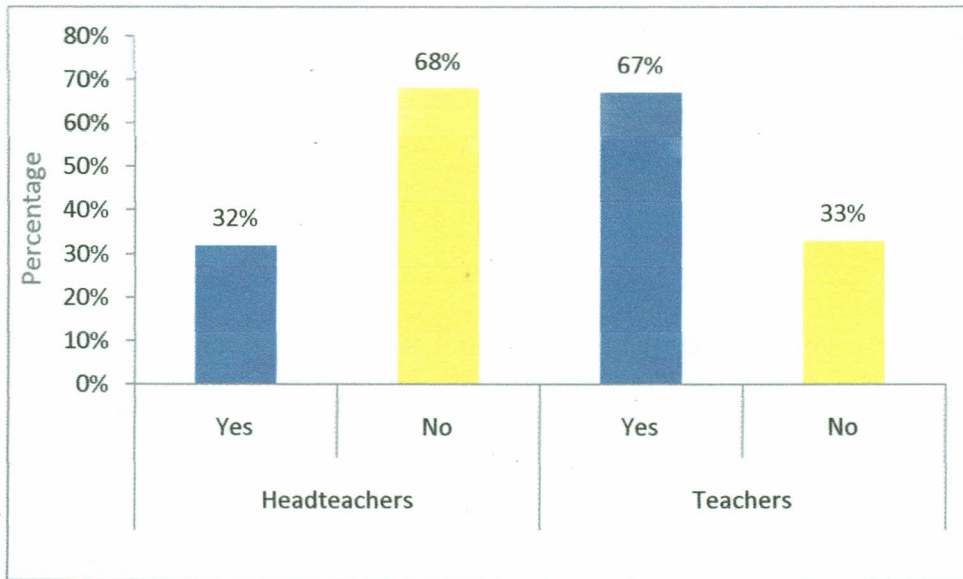
Table 4.6 shows that all the head teachers considered the visits undertaken by the *quality assurance and standards officers as useful. The degree of perceptions varied* but most (53%) of the head teachers considered the visits carried by the quality assurance officers as very useful. The responses can be interpreted to mean that the head teachers regarded and valued the visits carried out by the quality assurance officers.

Teachers had similar perceptions on the usefulness of the visits carried by the quality assurance officers. Most of them considered the visits undertaken by the quality assurance officers as useful to the schools(77%). This was an indication that the

teachers had derived benefits from visits carried out during the inspection programmes undertaken by the quality assurance officers. A significant number of the teachers did not consider the visits as useful at all (23%). This was an indication that they had not had any benefits accruing from the inspection programmes. It can thus be interpreted to mean that the visits were useful but in some cases they were not held in high regard.

The findings concurred with Nzomo, et al. (2008) who found out that the conditions of schooling in many marginal areas were deplorable. The quality assurance and standards officers seldom had the capacity to effectively implement successful school assessment and evaluation programmes. This greatly incapacitated their ability to post good grades and affected the pupils' performance. The limited inspection visits also affected the quality assurance directorates' capacity to effectively identify skills gaps and offer solutions to the underlying challenges. It heavily impeded the learners' outlooks and prospects. It tallies with the situation in Murang'a East Sub County which has had the occurrence of sporadic visits from the quality assurance officers as evidenced by the study.

Figure 4.2 shows the responses on perceived capacity of the quality assurance and standards officers to effectively supervise teachers



**Figure 4.2: Perceived capacity of the quality assurance and standards officers to effectively supervise teachers**

Figure 4.2 shows that most of the head teachers (68%) (n=13) did not deem the quality assurance and standards officers as having capacity to effectively supervise teachers while 32% (n=6) regarded the activities carried out by the department. This denotes the fact that they did not value the activities carried out by the officers with regard to their impacting on teacher performance. This can be interpreted to mean that most of the head teachers considered the teacher-supervision function as carried out by the quality assurance and standards officers to be ineffective.

Most of the teachers (67%) (n=213) held the view that the quality assurance and standards officers effectively carried out the supervisory functions envisaged by their offices some (33%) (n=104) did not regard it at all. This denotes the fact that the teachers appreciated the role played by the quality assurance and standards officers and regarded the supervisory functions highly. The differences with regard to views emanating from the teachers and head teachers were very pronounced. This was an indication that there were varied perceptions as regards the effectiveness of the

supervisory function undertaken by the quality assurance and standards officers. It can be interpreted to mean that the head teachers disregarded the quality assurance and standards officers' supervisory role whereas the teachers highly esteemed and regarded it.

The District Quality Assurance and Standards Officer held the view that his office could not effectively supervise the teachers in the study area. He attributed the prevailing situation to capacity shortfalls in terms of the human resource component and finances to facilitate travel to the individual schools. He thus alluded to the supervision being grossly ineffective owing to its sporadic nature.

This vindicates the position fronted by Muya(2011) who stated that the management and assurance of quality standards has been a critical factor in the wake of realization of the basic education programmes. The varied capacities of the different primary schools influence the pupils' achievement. This is attributed to the fact that in the event of well endowed schools in terms of facilities, the performance cannot be the same as that of heavily deprived schools. The disparities and exposure to a common summative assessment at the end of the programme may expose the learners to quality issues attributed to the varied teaching and learning environments. There is an urgent need to ensure that the maintenance of standards is adhered to in the learning programmes undertaken in the public and private primary schools. It thus calls for enhanced quality assurance practice. It is thus incumbent on the Directorate of Quality Assurance to employ effective programmes which assure high standards.

Table 4.7 shows the responses on the perception on adequacy of the quality assurance officers' qualifications to supervise teachers

**Table 4.7: Perception on adequacy of the quality assurance officers' qualifications to supervise teachers**

Perceptions on officers' qualifications	Head teachers		Teachers	
	F	%	F	%
Yes	9	47	217	68
No	10	53	100	32
Total	19	100	317	100

Table 4.7 shows that most of the head teachers (53%) did not consider the quality assurance officers to be qualified enough with regard to undertaking the function of teachers' supervision while a significant percentage (47%) highly regarded them. This was a confirmation of lack of confidence that the head teachers had in the quality assurance and standards officers. It was an indication of their inability to effectively discharge their mandates. It can be interpreted to mean that the head teachers considered the quality assurance and standards officers as not qualified enough with regard to the academic abilities requisite for undertaking their functions.

The teachers had a contrary view to that of the head teachers. The responses by the teachers indicated that 68% of them highly regarded the quality assurance and standards officers as pertains their qualifications and ability to effectively undertake supervisory functions as opposed to the few (32%) who did not regard them. The responses were a vote of confidence in the ability of the quality assurance and standards officers to undertake their supervisory functions in a competent manner. It can be interpreted to mean that the teachers had a positive perception towards the

quality assurance and standards officers and they appreciated the roles played by the officers with regard to supervision.

The study findings are in tandem with a World Bank report (2012) which found out that the implementation of current best practices in education management and quality assurance was wanting. The skills deficiencies in the ICT sector in the affected teachers and the officers in the directorate of quality assurance are a big drawback to the education sector. A survey carried out by the World Bank in the year 2012 showed that a bulk of the quality assurance officers and teachers lacked basic skills in software use.

In the light of the vision 2030, the sessional paper of the year 2005 and the millennium development goals emphasizing the role of ICT in education, the adoption levels were still low. It showed great shortcomings in the ensuring of quality in the primary education sector. The findings vindicated the thrust of the report as regards the capacity of the quality assurance officers as they were perceived by the respondents in the study area. The skills deficiencies may have been a factor contributing to the perceptions by the respondents on the adequacy of the officers to meet their obligations of supervising the teachers.

Table 4.8 shows the responses on perception of the quality assurance officers

**Table 4.8: Respondents perceptions on the level of cooperation from quality assurance officers**

Perceptions quality assurance officers	Head teachers		Teachers	
	F	%	F	%
Very cooperative	12	63	75	24
Cooperative	7	37	195	61
Uncooperative	0	0	47	15
Total	19	100	317	100

Table 4.8 shows that most of the head teachers (63%) perceived the quality assurance and standards officers as highly cooperative while some (37%) deemed them as uncooperative. The responses were a pointer to harmonious relations between the head teachers and the quality assurance and standards officers. It can be interpreted to mean that the head teachers highly regarded the quality assurance and standards officers as pertains their level of interaction thus the responses.

Most of the teachers shared sentiments similar to those expressed by the head teachers. Most of the teachers (85%) regarded the quality assurance and standards officers as cooperative. However, a very significant percentage of the teachers (15%) had a contrary opinion. This was a pointer to the situation of strained relations between the quality assurance and standards officers and teachers in some schools. It can be interpreted to mean that there existed harmonious relations between the teachers and quality assurance and standards officers but some cases of disharmony were evident.

Table 4.9 shows the responses on consideration of teachers' qualifications by quality assurance officers.

**Table 4.9: Perceptions of teachers' qualifications by quality assurance officers**

Consideration of teachers' qualifications	Head teachers		Teachers	
	F	%	F	%
To a high degree	2	11	83	26
To a fair degree	16	84	184	58
To a low degree	1	5	50	16
Total	19	100	317	100

The responses as shown in table 4.9 shows that most of the head teachers (84%) considered the quality assurance and standards officers as having perceived them to be fairly qualified with only 11% deeming them as highly qualified. This denotes the fact that the head teachers deemed the quality assurance and standards officers to have treated their qualifications with reservations. This can be interpreted to mean that in some situations there existed a wide gap with regard to the interaction between the quality assurance and standards officers and the head teachers based on the perceptions towards their qualifications.

#### **4.5 Resources Affecting Quality Assurance and Standards Management**

The Sessional Paper No. 1 of the year 2005 outlined various challenges bedeviling the education sector (GoK, 2005). The foremost challenge came out as lack of capacity by the officers charged with the ensuring of quality standards to deliver their mandate effectively. The sessional paper attributed the skills gap to the provisions which put the officers in their respective offices. Lack of skills and capacity was confirmed in

many of the zonal TAC tutors in a study carried out by the World Bank (2014). The zonal TAC tutors failed to perform optimally in assessment of syllabus coverage and enforcement of an environment providing for teamwork and collegial teaching. This reflected diminished capacity on the very institution in charge of enforcing. The study sought to find out what resources were provided for quality assurance and standards practices and their effects on the performance of K.C.P.E examination in Murang'a East Sub-county. This was with an aim of providing an answer to the research question put forth when the researcher embarked on the study

Table 4.10 shows responses on the adequacy of the number of officers to serve the quality assurance and standards needs

**Table 4.10: Adequacy of the number of officers to serve the quality assurance and standards needs**

Adequacy of the number of officers	Head teachers		Teachers	
	F	%	F	%
Very much	4	21	64	20
Fairly	10	53	159	50
Not at all	5	26	94	30
Total	19	100	317	100

Most of the head teachers (53%) considered the adequacy of the quality assurance and standards as fair 21% deemed it as high while 26% did not consider it as adequate at all. It denotes some element of reservation about the adequacy of the officers by the head teachers. Some (21%) had the feeling that the officers were adequate enough while others felt that they were not adequate at all. The responses were a pointer to

dissatisfaction with the prevailing staffing levels of the quality assurance and standards officers. It can be interpreted to mean that they did not approve the adequacy of the quality assurance and standards officers with regard to their numbers.

Most of the teachers (50%) considered the numbers of the quality assurance and standards officers as fairly adequate. The responses were an indication of reservation with the prevailing standards as regards the adequacy of the quality assurance and standards officers. Some teachers (20%) appreciated the adequacy levels while others deemed them as deplorable(30%). The responses show that the teachers were not very comfortable with the numbers of quality and standards officers in place and did not appreciate their adequacy in terms of capacity to post optimum performance.

The District Quality Assurance and Standards Officer attested to heavily impaired capacities owing to the gross understaffing with only one officer manning the four education zones. The situation largely incapacitated the office and made it not to realize its goals with regard to targets achievement. It made the schools fail to get visited in an ideal manner and it exposed them to the risk of falling standards.

The situation in Murang'a East identified with a study carried out in Gatanga sub-county found out that failure to exercise constant supervision was a factor which greatly affected the pupils' performance in the K.C.P.E examinations Gakure, (2013). The study noted that the sub-county which had posted poor results in the county for the previous four consecutive years had a highly incapacitated quality assurance department owing to diminished staffing levels. The department had one officer charged with the mandate of overseeing all the zonal inspectors and ensuring supervision was carried out. This greatly made the function ineffective and the

officers resigned to the fate of waiting for the head teachers to look for them in their office

Table 4.11 shows responses on adequacy of offices to accommodate the quality assurance and standards officers.

**Table 4.11: Adequacy of offices to accommodate the quality assurance and standards officers**

Adequacy of offices	Head teachers		Teachers	
	F	%	F	%
Yes	8	42	144	45
No	11	58	173	55
Total	19	100	317	100

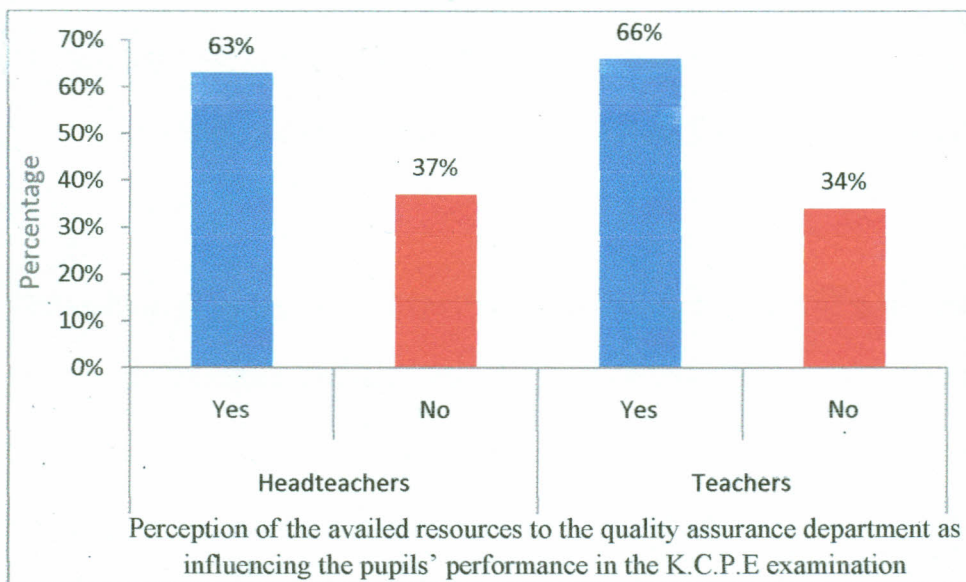
Table 4.11 shows that most of the head teachers (58%) did not consider the offices allocated to the quality assurance and standards officers as adequate for the conduct of optimum quality assurance practices while some (42%) considered them adequate. The responses were an indicator of the fact that the officers were constrained in terms of office space provision. This was an indication of the fact that they deemed the offices provided as inadequate and not meeting the requisite capacity. Teachers had the same position as that taken by head teachers. Most of them considered the quality assurance and standards officers as not having adequate offices to carry out their activities. It thus showed that the officers were heavily constrained of office space.

This was a confirmation of the dire straits that the quality assurance and standards officers were exposed to in the quest of carrying out their duties. The position was confirmed by the District Quality Assurance and Standards Officer who held the view the office space allocated to the officers was inadequate. Transport provision for the

officers was also largely unreliable occasioning failure to the officers in terms of having them reach their destinations in time.

The study findings tallied with a survey conducted by Reche et al (2012) in the Maara Sub-county in TharakaNithi County that found the quality assurance department in the county was heavily incapacitated. This was with respect to accessing transport to facilitate the officer's visits to the schools. The officers were forced to walk, hike lifts and use any available means to discharge their duties. This was a factor which greatly limited their capacity and exposed the learners to the risk of falling standards which the study attributes to the poor academic performance in the sub-county.

Figure 4.3 shows the responses on the respondents' perceptions of the availed resources to the quality assurance department as influencing the pupils' performance in the K.C.P.E examination.



**Figure 4.3: Perception of the availed resources to the quality assurance department as influencing the pupils' performance in the K.C.P.E examination**

Figure 4.3 shows that most of the head teachers (63%)(n=12) considered the resources availed to the quality assurance department as having an influence on the pupil's performance in the K.C.P.E examination with only 37% (n=7) dissenting. The responses were a reflection of the fact that the pupils academic performance was directly influenced by the supervisory capacity as motivated by the resources expended. Most of the teachers (66%) (n=210)shared similar sentiments as those expressed by the head teachers while 34% (n=107) dissented. It could thus be interpreted to mean that the resources provided influenced the supervisory capacity and by extension the pupils performance in the K.C.P.E examinations. Some of the head teachers' however deemed the availability of resources to the quality assurance department as not a factor that influenced the pupil's academic performance at all. The responses were an indication to the likelihood of other factors other than the availed resources to the quality assurance department influencing the pupil's academic performance. The District Quality Assurance and Standards Officer was of the position that the resources allocated to the quality assurance and standards department were inadequate and caused the office fail to deliver on its mandate in some instances.

The sentiments by the District Quality Assurance and Standards were reflected in the Ministry of Education Strategic Plan for the year 2010 which has a clear focus on the need to assure and confine quality standards. The strategic plan is explicit but the challenge of budgetary constraints in assuring the directorate of quality assurance capacity is inhibited by lack of funds. The strategic plan called for enhanced budgetary provisions to assure the capacity of policing and carrying out inspection visits to all the respective schools.

## 4.6 Quality Assurance Practices

The Ministry of Education has put in place a framework which ensures the provision of an environment for regular quality assurance programmes. This is by way of having the zonal TAC Tutors undertaking the mandate of carrying out the task of inspection and regular quality assurance (GoK, 2012). The TAC tutors have been charged with the mandate of undertaking supervisory tasks in their respective zones. This is a feat which they have always undertaken with passion all geared towards the success of the academic programmes and ensuring that standards are maintained and enhanced. The study sought to find out the practices undertaken for quality assurance and standards practices and their effects on the performance of K.C.P.E examination in Murang'a East Sub-county.

Table 4.12 shows responses on school visits by quality assurance officers for quality assurance inspection

**Table 4.12: School visits by quality assurance officers for quality assurance inspection**

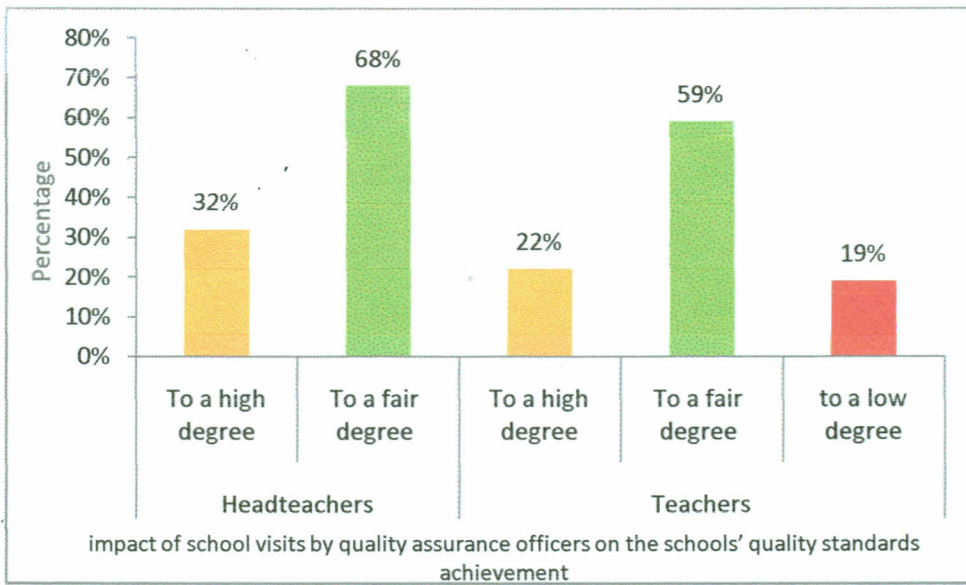
School visits by quality assurance officers	Head teachers		Teachers	
	F	%	F	%
Often	10	53	122	39
Rarely	9	47	160	50
Not at all	0	0	35	11
Total	19	100	317	100

Table 4.12 shows that most of the head teachers (53%) considered the visits carried out by the quality assurance and standards officers as often with 47% viewing them as rare. It denotes the fact that they acknowledged the visits and considered them as

regular enough to assure the schools of optimum inspection. This can be interpreted to mean that they appreciated the frequency with which the inspection activities in the schools were carried out. The teachers had a contrary view as regards the regularity of the visits carried out by the quality assurance and standards officers. Most of them (50%) considered them as rarely, 39% considered them as often and a very significant percentage (11%) held the view that they were nonexistent. It thus denotes the fact that in some instances the quality assurance and standards officers did not carry out inspection visits in the primary schools. The District Quality Assurance and Standards Officer confirmed that some schools were never visited due to inadequate personnel. This was an indication of the impaired capacities attributed to short fall in the personnel requirements. The District Quality Assurance and Standards Officer was of the view that the infrequent inspection visits made the essence of the inspections fail to be realized. This was an indicator that the sporadic nature and lack of consistency in the inspection was a drawback to the program.

The sentiments identified with the position taken by Onsumo et al (2008) who reported that the conditions of schooling and the quality of evaluation in many Kenyan primary schools were deplorable. The report cited the relative non-existent inspection visits by the quality assurance department personnel attributed to low staffing levels in many parts of the country. This causes the officers to undertake office duties and general administrative functions in the Ministry of Education offices at the expense of carrying out inspection and supervision of schools within their areas. It thus greatly negated the import of supervision and the exercise of oversight by the directorate

Figure 4.4 shows the responses on the impact of school visits by quality assurance officers on the schools' quality standards attainment.



**Figure 4.4: Impact of school visits by quality assurance officers on the schools' quality standards attainment**

Figure 4.4 shows that the teachers considered the visits undertaken by the quality assurance and standards officers as having impacted on the quality standards achievement to a fair degree (59%). (n=185) The responses were an indication of their failure to fully appreciate the impact accruing from the quality assurance and standards officers' visits to the schools. Some of the teachers considered the visits to have had impacted on the quality standards achievements to a high degree( 22%) (n=71) while a very significant percentage (19%) (n=61)deemed the achievements to have been to a low degree.

The head teachers had a similar position as that taken by the teachers. Most of them (68%) (n=13) considered the impact of the school visits carried out by the quality assurance and standards officers as having fairlyaffected the quality standards achievements while some held the view that it was to a high degree (32%) (n=6). It can be interpreted to mean that the visits carried out by the quality assurance and standards officers had not realized the optimum impact expected by the teaching

fraternity in the affected schools. The District Quality Assurance and Standards Officer confirmed that lack of consistency and failure to engage in follow up visits in the schools hampered the realization of quality standards. He called for facilitation to the department for the ideals of the inspection visits to be realized.

The findings were in tandem with the position taken by Kimani(2013) which showed that the quality assurance directorate officers lacked the capacity required to support the public primary schools to develop their development plans. The skills gap in the affected officers portends big danger as regards the schools capacity to effectively take charge and plan their development to assure them of the requisite quality standards.

Table 4.13 shows responses on presence of the practice of exercising instructional supervision over the teachers in school

**Table 4.13: Presence of a practice of exercising instructional supervision over the teachers in schools**

Presence of instructional supervision practice	Head teachers		Teachers	
	F	%	F	%
Yes	19	100	198	63
No	0	0	119	37
Total	19	100	317	100

Table 4.13 shows that all the head teachers confirmed the presence of an instructional supervisory system which conferred them authority over the teachers. The responses were a confirmation of the fact that the head teachers understood and duly exercised their instructional supervisory mandate over the teachers. Most of the teachers (63%)

concluded with the position taken by the head teachers. It was an indication that they acknowledged and appreciated the professional mandate exercised by the head teachers over them with regard to instructional supervision. A very significant percentage of the teachers(37%) were of the view that the head teachers did not effectively carry out the instructional supervisory exercise over them. This can be interpreted to mean that among the head teachers laxity existed and in some instances had exposed the schools to failure to achieve the optimum quality assurance standards.

The study findings identified with the position taken by Irungu(2013) that the head teacher's instructional- supervisory role has been identified as a requisite for the realization of involvement of head teachers in programmes which see to it that there is continuous liaison with the quality assurance and standards department may be a big boon to the realization of standards and current best practices. The ability of the head teachers to enforce and supervise the preparation of professional documents like schemes of works, inspect and assess pupils notes, undertake classroom observation and engage in financial management of their institutions. These are supervisory practices which would greatly forestall the falling of academic standards.

Table 4.14 shows responses on the perceived impact of instructional supervisory practice on the achievement of quality standards in schools

**Table 4.14: Perceived impact of instructional supervisory function on the achievement of quality standards in schools**

Perceived Impact of instructional supervisory practice	Head teachers		Teachers	
	F	%	F	%
To a high degree	13	68	85	27
To a fair degree	6	32	176	55
To a low degree	0	0	56	18
Total	19	100	317	100

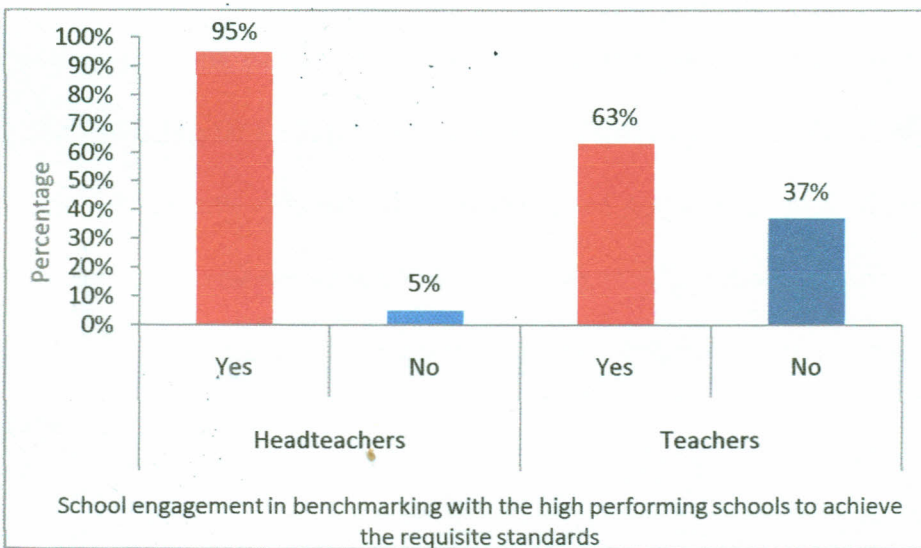
Table 4.14 shows that most of the head teachers (68%) considered the instructional supervisory practices as having highly impacted on the achievement of quality standards in their schools highly while 32% deemed it as having impacted on the instructional supervisory system fairly. The responses were a vindication of the capacity of the instructional supervisory system as exercised by the head teachers in terms of positively affecting the realization of quality standards in schools. It can be interpreted to mean that the head teachers had the experience of positively affected quality standards after the exercise of the requisite instructional supervisory provisions.

The teachers were in agreement with the position of the head teachers. However, most of them (55%) deemed the instructional supervisory system as having impacted on the realization of quality standards fairly 27% held the view that it had a high impact while 18% deemed it as having had a low impact. The responses were a reflection of a level of disenchantment with the capacity of the head teachers to dutifully exercise their instructional supervisory role. Some teachers were of the view that the quality standards had been impacted to a low degree by the instructional supervisory role.

The response was a reflection of disapproval with the capacity of the head teachers to exercise their mandate effectively.

The study findings confirm the position taken by Mukuria (2013) who opined that the review and enforcement of the minimum quality standards expected in the public primary education sector has been a mirage. This is attributed to varying underlying factors which include the rapid population growth which has not been matched with similar investments in the education sector. This has proved to be a serious challenge which has seen the rising up of alternative education provision sector players in the informal settlements, nomadic communities and the arid and semi-arid areas. It has caused the enforcement of standards and ensuring of quality to become a hindrance to the public primary school sector owing to the diminished capacity of enforcement standards. Similarly the public primary schools have been stretched to the limits with the head teachers being forced to attend classes thus failure to effectively carry out supervisory duties.

Figure 4.5 shows the responses on school engagement in benchmarking with the high performing schools to achieve the requisite standards.



**Figure 4.5: School engagement in benchmarking with the high performing schools to achieve the requisite standards**

Figure 4.5 shows that most of the head teachers (95%) (n=18) confirmed that their schools engaged in benchmarking practices with high performing schools to achieve the requisite standards. The responses were an indication of the fact that the affected schools valued the competitive nature of the academic programmes thus the essence of benchmarking as a means of comparison and emulation of the current best practices. This can be interpreted to mean that the schools engaged in peer review programmes geared towards assuring improved academic performance. Similar responses were brought forth by the teachers further reinforcing the position fronted by the head teachers with 63% (n=201) affirming. This was an indication of the highly competitive environment that the schools undertook their programmes in thus the essence of benchmarking activities.

The study findings mirrored the position taken by Kimani (2013) who asserted that competitive benchmarking is a practice which may equally ensure that quality standards are enhanced and achieved. The putting in place of programmes which see to it that the schools have access and capacity to compute and compare practices may effectively take charge of quality standards achievement. Computation on the basis of sound systems of standards assurance is an apt practice of guiding the education sector towards good tidings and enhanced capacities nationally. This is a practice which may greatly influence the picking up of good tenets and employing them for the good of the respective academic institutions. The schools in the study area were confirmed to have engaged in competitive benchmarking geared towards raising the academic standards.

Table 4.15 shows responses on the perceived impact of benchmarking activities on the school's performance

**Table 4.15: Perceived impact of benchmarking activities on the school's performance**

Impact of benchmarking activities	Head teachers		Teachers	
	F	%	F	%
Very high	7	37	71	22
High	11	58	166	53
Not at all	1	5	80	25
Total	19	100	317	100

Table 4.15 shows that most of the teachers (53%) were of the view that the benchmarking activities had a high impact on the school's academic performance. This was a vindication of the benchmarking activities with regard to realizing the envisaged benefits to the affected institutions. It can be interpreted to mean that the strategy of benchmarking had borne the schools the results desired from the activity. It denotes that the schools realized improved performance from the activity of picking good practices from the high performing ones. Some of the teachers (25%) however did not consider the benchmarking activity as having worthwhile impact on the pupils' academic performance. The response may have been motivated by the fact that the schools had not recorded any remarkable improvement even after engaging in benchmarking activities.

The head teachers had similar sentiments as those of the teachers. They highly approved benchmarking activities and confirmed that they had impacted on the

school's academic performance. This was an indication of the efforts expended by the individual schools having had realized the intended benefits to the pupils.

The study findings identified with previous surveys carried out by Gale, (2010) to explore the quality assurance standards employed in the Asian region. The findings indicated that competitive benchmarking was key to upholding standards. The states conducted regular peer review activities and crosschecked on the practices used by the different states. This effectively assured them of capacity to realize good practices in their jurisdictions. It had aided the upholding of standards and the creation of parity and uniformity as regards the quality assurance standards in place). The strategy worked in terms of ensuring the standards were upheld and best practices employed and replicated in other states geared towards assured improvement.

Bench marking by individual states in the EU member countries has equally seen quality assurance and standards management being carried out consistently in the education sectors in Europe (Calvert, 2010). The practices have been constantly reviewed with a view of gauging their relevance and capacity to identify with the dynamism and changing needs of the education sector. This has been a strategy employed by the EU member countries and has effectively worked towards assuring the alignment of the quality assurance practices with the envisaged standards It has thus served the European Union well with regard to aiding the members states keep abreast with the changing dynamics in the education sector within the individual states.

Table 4.16 shows responses on the practices engaged in by quality assurance officers during their visits

**Table 4.16: Practices engaged in by quality assurance officers during their visits**

Practices	Head teachers		Teachers	
	F	%	F	%
Observing teachers in class	8	42	135	43
Inspecting school facilities	0	0	53	17
Assessing financial management	0	0	33	10
Assessing syllabus coverage	11	58	96	30
Total	19	100	317	100

Table 4.16 shows that most of the head teachers (58%) considered the prominent activity undertaken by the quality assurance and standards officers during their inspection visits to be assessing syllabus coverage by the individual teachers. Others held the view that observing individual teachers in class was also undertaken by quality assurance and standards officers. This denoted the fact that they expended much effort in assessing the quality of the delivery in class with a view of ensuring curriculum implementation. It can thus be interpreted to mean that the head teachers considered the quality assurance and standards officers as having always placed a major emphasis on curriculum implementation in the quest of undertaking their supervision activities in the schools.

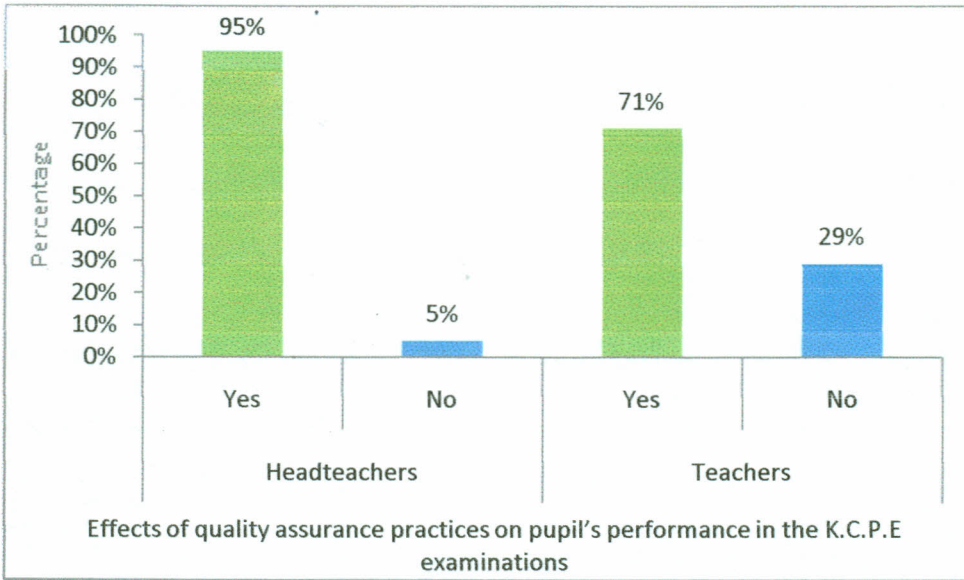
Most of the teachers deemed the quality assurance and standards officers as focusing on observing individual teachers in class (43%) and assessing syllabus coverage (30%). This was in tandem with the position taken by the head teachers and it was a reflection of major emphasis being placed on ensuring curriculum implementation. Some teachers considered the quality assurance and standards officers as engaging in

building inspection and interrogation of institutions' financial records. This brought to the fore the element of the quality assurance and standards officers striving to engage in well rounded activities which ensured optimum inspection in the quest of undertaking their professional mandates.

The District Quality Assurance and Standards Officer confirmed the engagement in practices geared towards enforcing curriculum implementation. He confirmed that the sub county had introduced a curriculum audit tool aimed at ensuring optimum results from the activities carried out by the office.

The sentiments expressed by the District Quality Assurance and Standards Officer mirror the position in the USA as brought forth by Mellar (2011). The study found out that effective collegial participation by all the federal states in quality assurance standards development has worked in the U.S.A. The strategy has ensured that harmonized standards and parameters act as the benchmark for quality assurance. It has seen to it that similar evaluation mechanisms are used for assessment thus harmonization of programmes. The strategy had ensured that the agency charged with the mandate of standards assurance had the goodwill and capacity to enforce them across all the federal states. This was attributed to the effective participation programmes

Responses on the effects of quality assurance practices on pupil's performance in the K.C.P.E examinations were as shown in figure 4.6.



**Figure 4.6: Effects of quality assurance practices on pupil's performance in the K.C.P.E examinations**

The responses as shown in figure 4.9 indicate that most of the head teachers (95%) (n=18) considered the quality assurance practices as having positive effects on the pupils' performance with a paltry 5% (n=1) dissenting. This was an indication of the fact that they appreciated the role played by the quality assurance and standards department in motivating improved performance in their institutions. It can be interpreted to mean that there was a correlation between the visits engaged by the quality assurance and standards officers in the schools and pupils' performance in the K.C.P.E examinations. The teachers shared a similar position with 71% (n=225) affirming while 29% (n=92) held a contrary opinion and this was a confirmation of the positive role played by the quality assurance and standards officers with regard to ensuring improved performance by the pupils.

#### 4.7 Strategies in place to improve quality assurance and standards practices

Table 4.17 shows responses on meetings by school administrators and the quality assurance department for common strategies on the quality assurance and standards management

**Table 4.17: Meetings by school administrators and the quality assurance department for common strategies on the quality assurance and standards management**

Practices	Head teachers		Teachers	
	F	%	F	%
Yes	18	95	244	77
No	1	5	73	23
Total	19	100	317	100

The responses as shown in table 4.17 shows that the head teachers had a common position that the school administrators and the quality assurance and standards officers always engaged in meetings to have strategies on standards management with 95% of them affirming. This was a confirmation that there were harmonious working relations between the quality assurance and standards officers and the school administrators. It was an indication of synergy between them. It can thus be interpreted to mean that the good working relationship between the school administrators and the quality assurance and standards officers ensured that they forged a common purpose for the realization of value to the consumers of the education programmes.

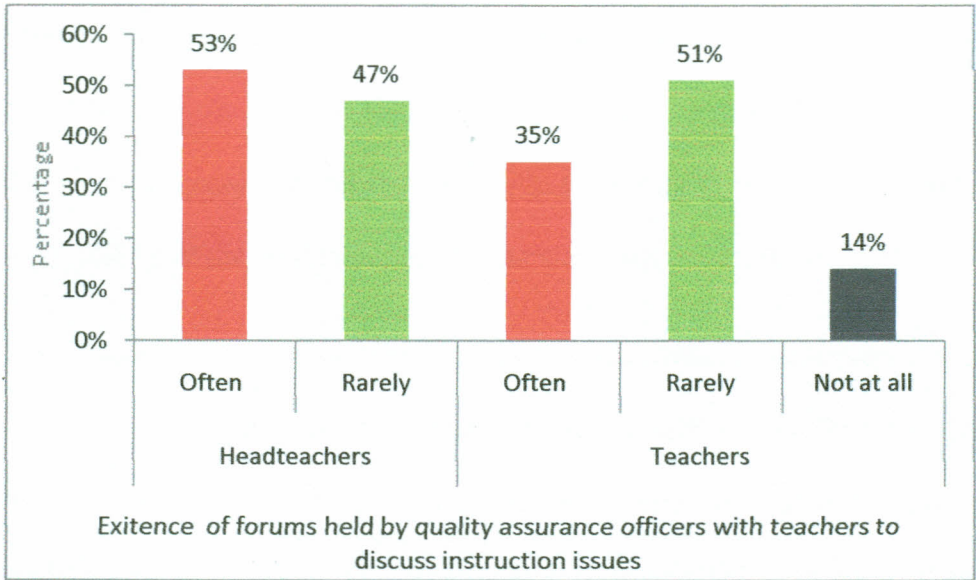
Similar sentiments were expressed by most (77%) of the teachers. It was a confirmation that they were aware of the mutual relations between the school

administrators and the quality assurance and standards officers. It denoted good working relationship and the presence of a common plan and purpose in most of the institutions between the administrators and the quality assurance and standards officers. The percentage of the teachers which had a contrary opinion was however very high. This was an indicator of the situation of disharmony between the administrators and the quality assurance and standards officers in some schools.

The findings were in tandem with the position taken by Muteru(2010) which called for continuous training which was identified as a practice which can forestall a fall in standards. This is because the dynamics of changing trends and realignments on the education sector calls for change of tact and the keeping abreast with changing trends. The presence of in-service training for school administrators and primary school head teachers can thus be a sure recipe for continued upholding of standards and achievement of the basic requirements. The putting in place of in-service training programmes can thus safely cushion all jurisdictions against the risk of plummeting standards and assure them of relevance and quality in the programs undertaken.

They also identified with the Ministry of Education strategic plan (GoK, 2012) for the period of 2008-2012 which calls for the retraining of quality assurance and standards officers as a strategy to ensure that quality is maintained. It has the premise which vouches for retraining the quality assurance officers to a level whereby they act as the Trainer of Trainers, TOTS for the primary school teachers. The strategic plan also calls for the national training of head teachers and teachers in school based quality assurance. This is geared towards assuring and maintaining their effectiveness in the monitoring and evaluation process.

Responses on the existence of forums held by quality assurance officers with teachers to discuss instruction issues were as shown in figure 4.7.



**Figure 4.7 Existence of forums held by quality assurance officers with teachers to discuss instruction issues**

The responses as shown in figure 4.7 indicate that most of the head teachers (53%) (n= 11) confirmed existence of forums for discussion of issues between the teachers and the quality assurance and standards officers held often. Some (47%) (n=8) were of the view that the forums were held in rarely. The responses were a confirmation of the provision for forums to discuss instruction issues between the quality assurance and standards officers and the teachers. It can be interpreted to mean that the quality assurance and standards officers and teachers engaged in round-table discussions geared towards ensuring improved standards in the institutions.

The teachers had a contrary view to that taken by the head teachers. Most of them (51%) (n=162) considered there to have had rare forums for discussion of instruction issues. Some were of the view that the forums were oftenly held while others considered them as virtually nonexistent. The responses were an indication of the fact

that in some institutions, the teachers had not engaged in forums for discussion of instruction issues with the quality assurance and standards officers. The responses denoted skewed application of basic standard practices in the schools. This was occasioned by the fact that absence of forums for engagement in schools predisposed the affected teachers to the risk of having a disconnect with the basic provisions and expectations of the quality assurance and standards department.

The District Quality Assurance and Standards Officer confirmed the presence of forums to assure the schools interaction with his office. The forums entailed annual meetings between his office and teachers for the essence of understanding the changes made in the curriculum. The meetings equally entailed evaluation of previous test papers in the K.C.P.E examination and confirming the skills tested in the frequency of the questions.

The findings identify with the aspirations of the Vision 2030 which is a blue print of the Republic of Kenya's development projections articulate the strategies that should be employed to ensure attainment of quality standards (GoK, 2010). The need to conduct an assessment of the teaching and learning processes is captured in the document. It calls for the regular evaluation and assessment of the transferable skills after every period of schooling to gauge the learners' capacities by the directorate of quality assurance to ensure that the envisaged standards have been achieved.

Table 4.16: Shows the capacity of quality assurance department to undertake needs assessments for teachers

**Table 4.18: Capacity of quality assurance department to undertake needs assessments for teachers**

Practices	Head teachers		Teachers	
	F	%	F	%
To a high degree	4	21	42	13
To a fair degree	5	26	133	42
To a low degree	10	53	142	45
Total	19	100	317	100

The responses as shown in table 4.16 shows that most (53%) of the head teachers considered the quality assurance and standards department as having engaged in needs assessment on skills to advise the teachers to a low degree. The response was an indicator of the fact that the quality assurance and standards department seldom undertook needs assessment before embarking on inspection visits. This being a standard measure of forearming the department with the requisite information as regards recommendations for improvement by teachers denotes failure on its part.

It was an indication of abdication of duty on the part of the affected officers and the high risk of failure to link the actual needs with the teacher expectations during the inspection visits. It can be interpreted to mean that the function of quality assurance as facilitated by the inspection visits carried out in the schools did not ensure the conduct of prior needs assessment in most cases. The same position was taken by most of the teachers. It was a confirmation that the conduct of needs assessment was not undertaken in an optimum manner by the quality assurance and standards officers before carrying out inspection visits in most of the primary schools. The District Quality Assurance and Standards Officer confirmed that meetings held between his

office, the school administrators and teachers regularly assured the assessment and confirmation of the pertinent needs that the schools had.

Table 4.19 shows responses on the perceptions on effectiveness of the strategies put in place by the quality assurance department on pupil's performance in the K.C.P.E examinations

**Table 4.19: Perceptions on effects of the strategies put in place by quality assurance department on pupil's performance in K.C.P.E examinations**

Practices	Head teachers		Teachers	
	F	%	F	%
Yes	13	68	181	57
No	6	32	136	43
Total	19	100	317	100

The responses as shown in table 4.19 shows that most of the head teachers (68%) considered the strategies put in place as highly effective in terms of improving pupil's performance in the K.C.P.E examinations. This denotes the fact that they appreciated the capacity of the quality assurance department with regard to fostering good academic performance by pupils in their schools. It was a vindication of the capacity of the department with regard to facilitating enhanced performance. It can be interpreted to mean that the quality assurance department had capacity and systems which were effective enough to assure good performance by the pupils in K.C.P.E examinations.

Most of the teachers (57%) expressed similar views as those shared by the headteachers. They considered the strategies put in place to ensure improved performance as effective enough. The proportion of teachers who considered the

strategies as not bearing fruits was however very significant. This was an indication that there was some level of dissatisfaction with the strategies and systems put in place. It can be interpreted to mean that there was the need for a review and mutual engagement between the quality assurance and standards officers and teachers to ensure enhanced and successful strategies.

The District Quality Assurance and Standards Officer was of the view that the strategies that his office had put in place had positively impacted on the pupils academic performance. He was of the view that the sudden turnaround of events in previous years K.C.P.E exams (2014) was motivated by the strategies put in place. He alluded to the practice of enforcing subject panels and having them tasked with achievable targets as a key motivation for improved performance.

#### **4.7.1 Particular strategies put in place by the quality assurance department and individual schools to ensure improved performance in the K. C. P. E examinations**

The respondents confirmed the existence of pertinent strategies for ensuring that the schools post good performance after the engagement with the quality assurance and standards department. They enumerated the strategies as the putting up of subject panels, school based tests, regular and continuous assessment, setting achievable targets and addressing poorly performed subjects on a regular basis. Ensuring of syllabus coverage and undertaking benchmarking visits was also confirmed. The responses were an indication of clearly cut out provisions and defined rules of engagement between the quality assurance and standards department and the individual schools. It can thus be interpreted to mean that the schools had indentified their pertinent challenges and put in place systems and structures geared for results provision.

#### **4.7.2 Proposals on ways to improve the quality assurance standards**

The respondents had varied proposals on the ways to improve the quality assurance standards. They were of the view that more regular visits to schools for advisory purposes should be undertaken. This was with an aim of assuring the maintenance of standards occasioned by frequent and regular inspection. Greater facilitation and mobility for the quality assurance and standards officers was also proposed. This would ensure that they visit the schools more frequently and with ease. The establishment of resource centers for advisory services and the employment of more officers to undertake quality assurance in the schools were also proposed.

The District Quality Assurance and Standards Officer held the view that the practice of capacity building may work favourably for the office in terms of infrastructural and the human resource development all with an aim of assuring the office greater ability to realize the envisaged targets. Greater cooperation between the Quality Assurance and Standards department and schools with an aim of ensuring information on curriculum changes is passed to them and standards enforcement were equally proposed.

The proposals made were in line with the Vision 2030 which is a blue print of the Republic of Kenya's development projections articulate the strategies that should be employed to ensure attainment of quality standards (GoK, 2010). The blue print articulates the need to conduct an assessment of the teaching and learning processes. It calls for the regular evaluation and assessment of the transferable skills after every period of schooling to gauge the learners' capacities by the directorate of quality assurance to ensure that the envisaged standards have been achieved

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter gives a summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations drawn from the findings in connection with effects of quality assurance and standards management on pupils' performance in KCPE in Murang'a East Sub-county, Kenya. The objectives that guided the study were: perceptions about quality assurance and standards management, resources allocated to the quality assurance department, practices used to undertake quality assurance and standards programmes, strategies in place for quality assurance and their influence on the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education performance.

#### **5.2 Summary of the study findings**

##### **5.2.1 What are the perceptions about quality assurance and standards practices in Murang'a East Sub County?**

The respondents considered the visits by the quality assurance officers as rare. They deemed them as not having had the envisaged impact as envisaged. The feeling was expressed by the teachers and head teachers. Some of the head teachers were of the view that the quality assurance and standards officers did not have effective capacity to supervise the teachers. They however considered them as cooperative in terms of their interaction and relations with the school administrators during the conduct of the supervision visits.

### **5.2.2 What resources have been allocated for the quality assurance and standards management in Murang'a East Sub County?**

The study found out that most of the education zones had only one quality assurance and standards officer. This depicted a situation of inadequate personnel to cover the areas. The transport facilitation was also considered inadequate to the extent that the officers used public service vehicles in the inspection visits. The offices given to the officers were also deemed as inadequate by respondents thus reduced capacities for service delivery thresholds realization. The respondents considered there to be a high linkage between the resources allocated for quality assurance and the pupil's performance in K.C.P.E examinations.

### **5.2.3 What are the practices used to undertake quality assurance and standards programmes in Murang'a East Sub County?**

The respondents considered the visits carried out by the quality assurance and standards officers as frequent. The visits undertaken by the quality assurance officers were deemed to have had a fair impact on the realization of the quality standards. The respondents were of the view that the quality assurance and standards officers enforced syllabus coverage, classroom observation, financial management practices and school facilities inspection in the course of the inspection visits. The findings were an indication of enhanced awareness levels by the respondents as regards the actual parameters evaluated.

#### **5.2.4 What strategies have been put in place to improve quality assurance and standards practices in Murang'a East Sub County?**

The respondents considered the conduct of round table meetings between the school administrators and the quality assurance and standards officers as a strategy which had been effectively employed to assure realization of quality standards. Holding of discussions between teachers and the quality assurance and standards officers was also considered as a strategy of standards enforcement. Engagement in benchmarking and comparison with the other high performing schools was also considered an effective strategy.

#### **5.3 Conclusions of the study**

*The study drew the following conclusions:*

The quality assurance and standards realization was perceived to be below the envisaged standards. This was occasioned by the fact that visits by the quality assurance and standards officers were not considered to have realized the envisaged impact. Perceptions on the inability of the officers to effectively supervise teachers were also a factor which made the quality assurance and standards practices viewed as not having attained the requisite thresholds of quality standards achievement. The perceptions may have impacted negatively on the realization of quality standards and pupils performance in the K.C.P.E examination.

Most of the education zones had not been allocated the requisite resources for quality standards realization. They had provisions for one officer to cover the vast areas. This was an indication of understaffing and constrained resources allocation. The absence of official transport for the officers was also a pointer to limited resources

thus the study concluded that the resource allocation for the quality assurance was constrained and may have negatively impacted on the performance in the K.C.P.E examinations.

The quality assurance department had put in place some pertinent practices which were undertaken with a view of standards and quality enforcement. The practices had borne the envisaged results and this was a confirmation that they were effective in assuring effective quality standards achievement. The varied practices had equally been tailor made for the specific schools. The study thus concluded that efforts had been made towards putting in place practices which were geared at enforcing quality standards. Enforcement of standards may have had an influence on the pupil's performance in the K.C.P.E examinations.

The study drew the conclusion that strategies had been put in place to assure the schools of optimum quality standards achievement. The strategies had been agreed on between the school administrators and the quality assurance and standards officers. This was a vindication of the quality assurance department in terms of having concerted efforts with the school administrators to assure realization of quality standards achievement. It also confirmed the synergy between the two entities.

#### **5.4 Recommendations of the study**

The study made the following recommendations:-

The Ministry of Education should empower the quality assurance and standards department. This is with an aim of reinvigorating it for better performance of its field officers to ensure that they strictly enforce quality assurance and standards

achievement in the study area. Enhanced capacities of the field officers will ultimately ensure that they carry out inspection visits more frequently. This will assure the realization of optimum standards and a positive outlook and perception towards the officers. It will have a positive impact on the pupil's performance in the K.C.P.E examination.

The Ministry of Education should equally seek to appropriate more budgetary resources for the purpose of enhanced capacities realization. This will see to it that the staffing levels in the department are improved and the officers more readily available to carry out the inspection visits. It will place them in a better position with regard to enhanced efficiency to diligently undertake quality assurance and standards enforcement. Provision of offices for the officers should equally be done to assure them good working environments. Putting in place resource centers for continuous teacher capacity building, provision of the officers with assured official transport and allied incentives will work positively for the realization of optimum standards. This may positively affect the pupil's performance in the K.C.P.E examinations.

The Ministry of Education should strictly enforce the practice of supervisory visits undertaken in the schools. It should strive to have the schools administrators and the quality assurance personnel develop tailor made practices specific for each school. It should seek to assure the quality assurance and standards personnel more regular interaction with the teachers than the prevailing levels. This will ensure that the teachers conform to the requisite standards with regard to observation of minimum expected standards as regards quality assurance. This may force the schools to observe the current best practices and assure them of sound provisions as regards quality assurance. This may have a positive effect on the pupils owing to the fact that

the teachers will be at par with the ideal standards and it may positively affect their delivery in class leading to improved performance by their pupils.

The Ministry of Education should enforce the practice of regular interaction between the quality assurance and standards officers and the school administrators. This will ensure that there is synergy in terms of focus and singular purpose in the strategies formulated for the realization of quality assurance standards. This will assure the schools of optimum standards realization. Engaging the teachers in roundtable discussions and mutual forums may greatly facilitate standards achievement. This is attributed to the capacity to have ownership of the programs and mutually agreed on targets. This may have a positive effect on the pupils' performance attributed to the fact that the teachers will always work towards the realization of their personal convictions accrued from the targets that they have participated in setting.

### **5.5 Suggestion for further studies**

The study suggested that a similar study with a bigger scope like a county-wide survey should be conducted to find out if the situation in Murang'a East Sub-county applies to the other sub-counties in Murang'a County.

The study equally suggested that research should be conducted on effects of quality assurance and standards management practices on students' performance in K.C.P.E examinations in Murang'a East Sub-County using an exposit-facto design to find out whether similar findings may accrue from the same study.

The study suggested that a similar research should be done and it should take into account the use of the systems theory with an aim of confirming if similar results would be established.

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## **APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL HEAD TEACHERS**

The study seeks to find out the effects of quality assurance and standards practices on the performance of K.C.P.E examinations in Murang'a East Sub-county. Kindly fill in the provided spaces to the best of your ability. Your identity will be treated in utmost confidence.

### **Section A: Bio Data**

1. Kindly indicate your gender

Male

Female

2. How long have you served as a head teacher in your current station?

Less than 1 year

1 – 5 yrs

6 – 10 yrs

11 – 15 yrs

16 – 20 yrs

More than 20 years

### **Section B: Perceptions on Quality Assurance Management**

3. How frequently is your school visited by the quality assurance officers?

Often

Rarely

Not at all

4. Were the visits beneficial in improving K.C.P.E performance?

Yes

No

5. If yes to question 5, how useful were this visits?

a) Very useful

b) Useful

c) Not very useful

d) Not useful at all

6. Are the teachers effectively supervised by the quality assurance and standards officers?

Yes

No

7. Do you perceive the quality assurance department officers as qualified enough to supervise the teachers?

Yes

No

8. How do you perceive quality assurance officers?

Very cooperative

Cooperative

Uncooperative

9. In your view do quality assurance officers consider teachers as qualified?

To a high degree

To a fair degree

To a low degree

**Section C: Resources Affecting Quality Assurance and Standards Management**

10. Would you consider the number of quality assurance officers as adequate to effectively serve the quality assurance and standards needs of the zone?

Very much

Fairly

Not at all

11. Are there enough offices to accommodate the quality assurance and standards officers?

Yes

No

12. Would you consider the availed resources to the quality assurance department as influencing the pupils' performance in the K.C.P.E examination?

Yes

No

**Section D: Quality Assurance Practices**

13. Do the quality assurance officers visit your school for quality assurance inspection?

Often

Rarely

Not at all

14. Do the visits by the quality assurance officers' impact on the quality standards achievement in your school?

To a high degree

To a fair degree

To a low degree

15. Do you have a system of exercising instructional supervision over the teachers?

Yes

No

16. How has the instructional supervisory function impacted on the achievement of quality standards in your school?

To a high degree

To a fair degree

To a low degree

17. Does your school engage in bench marking with the high performing schools to achieve the requisite standards?

Yes

No

18. If yes, to question number 20, how did the benchmarking activities impact on the school's performance?

Very highly

Highly

Not at all

19. Which of the following do the quality assurance officers engage in during their visits?

Observing teachers in class

Inspecting school facilities

Assessing financial management

Assessing syllabus coverage

20. Have quality assurance practices affected pupils' performance in the K.C.P.E examinations?

Yes

No

**Section E: Strategies in place to improve the levels of quality assurance and standards practice**

21. Do the school administrators and the quality assurance department meet to have common strategies on the quality assurance and standards management?

Yes

No

22. Do the quality assurance officers hold forums with teachers to discuss instruction issues?

Often

Rarely

Not at all

23. Does the quality assurance department carry out a needs assessment on skills to advise the teachers?

To a high degree

To a fair degree

To a low degree

24. What strategies have been put in place between your institution and the quality assurance department to improve pupils' performance in the K. C. P. E examinations?

Kindly explain

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25. Have the strategies put in place by the quality assurance department in your zone affected pupils' performance in K.C.P.E examinations?

Yes

No

26. In your own opinion, how should the quality assurance and standards function be improved to better the K.C.P.E performance? Kindly indicate

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## APPENDIX 11: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

The study seeks to find out the effects of quality assurance and standards practices on the performance of K.C.P.E examinations in Murang'a East Sub-county. Kindly fill in the provided spaces to the best of your ability. Your identity will be treated in utmost confidence.

### Section A: Bio Data

1. Kindly indicate your gender

Male

Female

2. How long have you served as a teacher in your current station?

Less than 1 year

1 – 5 yrs

6 – 10 yrs

11 – 15 yrs

16 – 20 yrs

More than 20 years

### Section B: Perceptions on Quality Assurance Management

3. How frequently is your school visited by the quality assurance officers?

Often

Rarely

Not at all

4. Were the visits beneficial in improving K.C.P.E performance?

Yes

No

5. If yes to question 5, how useful were this visits?

a) Very useful

b) Useful

c) Not very useful

d) Not useful at all

6. Are the teachers effectively supervised by the quality assurance and standards officers?

Yes

No

7. Do you perceive the quality assurance department officers as qualified enough to supervise the teachers?

Yes

No

8. How do you perceive quality assurance officers?

Very cooperative

Cooperative

Uncooperative

9. In your view do quality assurance officers consider teachers as qualified?

To a high degree

To a fair degree

To a low degree

### **Section C: Resources Affecting Quality Assurance and Standards Management**

10. Would you consider the number as adequate to effectively serve the quality assurance and standards needs of the zone?

Very much

Fairly

Not at all

11. Are there enough offices to accommodate the quality assurance and standards officers?

Yes

No

12. Would you consider the availed resources to the quality assurance department as influencing the pupils' performance in the K.C.P.E examination?

Yes

No

#### **Section D: Quality Assurance Practices**

13. Do the quality assurance officers visit your school for quality assurance inspection?

Often

Rarely

Not at all

14. Do the visits by the quality assurance officers' impact on the quality standards achievement in your school?

To a high degree

To a fair degree

To a low degree

15. Do you have a system of exercising instructional supervision over the teachers?

Yes

No

16. How has the instructional supervisory function impacted on the achievement of quality standards in your school?

To a high degree

To a fair degree

To a low degree

17. Does your school engage in bench marking with the high performing schools to achieve the requisite standards?

Yes

No

18. If yes, to question number 20, how did the benchmarking activities impact on the school's performance?

Very highly

Highly

Not at all

19. Which of the following do the quality assurance officers engage in during their visits?

Observing teachers in class

Inspecting school facilities

Assessing financial management

Assessing syllabus coverage

20. Have quality assurance practices affected pupils' performance in the K.C.P.E examinations?

Yes

No

**Section E: Strategies in place to improve the levels of quality assurance and standards practice**

21. Do the school administrators and the quality assurance department meet to have common strategies on the quality assurance and standards management?

Yes

No

22. Do the quality assurance officers hold forums with teachers to discuss instruction issues?

Often

Rarely

Not at all

23. Does the quality assurance department carry out a needs assessment on skills to advise the teachers?

To a high degree

To a fair degree

To a low degree

24. What strategies have been put in place between your institution and the quality assurance department to improve pupils' performance in the K. C. P. E examinations?

Kindly explain .

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25. Have the strategies put in place by the quality assurance department in your zone affected pupils' performance in K.C.P.E examinations?

Yes

No

26. In your own opinion, how should the quality assurance and standards function be improved to better the K.C.P.E performance? Kindly indicate

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### APPENDIX III: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. How long have you served as the District Quality Assurance and Standards Officer in the district?
2. How many field officers does your department have?
3. Would you consider it as having an effective capacity to undertake in the functions of quality assurance and standards management?
4. Does your office have capacity to make visits to all the schools in the district?
5. What time spans do you take before making subsequent visits to the schools?
6. Would you consider your office as having capacity to undertake effective teacher management programmes?
7. Do the school supervision visits entail assessment of the school evaluation systems?
8. Has your office ever had constraints owing to the levels of the field supervision officers?
9. Does your office have access to transport facilities to enhance the movement of personnel?
10. Would you consider the funding provisions for the department as fully adequate to assure it of sound operations?
11. Does your office keep in constant touch with the head teachers in the wake of formulating strategies for enhanced supervision capacities?
12. Does your department have capacity to organize training forms for the teachers and head teachers to assure improved skills?
13. Does your office have capacity to identify skills deficiencies and make follow geared towards improvement of the teaching standards?

14. Have there been efforts by your office to conduct needs assessment on the skills gaps with a view of advising on teacher training?
15. Have the quality assurance activities carried out by your office affected the performance of pupils in the K.C.P.E examinations in the district?
16. In your own opinion, how can the quality assurance practices in your district be improved on for better performance in the K.C.P.E examination?

## APPENDIX IV: LETTER OF RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION



### NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Telephone: +254-20-2213471,  
2241349, 310571, 2219420  
Fax: +254-20-318245, 318249  
Email: secretary@nacosti.go.ke  
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke  
When replying please quote

9<sup>th</sup> Floor, Utalii House  
Uhuru Highway  
P.O. Box 30623-00100  
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref: No.

Date:  
**18<sup>th</sup> March, 2015**

**NACOSTI/P/15/4956/5037**


Karugo David Njoroge  
Kenyatta University  
P.O. Box 43844-00100  
**NAIROBI.**

#### RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on *“The effect of Quality Assurance and Standards Management practices on pupils performance in KCPE Examinations in Murang’a East Sub County in Kenya,”* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Murang’a County** for a period ending **31<sup>st</sup> may, 2015.**

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Murang’a County** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are required to submit **two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf** of the research report/thesis to our office.


  
**DR. S. K. LANGAT, OGW**  
**FOR: DIRECTOR GENERAL/CEO**

Copy to:

The County Commissioner  
Murang’a County.

The County Director of Education  
Murang’a County.

## APPENDIX VI: INTERNAL MEMO APPROVING PROPOSAL

  
**KENYATTA UNIVERSITY**  
**GRADUATE SCHOOL**

E-mail: [dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke](mailto:dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke)

P.O. Box 43844, 00100  
NAIROBI, KENYA  
Tel. 810901 Ext. 57530

Website: [www.ku.ac.ke](http://www.ku.ac.ke)

**Internal Memo**

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**FROM:** Dean, Graduate School

**DATE:** 17<sup>th</sup> November, 2014

**TO:** Karugo David Njoroge  
C/o Education Management, Policy  
And Curriculum Studies Dept.

**REF:** E55/CE/22796/2010

**SUBJECT:** APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL

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This is to inform you that Graduate School Board, at its meeting of 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2014, approved your Research Proposal for the M.ED Degree Entitled, "Effect of Quality Assurance and Standards Management Practices of Pupils' Performance in K.C.P.E. Examinations in Murang'a East Sub-County in Kenya."

You may now proceed with your Data Collection, subject to clearance with the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology.

As you embark on your data collection, please note that you will be required to submit to Graduate School completed Supervision Tracking Forms per semester. The form has been developed to replace the Progress Report Forms. The Supervision Tracking Forms are available at the University's Website under Graduate School webpage downloads.

Thank you.

  
**SILVERIA WHIONG'O**  
**FOR: DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL**

c.c. Chairman, Department of Education Management, Policy and Curriculum Studies

Supervisors:

1. Dr. Florence Itegi  
C/o Department of Education Mgt. Pol. & Curr. Studies  
**Kenyatta University**
2. Dr. Martin Ogolla  
C/o Department Education Mgt. Pol. & Curr. Studies  
**Kenyatta University**

ST/rwm