

**ROLE OF TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT IN THE ACADEMIC
PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MURANG'A
EAST DISTRICT, MURANG'A COUNTY, KENYA**

JOHN IRUNGU JOSEPH

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ABSTRACT

Despite the fact that Total Quality Management in education is key to school success in terms of its mission, goal and objectives, there has been serious concerns expressed by the government, politicians and the general public over what they perceive as lack of inadequate quality management practices in schools. The purpose of the study was to find out the role of Total Quality Management in the academic performance of secondary schools in Murang'a East District, Murang'a County, Kenya. The objectives of the study was to establish the extent to which secondary schools employ total quality management principles; find out the effects of TQM on academic performance of secondary schools; find out the factors that hinder school administrators from employing total quality management in their school management activities; and to establish ways through which school administrators can be empowered to employ TQM principles in school management. The study was guided by Crosby and Demings model of TQM. The study findings study may be of benefit to the government because it would gain data on the school-based management practices employed in secondary schools and how these influence the quality of education. This would help in effective policy formulation for improving the quality of education at the national level. The findings of the study may also help school managers/principals gain data that would help in self-appraisal of their effectiveness in school management. The study employed a descriptive survey design to target all the 29 headteachers and 226 teachers in all the 29 secondary schools in Murang'a East District. Stratified sampling was used to select participating schools; each strata representing boys' boarding, girls' boarding and mixed day schools. Thereafter 20 out of 29 schools were selected randomly to participate in the actual study. All the 20 headteachers from the sampled 20 schools would automatically qualify to take part in the study; while simple random sampling was used to select 100 teachers (5 per school), yielding a sample size of 120 respondents. Data was collected using questionnaires for headteachers and teachers. The pilot study enabled the researcher to test the reliability of the instruments. Data was both qualitative and quantitative. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the quantitative data obtained while content analysis was used to analyse qualitative data. The study established that most schools were adhering to leadership, quality planning, human resource and employee empowerment principles to enhance total quality management. It was established that most of the schools had an improvement in academic performances from year 200 to 2011. However, the study revealed that among the schools that were registering improvement in academic performances, most of them had a very slight improvement and a few of them registered decline in academic performances. This shows that total quality management was not applied in all schools in Murang'a East district. The major challenges that undermined implementation of TQM in schools were; high employee turnover making it difficult to empower employees. Inadequate funds used for training (workshop/seminars) of employees and poor remuneration of teachers. In quality planning, the major challenge faced was inadequate time and finances to implement the plans. The study also recommends that the school management should adopt a hybrid approach in the implementation of TQM.