EFFECT OF POLICY OF TWO-YEAR DIPLOMA LEVEL TEACHER QUALIFICATION ON QUALITY TEACHER TRAINING IN PUBLIC PRIMARY TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGES IN KENYA

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Abstract: Quality education is crucial in educational development of any nation since education acts as an agent of change, and enhances social - economic development of nations. Despite the various changes of curricular by education commissions, quality teacher training in Public Primary Teacher Training Colleges in Kenya still has some gaps that need to be addressed. Although previous studies found that indeed challenges existed in teacher training colleges in terms of education policies, no research has been conducted among stakeholders within public primary teacher training colleges in Kenya to ascertain the effects on quality training. This study intended to examine the effect of policy of a 2 year diploma level qualification for teachers on quality teacher training in public primary teacher training colleges in Kenya. The study used descriptive survey design with a target population of 12,285 comprising 11, 525 and 1,050 college principals, subject tutors and teacher trainees respectively. Simple random sampling was used to obtain a sample size of 1,586. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected using pretested structured questionnaires. Collected data was coded and analyzed using SPSS version 28 and results presented in form of tables, frequencies and percentages. About 50% principals and tutors cited tutors' overstay in one single college while 50% trainees cited lack of students' freedom and lack of employment for teacher graduates. From these findings it is concluded that diploma level qualification are directly linked to quality teacher training in public primary teacher training colleges in Kenya. The study therefore recommended that the government should roll out adequate in-service in teacher training colleges to positively affect the teaching /learning strategies and acquisition of new knowledge required to combat the quickly changing world.

Key Words: *Diploma Level Qualification, Teacher Training Policy, Public Primary Teacher Training Colleges, Diploma Level Training Programs*

INTRODUCTION

The policy of diploma level qualification for teachers on quality teacher training in PPTTCs in Kenya. The qualification to teach in a primary school was a Primary Teacher Education (PTE) certificate commonly known as (P1). This entailed completion of Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) followed by two year training at a teacher training college (Namunga & Otunga, 2012). Training on subjects' content was done in the first year followed by specialization in either

Science or Arts in the following year coupled with teaching practice. Teaching practice is the specific actions and discourse that take place within a lesson and that physically enact the approach and strategy. Examining the ideas of Alexander (2001) teaching practices comprise: teacher spoken discourse (including instruction, explanation, metaphor, questioning, responding, elaboration and management talk); visual representation (using a chalkboard, writing, diagrams, pictures, textbook, learning aids such as stones, experiments, drama) to understand or construct the new knowledge being presented or indicated to the learners; the act of setting or providing tasks for learners to cognitively engage with new content or develop physical skills, such as experimentation, reading, writing, drawing, mapping, rehearsing, problem solving, practicing; a variety of social interactions, in which language is central between learners and teachers, such as pairs, groups, individually or whole-class; teachers' monitoring, use of feedback, intervention, remediation and formative and summative assessment of the students or assessment by the students themselves.

The teaching practice period for prospective primary school teacher trainees in Kenya has been a cumulative of 6 months which occur in three different sessions. According to Katitia (2015), effective teaching practice requires extensive spending of time by teacher trainees in the field for the entire program evaluating and applying varied strategies and concepts alongside experienced teachers. Education policy of two years training for primary school teachers creates a platform for crash program that limits detailed practical learning activities in teachers' education. The short period allocated for teaching practice is inadequate for the prospective teacher to extensively apply, and evaluate the pedagogy and knowledge acquired. This has impacted on technological practical skills achievement by the prospective teachers affecting their ability to fully integrate technology in teaching and learning (Katitia, 2015). Teaching practice is an inseparable component of teacher education. It is vital for the preparation of effective primary school teachers. Though teaching practice is compulsory for every teacher trainee, some reports indicate the existence of varied inadequacy in teaching practice planning and it's functioning. This situation is compounded by inadequate financing of the teacher education and inappropriate arrangements for teaching practice. As a result, it is difficult for teacher trainees to put theories learnt into practice. This situation has impacted significantly on the quality of teacher training process, quality of trained and deployed primary school teachers and the overall quality of basic education (Kitta & Fussy, 2013).

Recent reforms in teacher education have put pressure on the primary teacher training to be offered at diploma and degree levels. Consequently, the P1 certification is slowly being faced out as the diploma primary teacher education has been rolled out with admission qualification for candidates still set at grade C (plain) in the KCSE. This Diploma program in primary teacher education will take three years to accomplish (Nyankanga et al., 2013). This will create adequate time for content and pedagogical training of primary school teachers. Research has shown that effective learning and achievement by students is negatively impacted by weak teacher's pedagogical content knowledge (Katitia, 2015).

The government of Kenya has scrapped off the certificate course of primary teacher education (P1) level and instead introducing Diploma Primary Teacher Education (DPTE) level. The Diploma program in primary teacher education will take three years to accomplish (Nyankanga et al., 2013). The threshold for admission into DPTE program are KCSE mean grade c (plain) or its



equivalent with C (Plain) in English, Kiswahili, Mathematics subjects, any one humanities subject, and any one science subject. The mandatory learning areas will build on the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of the young teacher for effective lesson delivery. Teachers will only be eligible to teach in schools upon completion of the required hours for course work and passed the stipulated assessment as directed by KNEC.

In addition, they will also be required to have completed the required hours for the practicum and passed the stipulated assessment as directed by KNEC. Furthermore, there shall be three months micro-teaching undertaken as a course and will be a pre - requisite for teaching practice (TP). During this period, teacher trainees will prepare learning and teaching materials and short lessons, which they will try on their peers for practice and feedback. Upon successful completion of the course, teachers will be registered and employed by Teachers service commission (TSC) to teach in primary schools across the country. (Daily Nation 8th June 2021). Countries like Finland and Singapore, with high teacher education standards, emphasize on extensive pre-service programs which integrate long period of teaching practice before employment into the service (Darling-Hammond, 2017). Borrowing from best international practice in teacher education and training is prudent to improve the programs in Kenya. As result, developing policies that will put into consideration adequate time frame for teaching practice is paramount. The policy should borrow from the successful teacher education practice in the world and be implemented after adequate needs analysis that will fit it to our local situation.

According to Mhando (2006), the mode of primary teacher training in Sub-Saharan Africa, is conventional and traditional in nature. A survey done in Kenya showed that 10% of standard eight pupils in primary schools in Kenya, cannot read and write properly (UWEZO, 2011). This means, that majority of pupils joining high school from primary education curriculum are semi-illiterate. The report further states that nationally, only three out of ten children in class three can do class two works. Recent curriculum reforms have moved away from teacher-centered pedagogic approaches to child-centered, approaches. Pedagogy used by teachers is consistently seen as the crucial variable for improving learning outcomes and is critical in any reform to improve quality. Pedagogic approaches adopted are dictates of the duration of study which are informed by theories of learning, such as behaviorism, socialism and constructivism. The pedagogical teacher training is directly linked to the type of knowledge retained by primary school pupils. The changing roles of teacher and needs for the change in curriculum and trends in instruction do not correspond. The teacher training colleges for primary school teachers are still using training manual and traditional methods of training (Abenga, 2009).

E-learning is yet to be fully established and utilized or applied effectively. Content delivery using computers or e-learning is fast growing, especially the power point technique. Trainers who make use of computer design, development and presentation of training programs have advantage over those who do not use computers (Nafukho, 2011). It is therefore, imperative for teacher training colleges to increase the training period for teachers to embrace the emerging global technological approaches if they have to remain relevant teacher training institutions (Katu, 2011). Creswell (2015) warns that educationists who will not have embraced information technology by 2020 will be locked out of their professional practices, and here we are in 2022. Insufficient duration of study



lead to recruitment of unqualified teacher trainees, understaffing in the teacher educators' institutions, usage of unsuitable teacher education pedagogies coupled with inadequate T/L resources. These jeopardize teacher preparation, impart insufficient knowledge and skills required of a competent teacher and also churn out poorly prepared school teachers who cannot expertly serve the needs of the 21st century Kenya (Genvieve, 2017).

The reviewed literature indicated, key alternating strategies for enhancing quality teacher training in PPTTCs in Kenya including; ensuring the availability of strong, and relevant teacher education policies for qualified teacher educators with sound knowledge of relevant pedagogies and qualified teacher trainees with passion for teaching as a profession. This discourse has also revealed that teacher educators and their trainees should be equipped with competency in using ICT to improve the quality of teaching and learning. In this regard, primary teacher training colleges can ensure appropriate investment in Information Communication Technology, (Kitta & Fussy, 2013). Public primary teacher training colleges can also facilitate the development of relevant learning strategies for the use of ICT in the teacher education. This kind of investments would help Kenya to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Vision 2030, The Big Four Agenda, and other development goals. The improvement of teaching and learning environment at primary teacher training colleges is an essential ingredient in the preparation of high quality primary school teachers. After all, studies demonstrated that there are generally limited linkages between what is happening in the teacher training colleges and their stakeholders (Mhando, 2006). Key teacher training stakeholders including the Ministry of Education, Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), subject tutors, as well as teacher training colleges themselves.

Reflection on teacher training in Kenya, it successes and challenges reveal the dire need for policy changes and forward thinking that aims at fitting the 21st century requirements in education. The development agenda of Kenya, encompassing the provision of learners with quality education, demands professionalism in teaching. It is imperative that that teacher education nurtures increased number of thinking professionals. While pre-service teacher education ensures that the teacher trainee acquire positive attitude, knowledge and skills in pedagogical approach, in-service education not only augment delivery of content but also, promotes achievement of alternative pedagogical strategies and nurtures teacher efficacy. The world is changing at a supersonic speed and so should be the teacher training programs to ensure the prospective teachers fit in and are flexible enough to adopt different pedagogical practices to meet diverse learners' needs. Motivations and incentives in teacher education should be encouraged to attract and restore the teaching professionalism. Teachers need to embrace the life-long learning practice to be a braced with new changes in the world. Finally, it is prudent to anchor adopted changes in teacher training within relevant policies to ensure they stand the test of time.

Policy gaps in the sessional paper no. 1 of 2019 include; how to renew staffing norms especially in the implementation for the CBC curriculum implementation, more T/L resources required for training teachers on CBC, the policy document not clear on mechanisms for integration of ICT as a teaching and learning tool. Integration of ICT as a tool in the classroom increases effectiveness of teaching and improves student learning. This study therefore intended to examine the effect of

policy of 2 year diploma level qualification for teachers on quality teacher training in public primary teacher training colleges in Kenya.

METHODOLOGY

Research design is the overall strategy chosen to integrate the different components of the study in a coherent and logical way. It constituted the blueprints for collection, measurement and analysis of data with relevance and purpose to the research study (Kothari, 2016). The study employed the descriptive survey design. Descriptive survey design involved the collection of quantitative and qualitative data by use of questionnaires followed by the description of characteristics of the sample population based on the collected data. These characteristics included people's attitudes, opinions, habit, relationships or any other education social issues (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). This design allowed the researcher to gather information, summarize, presents and interpret for the purpose of clarification (Orodho, 2002).

The target population in this study was twelve thousand two hundred and eighty-five (12285) altogether. This comprised of all the thirty-five (35) college principals, all the one thousand seven hundred and fifty (1750) college subject tutors and all the ten thousand five hundred (10500) teacher trainees in the thirty-five (35) DPTTCs in Kenya.

With reference to the sampling procedure, the study adopted probability sampling, specifically simple random s a m p l i n g. A ccording to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), thirty percent (30%) of the target population can be selected from a population for a study. Since PTTCs use the same curriculum, eleven (11) colleges were selected using simple random sampling to enhance equal and independent chance of being a member of the sample. The selection criterion was as a result of the widely dispersed PPTTCs in the republic of Kenya. Gay (1996) argues that limitation of time and financial resources may influence researcher's choice of study area. To select eleven (11) colleges from thirty-five (35) PPTTCs in Kenya, the researcher wrote the names of all PPTTCs on pieces of papers shook them and then picked randomly the required number. All the principals of the randomly selected colleges were included in the study as key participants. The teacher trainees were further selected using simple random sampling based on the ratio of the student population in each college. The total proposed sample of the student population was 10% of the accessible population (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The sample size of the study consisted of 11 principals, 525 tutors and 1050 teacher trainees in the eleven selected colleges as indicated in table 3.1 below:

Category	Population	Sample size	Percentage
PPTTCs	35	11	30.0
Principals			
Subject tutors	1750	525	30.0
Teacher trainees	10500	1050	10.0
Total	12285	1586	12.9

Table 1: Sampling Matrix

With regards to the data collection instruments, the study used questionnaire and document analysis. The questionnaires which were the main tool for data collection consisted of series of structured questions. In this study questionnaires were convenient because they have the ability to collect large sum of population data, helped in accurate analysis, provided anonymity of the participants, and offered convenience due to the fact that the participants were knowledgeable and literate, (Orodho, 2009). Questionnaires were also safe with online administration via emails due to the COVID 19 health guidelines. Document analysis instrument was also used to get relevant information about teacher trainees' performance in PTE examinations.

About data collection procedures, the researcher sought an introductory letter from the Department of Education at the Presbyterian University of East Africa which was used to obtain a permit from the National Council for Science and Technology (NACOSTI) in Kenya to get clearance to visit the eleven PPTTCs, and college principals' permission. Structured questionnaires were prepared to obtain quantitative data. The researcher then assured the participants of confidentiality. The researcher advised the respondents not to write their details on the instruments the distribution of the questionnaires and collection of raw data took two weeks.

Regarding data analysis procedures, descriptive statistics were used to analyze both the quantitative and qualitative data obtained, the researcher cleaned, coded all the data and entered in the computer for analysis using the SPSS version 28 which is able to handle large amount of data, given its wide spectrum of statistical procedures purposefully designed for social sciences, it is also quite efficient and quick in analyzing data (Gastwirth *et al*, 2009). After analysis, the results were presented using frequencies, percentages and tables.

RESULTS

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The study sought to examine the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The characteristics included the following: gender distribution, age bracket, and education level. In terms of gender, slightly more than a third (36.4%) of the principals were female, 63.6 % of them were male. However, subject tutors registered 41% males, and 59% females, while teacher trainees also recorded 34% males, and 59.0% females.

With reference to the age bracket, majority of the teacher trainees were aged between 18 to 30 years while majority of the principals were aged between 40 to 51 years. About half of the subject tutors were aged between the ages of 31 to 40 years.

About their educational background, half of the principals had a master degree and the rest had bachelors. There were no PhD degree holders. These were indicators that they were well qualified to teach in PPTTCs. Analysis emerging from the principals and subject tutors qualifications, revealed, that this target group was well grounded, and this, further helped the researcher to obtain vital data on the quality of teacher education in public primary teacher trainings in Kenya.

Effect of Policy of two years Diploma Level Qualification for Teachers on Quality Teacher Training in Public Primary Teacher Training Colleges

The study sought to investigate the effect of policy of 2 year diploma level qualification for teachers on quality teacher training in public primary teacher training colleges. The question asked was, "How often do you use the following methods in teaching in your college: Group wok, experimentation, demonstration, field trips, science walk, and discussion, lecture, and outreach speaker. Participants were expected to tick their choices' from the table provided with the items, table 2 shows the distribution of the responses from the College Principals, Tutors and Trainees.

Table 2

Principals' responses on a two year period of teacher training affect quality of teacher training

	Responses [N= 11]	Count	%
1	Group work.	11	100
2	Experimentation	10	90
3	Demonstrations	11	100
4	Field trips.	4	36
5	Science walk	4	36
6	Discussions	6	54
7	Lectures	11	100
8	Guest speaker	5	45

Table 3

Subject tutors' responses on two year period of teacher training affect quality of teacher training

	Responses [N= 525]	Count	%
	Chours work	525	100
1	Group work. Experimentation	323 300	57
3	Demonstrations	500	95
4	Field trips.	80	15
5	Science walk	40	7.6
6	Discussions	525	100
7	Lectures	525	100
8	Guest speaker	50	9.5

Table 4

Teacher trainees' responses on extent to which two year period of teacher training affect quality training

	Responses [N= 1050]	Count	%
1	Group work.	1050	100
2	Experimentation	750	71.4
3	Demonstrations	1050	100
4	Field trips.	150	14.2
5	Science walk	200	19.0
6	Discussions	1050	100
7	Lectures	1050	100
8	Guest speaker	100	10

Analysis of the results above indicate that 11 (100%), and 10 (90%) of the principals who participated in the study confirmed that they used group work, demonstration and lectures as their most preferred pedagogical methods. Other pedagogical methods such as field trips, science walk, and outreach speakers, did not find favor with the principals as some of their preferred pedagogical methods, registering four (36%), four (36%) and five (50%) respectively.

Analysis of the subject tutors indicated that 525 (100%) preferred group work, discussions and lectures. On the same note, experimentation, field trips, science walk and guest speaker registered the lowest, at 80 (15%), 40 (8%) and 50 (10%). Demonstration registered 300 (57%). The trainees' configuration was as follows: 1050 (100%), 1050 (100%), 1050 (100%), used group work,



demonstrations, discussion, and lectures as their most preferred pedagogical methods. Field trips, science walk and guest speaker were preferred by 150 (14%), 200 (19%) and 100 (9%).

It is was worthy noting that the sub-groups of the population that involved in the study; principals, subject tutors and teacher trainees, indicated, more often than not, some of the most traditional pedagogical methods in their teaching-lectures, discussion, and demonstrations.

The Preparedness of Teachers who have Undergone Teacher Education in College

How do you rate the preparedness of teachers who have undergone teacher education in your college?" Three choices; very prepared, fairly prepared and inadequately prepared were provided as alternative answers. It was sent to principals and subject tutors only as the appropriate population for the study.

Table 5

Summary of principals' responses to teacher trainee's preparedness

Principals Responses [N=11]	Count	%
Very prepared	3	27.3
Fairly prepared	6	54.5
Inadequately prepared	1	9.1
Total	11	100

Table 6

Summary of tutors' responses to trainees preparedness

Tutors Responses [N= 525]	Count	%
Very prepared	86	16.3
Fairly prepared	325	61.9
Inadequately prepared	114	21.8
Total	525	100

The analysis of this result shows that according to College Principals; 4(36%), 6(55%) and two (18%), confirmed that the teacher trainees were very prepared, fairly prepared and inadequately prepared. Eighty six (16%), three hundred two hundred and five (61%) and one hundred and fourteen (22%) of the tutors responded with very prepared, fairly prepared and inadequately

prepared. According to college principals and subject tutors it is clear that teacher trainees are not very prepared but fairly prepared.

A subject tutor revealed that, teacher trainees enrolled for teacher education in public primary teacher training colleges with low pass marks in the high school examinations were academically weak and very slow in the comprehending the subject matter. The responded said: The teacher trainees, who join teachers training colleges teaching colleges after failing their high school examination, always find it hard to adjust to academic tasks at the college. As a result, it is difficult for them to prepare well in their training. They are very poor in the English language and academic contents. Therefore, it is difficult for them to cope with the required work ahead of them (Response, Section D, question 3a November, 2021).

DISCUSSION

An abrupt introduction to education system, such as the CBC has adverse effects on the nature and quality of education. In the study findings, one of the respondents suggested that changes should be introduced, gradually, taking into account the faculties. The respondent also said that the implementers of change must also be well motivated, and said: "If we want to improve primary training, we must be relevant and concurrent with the needs of the primary schools in a given paradigm in education sector and the wider society. Also, tutors must be well paid, so as, to engage them in research, and related activities

This findings are in line with Anangisye (2010) who emphatically assert that the mode of teacher education in Sub-Saharan Africa is conventional and traditional in nature. They argue that much of the pedagogical methods, used are characterized by lecture methods, simple handouts, and limited discussions. Bhalalusesa *et al.*, (2011) echoes lectures, discussions and limited practical pedagogical methods as major methods applied in teacher education. Abenga (2009) also concurs with the finding of this objective. The author warns that teacher education for public primary teacher training colleges in Kenya is still using training manuals and traditional methods of pedagogies. Elearning, as an emerging, and most useful tool for communication, and instruction, is yet to be fully established and utilized or applied effectively in teacher education. Content delivery using computers related methods, should be encouraged, so as to advance new methods of teaching, and learning. Uwezo Report, accessed from, www.iq4news.com, is in support of this finding, as it argues, that the changing roles of teacher education, and needs already develop for the change in curriculum, does not match. This finding also finds support in the works of (Nafukho, 2011; Creswell, 2015; Hardman, 2009; Kitta & Fussy, 2013).

This research however revealed the opposite. In other words, the preparedness of teacher trainees seems to be the most pressing hurdle facing the teacher education in public primary teacher training colleges in Kenya. This limitation can be minimized by ensuring that, there are adequate resources, and other related requirements for teacher education in Kenya. Charligha (2010) adds that, only trainees with high intellectual capacity and ability to meet not only the policy demands but also professional demands should be enrolled for teacher education.

The above findings, also tally with other research reports that contend that, the teacher education programs have always been rather superficial because the curriculum was overloaded and the classroom process was over-packed with too many lectures, discussions, handouts, assignments and other practices, at the expense of teacher authentic preparation for the task of delivery (Kosnik & Beck, 2009).

CONCLUSION

The results of this research revealed that diploma level qualification are directly linked to quality teacher training in public primary teacher training colleges in Kenya. Moreover, the study revealed that these effects including; teaching and learning resources were inadequate in public primary teacher training colleges in Kenya, thus, affecting quality training. The government should roll out adequate in-service in teacher training colleges to positively affect the teaching learning strategies and acquisition of new knowledge required to combat the quickly changing world The primary purpose of teacher education is to acquire appropriate knowledge, skills and competencies pertaining to effective teaching in primary schools. Primarily, they should acquire appropriate pedagogical content knowledge, and other necessary skills. In addition, they should learn different educational theories, principles and strategies relevant to their future practices as primary school teachers. The government should roll out adequate in-service in teacher training colleges to positively affect the teaching colleges to positively affect the teacher training colleges to positively affect the teaching learning strategies relevant to their future practices as primary school teachers. The government should roll out adequate in-service in teacher training colleges to positively affect the teaching learning strategies and acquisition of new knowledge required to combat the quickly changing world.

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