
**THE ROLE OF TEACHERS' TRAINING IN EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF
LIFE SKILLS CURRICULUM IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ELDORET EAST
DISTRICT, KENYA**

***Odongo Salome Awuor;**

Department of Curriculum Instruction and Education Media, Moi University
P. O. Box 3900-30100, Eldoret, Kenya

Felistas Chemutai;

Department of Curriculum Instruction and Education Media, Moi University
P. O. Box 3900-30100, Eldoret, Kenya

ABSTRACT: *The teacher is the most important ingredient in the effective teaching and learning and more so the life skills. It is therefore important that teachers are very well prepared to meet this new challenge of teaching life skills. The success of a teacher largely depends on his/her personal context, personal efforts and his/her general personality. These characteristics can be greatly enhanced if a teacher receives specialized training in methods of teaching life skills education programme. This prompted the author to carry out a study in life skills teaching in secondary schools in Eldoret East District in Kenya. This paper discusses the findings on how the training of teachers influences life skills education in the study area. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The techniques used to select the research sample were stratified, purposive and simple random sampling. Two hundred and forty (240) students, 45 teachers and 15 heads of humanities department were selected to participate in the study. To collect data, questionnaire and interview schedule were used. Data collected were coded in Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSSv 13.5) and analysed by non parametric Chi-square (χ^2) test, descriptive statistics and frequency distribution. The findings were presented in form of tables, charts and graphs. The study revealed that teachers were not fully prepared to teach life skills and were in dire need of in-service courses for effective teaching. It was therefore recommended the Ministry of Education through KIE should facilitate in-service training of LSE teachers at least once per year and provide clear guidelines on how to teach the contents of LSE. Investigation into teachers' classroom competence has yielded findings, which can be used for the betterment of teaching and learning of life skills in Kenyan secondary schools. Curriculum developers would find the research findings useful as they reflect on the extent in which the objectives set for the course are being achieved.*

Keywords: Role, Teacher Training, Life Skills Education, Secondary Schools, Eldoret East District, Kenya

INTRODUCTION

According to Brown (2011), effective teaching comprises of creativity, discovery, challenges and conducive environment as set by the teachers. These activities engage and motivate students to

learn unlike the educational system that traditionally focused on rote learning, where students rarely asked questions or were not encouraged to think creatively, and life skills presents a serious challenge. This is not just to students, but to teachers and other educators. By its nature life skills is participatory and seeks to nurture creative thinking and problem solving. Effective teaching is needed for the teaching and learning of life skills because it cannot occur where there is no interaction among the participants.

Teachers have deep knowledge about the curriculum goals, knowledge about how the ideas can be represented effectively and knowledge about how students understanding can be assessed. This knowledge helps teacher's make curricular judgments, respond to student questions and look ahead to where concepts are leading and plan accordingly. Pedagogical knowledge much of which is acquired and shaped through the practice of teaching helps teachers understand how students learn life skills, become facile with a range of different teaching techniques and instructional materials, and organize and manage the classroom. Most of the information on the way pupils learn is from the work of psychologists like Gagne, Piaget and Ausubel (as cited in Koross, 2009). Their work shows that learning is done according to the mental ability of a child. The curricula should be designed in the way that they closely match student's ability. Piaget (ibid.) adds that learning should be from concrete to abstract.

Smith (2003) suggests that learning is a consequence of experience. He argues that education and therefore teaching should be focused on the creation of 'appropriately nourishing experiences so that learning comes about naturally and focus less on 'talking about learning and teaching' and 'more about doing'. Alton-Lee (2003, p. 16) provides ten clearly defined and research-supported characteristics of quality teaching. The ten point model covers the following areas:

- i) A focus on student achievement.
- ii) Pedagogical practices that create caring, inclusive and cohesive learning communities,
- iii) Effective links between school and the cultural context of the school.
- iv) Quality teaching in response to student learning processes.
- v) Learning opportunities are effective and sufficient.
- vi) Multiple tasks and context support learning cycles.
- vii) Curriculum goals are effectively aligned.
- viii) Pedagogy scaffolds feedback on students' task engagement.
- ix) Pedagogy promotes learning orientations, student self-regulation, metacognitive strategies and thoughtful student discourse.
- x) Teachers and students engage constructively in goal-oriented assessment.

Eisner (2002, p. 13), in putting forward a number of concepts that should be essential components of schools, argues: Good teaching depends on sensibility and imagination. It courts surprise. It profits from caring. In short, good teaching is an artistic affair.

The effective teacher will be one who engages with the students in the class in a way that highlights mutual respect and an acknowledgement of the learning process that is in place. Eisner's suggestion that teaching is a caring exercise is very much part of the effective learning process. Learning is an emotional exercise. Students will engage in something that appeals to

them emotionally. The teacher who brings a sense of personal involvement to the classroom, who wants to share the knowledge with the members of the class, who is prepared to show that he/she is also a part of the learning cycle, will be setting up a relationship which will encourage a good learning environment. Wolk (2001, p. 20) highlights this by emphasizing that, teachers who are passionate about learning.... Create an infectious classroom environment.

The effective environment will allow students the time to learn. Wolk (2001) argues that working environment that is generated by the interaction and the enthusiasm of the teacher will remove the stigma of 'working' and turn the learning process into something that is rewarding and therefore to strive towards. In effect, the creation of an effective learning environment would generate a positive learning atmosphere throughout a school.

Nuthall (2001) questions the cultural myths that haunt classrooms, making teachers follow certain rituals that appear to be good practice. His suggestion that 'every generalization made, every conclusion drawn, must be true of every individual' highlights the very nature of the effective classroom. It is like a finely tuned instrument that needs to be nurtured not forced into straight-jackets of convention. The effective teacher will be able to orchestrate the music of the classroom, turning Yeats 'foul rag and bone shop' into an environment of excitement and passion for learning.

Stipek (1996) lists six practices that support the idea that an effective classroom is a classroom of opportunity and experience, where the learners can explore and experiment in a climate that recognizes the process of learning as the measure of success rather than the right answer approach. It acknowledges the vital role of intrinsic motivation in creating an environment where students can feel that they are the masters of their own learning.

In a different environment, but following the same basic philosophy, Alton-Lee (2003) suggests, 'quality teaching provides sufficient and effective opportunity to learn' (p. 20). Smith (2003), states that a teacher must be able to identify the ebbs and flows of each class and work with the students to create the learning environment. According to him, teachers need to be prepared to test what is going on in the class, for example, through feedback questionnaires on what they are doing. In reflecting on this feedback and on the classroom activity of a year, a teacher could identify specific exercises and techniques that engage the students. It takes patience and persistence to have the classes work cooperatively, to carry out independent research, and to report back to small groups and to the whole class – the goal is that through the teacher's endeavours, the learning will become the student's own learning. He further points that activities need to be part of their learning regime and not something that is imposed. Since this is an area that requires planning, reflection and preparation. Cole and Knowles (2000) points out that teachers can enjoy the process of teaching by sharing their knowledge through the creation of a reflective classroom. In such an environment the knowledge is shared; students and teachers become learners, discovering the world of the subject.

The teacher that is willing to share his/her knowledge unconditionally will be stepping towards the effective classroom. The passion that a teacher has for his/her subject will be creating a world

that moves beyond the ritual of classroom activities. It is the example of passion for something that can inspire students to want to learn.

Fried (1995, p. 3) observes that: the example we set as passionate adults allows us to connect to young people's minds and spirits that can have a lasting positive impact on their lives. At the same time the teacher is the guardian for learning in the classroom environment. If the teacher goes in unprepared, unwilling to share, unfocused on the process of developing a context that will encourage and stimulate an interest and a thirst for further knowledge then that teaching is shirking the responsibility of being a teacher. Teaching is far more than simply transferring information; it is the engaging of minds to seek out answers. Strong, Silver and Robinson (1995) put forward the acronyms SCORE to suggest a model of student engagement. According to Smith (2003, p. 11) this model should be applied to teachers first:

- S: The success of mastery of the subject that you teach
- C: The curiosity that every teacher should have entrenched in their teaching. A teacher who is not curious has lost a critical portion of the passion for learning.
- O: Originality – a teacher who is passionate about the teaching process will be creative; will be constantly seeking new ways of engaging and challenging students.
- R: Relationships are central to the effective classroom and teachers are crucial in the nurturing of the opportunities for students to engage with subjects that at senior levels can lead to a lifelong interaction with the subject.
- E: To maintain this process the teacher needs energy. This is something that schools do not always provide and teachers in general need the time to reflect; to re-energize and to regenerate their focus on the learning process. It is an essential ingredient in the effective classroom that is too often ignored.

In essence, a teacher who brings a passion for teaching to the subject, and takes responsibility for the creation of an environment that allows for the sharing and enjoyment of that knowledge, will be creating an effective learning climate.

Rice (2003, p. 17) further emphasized that integration of various teaching techniques has been known to hold the key to various teaching techniques and methods. Different approaches, activities and materials make learning more interesting and give all students an opportunity to make progress.

Berry (2002) posits that while teacher qualities are indeed important they appear to have a “singular focus on content knowledge” (p. 30). Highly qualified teachers must also know “how to organize and teach their lessons in ways that assure diverse students can learn those subjects... Highly qualified teachers don't just teach well-designed, standards-based lessons: They know how and why their students learn...”

Cruikshank, Jenkins and Metcalf (2003) define effective teaching:

Most people would agree that good teachers are caring, supportive, concerned about the welfare of students, knowledgeable about their subject matter, able to

get along with parents... and genuinely excited about the work that they do...effective teachers are able to make students learn (p. 6).

The authors clearly link these personality traits to student success. Borich (2000) suggests that effective teachers are those who use “meaningful verbal praise to get and keep students actively participating in the learning process”. According to McDermott and Rothenberg (2000), students enjoy teachers with a sense of humour and normally these teachers make learning fun. As long as it is not at any individual’s expense, good teachers can occasionally enjoy a laugh with the class and they can also laugh at themselves. Students recognize the strength reflected in teachers who are not threatened by foolish or silly mistakes that they make. Since students sometimes find themselves in similar embarrassing situations, good teachers can provide a wonderful model for how to deal with an embarrassing situation effectively.

According to Irvine (2001, p. 8), students defined caring teachers as those who set limits, provided structure, held high expectations and pushed them to achieve. Teachers with positive attitudes also possess high expectations for success. He adds that students of teachers with high expectations learn more as teachers’ expectations rise. Teachers’ expectation levels affect the ways in which teachers teach and interact with students. In turn, these behaviours affect student learning. Generally, students either rise to their teachers’ expectations or do not perform well when expectations are low or non-existent. The best teachers were remembered as having the highest standards.

Noddings (2001, p. 40) explains that, a caring teacher is someone who has demonstrated that she[he] can establish, more or less regularly, relations of care in a wide variety of situations...[and] will want the best for that person”. The relationship of teacher and student, giving and receiving care, is a continuous one, lasting over time and involving intimate and personal understanding. In addition, nodding connects caring with preparation and organization. Students recognize caring in teachers who are prepared and organized. This philosophy of caring permeates the actions of teachers, students remember best.

It has generally been recognized that students spend most of their active cycles in schools (Wayne & Young, 2002). Most of the information they learn come from the teachers. The research clearly shows a critical link between effective teaching and students’ academic achievement. It showed that some teachers contribute more to their students’ academic growth than other teachers; almost no research can systematically explain the considerable variation in teachers’ skills for promoting student learning (Goe, 2007). Pinpointing the skills that lead certain teachers to have a greater impact on student performance than others is a matter of great urgency in a country that struggles with educating all of her children equally. The growing interest is better understanding what constitutes effective teaching practice, coupled with its power to leverage educational improvement, presents a challenge and opportunity for policy makers to address how to efficiently and reliably measure teacher performance. The role of teacher evaluations has surfaced only recently as an underutilized resource that might hold promise as a tool to promote teacher effectiveness in the classroom (Danielson & McGreal, 2000).

Brown (2011, p. 31) investigated factors that influence effective teaching. In his findings, he developed five elements of effective classroom instructions. These elements are described below.

(i) The relationships between teachers and students forms the basis for all learning interactions

While maintaining professional demeanour, a teacher should strive to develop a personal relationship with students by being aware of their background and sharing some of his /her personal experiences. Most importantly, the teacher should seek to understand his/her students' expectations for learning and share his/her course goals. In order to achieve his/her goals, a teacher should develop personal narratives, using "getting to know you" activities, working individually with students, interest surveys, and personality inventories. In all cases, teachers should strive to make their approaches respectful to each student.

(ii) Learning needs to be structured

Good lessons don't "just happen". They are the results of careful thought and attention to detail. Planning is essential to ensure effective teaching. Planning includes "big picture issues" such as sequencing and pacing learning objectives over the course of a year and "detailed-oriented issues" such as specific daily classroom activities and assessment strategies. The teacher's focus in developing resources should be on identifying specific skills, sequencing them and then designing learning activities to address those skills.

(iii) One size does not fit all

Students come to class with a variety of learning preferences and needs. They vary in background, knowledge, abilities, attitudes and interests. Classroom activities should be designed to address the needs of diverse learners. The teacher should strive to vary and pair teaching activities to include multiple media such as power point presentation, audio video production, lectures, prepared notes, advanced organizers, readings, and hands on manipulative. The students need to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways beyond classroom tests. Assessments should include presentation in various media, papers, community projects and classroom projects. Some of the activities that can be used in classroom include:

- Direct instruction such as demonstration, questioning and lectures.
- Indirect instruction such as using case study for analysis
- Experimental learning such as experiments, field trips, games and simulation.
- Independent study such as journals or research paper.
- Interactive instruction such role playing, debate and cooperative groups.

(iv) Student needs to participate in variety of roles

Students need opportunities to work independently, to work in heterogeneous groups, and work in homogenous groups, to lead, to follow and to express their opinion about what they are learning. For this to happen, it is essential that classroom observe what one veteran teacher referred to as the three laws of inquiry – based classrooms;

- Respect people,
- Respect things,
- Respect ideas.

A classroom built upon respect is essential to providing the security necessary for students to fill all the roles they need to learn.

In Kenya, students face myriads of psychological, social and mental problems in schools and this may subsequently result in future problems to students after leaving schools (Ngugi, 2006). In recognition of this, life skills education after post election violence were introduced to help the students adjust to the prevailing conditions in the school and after school (MOEST, 2004). For the information to benefit the students, they need to acquire adequate information to enable them apply the skills learnt from the subject. According to Mondo (2006), teachers should help the learners who have been taught life skills to become aware of themselves, understand who they are, and accept and appreciate themselves as individuals. Rooth (2005) states that life skills teachers should use varying teaching methods thus ensuring that the content of each topic is delivered in the relevant and appropriate manner.

Teachers Preparation and the Teaching of Life Skill Education

The teacher is the most important ingredient in the effective teaching and learning and more so the life skills. It is therefore important that teachers are very well prepared to meet this new challenge of teaching life skills. The success of a teacher largely depends on his/her personal context, personal efforts and his/her general personality (Corbin High, as cited in Jepkoech, 2002). These characteristics can be greatly enhanced if a teacher receives specialized training in methods of teaching life skills education programme.

Another important factor for successful implementation of a new programme is the training or in-servicing of teachers, head teachers and the educational supervisors. Goddard and Leask (1992) assert that:

Teachers, like psychiatrists work with the mind and much of their work is unseen. They work with raw materials of unknown and variable quantity- the potential of an individual. This makes the judging of a teacher's effectiveness difficult and it means that the impact of poor teaching is insidious; the effects may not be seen for many years. It allows for superficial judgments about what the work for the teacher involves (p. 46).

The education teachers received when they were at school and in higher education twenty years ago will not suffice. There is need for a constant updating and extending the knowledge component (Goddard & Leask, 1992). It is not possible to deliver a whole curriculum that has progression and coherence without working with colleagues and being fully aware of and working with the wider educational setting.

Quality education can only be achieved if the teaching and learning is underpinned by a model of learning for service as a whole. For learners to become better learners, the nature of the teaching process demands that teachers must continue to be learners throughout their careers, otherwise they will cease to be effective (Goddard & Leask, 1992).

Fullan (1982) adds that the quality of teaching and learning depends on the competence of teachers. Momanyi (2009) concurs with Fullan (1982) by asserting that effectiveness and

efficiency in teaching and learning are determined by a teacher's academic and professional characteristics as well as his/her experiences as a teacher. The study that informed the writing of this paper attempted to establish the academic and professional qualifications and training of the teachers of life skills in secondary schools in Eldoret East District.

In-servicing of teachers helps to acquaint the practicing teachers with the latest innovation such as life skills. Research shows that it is important to provide in service courses to teachers to keep them informed about the recent developments in the instructional technology. Tum (1996) recommended that in-servicing training for practicing teachers at all levels of education should be made a priority in this country. Besides teachers, all those charged with the implementation of a new programme process such as the educational administrators and Quality Assurance and Standards Officer (QASO) should be in-serviced.

Eshiwani (1993) notes that the most urgent need in the improvement of quality education is the upgrading of the management skills of those whose responsibility is to manage schools. The immediate target groups were the head teachers. Courses, workshops and seminars should be organized for head teachers in the area of school management.

UNESCO (2005), on FPE in Kenya, notes that the head teachers, teachers and school committees should be trained on book keeping, accounting and general procurement procedures. The government should recruit, in-service and deploy more inspectors to the districts to improve inspection services to the districts and guarantee quality instruction in schools. It also recommended that teachers should be taken through in-service courses to train them on new teaching techniques like multi-grade and double-shift and ways of instilling discipline without using the cane.

Bennaars *et al.* (1994) observe that untrained, poorly trained, discontented and frustrated teachers cannot bring about the anticipated economic, cultural and moral change spelt out in the aims and goals of education. Sifuna (as cited in Momanyi, 2009) agrees with Bennaars *et al.* (1994) that untrained teachers are a great set back in implementing a new programme. Miller and Seller (1990) note that the introduction of a new programme is very complex. The change is much more visible and will need to receive more attention from teachers and administrators. Teachers are expected to teach a new programme in the classroom while working within a complex social system. The teachers need to acquire some ownership of the new programme. This can be achieved through in-servicing of teachers.

Rice (2003) has carried out a study on in-service training for teachers in Washington DC. The findings showed that training is a central theme related to change in practice. He adds that during pre-service training, student teachers acquire skills and knowledge which they should be able to use in a classroom situation. He also notes that training enable teachers to bridge the gap between the worlds of training and that of actual teaching. The student teachers learn to identify and solve problems through arbitration of tutors, thereafter, they feel qualified. Mwaura (2003) has studied the degree of preparedness in teaching Kiswahili language in Kenya and points out that there is need for systematic short in-service courses which should be conducted on a

continuous basis, more so in the wake of any revision of national development objectives and priorities.

McDermott and Rotheberg (2000) also agree that teachers are the key factors in contributing towards and enhanced quality of classroom experience. This paper concurs with these sentiments by stating that teachers of life skills should also attend professional growth activities such as seminars in which the theme of instructional methods should be emphasized. Otieno (2009) has carried out a study on life skills in education and HIV and AIDS. He points out that the books, other learning and teaching materials, and the exposure of teachers to new methods during training/pre-service, and in-service courses have not been very successful as expected. He notes that teachers are not adequately prepared to implement the programme effectively. Since there are few trained teachers for life skills programmes and that it is supposed to be taught through interactive and problem solving approach, the question of who should teach it and how probably needs clarification. The current position of the Ministry of Education is that any teacher can teach life skills education programme. This position is in agreement with the assertion that moral education in any sense of the phrase is something which all teachers need to know about, just because it is impossible for any teacher to escape from the role of moral educators (Musoma & Nasongo, 2009).

However, the two studies differ on the basis that Otieno investigated on factors that influence the teaching and learning of life skills. In his findings training of teachers was one of the factors influencing the teaching of life skills. He did not mention what the teachers should be trained on. This position can only be true if the teachers are empowered with skills. The training programme should be more focused on methodology rather than content. Otieno goes further to investigate whether the teachers were trained on how to employ interactive, problem solving approaches of teaching life skills. The findings of the Otieno showed that these are some of the approaches that would enable teachers to handle specific controversial topics in life skills education like: sexual intercourse, drug abuse, early pregnancy and delaying sex among others. It is imperative from Musoma and Nasongo's phrase "need to know about" that the teacher should be prepared to teach moral education (life skills) and not just to be assigned to teach.

Hammond, Darling and Bransford (2005) raise some questions about teaching. How do the teachers learn to use their understanding of content matter, their practices and strategies and improve learning environment? How do they learn to keep balance between the diversity of the learners and the needs of the curriculum? How do teachers learn to be active members of the professional community and to improve the learning of the students?

Different institutions play their role in different times at district and national level to train the teachers before starting their jobs and during job. Directorate of Staff Development (DSD) is one of them fulfilling this responsibility. It aims at imparting the fundamentals of teachers' education with a view to qualify the trainee for the immediate employment in a school or to provide the basis for 'specialization' in different subjects. Teachers cannot be expected to do all this on their own. They need support and conducive environment for the purpose (Bansal, 2007). Farooq and Shahzadi (2005) have conducted a study to compare the effectiveness of teaching of professionally trained and untrained teachers and the effect of students' gender on achievement in mathematics.

The results of the study supported that the students taught by trained teachers showed better results in mathematics. As Moon, Mayers and Hutchinson (2004) explain, in their skill to teach mathematics and the environment they create to teach mathematics has significant influence on students' achievement. The participatory training validates the trainees' expertise and insight, and creates ample opportunities to share information and practice new skills.

Watkins, in the Oxfam Education Report (2002), concurs with what McDermott and Rothenberg (2000) say by stressing that poorly trained teachers are unable to foster a child-centred learning environment. Cruckshank, Jenkins and Metcalf (2003) emphasized that the teacher should use appropriate instructional methods of teaching. They report that teacher's knowledge of the subject should not be over looked since it is essential for arranging for a successful learning if a teacher has a high understanding of the subject matter. Mwaura (2003) states that teachers find it difficult learning new strategies cut across the old habit assumptions and invalidated hand worn skills. Teachers then need to improve through training and in-service courses. He further stresses that many teachers do not read after leaving college thus making them ineffective and uninformed. Training is a necessary condition for effective performance of teaching roles and responsibilities.

Borich (2000) asserts that all other things being equal, teachers trained in particular skills performed better. However, Wayne and Young (2003) note that the success of a teacher in classroom teaching ought to be evidenced, not only by professional records but also by student acquisition of skills as set out in the subject syllabus. They argue that teachers' qualification, quality of textbooks, frequency of marking and interest among students are significant factors that affect achievement. Levine (2000) observed that both the teachers' teaching experience and professional qualification are positively correlated to student achievement.

Borich (2000) asserts that years of teaching, affords a teacher a deeper understanding of the subject matter through broad exposure and further reading and hence become more qualitative in teaching. Mujis (2006) argues that the invariable success of particular schools was a clear testimony of their superiority in quality of their teachers. From these findings, it appears that training is very necessary for quality of education but it becomes unfortunate when students taught by trained teachers do not meet the intended learning outcome. A study by Berry (2003) revealed that in-service training correlated with achievement. Rochkind and Johnson (2007) emphasize that if achievement is to be improved, teachers must have in-service training. Given that the discussion in education is increasingly revolving around quality, it is imperative that the whole question of teacher training be reviewed (Simiyu, 2009). Life skills are intended to promote social justice, human rights and inclusiveness, as well as a healthy environment (Department of Education, 2003). Even though life skills sound promising in theory it has become apparent that there are many problems in the practical implementation thereof. It is therefore doubtful whether life skills are always effective (Christian, 2006). However, no intensive and in depth research has been done regarding the assessment of effectiveness of life-skills. One aim of a study done by Prinsloo (2007) was to determine and understand the experiences and perspectives of life skill teachers.

It also appears that teachers do not feel that they have been sufficiently trained and, given that often teachers have to teach life skills without receiving any or very little training, effectiveness becomes questionable (Rooth, 2005). The World Health Organization (2000) suggests that the training of life skills teachers should follow the experiential methods that have been found to be so critical to the success of these prevention programmes. The training programme should offer sufficient assistance to teachers to acquire the necessary expertise in methods they may perceive as unconventional or opposed to their traditional methods. Experiential or participatory training validates the trainees' expertise and insight, and create ample opportunities to share information and practice new skills. Opportunities to practice programme activities can serve as both a skill-building and confidence-building tool. The training modules should include activities that provide trainees with an understanding of the theoretical and conceptual framework underlying life skills; such understanding is needed to increase teachers' commitment to the programme.

Statement of the Problem

In the recent past, social challenges such as violence, rape, teenage pregnancy, truancy, indiscipline cases, drugs and substance abuse, HIV/AIDS pandemic have been on the rise among the youth owing to the degraded morality in the Kenyan society. Cases of students burning up schools and destroying property have also greatly increased. All these go to show that the moral development of the youth in general and students in particular has declined (Bansikiza, 2001). The schools in Kenya's Eldoret East District are not exempt from this challenge. Cases of students' riots, rape, drug abuse and teenage pregnancy are increasingly becoming common news in the media. For example, Ochiel (writing in *The Standard* newspaper of March 20, 2011) expressed shock over a case of a teenage girl raped by her fellow students. Similarly, Otieno (writing in the *Daily Nation*, March 24, 2012) makes a damning report of the setting ablaze of one dormitory in a school in Eldoret East District by students.

Furthermore, Ouko (*The Standard*, October 10, 2011) reported the arrest of female students together with prostitutes found soliciting sex from men at the famous Paradise Bar in Eldoret town. The report indicated that each year there has been an increase in the number of sex workers, some of whom are students in local high schools and universities, flooding Eldoret town during the month of October. This is because during this time farmers get proceeds from their wheat and maize produce. The students and other sex workers target to benefit from the farmers' money in exchange for sex as the harvesting season approaches. As if that is not enough, another report from Eldoret East District showed that quite a number of students missed their results due to examination irregularities (Eldoret East District Education Office, 2012). It is apparent that indiscipline cases are on the rise in the area.

Despite the policies and measures that the Kenya government has put in place with regard to management of its secondary schools, these institutions continue to face a number of challenges that negatively affect their academic performance. It is becoming increasingly evident that a discrepancy exists between what students learn in life skills and how they behave. Life skills consumers are expected to use the knowledge and skills gained in the subject to bring a desirable change to their lives and society. Therefore, the research sought to establish the role of teacher's training in the effective implementation of on life skills curriculum in secondary schools in Eldoret East District, Kenya.

Limitations of the Study

The study was limited to selected secondary schools in Eldoret East District. Other schools in Rift Valley Province were excluded as time and resources would only allow a sample of schools and not all schools to be covered. It was, however, hoped that the information obtained from the sampled schools was representative and can be generalized to cover Rift Valley Province and other parts of the country since anti-social behaviour would follow the same pattern. The study went as far as investigating and analyzing data given by the sources. The study had no control over the exact information teachers of life skills chose to give or withhold. The schools were sparsely located and making many visits was difficult.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study area covered secondary schools in Eldoret East District. It is located in the North Rift Region of the greater Rift Valley Province of Kenya. Marakwet District borders Eldoret East District to the north, Keiyo District to the east, Koibatek District to the south and Wareng District to the west. The District is divided into twenty locations. It lies along the latitude $0^{\circ}40'$ north and longitude $45^{\circ}02'$ east at an altitude of 3,075 metres above sea level.

A pragmatic philosophical stance informed the current study on the factors affecting the teaching and learning of life skills education. On this platform, the focus is on the research problem and finding practical solutions to it. The study therefore adopted a mixed methods approach using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The study also employed a descriptive survey research design.

The target population comprised secondary schools in Eldoret East District. According to the Ministry of Education data bank, there are forty-five schools in the District. The target population for the study consisted of all the 45 heads of department, 135 teachers in the District who teach life skills and 800 Form Four students from the 45 public secondary schools in Eldoret East District. The Form Four students were chosen to participate because they had been taught life skills since Form One. Therefore, they were best placed to comment on the entire instruction process. The target population comprised 980 respondents drawn from 45 secondary schools in Eldoret East District.

The sampling techniques used for the study were stratified random sampling technique, purposive sampling technique and simple random technique. Schools were selected using stratified random sampling technique. The basis of stratification was school type (boys, girls and mixed schools). Forty-five (45) of the target secondary schools were sampled for the study. Therefore, 15 schools formed the sample for this study. The study purposively sampled fifteen (15) heads of humanities department from the fifteen sampled schools. Simple random sampling was used to select 3 teachers in each of the selected schools to fill in the questionnaire, making a total of forty five (45) teachers of LSE. While simple random sampling technique was used to select sixteen (16) students in each of the sample schools to fill in the questionnaires. A total of two hundred and forty (240) students from the selected schools participated in the study.

The instruments used to collect data were the questionnaires and interview schedule. The questionnaires were the most convenient tool for collecting data because they are easier to administer because each item was followed by alternative answers. They are also easier to analyse since they are in an immediate useable form and finally, they are economical to use in terms of time and money. After data collection, responses from all items were cross-checked to facilitate coding and processing for analysis using statistical Programme for Social Sciences (SPSS v.13.5) computer package. Statistical analyses of data were done by inferential statistic (Chi-square) (χ^2) test, descriptive statistics employing the measures of central tendencies, frequency distributions and cross tabulations. The research yielded both qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data was analysed using content analysis based on analysis of meanings and implications emanating from respondents information.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Teacher Training on Life Skills

The research sought to find out the training of teachers on life skills education. The teachers were asked to state if they had studied life skills at college level and the responses were as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: The Study of Life Skills at College Level

Statement	Response	Frequency	Percentage
Did you study life skills at college level	Yes	12	27%
	No	33	73%
Total		45	100%

The study reveals that 12(27%) of the teachers studied life skills education at college level, while 33(73%) of them did not study life skills at college level. The findings therefore show that although life skills education teachers were professionally qualified, majority of them were not trained to handle life skills education. The findings contravene the curriculum theories indicated in the literature review that advocate for preparation of teachers in handling any curriculum. Rochkind and Johnson (2007) note that the success of or failure of any educational programme depends on the competence of teachers

Teachers' Attendance of In-service Courses

The teachers were further asked if they had attended in-service courses to which they responded as shown on Table 2.

Table 2: Attendance of In-service Courses

Statement	Response	Frequency	Percentages
Have you attended in-service course on life skills	Yes	15	33%
	No	30	67%
Total		45	100%

Table 2 indicate that 15(33%) of the teachers had attended in-service course on life skills education whereas 30(67%) of the teachers had not attended any in-service course. It is possible to deduce from the findings that teachers had a limited number of in-service training sessions. The teachers were also asked to indicate the number of times they had attended in-service courses. This is summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: The Number of In-service Courses attended by Teachers

Number of in-service courses attended	Frequency	Percentage
1	10	67%
2	2	13%
3 and above	3	20%
Total	15	100%

The study found out that, out of the 15 teachers who had attended in-service courses 10(67%) of the teachers had attended only once whereas 2(13%) had attended twice and 3(20%) had attended more than three times as shown on Table 3. Berry (2003) emphasizes that if achievement is to be improved; teachers must have in-service training.

From the findings on the training of teachers on life skills education, it is possible to deduce that teachers had limited training on life skills. These findings contravene the curriculum theories indicated in the literature review that advocate for preparation of teachers in handling any curriculum. Rochkind and Johnson (2007) note that the success of or failure of any educational programme depends on the competence of teachers. In-service courses acquaint the practicing teacher with the latest innovations in the curriculum of his/her subject. In this way, the teacher is most able to cope with new demands in his/her area of specialization as intended to enhance teaching and learning (Mwaura, 2003). Berry (2003) emphasizes that if achievement is to be improved, teachers must have in-service training. However, as a way to save students from anti-social behaviour, teachers should consider, committing themselves to teaching of life skills education as they wait for training.

Rice (2003) emphasizes that if achievement is to be improved, teachers must have in-service training. He further states that there was need for resources to train teachers to deliver life skills and to support them in their work. According to a delegation from KIE (2008), training is identified as an important factor that plays a role in the implementation of life skills education. With regard to training, there should be master of trainers who should have been involved in the development of materials to be used in life skills education, for them to be familiar with the programme content, methodology and philosophy. The selection of master of trainers is very important because this group will become the model for teacher trainers. Master of trainers is often selected from teacher trainers working at national level or may be innovated teachers with experience as teacher trainer. In addition to the training and expertise gained during the development process, master of trainers need further training, which should take two to three weeks (KIE, 2008).

After training, the implementation should start with the training workshop for two to three days, followed by the piloting to test the implementation. Teachers training can last for two to three days or longer, however it should be followed up over time. According to WHO (2000), there should be support structures for the teachers to implement life skills education. Teacher training plays an important role in the effective teaching and learning of life skills education. The training of teachers should be of reasonable duration or length of time, in order for the teachers to gain adequate knowledge and confidence to be able to conduct teaching successfully. Since most researchers have traditionally focused on training of teachers in college, this paper focused on training of teachers at college level and frequent in-service of teachers while in the field.

Various studies have been conducted on life skills education programme in different parts of the world. These studies are relevant to the current study as they are also able to shed light on what other countries or regions have achieved or failed to achieve in providing the life skills education programmes. The findings of the present study concurs with the reports of several investigators that have examined the training and in-service of teachers. Teaching according to Mayor (2005), involves more than knowing and enjoying the subject. How teachers learn and develop is a question that has compelled teacher educators and researchers to think about it.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The teachers were professionally qualified and could handle life skills education best when taken through in-service courses. However, despite the high professional qualification of LSE teachers, lack of pre-service and in-service training in LSE had greatly hampered the successful teaching and learning of LSE. The in-service course(s) could have become handy due to the fact that most teachers were inexperienced in handling the programme.

It is recommended that adequate training can contribute to improved attitude of teachers towards life skills education and raise their value of commitment. The Ministry of Education through KIE should organize annual in-service courses for teachers of LSE to update them on new developments in the curriculum and teaching methodology.

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