
The Contribution of Ward Education Officers Supervisory Roles on Teachers' School Attendance in Longido District, Tanzania

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ABSTRACT: *The study aimed at investigating the contribution of Ward Education Officers supervisory roles on teachers' school attendance in public secondary schools in Longido District, Tanzania. The study was guided by one research question aimed to find out the extent to which WEOs supervisory roles influence teacher's school attendance in public secondary schools in Longido District, Tanzania. Administrative Theory of Management developed by Henri Fayol in 19th Century was used to guide this study. The study employed Convergent design under mixed method approach. The targeted population of this study include 9 heads of schools, 1 DEO, 9 ward education officers' and 283 teachers from the 09 public secondary schools in Longido District, Tanzania that make a total number of 302 populations. The sample size of this study included 4 heads of schools, 4 ward education officers, 48 teachers from 4 public secondary schools and 1 DEO in Longido District to make the total number of 57 respondents. Questionnaires, interview guide and document analysis guide were used to collect data from the respondents. The reliability of quantitative data was established through Cronbach-Alpha where by ($r=0.86$ for teachers' questionnaire) while qualitative data through triangulation and member checking methods. Quantitative data was analyzed by using descriptive analysis to generate frequency, means and percentages. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically and presented in words by verbatim quotations. Research ethics such as anonymity, confidentiality and acknowledgement were adhered across the entire research process. The study found out that good communication between WEOs and heads of schools, inspection of teachers' attendance register books, frequently schools' visits and provide advice to teachers who are not attending to schools contribute good attendance to teachers. The researcher concluded that WEOs supervisory roles contribute teachers school attendance positively whereby teachers adhered to code of conduct by coming and departure to school on time. The study recommends that; WEOs should encourage teachers attending to school daily and solve the conflicts and management to enhance their attendance at schools. The researcher concluded that Ward supervisory roles influence teachers school attendance positively*

KEY WORDS: WEOs, supervisory roles and teacher's school attendance

INTRODUCTION

Governments around the world work hard to provide education for their citizens by understanding that it is important, not only for economic growth but for also social stability in order for their citizen to be knowledgeable in different arena. One of the major issues plaguing educational institutions were the confusion of administrative duties among the participants. The reason for this confusion is due to lack of information on changes in the rules governing the supervision of educational institutions. (Clark & Olumese, 2019).

Egboko (2019) suggest that there is a need of supervisory skills for ensuring effectiveness in school management to maintain good communication and stability of the school in order to enhance teachers' attendance in public secondary schools. This means that schools supervisory strategies such as directing, controlling, stimulating, initiating, designing, implementing, analysing and subsequently appraising are used in schools to maintain discipline. In this regard, supervision for school managers is necessary in helping, guiding, advising and stimulating growth in subordinates in order to improve effectiveness at work (Clark & Olumese, 2019). This reminds supervisors to be effective in performing their vital link role between heads of schools and upper management in the education system for the purpose of improving teachers working performance. However, Teachers' performance in any education institutions can be influenced with a wide range of personalities, their communication with administrators and supervisors.

According to Massout (2021) the roles of WEO is to develop and monitor all regional educational programs, plan all education events, participate in seminars and workshops, coordinate with various departments for all marketing events, prepare and maintain documents for all education plans, perform audition for all public performance, to assist in appointment of coordinator and monitor efficient working of all programs within assign ward and maintain all comprehensive records for all education programs and provide training to all staff members.

According to Rymarz & Belmonte (2017) identified that Ward Education Officers (WEOs) play a central role in monitoring the quality of basic education. Thus, WEOs have frequently contact with schools and a broad set of responsibilities that includes tracking school improvement, supporting teachers, and collecting school-level information. The Government of Tanzania have required supporting the role of the Ward Education Officer by providing them with resources, training, and a central role in education programmes.

Egboko & Adediwura (2019) observed that WEOs were supposed to hold a master degree in education as education qualification in their position, however, most of WEOs were promoted basing on the level of working experience in the education sector to have an ability to monitor and inspect all education activities in the schools. WEOs were supposed to coordinate seminars and workshops to improve teacher professional development and their attendance that entails all learning experiences geared toward developing teachers' knowledge, skills, competences, and

other attributes in order to enable them to cope with educational reforms and facilitate learning outcomes during teaching and learning (Kalyalya, 2017).

Oziambo (2020) observed that; one of the misconduct among teachers in schools is attendance problems where by most of teachers come late to schools, absenteeism without specific reasons and truancy during working hours among teachers. Different strategies have been used in order to overcome this challenge such as inspecting teachers work, teachers attendance registers, school discipline committee, guidance and counselling, report the cases to higher authorities, warning and reprimands in order to make teachers change and behave good in working environment. Ward Education Officers have the role to make sure that teachers' attendance is good by using different strategies that help them to reduce indiscipline problems among teachers including attendance problems.

According to Education Act (Cap.327), The National Curriculum Framework (2012), Education Officers shall provide services of support, guidance, monitoring, inspection, evaluation and reporting on the process of teaching and learning in schools, development and implementation of the curriculum, syllabi, pedagogy, resources and others in order to facilitate teaching and learning program. Therefore, it is the duty of ward Education officers to check on these including teacher's attendance in schools.

Despite of all the effort made by government to empower WEOs to perform their duties effectively, still there is complaints from heads of schools and teachers due to the WEOs' reluctance to carry out their responsibilities of ensuring that teachers were effectively perform their duties (Mwila, 2018). Still there is inefficiency among teachers, underperformance and poor supervision to public Secondary Schools.

Therefore, this study focused on the contribution of Ward Education Officers supervisory roles to teachers' school attendance in public secondary schools in Longido District, Tanzania in order to come up with different strategies that should improve teachers' attendances in schools.

Statement of the Problem

WEOs involvement in supervision role in secondary schools is an important strategy for improving teachers working performance. Teachers of public secondary schools have serious concern in Tanzanian education system. This is due to lack of professional growth, low supervision done by the heads of schools and WEOs as their stipulated responsibilities and indiscipline among teachers (URT,2017).

Parents and other stakeholders are complaining about teachers' attendance in schools hence there was a need for this study to assess the contribution of Ward Education Officers Supervisory roles on teachers' school attendance in order to address this problem.

WEOs supervision in secondary schools contribute more in improving teachers work performance by having qualified workforce in various sectors. Regardless of the efforts made by the Government of Tanzania in developing supervision process in secondary schools by providing moto bicycle and seminars and workshops, still teachers' performance is questionable.

Nkata (2020) and Coleman & Reames (2020) conducted studies on assessment of the role of ward education officers' in providing managerial support to community secondary schools, ward education officers' supervisory skills and their effectiveness in supervising secondary schools management. The findings observed that WEOs have the supervisory role to teachers however, none of the reviewed study focused on solution and measures to mitigate the problem and challenges that WEOs faced in the process of supervising teachers that make the gap to be filled. Therefore, this study investigated on the contribution of WEOs supervisory roles on teacher's school attendance in public secondary schools in Longido District, Tanzania in order to improve their performance.

Research Question

To what extent do WEOs supervisory roles contribute on teachers' school attendance in Longido District, Tanzania?

Significances of the Study

The study calls on policy makers to empower WEOs in implementing their roles. The study adds to the body of knowledge on the importance of WEOs roles in promoting teachers' performance. This is expected to provide awareness to the educational stakeholders on the role of Ward Education Officers 'in enhancing good attendance in schools hence improve their working performance. This study shows the role performed by the WEOs in enhancing teachers' punctuality has direct effect on teachers' attendance. In addition, this study will bring knowledge to the heads of schools on the importance of supervision done by WEOs and adding knowledge to teachers on the importance of attending to school on time hence improve their working performance.

Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by Administrative Theory of Management developed by Henri Fayol (1841-1925) with his work and publications, Fayol's 14 Principles of Management (1888) and Supervisory Industrielle et Generale (1916). In his principles, the author tried to stipulate various issues concerning administration. According to Henry Fayol under division of work, worker always on the same position, the manager always concerned with the same matters, acquire an ability, sureness and accuracy which increases their output. In other words, division of work means specialization.

According to this principle, a person is not capable of doing all types of work. Each job and work should be assigned to the specialist of his job. Division of work promotes efficiency because it permits an organizational member to work in a limited area reducing the scope of his responsibility.

Therefore, this study it found that, if WEO and HOS work hard in their respective section ended to high teachers' performance.

Administrative management theory was adopted in this study since it concentrates on broad problems of organization, division of work between management, supervisions, teachers, students and parents. Moreover, coordination is actually part of strategic human resource management and essential item of total quality management. It is through administrative management such as ethics, integrity, trust, training, teamwork, leadership, communication and recognition are realized.

Strength of the Administrative Theory of Management

Fayol was the first person to actually give a definition of management, which is generally familiar today, namely 'forecast and plan, to organize, to command, to co-ordinate and to control. By having that knowledge as WEO can use all those strategies to promoting teachers' performance. It enlightens various means that a leader can employ to supervise the entire organization.

Weakness of the Administrative Theory of Management

The weakness of the theory is that it relied on formal organization. Administrative management theory does not give any importance to informal organization or groups rather it is management oriented. It does not give much attention to the problems of the workers, all employee treated equally. It also does not give rooms for those managers to have training or knowledge from those administrative principles.

Relevance of the Administrative Theory of Management

Despite of Fayol been an engineer, but his 14 principals can be also using in managing education institution. Ward education officer perform the function of all educational activities of schools within ward by applying those principle like division of work, authority and responsibility and initiative under this principle by command teachers to abide to the norms and ethics of teaching profession in order to be obedient to the rules and regulation of works. Therefore, it is responsibility of ward education officer to ensure teachers adhere to the education codes of conduct.

Therefore, the theory is relevance to the study because when WEOs stand for their authority in giving order to the head of school and finally to the teachers, become responsible to make follow up to the what has assigned them to do. For example, can assign head of school to prepare a monthly report but again became responsible to make follow up that the assignment is accomplished.

Review of Empirical studies

WEOs supervisory role promote teacher's attendance

Daily et al. (2020), conducted a study about using school climate to improve attendance and grades: Understanding the importance of education supervisors' roles among middle and high

school students Wiley, USA. The study used cross section survey design where by questionnaires for teachers and interview for principals and education supervisors were used to correct data. The study involved 73 teachers and 4 principals and 2 education supervisors. The findings of the study indicated that in the middle and high school samples, it was found that a positive school climate reduces school absenteeism among teachers. Findings also suggest teachers with more absences tend to perform less well academically. A positive school climate and school satisfaction may promote good teachers work performance. The study did not indicate how responded were sampled hence this study filled the gap by employed simple random sampling technique and stratified sampling technique to sample respondents.

Warne et al. (2020), conducted a qualitative study of Swedish education supervisors toward teachers' views on school attendance, with a focus on tardiness. A focus group discussion was used to collect data from 21 school personnel, 21 students in grade nine and two parents. The data were analyzed by using thematic content analysis. The results illustrated the main theme, it depends on, regarding what happened if teachers arrived late to school. This finding is further explained by the subthemes about teachers' signals and reactions and the responses from teachers and students. The conclusion showed the importance of organizing the school day more predictably for the teachers. It is necessary to develop guidelines related to how to handle teachers and students' late arrival based on predictable viewpoints but even more so on how to promote teachers' sense of belonging and their interest in and motivation for going to school. The study findings did not explain the role of education supervisors promoting school attendance. The current study therefore filled the gap by looking on education supervisory role to promote teacher's attendance in order to improve teachers work performance.

John (2021), did a study on effectiveness of ward education officers' supervision in promoting teachers work performance in public secondary Schools in Tanzania. To conduct this study, a mixed research method under a convergent parallel design. Data was obtained through individual interviews, questionnaires and document review. A sample of 124 respondents were used to collect data from teachers, heads of schools and other administrative officers were selected using purposive and simple random sampling from 5 secondary schools. The findings indicate that supervision process contributed very little to promoting teachers work performance due to low academic qualifications of supervisors and their lack of knowledge on curriculum matters. Despite the limited academic background of supervisors, the study found out that supervisors were inspecting more on teacher's attendance books, class journals and teachers' discipline. The findings of the study explained on teachers work performance without be specific on the roles of WEOs in promoting teacher's attendance. The current study looked on WEOs supervisory role promote teacher's attendance in order to improve teachers work performance by using questionnaire, interview and document analysis guide in order to collect data from respondents..

Mshata (2020), conducted a study about the efficacy of ward education officer's supervision roles in encouraging teachers' punctuality at secondary schools in Kaliua District, Tabora. This study employed descriptive research design and used mixed research approach. Descriptive statistics and

inferential statistics were used to analyze data collected through questionnaires, and thematic analysis was made for the data collected through interviews and documentary review. The study findings revealed that ward education officials review teachers' attendance books during school supervision to see whether they are arriving at school early in morning. The findings of this study do not indicate how ward education officers promote teacher's attendance hence leave the gap for the present study to be conducted on the supervisory function of ward education officers in encouraging teachers attendance in order to improve their working performance.

Pezzullo (2022) conducted a study on Understanding Factors Associated with Attending Secondary School in Tanzania. The study identified that there are different factors that hindered teachers attendance like family problem and poverty. The study did not identified number of respondents involved in the study hence the current study filled the gap by involved 57 respondents through the use of questionnaire and interview guide instruments in order to get data on the role of WEOs on promoting teachers attendance.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a convergent design under a mixed methods research approach focusing on collecting data concurrently, analyzing concurrently and merging the results to draw conclusions. Mixed research method involved the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data at once in order to collect data on the extent to which **WEOs supervisory role promote teacher's attendance in Longido District, Tanzania**. Data were collected from the Ward Education Officers, heads of public secondary schools, teachers and DEO in Longido District. The target population of this study included 9 heads of schools, 9 Ward Education officers', 1 DEO and 283 teachers from 9 public secondary schools in Longido District that make 302 respondents. The sample size of this study included 4 heads of schools, 4 ward education officers, 48 teachers from 4 public secondary schools and 1 DEO in Longido District to make the total number of 57 respondents were sampled through simple random sampling and stratified sampling techniques. DEO was direct included from the study hence there was 1 DEO in the District. All 4 heads of selected public secondary schools and all 4 WEOs were directly included from this study. The instruments used to collect data were questionnaires, interview guides and document analysis guides. Questionnaire was administered to teachers while interview guides were conducted to DEO, WEOs and heads of public secondary schools in Longido District, Tanzania. The reliability of quantitative data was established through Cronbach Alpha; ($r=0.86$ for teachers') while the reliability of the qualitative data was established through peer checking and triangulation of data.

Quantitative data were collected and summarized into frequency, percentages and mean scores presented in tables by using statistical package for social science (SPSS) version 22. Qualitative data was summarized and analyzed in themes and sub themes and then presented in narrative form and direct quotations.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

WEO's Supervisory Role on Teachers' Attendance

The study sought to find out the extent to which WEOs supervisory role promote teacher's attendance in Longido District, Tanzania. Data from questionnaires, document analysis guide and interview guide were used to address this research question where by heads of schools DEO and teachers were involved in this study. Table 1 presents teachers' opinions on the extent to which WEOs supervisory role promote teacher's attendance in Longido District, Tanzania.

Table 1: Teacher's responses on WEO's Supervisory role in influencing teachers' attendance in Longido District. (n=48)

WEO's Supervisory roles	SD		D		U		A		SA		Mean
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	
WEOs inspect teachers' attendance register books to enhance teacher's attendance	4	8.5	2	4.3	1	2.1	31	66.0	9	19.1	3.89
WEOs inspect class journals to enhance teachers attending at class sessions	4	8.3	7	14.6	2	4.2	29	60.4	6	12.5	3.54
WEOs give kindness words to teachers who attend school everyday	10	20.8	12	25.0	8	16.7	12	25.0	6	12.5	2.83
WEOs provide advice to teachers who are not attending school	0	0.0	8	16.7	6	12.5	25	52.1	9	18.8	3.73
WEOs frequently visit schools to encourage teachers to attend school	2	4.3	3	6.4	8	17.0	22	46.8	12	25.5	3.83
Communication between WEOs and heads of schools enhance teachers school attendance	3	6.3	1	2.1	3	6.3	22	45.8	19	39.6	4.10
WEOs mentorship enhance teachers' attendance of class sessions	2	4.2	5	10.4	9	18.8	27	56.3	5	10.4	3.58
WEOs positivity on supervisory skills enhance teachers' attendance	2	4.2	4	8.3	5	10.4	30	62.5	7	14.6	3.75
Teachers conflict with management by WEOs enhance their attendance at schools	11	22.9	11	22.9	14	29.2	10	20.8	2	4.2	2.60
WEOs time management enhance teacher's attendance	2	4.2	7	14.6	12	25.0	22	45.8	5	10.4	3.44
Total mean score											3.53

Key: SD=Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, U= Undecided, A= Agree, SA= Strongly Agree
Source: Field Data (2022)

Data from table 1 shows that, 85.4 % of teachers agreed that communication between WEOs and heads of schools enhance teachers' school attendance, 6.4 % of teachers were undecided while 8.4 % of teachers disagreed on the statement. From data collected teachers and Ward Education Officers communicate well in order to enhance teachers school attendance in Longido District, Tanzania by mean score of 4.10. The data was in line with those of Daily et al. (2020), who found out that; positive school climate reduced school absenteeism among teachers. Teachers and WEOs should work together in order to improve teachers' attendance in public secondary schools. Data

was in agreement with WEOs interview who observed that; *after visiting schools normally I call the meetings with teachers and discuss together in order to identified problems associated with their attendance. This helps a lot to improve their attendance and they come early to school nowadays in order to perform their duties on time* (WEOs interview on 23rd September, 2022).

This would mean that WEOs perform their duties by communicating with teachers on areas that need more elaborations including teachers' attendance hence improve their performance at school. The meetings conducted between WEOs and teachers help them to build good relationship which make teachers to work jointly and perform activities as a team and improve their performance.

In addition, data from table 1 shows that, 85.1 % of teachers agreed that WEOs inspect teachers' attendance register books to enhance teacher's attendance, 2.1 % of teachers were undecided while 12.8 % of teachers disagreed on the statement. The result indicates that WEOs perform their duties through inspecting teachers' attendance registers in order to avoid teachers' absenteeism in schools hence improve attendance of teachers by mean score of 3.89 in order for them to attend daily at school. This data was in contrast with the findings of John (2021), who found out that; low academic qualifications of supervisors and their lack of knowledge on curriculum matters make WEOs not to perform their duties effectively. This means that; there is a need to conduct training and work shop for Ward Education officers in order to impart knowledge on supervisory duties hence inspect teachers in order to enhance good attendance in public secondary schools. this was supported by head of school who report that; *Most of the time WEO visits our school and demand to look on teachers' attendance book in order to identify teachers who come late to school and provide advice but sometimes warning letters for those who seemed to appear mostly late comers to school in order for them to change.* (Head of school interview on 19th September, 2022).

The comments given by head of school show that head of school when come to school look on attendance book of teachers in order to identify those who came early and those late comers. WEOs use that document in order to make improvement in attendance by suggesting ways to make them change and adhere to code of conduct as directed by their director.

The collected data was similar with those of the document analysis guide, which showed the signature of Ward Education Officers signature from the logbooks that indicate they visit teachers and inspect teachers' attendance registers books in order to check up if they adhered to rules and regulations and reduce the attendance of coming late to school without specific reasons.

Data from table 1 shows that, 72.3 % of teachers agreed that WEOs frequently visit schools to encourage teachers to attend school, 17 % of teachers were undecided while 10.7 % of teachers disagreed on that. The mean score of 3.83 showed that WEOs perform their work by visiting teachers at schools to improve their attendance. The findings observed that; WEOs visit teachers in order to encourage them attend to school daily hence reduce the tendency of teacher's absenteeism without specific reasons. The result was in line with those of interview with one head of school. *Ward Education Officers have a routine of visiting the school frequently and check on*

working documents involved attendance register. (Head of school interview on 15th September, 2022.)

This would mean that WEOs visit teachers in public secondary schools in order to check their attendance hence improve teachers' attendance in schools.

Moreover, data from table 1 indicate that; 77.1 % of teachers agreed on WEOs positivity on supervisory skills enhance teachers' attendance, 10.4 % of teachers were undecided while 12.5 % of teachers disagreed on that. The data observed that; Ward Education Officers have enough skills and knowledge on supervision hence improve teachers' attendance in schools by mean score of 3.75 which indicated that WEOs are not harsh to teachers when performing their duties. The findings were similar with those of Mshata (2020), who found out that; ward education officers have skills in supervision roles in encouraging teachers' punctuality at public secondary schools. The findings also were different from those of DEO who observed that; *Most of Ward Education officers did not have supervisory skills hence there was a need to conduct seminars and workshops to them* (Personal interview with DEO on 21th September, 2022). Data from the interview showed that, WEOs performed their duties though they lack some skills in supervision hence there is a need to train them on areas that have weaknesses hence impart them with skills that they missed.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings observed on the extent to which WEOs supervisory role promote teacher's attendance in Longido District, Tanzania. The researcher concluded that Ward supervisory roles influence teachers school attendance positively whereby teachers adhered to code of conduct by coming and departure to school on time in order to improve their perform at school.

The study recommended that; WEOs should encourage teachers attending to school daily and solve the conflicts between teachers and management to enhance their attendance at schools. Sometimes teachers fail to attend on time due to various problems including conflicts with management hence WEOs need to solve those issues jointly.

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