

**THE ROLE AND COMPETENCE OF PRIMARY SCHOOL COMMITTEES
IN THE MANAGEMENT OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KENYA: A CASE
STUDY OF ELDORET MUNICIPALITY**

BY

**ANNE C. KOSKEI
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80034005

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**MOI UNIVERSITY
P.O.BOX 3900
ELDORET, KENYA**



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ABSTRACT

The main aim of this study was to examine the roles, responsibilities, and the competence of the school committees in the management of primary schools in Kenya, using Eldoret Municipality as a case. The study was based on F.W. Taylor's scientific theory (1917) and Ouch's theory Z (1986) which point out that, the types of persons best suited to a particular type of work should be identified and allocated tasks according to their level of ability.

The basic objective of this study was to investigate how the committees contribute to the smooth running of the primary schools by looking at their; historical background, mode of elections, composition, roles, competence and to make recommendations for improvement.

A random sample of 16 public primary schools formed the base of the study. A total of 131 respondents, (99 committee members, 12 headteachers, 10 chairmen, 10 education officers) were involved in the study. Simple random sampling technique was used to obtain the study sample. A list of all the primary schools in Eldoret municipality was obtained from the municipal Education Office, 40% of which were selected to form the study sample.

Data was collected from the school committee members and the head teachers using a designed questionnaire for each group. The school committee chairmen and the Officers in the Municipal Education Office were each subjected to an interview schedule. The data generated were subjected to descriptive analysis and presented in tables of frequencies and percentages. Descriptions of the respondents' responses in the interview were also done. Open -ended questions were looked into and the suggestions and opinions of the respondents were included in the analysis.

The study revealed that, the roles and responsibilities of the school committees were vaguely defined. Their mode of elections and the qualifications required for effective management are not clearly stated. The committees lacked skills and knowledge required for competent school management. There were functions the committees did not know whether they should be involved in or not. Conflict was apparent in the management of school finances.

In the light of the above findings, the study recommended that, the primary school management structure be redesigned to clarify the hierarchical distribution of authority over management functions. The Education Act be reviewed to clearly define the roles, mode of elections, and qualifications of those to be elected as primary school committees for efficient and effective school management to be attained.