



## CHALLENGES FACING SCHOOL BOARD OF MANAGEMENT IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROCUREMENT POLICY IN KENYA

Jane Jelimo Michael<sup>1</sup> & Stephen Kipkorir Rotich<sup>2</sup> & Dr. Catherine Kiprof<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Moi University, Kenya

<sup>2</sup>Garissa University College, Kenya

### Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to identify challenges facing the implementation of the procurement process of instructional materials in Kenyan Public Primary Schools in Wareng District, Uasin Gishu County. The study was to assess SIMSC's knowledge and skills in the procurement process and challenges that hinder compliance to the procurement policy in place. The study was based on the Systems theory as expressed by William and E. Thorndike (1903) which focuses on the need for a school (system) to function as a whole. A descriptive survey design was adopted; research was both quantitative and qualitative; the aspect of qualitative data was analyzed for their qualitative value; questionnaires, interviews, and document analysis were used to collect data. Research instruments were tested for validity and reliability. A sample size of 152 respondents comprising 38 head teachers, 76 panel heads, and 1 DQASO were drawn from 38 public primary schools to participate in the study through quarter, purposive and stratified simple random sampling techniques. Data was analyzed using qualitative descriptive statistical technique, specifically frequencies and percentages. A bar graph, pie charts, and tables were used to present data. The study revealed that, inadequate, late disbursement of funds, SIMSC's lack of knowledge and skills in the procurement process, and un-procedural procurement practices adopted by schools compromised the implementation of the procurement process. Finally, the study established that, the level of compliance to the procurement process is still low and majority of schools still flawed procurement rules. The study recommends that the process and policies be simplified and proper monitoring and evaluation strategies on procurement be put in place.

**Key Words:** Procurement Process, Implementation, Challenges, Board of Management.

### Introduction

According to Fullan (1985), the quality elements that have been found to be consistently related to achievement in institutions of learning are instructional materials. The government of Kenya has given priority to education sector by allocating 28.2% of the total government expenditure both primary and secondary Schools (Kimalu et al, 2001). The government's budget for 2010/2011 allocated the ministry of education Kshs.170 billion which was higher by Kshs. 15 billion from the previous allocation of Kshs. 133 billion in 2009/2010 budgetary allocation (Siringi, 2010). The funding is geared to attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015 and Vision 2030. The provision of teaching and learning resources to schools forms part of the overall policy for quality improvement and reducing the cost of education to every household. It has been noted that through provision of instructional materials there was increased enrolment in public primary schools from 6.9 million pupils in January 2003 to 7.2 million in January 2004. (Sessional Paper, No. 1. 2005).

The attainment of the above came with the support of the Department for International Development (DFID) providing support to the ministry of education using a series of interventions whereby in April 2000, it approved an allocation of Kenyan pounds 13.4 million for a project to provide Ksh.1 m on a matched funded basis with the government of Kenya to provide quality primary education. The success of the project was pegged on the need for the ministry of education to provide all public primary schools with the procurement policy on instructional material(IM) (June,1988). The policy focuses on the liberalization of the provision of textbooks and other instructional materials to schools, the decentralization of finances and the selection of all materials at the school level through transparent and sustainable methods of procurement (MOE, 2008).

However, despite the above guidelines from the policy document, the procurement process is still faced by many challenges ranging from untimely disbursements; most arrive in the second or third term, the procurement process that is long thus time consuming and teachers and head teachers spend a lot of time selecting and collecting books when they should be teaching (UNESCO, 2005; Sushila, 2004).

Nevertheless, the procurement process is crucial because of the efficiency expected of school heads in the management of resources at their disposal and more so the need to ensure quality delivery of services (Makotsi, 2004). From the directive from the ministry of education (MOE, 1988; 47), it is clear that the government expects that various resources available to education be managed properly and utilized in the most cost-effective manner to bring out efficient provision of quality and relevance in education. Criticisms about the way educational services are managed continue to rise. The most heated debates included a series of press discussions on various episodes of misappropriation of funds meant for the purchase of textbooks in 2009/2010 (East African Standard report media group, 2009). Moreover, the latest scam was that of 4.2 billion Ksh that went missing. (Daily Nation media group, June, 2011). Available literature revealed that, certain factors have to be considered when allocating and utilizing school finances, Sushilla (2004). This is in relation to the procurement process whereby there are challenges that have become a myriad in the achievement of the same.

It is clear that, many schools are still faced by procurement challenges hence operate against the policy. In one occasion, it was noted through a press report that Ksh.1.3 billion meant for textbooks under FPE programme had been wasted, donors claim that books bought with the money were either stolen, lost or thrown away, Otieno S. (17<sup>th</sup> Dec 2009). The DFID representative indicated that public primary school heads under whose watch ksh.5.8 million books went missing or were tossed away. The losses covered a period of six years (2003-2008) with an average cost of Kshs 226 per book. The National Auditors reports further revealed how payments were well paid in advance to suppliers totaling Ksh.176, 000 at a school in Gem district. There was payment for one undelivered materials of Ksh.17, 550 at one in Kisumu and procurement of materials valued Ksh.98, 244 at one in Kericho district without following the procurement procedures. That section alone costs the project Ksh.291, 794. The report also highlighted irregular disbursement and misuse of funds. It further revealed that six schools procured works valued at Ksh.7.5 million without following the proper procurement process, Amango B (2009).

UNESCO, (2005) in a study on challenges facing the implementation of FPE acknowledges it as the avenue for the provision of IM in public primary schools aimed at accessing quality instruction to Kenyan children from diverse economic backgrounds. The study however fails to look at how these resources are acquired hence do not mention those challenges that may hinder the provision of the essential materials. Another study on the progress of FPE Education (Kenya, 2008) revealed that, there has been lack of sustained and comprehensive communication strategies in that education stakeholders are left in Limbo and do not know what goes on in schools. The study has only pointed out one factor and fails to categorically address other factors that have hindered the implementation of the procurement process.

A study by Sifuna, (2005) on challenges facing the implementation of FPE points out that the government did not carry out situation analysis before implementing programmes under FPE resulting to confusion among the implementers and sponsors. The key issues pointed out that were not clearly addressed were unclear guidelines on various issues including procurement procedures. This study therefore seeks to address these concerns and hopes to articulate in specific terms how the procurement challenges have compromised the level of adherence to the procurement policy in place in Wareng district.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The Government of Kenya took the initiative of reducing the cost of education in order to make it affordable for children from varied economic backgrounds through the implementation of Free Primary Education (FPE) in 2003. Olembo and John (1986) pointed out that expenditure on instructional materials may boost pupils learning outcomes in schools. However, UNESCO (2005) and Sifuna (2005) argue that FPE policy lack clear guidelines on various issues including procurement procedures. Moreover, Wareng audit report revealed cases of school heads who violated procurement process (MOE, 2011). Majority of the head teachers have demonstrated that the procurement process is a difficult task to adhere to. The problem that this study sought to find out was whether the present policy on procurement was functional or the implementers have challenges in interpreting the policy.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to assess if the School Board of Management in charge of instructional materials have the knowledge and skills in the procurement process in public primary schools in Wareng district.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study was guided by the Systems Theory by William A W. and Edward T. (1903) which postulates that, a system is a transdisciplinary that abstracts and considers itself as a set of independent and interacting parts. In systems theory, it was recognized that organizations are complex social systems, which indicates that reducing the part from the whole reduces the overall effectiveness of organizations. Any institution such as a school puts procedures and structures in place so that it can operate. Schools operate as systems in that they interact the various sub-sections that are geared towards providing ultimate success in its functions.

This systems theory was adopted in this study because schools are systems in which there are inputs which undergo a process to produce quality outputs. The transformation process is dependent on the quality of the inputs. When the input (Instructional Materials) is processed through the instructional process, it yields to an output in form of quality delivery of instruction.

### **The National Policy on Procurement**

The Ministry of Education issued a comprehensive primary school instructional materials Handbook which was to serve as a guide to the school Management Committees, (MOE, 2007). The manual highlighted the key principles and procedures to be adhered to in line with the National Procurement Policy (1988). The policy highlights transparent and sustainable methods of procurement, school tendering decisions on books that are to be made through selection committees, funding provided to schools, use of approved lists for quality and acceptance standards and lastly equity and access to learning materials through the establishment of textbooks for pupils at the ratio of 1:3 per subject in lower primary and 1:2 in upper primary. For this to be realized schools were advised to encourage active participation of all stakeholders in the procurement process.

The policy focuses on the Liberalization of the provision of textbooks and other instructional materials to schools, the decentralization of finances and selecting of all materials at the school level (MOE, 2008). The main role of the School Board of Management is to make sure that the procurement process of Instructional Materials (IM) in the school goes on smoothly and that there's a complete transparency (MOE, 2004). Nevertheless, studies have pointed out to the evidence, particularly in developing countries that the availability of IM has a positive effect on school effectiveness (Parrel & Heynemann, 1989; Lockheed & Vespoor, 1991); Psacharopoulos and Woodhall, 1985). The Government that

endeavors to achieve optimal human capital from school may be well advised to pursue a high concentration of textbooks in their classrooms. Ineffective procurement procedures and high overall book expense are some of the factors that may undermine the achievement of this objective.

In order to address the problem of Instructional Materials procurement, the Government came up with a booklet called Approved List of School Textbooks Schools which contains textbooks which have been put in place through the vetting process administered by the Kenya Institute of Education (KIE), to ensure that the books are of appropriate quality, fair price and acceptable standards (MOE, 1999). Schools are therefore expected to procure IM in accordance with the policy. Despite the policy document in place, the prices of textbooks were outstripping the income of the population. This condition therefore, undermines the ability of schools to procure books thus compromising the quality of education in schools.

### **The Procurement Procedure on Instructional materials**

Before schools acquire and use any resource, they need to consider their importance in relation to the teaching and learning process. For it to be of value, it must influence learning positively and facilitate the achievement of quality teaching and learning (MOE, 2008). Fullern (1985) asserts that the quality elements that have been found to be consistently related to achievement are managerial efficiency of the material inputs.

### **Skills of School Board of Management**

Gary (2005) notes that, training is a hallmark of good management. It is from this viewpoint that the Kenya Government gives increasing shares of budgetary allocations to the education sector because it plays a central role in promoting economic growth and development by providing the much needed skilled manpower. (G.O.K. 1988). In most African countries, the implementation of SAP's (structural adjustment programmes) has had a major impact on the provision of basic social services like education, health and nutrition among others. The priorities and commitment of the Kenya government in the provision of education is reflected in the relatively large and consistent resource allocations and expenditures since independence.

Despite the large investments in primary education and the concern for quality, there are still many challenges that hinder provision of these essential materials. The challenge in primary schools unlike secondary schools is that schools don't employ accounts clerks who can foresee the financial revenue and expenditure of the schools; instead the Head teachers and PTA members are managers of the schools, some of them have mismanaged the funds because they are not trained to handle such a lump sum amount. In general the major challenge is that people who are handling the funds at school level are untrained or not qualified to do the job thus money allocated to school is either squandered or lies idle in the account while the students suffer in schools (Siringi, 2004; 105).

Thorndike (1992:24) points out that governing bodies once appointed must attend training courses in order to improve their managerial skills. Thorndike indicates that training enables the management committees to learn strengths and weaknesses which can be identified and suggestions made for development because schools would certainly want to provide the best quality of education. Mahoney (1988:212) indicates that training transforms management committees from being struggling amateurs to be more knowledgeable, confident and determined school managers, increase awareness, confidence, make them more active, broaden one's knowledge and sharpen their approach to their roles.

In UK and the USA, the importance of training for governing bodies is summed up by when he states that the responsibilities for governing bodies are so important and complex that a government cannot be expected to discharge them effectively without some training going beyond the normal process of picking up the job by doing it (Mahoney, 1988:208). In Kenya, Sessional Paper No.1 (2005) highlights a work and the government's intention to review the various education and training of the management bodies to work out on the modalities for entrenching professionalism to enhance their management and co-ordination capacities, (MOE, 2005:64). From the above it is evident that training on management committees is voluntary despite the fact that KESI has a programme and offers training in management courses. Many schools and management committees have not benefited from it (MOE (2001:50-51). School Board of Management need to be strengthened so that they can play a more active role in institutional governance through a devolved system and also empower them through training programmes in order to give them management, accounting, monitoring and evaluation skills (Elimu Yetu Coalition, 2003:69).

### **Effectiveness of Instruction through Instructional materials**

Teaching can only be effective when adequate and relevant instructional materials (IM) are used, (Afolabi et al, 2006). Many educators and researchers have reported the importance of IM in teaching. Teaching and learning (T&L) could not be effective without adequate and relevant use of IM (Grant, 1978). Scram (1977) referred to IM as basic channel communication of ideas and concepts in the classroom for the purpose of bringing about effective teaching and learning (Adebajo, 2004). Abimbade (1997) noted that, IM in T & L make students to learn more and retain better what they have been taught and that it promotes and sustains students' interest. It also allows learners to discover themselves and their abilities. Reporting the view of Schramm, (1977) said that IM enriches learners' knowledge and reinforce verbal instruction. Nevertheless, IM are considered as powerful means of renewing the education system, they can be seen as indispensable in facilitating the introduction of innovation and improving the quality of teaching and learning.

### **Challenges of Implementing the Procurement Process**

In 1998, a series of interventions regarding procurements in Philippines became the central concern. Suppliers to the department of education claimed that bribes in the provision of learning materials ranged from 20 – 65 % of the value of the contracts awarded. It was revealed that, some supplies even got legislators to sign requisition issue vouchers, which was against existing auditing rules. Many schools in Kenya are still faced by procurement challenges hence operate against the policy. In one occasion, it was noted through a press report that Ksh.1.3 billion meant for textbooks

under FPE programme had been wasted, donors claim that books bought with the money were either stolen, lost or thrown away (Otienon, 2009). The National Auditors reports further revealed how payments were well paid in advance to supplies, undelivered materials in Kisumu and procurement of materials in Kericho district without following the procurement procedures

A study by UNESCO, (2005) revealed that,

*Primary school head teachers in Taita Taveta district have complained of harassment by audit agents.....*

*The more than 40 teachers said that the district audit team was harassing them while demanding that they pay an audit fee of between Kshs 500 and 2000 to private accountant.*

*This is corruption of the highest order despite the government's commitment to zero tolerance to corruption," They accused the audit team of colluding with a private accountant to charge them of un receipted levies in order to balance their books of accounts. "When do we teach if we spent most of the time writing books of accounts and traveling to seminars on financial management?" Meanwhile, the district education officer said that, auditing exercise was financed by the government and no teacher was supposed to pay for it. However, he advised teachers without accounting skills that they were free to higher accountants of their choice to assist them in book keeping. "There is a provision in the FPE funds to pay for services including employing an accountant".*

In addition, UNESCO further raises concerns that, the procurement procedures were cumbersome and time consuming in that teachers and head teachers spent most of the time selecting and collecting books instead of teaching. The study realized that the head teachers, teachers, and school committees needed training on book keeping, accounting, and general procurement procedures in order to improve on their managerial skills. The procurement committees and head teachers are therefore faced by greater challenge to balance their books of accounts. (<http://Www.africa.files.org>). KESSP analysis on procurement (2008/2009) findings, observed that Education teams no longer play an active role in supervising and monitoring procurement at school levels including enforcing compliance with established procedures. The underlying efficacy of the procurement plans rests on the head of schools. The Government has put in place a policy that aims at providing legal procedures to ensure access and equity in the distribution of these scarce resources to all Kenyan public primary schools. The key issue in such a policy is to ensure that all procurement procedures are adhered to. In order to ensure such adherence, challenges facing the procurement practices needed to be investigated in order close gaps in schools where adherence may not have been realized. However it seems that there is a deviation from what the policy is saying and what is happening on the ground

## Methodology

A descriptive survey research design was adopted. Oso and Onen(2008) postulate that, surveys are used to investigate populations by selecting samples to analyze and discover occurrences. Surveys also entails collection of quantifiable data from the sample. This research design was appropriate for the study in that, it allowed for rapid collection of data and facilitated for coverage of large areas.

### Sample Size

Kothari (2008) states that a 30% representative sample of the entire population is sufficient for making generalization. A total number of 38 head teachers, 38 parent representatives, one DQASO, and 77 panel heads formed the study sample as illustrated in table 3.1

**Table 3.1: The Sample size for respondents**

Respondents	Population	Sample size (30%)
District Quality assurance and standards Officers(QASO)	1	1
Head Teachers	129	38
Panel Heads	258	77
Parents representatives	129	38
Total Sample population	517	154

In this study, the following sampling techniques were used; Quota, purposive, stratified and simple random sampling techniques. All the Public Primary Schools in Wareng district were stratified into two divisions in the district that is Kesses and Kapseret. Quota random sampling was used to select 25 schools in Kesses Division and 13 schools in Kapseret. Division from the 38 selected public primary schools in Wareng District. Quota sampling ensured that each stratum was assigned the proportionate number of schools in the sample as in the population. In selecting schools for study in each stratum, codes were used to identify them. The researcher ensured that each school had a unique code for its identity. Further, stratified simple random sampling was used to ensure that each school in each stratum had an equal chance to be included in the sample.

Purposive sampling technique was used to select the school head teachers from all 38 selected schools, 1 district education representative (DQASO) and 1 parents representative who is in the instructional material Committee and lastly, 2 Panel Heads from the 38 selected schools were further selected using simple random sampling technique. The head teachers, panel heads, DQASO and the parent representatives were included in the study because they are in charge of instructional material procurement in public primary schools hence have sufficient information on the procurement practices.

**Research Instruments**

The questionnaire was chosen in this study because it collects a lot of information over a very short period of time and free from bias of the interviewer and answers are in the respondents own words, piloting can be carried out to test the reliability of the instrument and lastly large samples can be made use of and thus the results can be made more dependable and reliable.

The questionnaires were administered to every head teacher, 2 panel heads and 1 parent representative from the 38 selected public primary schools in Wareng District. The questionnaire was divided into two parts; Part A dealt with the background information of the Panel Heads and Part B dealt with the information on Instructional Material Procurement in their respective schools. The questionnaire designed was used to collect information based on the objectives of the study.

The researcher used the interview schedule for guidance during the interview process. The interview schedule designed was meant for the Head teachers and the DQASO from each of the 38 selected schools. Interview enabled the researcher to collect additional information based on the objectives of the study and hence balanced between quality and quantity of data collected. It also provided more information on procurement challenges that could not be directly observed or was difficult to put down in writing.

Document analysis refers to the critical examination of public, private or recorded information related to the issue under investigation ( Oso & Onon, 2008). In this study, the researcher examined procurement records and IM inventories. Information could be tracked from the head teachers to the panel heads. Analysis of order forms, delivery notes, issue records and SIMSC latest minutes provided additional information that could not be captured using interviews and questionnaires.

**Results and Discussion**

The discussion of results was based on the challenges of knowledge and skills of Board of Management in the implementation of Procurement process.

**Work experience of the Respondents**

This section gives the background information of experiences of head teachers, panel heads, and parents’ representatives who participated in the study.

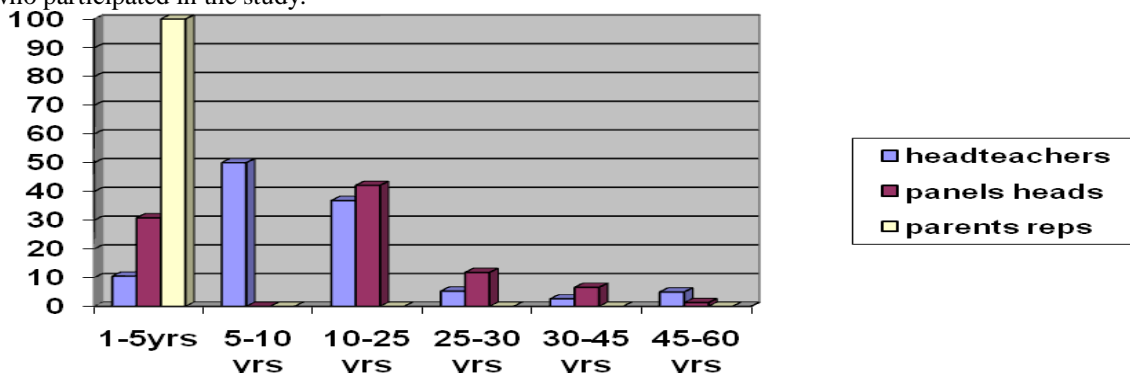


Fig Fig.4.1

**Background information of work experiences**

Results from fig.4.1 above revealed that, majority of the head teachers and panel heads had an experience of 5-25 years. This implies that their experience was enough to provide sufficient information concerning the implementation of the procurement process in their schools. In addition, their long experience placed them in a better position to implement the procurement process. All the parents’ representatives had an experience of 1 year though their tenure of office is annual but they can be re-elected. Indeed, the one year’s tenure is insufficient to learn and implement the procurement process hence the many challenges in the implementation process.

**Knowledge and skills**

In order to achieve this objective the School Board of Management in charge of Instructional Materials were asked to indicate whether the level of education, training, and capacity building affect their ability to implement the procurement process. Their responses are as in table 4.2

**Table 4.2: Assessment of Board of Management level of education and training in the procurement process**

	Items	Respondents	Frequencies & Percentages of Respondents		
			SA & A	SD & D	U
1	Level of education affects SMSC procurement roles	Head teachers	33 (86.9%)	5 (13.1%)	0 (0%)
		Panels heads	64 (82.9%)	4(5.7%)	2 (2.8%)
		parent representative	30 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
2	SIMSC have not been trained on financial management	Head teachers	38 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
		Panels heads	70 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
		parent representative	30 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
3	Regular capacity building will improve SIMSC roles	Head teachers	36 (94.8%)	0 (0%)	2 (5.3%)
		Panels heads	68 (97.1%)	0(0%)	2 ( 2.9%)
		parent representative	28 (93.3%)	2 (6.7%)	0 (0%)

Results revealed that, majority of the respondents strongly agreed that the level of education affected SIMSC's ability to implement the procurement process. This is indicated by 86% head teachers, 82% panel heads, and 100% parents' representatives who strongly agreed. This implies that, the implementation of the procurement process was hampered, by SIMSCs' level of education. This means that SIMSC are not able to carry out procurement transactions diligently as required therefore providing loopholes that can be manipulated by interested parties who may have an upper hand (head teachers and suppliers). When this happens, schools may end up in mass losses of funds due to misappropriations arising from hiked prices, denial of discounts or supply of goods in fewer quantities and of low quality or failure to supply, yet invoices and delivery notes say otherwise.

The head teachers interviewed confirmed that most of the SIMSC members are form four leavers and have no experience in financial management. The DQASO confirmed the same that most of them have primary education yet are expected to oversee the procurement procedures. Their level of education is a limitation and therefore cannot provide for quality services expected of them. These results are in agreement with the contention fronted by ,Makotsi (2004) that the procurement process is crucial because of the efficiency expected of school heads in the management of resources at their disposal and mare so the need to ensure quality delivery of services. Moreover, Otieno(2009) adds that, primary school head teachers under whose watch Ks.5.8million books went missing or were tossed away. The losses covered a period of six to eight years (2003-2008) costing the government Ks.291, 794.

Further, results also revealed that majority of 100% SIMSC members strongly agreed that the procurement committee had not been trained on financial management. In addition, 90% SIMSC strongly agreed that regular capacity building would improve their ability. This implies that there was no training offered to the procurement committees and that there was no capacity building meant for updating them with new trends in the procurement process. This means that procurements were done with limited knowledge and skills hence compromised the provision of the required resources to the learners. These results are in agreement with the works of Koskei, Maiyo and Ruth (2006) who laid emphasis on the need to train management committees in order to effectively manage resources placed in their hands. Pscharapoulos and Woodhall (1985) stressed on the importance of training those charged with the responsibility of managing finances in primary schools as crucial if the resources are to be used for the intended purpose.

### Problems of the Implementation of the procurement process

The objective of this study was to determine the problems that hinder the implementation of the procurement process in public primary schools. In order to achieve this objective, the procurement committees were asked to respond the to problems that hinder the implementation of the procurement process in their schools. Their responses are illustrated in table 4.10 below.

Table 4.2: Analysis of challenges that hinder the implementation of Procurement process

Items	Respondents	Frequencies & Percentages of Respondents		
		SA & A	SD & D	U
1 Lack of training on the procurement committee	Head teachers	32(84.2%)	2(5.3%)	4(10.5%)
	Panel heads	65(92.9%)	1(1.4%)	4(5.7%)
	Parents' representatives	21(70%)	9(30%)	0(0%)
2 Lack of support from administration	Head teachers	26(68.4%)	5(13.1%)	7(18.4%)
	Panel heads	58(84.9%)	7(10%)	5(7.1%)
	Parents' representatives	19(63.3%)	8(26.7%)	3(10%)
3 There is no proper delegation of duty to some of the SIMSC members	Head teachers	21(53.3%)	7(18.4%)	10(26.3%)
	Panel heads	53(75.7%)	9(12.9%)	8(11.4%)
	parents representatives	20(66.7%)	7(23.3%)	3(10%)
4 Some SIMSC members are not involved throughout the procurement process	Head teachers	15(39.5%)	17(44.7%)	6(15.8%)
	Panel heads	46(65.7%)	18(25.7%)	8(11.4%)
	Parents' representatives	21(70%)	6(20%)	3(10%)
5 Long and cumbersome procurement procedures compromise the implementation process	Head teachers	25(65.8%)	7(18.5%)	6(15.8%)
	Panel heads	54(77.2%)	12(17.1%)	4(5.7%)
	Parents' representatives	18(60%)	5(16.7%)	7(23.3%)
6 Delay of disbursement of funds from the government affect the provision of IM	Head teachers	35(92.1%)	1(2.6%)	2(5.3%)
	Panel heads	61(87.1%)	4(5.7%)	5(7.2%)
	Parents' representatives	26(86.6%)	2(6.7%)	2(6.7%)
7 Irregular checking of books of accounts creates loopholes	Head teachers	20(52.6%)	8(21.0%)	10(26.3%)
	Panel heads	55(78.6%)	4(5.7%)	11(15.7%)
	Parents' representatives	19(63.3%)	4(13.3%)	7(23.4%)
8 Failure to liais with education office compromises the implementation process.	Head teachers	21(55.3%)	12(31.5%)	5(13.2%)
	Panel heads	46(65.7%)	13(18.6%)	11(15.7%)
	Parents' representatives	18(60%)	7(23.3%)	5(16.7%)
9 Conflict arising from individual interests affect the implementation	Head teachers	27(71.1%)	8(21.1%)	3(7.9%)
	Panel heads	53(75.7%)	8(11.4%)	9(12.9%)
	Parents' representatives	21(70%)	7(23.3%)	2(6.7%)

Results revealed that, majority of 84% head teachers, 92% panel heads and 70% parents' representatives strongly agreed that lack of training on the procurement process affected the procurement committees' efficiency. This implies that SIMSC members have not been trained on financial management and therefore are not in a position to implement the procurement process as required. This means that procurements in public primary schools are not carried out as required due to limited knowledge and skills or due to questionable integrity by those charged with the responsibility of implementing the procurement process. It therefore means that, schools have incurred colossal losses of money meant for procurements and therefore IM needed in schools may not be available in its right amount because it has not been procured well. UNESCO, (2005) raises concerns on the need to train head teachers, teachers and community members on book keeping, accounting and general procurement procedures in order to empower them with the required knowledge and skills in the procurement process.

Moreover, results also revealed that, majority of 60% respondents strongly agreed that lack of support from the administration hinders the implementation of the procurement process implying that head teachers and Education Officers do not provide adequate support to SIMSC members in their procurement process. Lack of it means that the procurement process will not be implemented as required and therefore the procurement funds may not be utilized for the required purpose. When asked to give opinion regarding delegation of duty, majority of 55% head teachers, 75% panel heads, and 66% parents' representatives strongly agreed that there was no proper delegation of duty to the head teachers and their deputies. This implies that they have contradicting roles hence compromises with the level of adherence.

A close observation from the head teachers interviewed revealed that, their roles and those of their deputies were contradicting in that the head teachers who are the accounting officers are members of the procurement committees, whereas the deputies are the chairmen and the senior teachers are their secretaries. This implies that the deputies have authority over the head teachers who are the accounting officers. Unclear roles may not provide for amicable solutions in decision making regarding the implementation of the procurement process. When conflicts arise it delays provision of IM hence subjecting learners to inadequate materials which compromise their quality of learning.

Further, the respondents were asked to give their views regarding involvement of SIMSC throughout the procurement process. Results revealed that, 39% head teachers, 65% panel heads and 70% parents' representatives were not involved throughout the procurement process. A significant number of 44% head teachers 25% panel heads and 20% parents' representatives strongly disagreed. This implies that some SIMSC members do not participate in the procurement process this therefore means that not all of them are in a position to fully supervise the implementation process. When this happens, it may create a leeway for manipulation of the process by interested parties. When this happens massive losses are incurred and this subjects parents to unnecessary budgets. Moreover, children will perform dismally and more so, those from low economic backgrounds may be forced to drop out of school because they cannot cope with costs attached to IM needed in school.

The key factor pointed out by the head teachers and DQASO that contributed to members not participating fully in the procurement process was that, parents' representatives felt out of place when books were being chosen due to its technicality. The teachers participated only in choosing books and left the rest for parents' representatives and the head teacher. Elimu yetu Coalition (2003:699) raises concern on the need to empower school management committees through training programmes in order to give them management, monitory, and evaluation skills. Makori, (2008) suggests that, majority of education stake holders are left in 'Limbo' when procurement transactions are being implemented at school level hence the many challenges. Mahoney, (1988:212) posits that, training transforms management committees from being struggling armatures to be more knowledgeable, confident and more active.

It was also revealed that, long and cumbersome procurement process affected the level of compliance by majority of 70% respondents who strongly agreed. This implies that, most schools do not implement the procurement process as required due to the time it consumes and the technicality in implementing it. This is congruent to UNESCO, (2005) that the procurement process is long and cumbersome therefore teachers and head teachers and head teachers waste a lot of time meant for instruction. Moreover, results also revealed that majority of 90% respondents strongly agreed that, delay of disbursement of funds affected provision of IM. This implies that procurements were made late and that learners were not able to access IM at the required time hence impacting negatively on their performance. In addition teachers will not have ample time to cover the syllabus. UNESCO, (2005) acknowledges the fact that disbursement of funds from the government was delayed those made available came in installments causing problems in purchasing materials hence deny learners access to IM in first term.

In addition, results revealed that 52% heads teachers, 78% panel heads and 71% parents representative strongly agreed that irregular auditing compromised the implementation process. However, 21% head teachers strongly disagreed, while 26% were undecided this implies that most schools never submitted their books of accounts for auditing regularly and therefore SIMSC members are not in a position to properly account for money received and spent. This could be attributed to the fact that, schools have no accounts clerks and head teachers are charged with the responsibility of balancing their books of accounts. Due to limited knowledge and skills in financial management they are not in a position to. When this happens, many of them decline to submit unbalanced books thus continue to flawed procurement rules and this impact negatively to provision of resources to the learners.

The DQASO added that some schools had missed audit for 2 or more years yet continued to flawed procurement rules. By 31<sup>st</sup> June, every year, all schools should have submitted their books of accounts for auditing. As regards liaising with the education office, majority of 60% respondents strongly agreed that failure to liaise with Education Office compromised the level of compliance. This means that the ministry of education has not put in place modalities geared at providing sustainable monitoring and evaluation strategies for procurements in schools. This has paved way for un-procedural practices that compromise the quality of teaching hence the poor performance in most public primary schools.

Moreover, results also revealed that, 71% of the respondents strongly agreed that the implementation of the procurement process was affected by conflict arising from individuals' interest. This implies that the procurement process is not implemented as required and that it is carried out to suit individuals' interests. This could be attributed to



the fact that, some of the SIMSC members who have interest in the awarding of tenders and so are interested in specific suppliers or bookshops regardless of their terms and conditions. It could also be attributed to some of the SIMSC members who do not have children's interest instead, go for their own interests. These results concur with the views fronted by Mbugua, (2009) that, *there exists massive conflict of interest where senior ministry officials own bookshops hence force head teachers to purchase books in their stores*. In addition, a DFID representative cited cases where top officials are alleged to operate briefcase bookshops write themselves hefty cheques or force teachers to purchase from selected bookshops (<http://www.Unesco.org>). In a statement from the press conference Lumumba (KACC, 15TH June, 2009) Embezzlement of education funds have yet again become a hot issue. Sifuna, (2005) adds that, the confusion in the implementation process was brought about by non clarity of guidelines on various issues including procurement procedures.

## Conclusion

The findings from the procurement committee who participated in the study revealed that, the level of education of most of the procurement committees affected their ability to implement the procurement process. This was revealed by 80% respondents. This implies that procurement committees in most public primary schools are from four levers especially the head teachers and panel heads including a few parents' representatives. Some of the parent representative had primary school education. This implies that, they were not in a position to cope with the technicalities in the procurement process hence would not implement it as required.

Further, it was established that 100% of the respondents strongly agreed that SIMSC had not been trained on financial management. It was revealed that they were not in a position to supervise the procurement process effectively since they lacked essential skills in financial management. It also revealed that, IM were not procured as required and that learners would not benefit from the resources. The study also found out that, regular capacity building would improve SIMSCs' roles. This was indicated by 90% respondents who strongly agreed. This implies that there are no capacity building for SIMSC and therefore they are not updated with the required knowledge and skills meant to improve their ability to implement the procurement process. Moreover, results also revealed that, 65% head teachers, 48% panel heads, and 40% parents' representatives strongly agreed that suppliers give schools 10% discount. However, 31% head teachers and 40% parents' representatives were undecided as compared to 49% panel heads who strongly disagreed. In addition, 71% head teachers strongly agreed that 10% was supplied in form of additional IM contrary to 49% panel heads and 53% parents' representatives who disagreed. A significant number of 31% panel heads and parents' representatives were undecided. This implies that, although schools were awarded 10% discount, it was not clear of the form schools received it as revealed by majority of panel heads and parents' representatives who were not sure whether schools got it and the form in which it was awarded. This implies that the head teachers and suppliers are the only ones that negotiate for discounts and therefore it indicates that there is no transparency in the awarding of discounts thus schools may miss to benefit from discounts.

Further, 55% head teachers strongly agreed that SIMSC advertises tenders contrary to 51% panel heads and 56% parents' representatives who strongly disagreed. This implies that tenders are not advertised and that schools use the same suppliers for long therefore do not benefit from competitive terms and conditions of service that come with new tenders. It is also clear that 55% head teachers and 42% panel heads agree that STCs have the ability to select appropriate suppliers contrary to, 40% parents' representatives who strongly disagreed. However, 29% head teachers, 24% panel heads and 27% parents representatives were undecided. This implies that schools have not given mandate to STCs to select suppliers therefore schools use other means to select suppliers. When this happens suppliers are not vetted competitively and this gives a leeway to the head teachers to operate within their interests.

The results revealed that, 73% head teachers, 40% panel heads, and 23% parents' representatives agreed that SIMSC received IM ordered for their schools and verifies its quality and quantity. This is contrary to 54% panel heads and 73% parents' representative who strongly disagreed implying that, head teachers are the only ones who receive IM ordered for their schools and therefore its quality and quantity was not guaranteed. This means that less or cheap IM may be procured. Further, 68% head teachers, 37% panel heads, and 16% parents' representatives agreed that payment was made after IM had been delivered. This is contrary to 21% head teachers, 51% panel heads, and 70% parents' representatives. This means that, payment was made before IM was delivered to schools or may be purportedly made to undelivered IM. When this happens suppliers thereafter may fail to supply the school with IM ordered hence ending up in mass losses; given that suppliers would not be willing to reimburse funds for undelivered IM.

It was observed that there were no regular submission of books accounts in most schools and that procurement committee and education stakeholders were not in a position to evaluate whether funds had been used for the right purpose or not. It can also be concluded that, audit recommendations were never discussed nor implemented implying that schools continued to flawed procurement rules. The SIMSC meetings were not held as required and that SIMSC members were denied an opportunity to effectively assess how procurements were carried out in schools. There was no proper communication strategies put in place for the community to be informed of money received and spent in schools and therefore, there were no transparent procurement practices adopted by schools. This created loopholes for un-procedural procurement practices. It can therefore be concluded that, most of the procurement practices adopted by schools were not in line with the procurement guidelines and became a stumbling block in the implementation of the procurement process. Lack of training, support from administration, long and cumbersome procurement process, delay of disbursement of funds, irregular auditing, and conflict arising from individuals vested interests were some of the problems that hindered the implementation of the procurement process. It can therefore, be concluded that, the procurement process is still elusive and has been besieged by a myriad of challenges.



## Recommendations

The procurement process is cumbersome to implement. The study therefore recommends that, it should be made simpler and clear in order to promote compliance and implementation.

The study recommends that accountants be employed at least to serve in cluster schools. This will relieve the head teachers the big burden of balancing books of accounts.

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