



Influence of corporate leadership on protection of the rights of children in early childhood centres in baringo county, Kenya

Mbakaya Margaret Kwatukha¹, Odundo Paul² and Oluchiri Judith J³

¹Department of Educational Communication and Technology, University of Nairobi, P.O. Box Nairobi, Kenya.

²University of Nairobi, P.O. Box Nairobi, Kenya; ³Centre for Disaster Management, Masinde Muliro University of Science & Technology, P.O. Box 190 Kakamega 50100, Kenya.

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the structure of corporate leadership and how it can help achieve Early Childhood Education (ECE) goals in protecting the rights of children. It establishes that corporate leadership has not fully been exercised and implemented in Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres, and this is due to the administrator's inability to steer stable and sustainable centres for protection of rights of children and unprofessional management. The study employed descriptive surveys, and stratified sampling was used to obtain a sample of 52 ECD centres in Baringo County, Kenya and the target population involved the staff in ECD centres. This paper establishes that corporate leadership is vital towards accomplishment of protecting rights of children and that curriculum supervision plays a major role in quality education and protecting children rights. Therefore it recommends a full review of implementation of corporate leadership in ECD centres and training of staff to achieve this course

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Introduction

Corporate leadership in ECD according to (1) is an indispensable means of protecting the rights of children in ECD centres as it provides the environment required to secure good health, liberty, security, economic well-being, and participation in social and academic activities comprehensively. Good performance in the ECD training immensely contributes to any country's national growth (2). Performing ECD centers produce an appropriate human resource capital as early in life as possible that is integral in spurring productivity. Improved national productivity is an important channel to eliminate poverty, disease and ignorance, hence improving human welfare (3).

Corporate leadership is founded on several principles which can be very crucial in ECD(1). These general principles are geared towards enhancing open governance of corporations (4). The principles include: one, the implementation of integrity and ethical behavior - this can be formulated in a manner to establish codes of conduct that can govern ECD centres administrators in decision making (5); two, equitable treatment of all shareholders - this can ensure that all ECD centres stakeholders have equal rights and can easily exercise them hence encouraging pupils' participation in the role and responsibility of the board. This principle of corporate leadership can aid ECD centres' management performance to be challenged for improvement by other stakeholders (Children are Everyone's Business, 2010); four, disclosure and transparency - this can enhance ECD centres' accountability facilitating the issuance of clear and factual information on utilization of resources (Crane & Ali, 2010); lastly, interests of other stakeholders, this can reflect on ECD centres' responsibility towards non-shareholders including clients, workers and policy makers (Sapovadis, 2007). Can thus help to protect the rights of children in the ECD centres by ensuring proper management is in place that will facilitate positive steps to include the most marginalized of these children like the poor, and those suffering

from HIV and AIDS and other ailments. The primary purpose of this is to enhance not only the performance, effectiveness and contribution of ECD administrators, but also to improve the effectiveness of ECD sector as a whole in fulfilling its role in safeguarding the rights of children to education. This in overall contributes to a stable and sustainable future. It should be in no-one's interests to do business in an environment where the potential of future generations of workers and consumers is compromised by child rights violations such as subjection to poverty, violence, abuse, a lack of access to health and education, and inadequate participation in society (6). Corporate leadership can facilitate the protection of rights of children in ECD centres by making education acceptable to all pupils through provision of relevant and quality education and maintenance of conducive physical structures for all genres of pupils.

Corporate leadership has aided to improve the performance of numerous institutions. As a result, companies have attracted more investors, improved employees' performance, utilized limited resources effectively, and surveyed the present market and forecasted future market behavior appropriately. This has enabled these institutions to prevail where others have had a hard time surviving in business (6). Contrary, corporate leadership has not been exercised in the ECD sector. This has made its integration in the ECD centres a hefty challenge translating to the rights of children being shelved aside in all or most ECD centres. This is because management of the sector is done unprofessionally based on the proprietor's line of thought or the indirect management of the host primary school administrators. This denies ECD centers the needed management structural capacity to implement corporate leadership appropriate for safeguarding the rights of children, being made to look like appendage organs of the larger primary school. The ECD centres activities are therefore not given priority.

Corporate leadership offers child socio-academic guidance, technical and interpersonal skills, and physical and mental security. This can help to enhance pupils' class and field participation. It can give assurance that future needs and expectations of children will be looked into today for a smooth tomorrow. Corporate leadership ensures that a child lives in a conducive environment for both physical and academic growth. The above scenarios stress the need for corporate leadership and how it can be helpful in facilitating the rights of children in the ECD sector. There are numerous rights that it can influence in the ECD sector in Baringo County. The problem of this study will be to investigate the influence of corporate leadership on protection of the rights of children in ECD centres in Baringo County. The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of corporate leadership on protection of the rights of children in ECD centres in Baringo County. The broad objective of this study was to analyze the influence of corporate leadership on protection of the rights of children in ECD centres in Baringo County.

Theoretical basis of the study

The study employed the Stakeholder Management Theory (SHMT) and the Agency Theory. The Stakeholder Management Theory has dominated the literature of business ethics for long. This theory relates to the corporate responsibility of a business firm. As such, stakeholders are largely formal in character hence allowing businesses to device and implement a variety of substantial conceptions. Part of the popularity of SHMT is undoubtedly due to the fact that these concepts provide a very broad umbrella under which a range of normative or general business principles can be accommodated. The adequacy of SHMT may be questioned on either of two basic grounds.

Agency Theory operates on the assumption that business markets are efficient and adjust quickly to new circumstances hence admitting the existence of short to medium-run inefficiencies. Agency Theory takes the relationship of one or more people, the principals, engaging another person, the agent, to perform some service on their behalf which involves delegating some decision-making powers to the agent. The theory asserts that the principal can limit divergence from his interests by establishing appropriate incentives for the agent, and by incurring monitoring costs designed to limit opportunistic action by the agent.

Study framework

This study focused on corporate leadership which acted as the independent variable and its influence on the rights of children in ECD centres, which is the dependent variable. Corporate leadership aspects of management can have great influence towards the achievement of the rights of children in ECD centres. The relationship between the management aspects of corporate leadership and their influence on the rights of children in ECD centres was assessed in this study. Management aspects of corporate leadership served as the independent variables and the rights of children are the dependent variable.

Research Methodology

This study utilized descriptive survey. The target population consisted of 52 Head Teachers of ECD centers in Kabarnet Division, Kenya. This was subdivided into the four educational zones of Kabarnet Division namely Kabarnet, Chapchap, Ngolong' and Senetwo zones. In the total sample, 13 ECD centers were randomly selected with equal probability in each zone to give the total sample of 52 ECD centers. This was to ensure that different types of ECD centers depending with their mode of management were all represented in the cumulative sample. The main tool used to collect data was a questionnaire.

These were management questionnaires which consisted of 5 sections designed to collect information on demographic information, and understanding of corporate leadership and its influence on the rights of children in ECD centres. Descriptive statistics and inferential statistic were used. Data containing the study results was then presented using pie charts, bar charts, graphs, and frequency tables in percentages to ensure information gathered was clearly understood.

Results

Table 1 gives the response rate.

Table 1 Response Rate

Respondents	Actual Response Rate	
	F	%
Teachers	38	73%
Administrators	14	27%
Total	52	100%

Source: Author (2012)

Table 4.1 shows that 38 (73%) of the teachers responded while 14 (27%) of the administrators responded out of the total 52 expected which represented 100% target response. This shows all of the respondents responded and this improved the reliability of the data collected.

Corporate Leadership, curriculum supervision and children right

Curriculum supervision and individual needs of ECD learners

The Null Hypothesis $H_0: \mu_{CS} = \mu_{IN} = \mu_{CR}$, that was curriculum supervision influenced the individual needs of ECD learners hence protecting their academic rights. The Alternative Hypothesis H_1 : Not all equal, was that, curriculum supervision did not influence the individual needs of ECD learners thus failed to protect their academic rights. Since the probability value was less than alpha ($.004 < .05$), the conclusion was to reject the Null Hypothesis. This was cemented by the fact that the highest percentage of respondents 18 (35%) felt that supervision was of little importance followed by 16 (30%) that felt it was just important and 10 (20%) found it average. Only 3 (5%) felt it had no influence.

Curriculum supervision and developing curriculum for ECE colleges

The Null Hypothesis $H_0: \mu_{CS} = \mu_{DC}$, that was curriculum supervision, as a component of corporate leadership, influences the development of curriculum for ECE colleges as part of higher learning. The Alternative Hypothesis H_1 : contrary, was that, curriculum supervision did not influence curriculum supervision for ECE colleges as part of higher learning thus failed to protect their academic rights. Since the probability value was greater than alpha ($.64 > .05$), the conclusion was to accept the Null Hypothesis. This was cemented by the fact that the highest percentage of respondents 17 (30%) felt that curriculum supervision was very important and just as important in influencing curriculum development for ECE colleges and other institutions of higher learning. These were followed by 8 (15%) that felt it was of both average and little important equally. None felt it had no influence or importance at all.

Curriculum supervision and Cultivating skills and attitudes in pupils

The Null Hypothesis, $H_0: P_{CS} = 1$, that is, there was correlation between curriculum supervision, as a component of corporate leadership, and cultivation of skills and attitudes in pupils. The Alternative Hypothesis, $H_1: P_{CS} \neq 1$, depicted there was none. Since the probability value exceeded the alpha ($.31 > .05$), the Null Hypothesis was positive. Thus the observed correlation was practically significant giving the conclusion that

curriculum supervision helped cultivate skills and good attitudes 30 (58%) in pupils. 17 (32%) felt supervision was of importance followed by 5 (10%) that felt it was of average importance. None felt it was of little or no importance.

Curriculum supervision and response to special needs pupils

The Null Hypothesis, $H_0: \mu_{CS} = \mu_{SN}$, was that, curriculum supervision influences special needs pupils while the Alternative Hypothesis, $H_1: \mu_{CS} \neq \mu_{SN}$ was contrary. The Null Hypothesis could not be rejected as the probability value exceeded alpha (.41 > .05). The conclusion was that 42 (80%) of respondents felt the supervision was important followed by 8 (16%) that felt it was most important and 2 (4%) finding it as of average importance. None felt it as being of little or no importance.

Curriculum supervision and flexibility in presentation

The probability value was less alpha (.028 < .05), thus the relationship between curriculum supervision, as a component of corporate leadership, and its influence on flexibility in content, methodology and presentation while teaching was negative. The study established that curriculum supervision was of little influence to flexibility of presentation by the highest percentage of 21 (40%). On the other hand, 16 (30%) felt curriculum supervision was of importance followed by 10 (20%) that felt it was of average importance while none (0%) felt it had no influence or importance.

Conclusions

The purpose of the study was to establish the influence of corporate leadership on the protection of the rights of children in ECD centres in Baringo County. The following are the major conclusions based on the findings and discussions. Corporate leadership is necessary and vital towards the accomplishment of the protection of the rights of children in ECD centers. It has been effective in the private corporate business world and it has also proven very effective in both public and private ECD centers administration.

The ECE curriculum supervision has played a fundamental role in protection of the rights of children to quality education in the ECE sector. It is as a result of this supervision that proper learning materials have been sought and put to work, curriculum has been upgraded or improved and the standard of teachers or administrators skills has been developed. However, employees have not fully given their best input in most ECD centers as many still feel demoralized due to what they termed as poor pay package offers. The researcher, from the evidence given, concludes that the current state of corporate leadership implementation in ECD centers as a key to protecting the rights of children is wanting. Though in most ECD centers there are traits of its implementation, there are others where corporate leadership lacks in totality. The majority of ECD centers are partial implementers. This is in both private and public ECD centers. Also, the current understanding of children's rights is inadequate.

More emphasis is needed to cultivate the culture of ECD pupils' rights protection more so those with special needs who

are denied even the basic legal rights to education and natural rights of socialization. However, there are those that feel the protection of the rights of children in ECD centers is not a complex decision-making issue but rather one that any person with a humane or motherly affection can effect with ease. Others felt it is a communal thing while others still felt a need for more security details to deal with issues relating to children's rights adulteration.

Recommendations for Policy Action

The study made the following recommendations for policy action:

(i) Corporate leadership should be implemented fully in all ECD centers to enhance the protection of the rights of ECD pupils. It is vital in improving ECD centers' teachers and administrators' skills, motivation level, supervision and management, institutional growth and professional capacity. This will improve pupils' rights protection in terms of delivering quality education, offering security, increasing learning aids, counseling, health matters, comfortable learning shelters/classes and community-involvement.

(ii) The existing state of corporate leadership in ECD centers administration should be reviewed since it does not fully encourage pupils' rights protection. All aspects of corporate leadership should be put into effect with focus directed to the protection of the rights of children in ECD centers. The teachers and administrators need to be trained more on corporate leadership as the current understanding of many is inadequate. This would see the protection of children's rights being enhanced in ECD centers as few can be said to be fully compliant with the children's rights act.

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