

EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INDUCTION PROGRAMS ON STUDENTS' TRANSITION FROM PUBLIC PRIMARY TO SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NANDI EAST SUB-COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract

This article discusses the effectiveness of implementation of induction programs on transition of students from primary to secondary schools in Nandi-East Sub County, Nandi County in Kenya. Expectations of stakeholders in education is that as learners transit from the primary level of education to secondary school level, adequate preparations are made so that the transition is smooth and learners can be able to adapt to the new environment with ease. Education is concerned with the development of an individual as a whole, hence, the need to have induction programs before students can begin their activities at given levels of study.

Keywords: Induction of learners, transition, attachment, effectiveness, evaluation

Introduction and Literature Review

Induction is defined by the Pearson Education Limited (2003), as the introduction of someone into a new job, company or official position. In this context therefore, induction is a program that is mounted by an institution to welcome and prepare new learners for activities of learning in their new environment and the induction is expected to continue for the period that the students will stay in the learning institution. Newly admitted students are formally introduced into various programs of the school, which include curricular and co-curricular activities (Ogoemeka, 2004).

Induction is of great importance because secondary school students are given information about the kind of subjects offered in the school, and expectations of the students. They are also introduced to the available facilities to be used by the students within the institution (Kelley, 2004) The program helps the students to realize upfront the expectations of the school and how to be successful while at the institution (SchoolRun, 2016). The required inductions are aimed at helping the new students to maximize their experiences, reduce culture shock and gain knowledge and skills for global understand.

In Kenya, induction is done to secondary school students, especially for those who have just completed their secondary school level to join Primary Teacher Colleges, as studied by Simatwa (2010), that there normally isn't enough time and resources to organize for induction for in schools. The government of Kenya

recognizes the importance of the induction programs for new students and the employees on promotions and also those transferred from one station of work to another, (Republic of Kenya, 2006). Induction programs are organized by various schools which practice it to enlighten students on the programs of the school and make them aware of their expectations as they join secondary schools.

In Nandi East Sub-County, there are 30 Secondary schools, out of which only 8 are boarding schools and the remaining 22 are day schools (Nandi-East Sub-County Report, 2016). The boarding schools try to do induction on the first day of arrival to the school for form one students, then the students are given time to orient themselves and learn about their new environment.

Induction Programs in Secondary Schools

Induction programs in secondary schools are part of institutional management process and are prepared with the aim of making a new starter or student to become a useful and integrated member of the school team. The new students need to understand their roles while in the school and therefore, need to fit in well with the rest of the members within the institution.

For induction programs to be more beneficial to the new students, plans should be made in advance which include: Preparation of induction program timetable, detailed induction activities for a defined period



of time. It is best to assign a mentor to the new students who will play the role of father/ mother to them

Induction training should also be provided to the new students to enable them to get full information of their schools and be provided with leaflets that contain the school rules and regulations that govern the institution of learning. The school provisions will enhance high retention rate and better academic performance when they find an environment that cultivates continual growth and success (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2015).

Smith and Ingersoll (2014), state that the different purposes of induction programs largely depend on the type of induction program being offered in given institutions of learning, and that the contextual need for individual students and schools will influence the structure of induction programs.

According to Dinham and Rowe (2008), the move from primary to secondary school constitutes a major challenge in students' lives, which needs to be minimized. For this to be done, a program of induction needs to be provided so that the newcomers are given a brief of what they should expect in the institution and how to go about tasks required for accomplishment in the institution. During the transition, some students manage to cope with the new situation fast, while others seem to struggle, as stated by Ashton (2008), that decline in performance, lack of interest in school activities and withdrawal among other features, may be witnessed among some of the students.

Induction programs have been identified as a way of improving student retention in school (Smith & Ingersoll, 2014), and that the programs help in increasing knowledge of students and their academic achievements (Darling, 2000) who continues to state that the program is an essential ingredient for beginning students' success. The provision of induction programs in secondary schools provide the structure that maximizes the students' learning in the context of classroom work, and integrates the students into the school community.

The school increases the possibility of retaining strong and well-trained students and gives the outcome of improved student learning. Induction programs in secondary schools help to bring about successful reforms within the school environment, hence, educational leaders need to have understanding of the change process within the classroom (Keys, 2003). Richardson and Placier (2001) state that change at individual level addresses motivation, human behavior, beliefs and relationships and the impact of these beliefs on the

organization.

European Commission Staff Working Document SEC (2010) indicates that the development of induction programs contributes to the development of a learning culture within the school that not only focuses on the new students, but also on the learning of all other students in the school. Mentor system created in the school, plays an important and crucial role in helping to create an environment in which positive views of all students are accommodated and taken seriously, because they foster a learning culture within the school as a whole.

The same working document continues to elaborate that the main ingredient for a coherent and system-wide induction program addresses and extends to several dimensions.

- 1) **Personal support** is provided by peers, mentors, teachers and other school stake holders. This kind of support helps the new students to develop identity as secondary school students of the learning institution. The students may experience loss of self-confidence, extreme stress and anxiety as they begin their academic life in school. Depressive symptoms that may be evident in the behavior of students are possibly associated with changes in presence of peers and parents who also give support. Induction programs support them to have an increased feeling of competence, motivation, sense of belonging and attention from the school community.
 - 2) Social support is provided through induction programs which make students to feel that they are part of the school community where there is collaboration with other students that stimulate feedback and exchange of ideas. Social support enables students to have a collaborative learning environment within the school and also with school stakeholders.
- A study made by Newman, Newman, Griffen, O'Conner, and Spas (2007) shows that when social support declines, depressive symptoms increase and result in ineffective performance in school. Induction programs are held so that transformation can be done to alleviate some of the social concerns and desired behaviors formed in students (Feiman-Nemser, 2003). Zins, Weissberg, Wang, and Walberg (2004) posited that there are simple techniques that can be used to incorporate social and emotional learning:
- 1) Implement regular class meetings where the

- class teacher and students discuss challenges encountered and try to promote responsibility and thoughtfulness in students.
- 2) Use of conflict resolution to teach problem-solving skills where the teacher gives guidance to students on positive ways of handling disagreements. Land continues to state that it is important to settle conflict issues and stress should be placed on conflict management by school leaders. Learning of conflict resolutions strategy, yields harmony with curriculum because students will be prepared to learn after conflicts are settled.
 - 3) Emotional sandwiching is another method employed by teachers where they create warmth in the classroom by starting and ending the day with students in class. This method creates a personal connection with the students that when people are emotionally balanced and have a feeling of being appreciated and valued, they feel good and tend to also produce positive results from good deeds.

Induction Programs and Academic Performance

Academic support can be obtained when students have a sense of belonging and a positive perception of transition from primary school to pursue secondary education. This achievement can also be related to participation in extra-curricular activities, which is linked to increased commitment to school, positive engagement and social networking and better academic attitudes and work habits are promoted (Akos, 2006). Teachers being the largest group of educators working within the school environment are the closest to the students and are considered to be critical change agents in building professional communities and work towards school improvement (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2011). Introduction and use of modern technology is another powerful motivator in student learning, because it helps in retaining learners in school and dropout rates are limited. Technology creates interest for students and alleviates learning barriers for students who are at the risk of dropping out of school, aids in mastery of academic content, provides individualized instruction, improves students' attitudes towards learning and prepares them for efficient and effective class-work (Fullan, 2007).

Technology also aids in building self-esteem in students and changes those with reluctant attitudes to

become motivated learners. It also empowers them by providing a multiple and flexible environment which has learning opportunities in a psychologically safe learning environment.

Adjustment of Students to Social Life in Secondary School

During changes that must occur, students need to adjust to the new learning environment, be familiar with peers, teachers, learn how to work differently and understand the rules and routines that are put in place in the learning institution (Zeedyk et al., 2003). As students navigate their transition, they also need to adjust to the social changes that take place in the process. When students suffer low and unfitting positions among classmates, the main function of learning and achievement, is interfered with and the student may feel isolated due to lack of attention and interest from fellow students. This decreases social relationships and gradually creates negative self-image, lack of efficiency that causes alienation and further leads to low self-esteem which makes the affected individual to become unable in tackling difficulties and problem-solving (Yarmohammadeain, Molavi, & Iranpoor, 2003).

Hart Research Associates (2010) asserts that students' response to changes largely depends on their personal resources, coping skills and the culture into which the students transit to. Schools can offer support for successful transitions to be attained so that the students can develop a sense of competence and capability within themselves.

Attachment of Students to their Secondary Schools

According to Bergin and Bergin (2009) and Bomber (2007), there are four categories of attachments as stated:

Secure attachments – This kind of attachment is found in children who experienced sensitive and good care-giving during their early stages of life, which enabled them to built trust and reliance on teachers to meet their needs. The group of children, manifest confidence in forming relationships, utilization of learning opportunities, engagement in productive activities, ability to solve problems that arise, and have resilience and awareness in daily activities (Bomber, 2007).



Insecure Ambivalent Attachments – Children in this category experienced inconsistent and unresponsive care-giving which later results in frustrated students who may reject teachers in the process of seeking comfort which they do not find. They may reflect the attitude of immaturity, helplessness, passiveness, anger and petulance. They are also attention-seeking, hyperactive and have difficulty in recovering from upsets (Rilley, 2010).

Insecure Avoidant Attachment – This group may have experienced insensitive and intrusive care-givers who rejected them. While in school, the group of learners who received this kind of attachment is independent of their teachers, do not want to seek help from anyone, and want to meet their own needs. They have the attitude of being task-oriented, are self-reliant and achieve highly in some areas of education. Socially, the learners have discomfort when with other people, are indifferent and avoid close relationships. Because of their difficulty in seeking for help, they have limited creativity and are prone to sudden outbursts (Bomber, 2007).

Insecure Disorganized Attachments – Learners presented in this group are usually from neglected, abusive or chaotic families. The learners are likely to feel confused while with teachers and get frightened, which results in being vigilant, easily distracted, have a strong sense of fear, panic or helplessness and present behaviors that may seem shocking and difficult to be managed by adults. The learners become very sensitive to criticisms, defiant or controlling and become easily overwhelmed by difficult situations (Bomber, 2007).

Learners, who can regulate their own emotions and responses, are more likely to have popularity in school, are stable emotionally, have fewer infectious diseases and achieve better in academics (Gutman & Eccles, 2007). Geddes (2006) observes that interactions between teachers, learners and the learning tasks are not static, but dynamic because they are a reflection of awareness and understanding of learners by their teachers. The learners on the other hand, built trust and have the ability to seek support from their teachers when they are faced with challenging tasks

Active involvement in school activities and its deliberations in a caring school learning institution help students to develop empathy for others, have social skills and understanding of values within the community. Students become more thoughtful and reflective in their work, accept authority from their seniors, have respect and concern for other people, avoid situations

that may cause harm to themselves and other people, and have a sense of high standard of ethical conduct (Schaps, Battistich, & Solomon, 2004).

School atmosphere is a major issue in adjustment and attachment of students while in school. Strategies have been put in place to help in cutting down on violence, therefore, making students to feel safe within the institution of learning (Rubinson, 2002; Axelman, 2006). In some schools, disruptive behavior and bullying are situations that students encounter in some secondary schools and struggle to overcome them. The problems make the students to feel unsafe while in school and this hampers their learning abilities and progress. Students who feel unprotected are most likely to drop out of school, or transfer to other safer schools (Ainlay, 2006).

LaRusso, Romer and Selman (2008), state that students need to feel respected by other community members in order to perform well in school. Through increased respect in school, there is hope that the learning institution will be less frustrating for students, hence, decrease in cases of drop-outs and transfers. In other situations, students who may be able to put up with the harsh conditions, feel alienated by adults within the school community instead of giving help to the students (Axelman, 2006).

Rubinson (2002) made studies which showed that changes made by students because of support from their teachers, helped them to develop positive peer bonding. The attachment created allowed some input into students' education and showed that they would be unlikely to bully fellow students, abuse drugs, or attempt suicide. Rubinson continued to point out that school neighborhood can influence behavior and performance of students, but the school community has greater impact that is more effective in creating support connections and autonomy in students.

Ainley (2006), states that learners who get attached to their schools are most likely to mature into productive adults who will be helpful members of their communities. Ainley continues to elaborate that when teachers have close attachment to their students, they will be able to detect warning signs of adolescence, which will help to be proactive in dealing with potential problems like suicidal attempts and drug abuse. Studies show that schools that have collaboration with students have better behaved learners and less substance abuse (Rubinson, 2002), and that existing problems get decreased. Ogbiji and Ada (2008)

point out that induction programs are identified as an opportunity where school administrators can employ some creativity in imparting helpful ideas to the new students and also new staff.

Methodology and Sampling Procedures

The research design used in the study was the descriptive research design because the study depicted people, conditions of the research as it existed at the time being researched on, situations and events. The descriptive design attempts to collect data from members of a population in order to determine the current status of that population in respect of the variables of the study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Correlational research design was also used which explored the degree of relationships between two or more variables where data was obtained from individual participants in the study.

The population which the researcher collected information of the study from, were students, teachers and the institutional principals in Nandi-East Sub-County, which had 30 public secondary schools. Stratified Sampling was used in the study to ensure that all the categories were catered for. Stratified sampling ensures that all the sub-groups are represented for participation in the study (Role, 2015). The researcher wrote names of all the 30 secondary schools in Nandi East Sub County in a list, then, used random sampling to pick four of the schools from every category for the study.

Cluster sampling was used in the study such that all the form two students participated in the study. Purposive sampling was used to select teachers in the sampled schools and their principals were interviewed.

Results

Data collected showed that there were 224 boys which held a percentage of 49.1, while the girls were 232 with a percentage of 50.9 presented from all the school categories. There is indication that there were more girls who participated in the study than boys in the secondary schools. The students who responded to the questionnaires from Boys Boarding schools were 146 with 32%, those in Girls Boarding were 159 with 34.9% and those who participated from Mixed Day schools were 151 which showed 33.1% of the participants. The presentation shows that there were more respondents from Girls' Boarding schools

than from Boys' Boarding and Mixed Day schools. The total number of respondents was 456 students.

Response of students about older students exerting a strong influence on them to do well in school was the lowest with a mean of 2.46 and tended to disagree. The feeling of students about encouragement of teachers for them to participate in clubs and societies in the school stood at a mean of 2.56 and closely followed by a mean of 2.57 which was the feeling of students about how they were received in school on admission day. The overall mean of implementation of induction programs was 2.617 with a standard deviation of 0.497.

When ANOVA was used to determine the level of significance of implementation of induction programs between and within groups of Boys boarding, Girls boarding and Mixed Day schools, the F-value is 5.432 with an associated p-value of 0.005 which indicated that there was a significant difference in the implementation of induction programs in the different secondary school categories.

When Boys boarding and Girls boarding schools were compared, the mean difference was -0.07559 with significance of 0.417. The results show that there was no significant difference in the implementation of induction programs between Boys boarding and Girls boarding schools as the mean difference between the two groups was 0.417 which is greater than 0.05, the significance level. Similarly, boys boarding schools do not differ in the implementation of induction programs from girls' boarding. The mean difference of .10795 has an associated p-value of .158, which is greater than .05, the significance level.

Comparison between girls' secondary schools and mixed day secondary schools indicates a mean difference of .18354 with a p-value of 0.001 which is less than 0.05, the significance level. There is therefore a significant difference in the implementation of induction programs between girls' boarding schools and Mixed Day schools which could be due to lack of enough time for studies as they have to travel to school and back to their homes. Implementation of induction programs was better practiced in Girls boarding schools than in Boys boarding schools and mixed day schools.

The entry mark of students had a Pearson Correlation of 0.798 and 0.000 sig. (2-tailed) when correlated with End of year academic performance. The result is indication that there is a significant relationship between the students' entry mark and the End of year academic performance because the significant level is



0.01 which is greater than 0.000 sig (2-tailed) in the correlation. Response of students about their evaluation of adjustment to social life in secondary school shows that in all the areas, the students tended to disagree. Apart from item number 4 which was about students' relationship with friends growing stronger than when they first joined the school and had a mean of 2.50, the rest of the items were below 2.49.

The mean of the feeling of students on their attachment to their various secondary schools was at 2.427 which were rated as tending to disagree. All the items which students gave their feelings regarding how attached they were to their schools fell between 2.39 and 2.49. When implementation of induction programs was correlated with end-of-year academic performance of students, the result of Pearson Correlation was 0.308 and p-value of 0.000. This shows that there is a significant relationship between implementation of induction programs and academic performance because 0.000 is less than the significant level of 0.05.

When implementation of induction programs was correlated with social life adjustment, the Pearson Correlation result was 0.078 and p-value was 0.098. This shows that there was no significant relationship between implementation of induction programs and social life adjustment. Attachment to school had Pearson correlation result of 0.080 and p-value of 0.086 when correlated with implementation of induction programs in school and indicates that there was no significant relationship between implementation of induction programs and degree of attachment to school.

It is interesting to note that end-of-year academic performance is significantly related to social adjustment in school with Pearson r of .208 and a p-value of .000 and to attachment in school with Pearson r of .111 and a p-value of .018. Both p-values are less than the significance level of .05. The relationship is weak but significant.

Discussion

In the study about students exerting a strong influence to the new students to do well in school, students tended to disagree that there was effective implementation of induction programs as older students did not show a strong influence to the new students in the school to do well. This shows that the school did not have a culture which was created so that incoming students could emulate from and also strive to do well academically.

European Commission Staff Working Document (2010) states that development of induction programs, help in developing a learning culture within given secondary schools which help in creating positive learning environments. Therefore, when the older students have culture created that new students can emulate from, they will desire to do even better because of culture that has been created.

Academic achievement in secondary school indicates significant relationship with entry marks from primary school because the elementary schools and families of the new form one students have a major role to play in preparation of students in secondary school (Anderson, Jacobs, Schramm, & Spiltberg, 2000). When pupils do not get proper preparations from their primary schools, the results they attain majorly determine their secondary school academic outcome. Most of the students felt that they did not adjust well to the social life at school and therefore implicates that when social support declines there could be a result of increase in depressive symptoms hence ineffective performance in school (Newman et al., 2007).

Feiman-Nemser (2003) stated that induction programs are held to enable transformation to be done in institutions which aid in alleviation of some social problems and have desired behavior inculcated in students so that enough time is allocated to academic benefits than solving social issues. The results from the study indicate that assistance in social life in secondary schools is minimal in Nandi-East Sub County which could be the reason as to dismal academic performance in some of the secondary schools.

Young et al. (2009) pointed out that many problems are kept at bay when there is attachment between students and their teachers because students will not fear to communicate their concerns to their teachers and the administration of the school. When students get attached to their schools, they feel comfortable to ask for clarification in areas that they may not be clear with and avoid any indiscipline cases.

Commodari (2013) states that attachment of students to their school indicates how ready the school and the students are for academic success. The reason is that students feel free to relate to their teachers, which helps them to seek for advice that concern academics, ask questions for clarification and in the process perform better in their academic studies. One of the most important elements to be considered is effective implementation of induction programs as

stated by Darling (2000) that induction programs are essential ingredients for students' academic success as the programs help in reforming the school environment where motivation of students is done, positive human behavior is enhanced to produce relationships that impact positively on academic outcomes. This shows that students who are socially adjusted in school and have close attachment to school tend to perform better academically.

Conclusion

Basing on the findings of the study, the researcher finally reached conclusions that in Nandi East Sub County, rating of implementation programs was average according to students' responses and therefore need more practice for effective academic outcomes. Induction programs were better practiced in girls' boarding schools than in boys' boarding and mixed day schools.

Relationship between students' entry marks and end-of-year academic performance is positive and moderate, which implies that students whose entry marks are high tend to perform better in the end-of-year examinations. Adjustment to social life indicated that more requires to be done in order to have students' adjustment to secondary school. Degree of attachment to students' secondary schools had below average rating which showed that all the school stakeholders have a role to play in ensuring better attachment for good performance in schools. There was a significant relationship between the practice of induction programs and academic performance in public secondary schools in Nandi East Sub-county which suggests that the academic performance of students will be better if the induction programs are well-implemented.

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