Factors affecting project implementation of school projects in private secondary schools in the larger Nyeri District

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Abstract:

Many Secondary schools in Kenya have been receiving funding meant to establish or improve existing facilities such as classes, dormitories, laboratories, libraries, especially since the current Government took over in 2003. However some of the projects have stalled along the way or even before commencement. As a result some facilities remain unutilized especially due to none completion. The main goal of the study was to establish the factors affecting project implementation in private secondary schools in the larger Nyeri District. Since the free tuition programme commenced in public schools, a challenge has been looming, that parents will opt for public secondary schools, at the expense of the growth of the private secondary sector. The study aimed at determining whether implementation of projects in private secondary schools in the larger Nyeri District is affected by management competence, funding, conflict, and monitoring and evaluation which were the independent variables. The study used descriptive survey design. Both qualitative and quantitative research designs were used. The study comprised 20 Principals and 20 Board of Management members from the 20 Private Secondary Schools in the larger Nyeri District. Questionnaires were administered to principals and board members. Open ended and close ended questionnaires were used. Data was analyzed using frequencies and percentages. The study established that managerial skills are likely to affect successful implementation of projects. The study also established that successful implementation of projects is greatly affected by availability of funds, the methods used to raise funds and the way in which the collected funds are used. It was established that conflicts existed over many issues regarding implementation of projects, and these conflicts had a negative impact on implementation of projects. It was also established that most donors do not assess and evaluate projects that they had funded and if they did, they did not give any recommendations and this affected the implementation of projects. The study recommends that project managers in private schools should be provided with opportunities to undergo project management training as this would equip them with the requisite skills. Tendering and procurement systems in private schools should become more streamlined and open since some of the respondents were of the view that the system is not always transparent; private schools should initiate income generating activities in order to supplement the finances coming from parents through payment of fees; and owners and sponsors of private schools should inculcate professionalism in their managerial systems especially on recruitment of staff.