

# CONTRIBUTION OF HODS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ON THEIR ROLE PERFORMANCE IN SUPERVISION OF INSTRUCTIONS

<sup>1</sup>Rebecca Wakariti Muriuki, <sup>2</sup>Dr. George Onyango, <sup>3</sup>Dr. Florence Kithinji

wakaritir@gmail.com

*1. Kenya Education Management Institute  
62592-00200 Nairobi*

*2. Department of Education Management Policy  
and Curriculum Studies, Kenyatta University,  
43844- 00100 Nairobi, Kenya.*

---

## Abstract

The study evaluates the professional development programs for Heads of Departments (HODs) in Kenya and their impact on role performance in instructional supervision. The research methodology involved a comprehensive review of literature, including journal articles, books, and online sources, to explore the role of HODs in various educational contexts globally. The study highlights that HODs serve as a critical link between teachers and school leadership, with responsibilities that include curriculum supervision, resource management, and leadership in ICT integration. Findings from international studies indicate that professional development significantly enhances HODs' leadership skills, equipping them with the competencies necessary to adapt to evolving educational demands. In the United States, China, and African countries such as Tanzania and Uganda, professional development has been recognized as a key factor in improving HODs' role performance. However, research suggests that in Africa, leadership in teaching remains relatively inadequate, emphasizing the need for further evaluation of professional development programs. This study aims to determine whether the existing professional development initiatives for HODs in Kenya are sufficient to enhance their effectiveness in schools. The findings will contribute to the broader discourse on improving school leadership and instructional supervision through targeted professional development programs.

Key words: Professional Development, Role Performance, Supervision of Instructions

## Statement of the Problem

---

### Statement of the Problem

Effective supervision of instruction is a critical function of Heads of Departments (HODs) in ensuring quality teaching and learning in schools. As instructional leaders, HODs are responsible for monitoring lesson delivery, providing professional support to teachers, and ensuring adherence to curriculum standards. However, despite the crucial role they play, concerns have been raised about their effectiveness in instructional supervision due to gaps in professional development.

International studies indicate that professional development enhances HODs' instructional leadership skills, equipping them with strategies to improve teaching effectiveness and student outcomes. In countries such as the United States, China, and Tanzania, structured professional development programs have been recognized as key to strengthening the instructional supervision capabilities of HODs. However, in Kenya, there is limited empirical evidence on whether existing professional development programs adequately prepare HODs for effective supervision of instruction.

Given the increasing demands in education, including curriculum reforms and ICT integration in teaching, HODs require continuous professional development to enhance ICT integration in teaching and learning. This study seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of professional development programs for HODs in Kenya in ICT Integration on their Role Performance

### Background to the Study

In all educational institutions around the world, generally Heads of Departments (HODs) act as a link between the teachers and the head of institution in curriculum implementation and delivery of education services. As such, HODs play both horizontal and vertical roles and the quality of learning outcomes largely depends on the effectiveness of HODs (Lwin, 2022). In recent times there has been a growing scholarly interest in the role of HODs, their effectiveness and job performance in educational institutions. It is worth noting that HODs play a key role in schools and sometimes perform delegated administrative duties. According to Tebello and Ntjoetso (2021), HODs provide leadership that links the teachers

with the school principals. They play a key leadership role in the achievement of departmental targets.

In New Zealand, Post Primary Teacher Association (PPTA, 2019) findings revealed that HODs have a responsibility in leadership functions, which significantly impacts on students learning outcomes. The findings of the taskforce shows that the roles of HODs have expanded. Education reforms have put a lot of pressure on education managers which has made them to delegate some of their responsibilities to the HODs. As a result, the role of HODs in school leadership has become increasingly demanding (Wylie, 2013). This has greatly affected their role performance in schools. HODs are essential because of their role in curriculum supervision, resource management, leading in ICT integration and offering guidance and counseling in their department.

In USA, Strang (2021) established that HODs play important roles in curriculum implementation in schools. Some of the roles of HODs identified include; supervision of teaching, management of resources and providing leadership in the achievement of educational objectives. The researcher observed that to enhance role performance of HODs, their professional development is important. The researcher argued that the rapid development of new technologies has greatly changed educational needs and delivery of education services. These changes have been the drivers for professional development of HODs in an effort to bring them to speed on the current issues in education. Strang also argued that professional development of HODs was necessary to equip them with management and leadership skills required to effectively execute their mandate. According to Chen and Chan (2022), some of the roles of HODs in Chinese schools include; planning, management of resources, evaluation of learning progress and development of curriculum tools. The efficacy and caliber of teachers and HODs in China is significantly influenced by professional development. The researchers observed that professional development for HODs is essential in enhancing their skills to take on new tasks and bring forth new innovations that may boost student performance. In this country, HODs are regularly trained on various aspects in order to improve their skills to meet the changing education needs like the use of modern technologies in the classroom and evolving learning behaviour of the students.

In Tanzania, Raluswinga (2018) states that HODs play a key role in curriculum implementation in learning institutions. To enhance their role performance HODs undergo professional development to improve their management and leadership skills. The knowledge and skills gained enables them to supervise curriculum implementation and effectively play their leadership role to realize educational objectives. Malunda (2019) reported that HODs in secondary schools in Uganda are encouraged to pursue professional development in order to improve their management skills in their role performance. The

researcher argued that professional development improves supervision skills of HODs which enhances their effectiveness and role performance.

Majority of the scholarly studies related to HODs professional development conducted in Africa have observed that the quality of leadership in teaching remain relatively inadequate. This observation is a pointer into the need to conduct the current research on evaluation of HODs professional development program and its effectiveness on their roles. This will involve finding out whether professional development is adequate to enhance role performance of HODs in ICT integration in teaching and learning.

## **Literature Review**

### **Professional Development of Heads of Department in Integration of ICT in Teaching and Learning and their role Performance**

Several studies have explored professional development of HODs in integrating ICT into teaching and its impact on their performance across various countries. In a 2019 study conducted in Punjab, India, Gulzar and Muhammad investigated the influence of ICT on teachers' performance using a descriptive research design. Their sample comprised 102 HODs, and data was collected through questionnaires. Analyzing the data using percentages, means, and standard deviations, the research revealed a positive correlation between ICT integration and HOD performance. Another study done in China by Li and Wang (2020) investigated the use of technology in teaching. The study sample comprised of 500 HODs and teachers engaged through the use of questionnaires. The study revealed that technology was an important aspect in learning since it improved learning of the student. Even though this improved the experience of teachers there are still challenges that bar teachers and HODs from undergoing professional development in integration of ICT. This study was conducted in Makueni County to establish if this is the case in the Kenyan context.

A study done in Israel by Dorit (2018) investigated professional development in ICT among HODs and teachers to enhance the performance of their students. Data were gathered through questionnaires from 303 participants. The study adopted descriptive survey design and the findings revealed a positive impact of professional development on ICT on the performance of students. The study concluded that the role of ICT cannot be undermined since it has a positive impact on teaching and learning in schools. The findings of this study were important in contributing to the current study with an aim of filling the existing gap on scanty literature on Kenyan secondary schools.

A study done by Dongpin (2021) reviewed the application of ICT and professional development of teachers and HODs. The study used a sample of 85 articles selected between 2013-2019. The selected articles were empirically analyzed and the findings from the analysis indicated that teachers and HODs needed to undergo teacher professional development in ICT to enhance their skills and knowledge on ICT integration in teaching. The study focused on using video-based materials in learning and other technological applications that aid in learning. This review was important as it informed the current research to address professional development of HODs in secondary schools in Makueni County, Kenya.

Similarly, Blessing (2021) conducted a study in Anambra state, Nigeria, investigating the impact of ICT on teaching among HODs. Through interviews and questionnaires with a sample size of 213, their findings revealed unanimous agreement on the importance of ICT in teaching and its positive influence on student performance.

In another study, Dlamini (2018) explored the significance of professional development for HODs in integrating ICT into teaching and learning in South Africa. The study sample size was 986 and data were collected using structured questionnaires. The findings revealed better performance amongst the HODs who had undergone professional development in ICT. Their role in management and inducing knowledge to their departments had greatly improved after the training. The results demonstrate the importance of professional development of HODs in ICT integration on their role performance. However, the findings may not be generalized to the Kenyan schools hence the need for the current study to address the population gap.

In Tanzania, a study was done by Ngeze (2019) to investigate the influence of technology on the HODs and teachers. The study involved 134 respondents. The data collection was conducted using online surveys and analyzed using graphs, tables, percentages, means and standard deviation. The findings revealed that HODs who have undergone professional development tend to encourage teachers in their departments to adopt new teaching technologies. It was also found that the use of technology greatly improves the ability of learners in absorbing the knowledge and visualizing which leads to better performance. This study informed the current study in addressing the existing gap in professional development of HODs in ICT integration and role performance in Makueni County.

In Kenya, Cheruiyot and Kibet (2020) did a study to investigate the integration of ICT in teaching and supervision among HODs in Nandi County. The study adopted mixed method research design and data were collected using questionnaires for HODs and interviews for the principals. The sample for the study was 128 HODs and 23 principals selected through stratified sampling technique. The results revealed that HODs monitor and control their departments to ensure performance targets are achieved. The integration of ICT is

important in the execution of these important roles in various departments. The current research concentrated on effectiveness of professional development of HODs in ICT integration and the performance of their roles in ICT integration in secondary schools in Makueni County to enhance knowledge in this area.

## Findings and Discussions

The null hypothesis  $H_{01}$  There is no significant relationship between professional development of HODs in ICT integration in teaching and learning and role performance in secondary schools in Makueni County was tested.

The results of the Pearson correlation test are presented in Table 4.37.

**Table 4.37: Correlation Between ICT Integration in Teaching and Learning and Role Performance**

		Role Performance
ICT integration in teaching and learning	Pearson Correlation	.26**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.00
	N	320

Table 4.37 presents the findings, which show a positive and statistically significant correlation between role performance and the professional development of head teachers in the area of ICT integration in teaching and learning among HODs in secondary schools in Makueni County ( $r(320) = .26, p = .00$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative one adopted. The results imply that the professional development of HODs in ICT integration in teaching and learning positively influences their role performance.

To determine whether professional development of HODs in ICT integration in teaching and learning could be used to predict the role performance of HODs in secondary schools, regression analysis was carried out. The results are presented in Table 4.38.

**Table 4.38: Regression Analysis for PD of HODs in ICT Integration in Teaching and Learning and Role Performance**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.26 <sup>a</sup>	.07	.06	2.67

---

 a. Predictors: (Constant), ICT

The results in Table 4.38 shows a positive relationship between professional development in ICT integration in teaching and learning as the predictor variables and the role performance of HODs as the outcome variables,  $R = .26$ . The R square value shows that the ICT integration in teaching accounted for about 7% of the total variance in the role performance of HODs. This is indicative that professional development in ICT integration in teaching and learning can be used to predict role performance of HODs.

The researcher conducted ANOVA test to determine whether the predictive value of professional development in ICT integration in teaching and learning could be used to significantly predict role performance of HODs. The results are shown in Table 4.39.

**Table 4.39: ANOVA Test**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	160.63	1	160.63	22.47	.00 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	2273.32	318	7.15		
	Total	2433.95	319			

---

## a. Dependent Variable: RP

## b. Predictors: (Constant), ICT

Table 4.39 shows that the results reveal that the ICT integration in teaching can be used to significantly predict role performance of HODs, ( $F(1, 318) = 22.47, p < .05$ ). These findings confirm that ICT integration in teaching is a significant predictor of role performance of HODs.

Having established that PD in ICT integration in teaching and learning is a significant predictor of role performance among HODs, the researcher obtained the predictive values of professional development in ICT integration in teaching on role performance. The results are presented in Table 4.40.

**Table 4.40: Heads of Departments PD in ICT integration in teaching and their role performance**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	19.95	.31		64.23	.00
	ICT	.05	.01	.26	4.74	.00

a. Dependent Variable: RP

From Table 4.40, the ICT integration in teaching had a regression coefficient of  $\beta = .05$ ,  $p = .00$ .

The prediction equation for the Model 1 is:

$$\hat{Y} = 19.947 + 0.257X_1 + \hat{\epsilon}$$

Where  $\hat{Y}$  = Role Performance;  $X_1$  = PD in ICT integration in teaching and learning and  $\hat{\epsilon}$  = standard error. The results indicate that a unit change in ICT integration in teaching leads to 0.26 change in role performance of HODs. These findings show that the ICT integration in teaching can be used to predict role performance of HODs in secondary schools in Makueni County.

**Table 1. HODs professional development on their role performance in ICT integration**

		Role Performance
Pearson Correlation		.26**
ICT integration in teaching and learning	Sig. (2-tailed)	.00
N		320

In the above table the findings show a positive and statistically significant correlation between role performance and the professional development of head teachers in the area of ICT integration in teaching and learning among HODs in secondary schools in Makueni County ( $r(320) = .26$ ,  $p = .00$ ). The results imply that the professional development of HODs in ICT integration in teaching and learning positively influences their role performance.

## Recommendations



The aim of the research was to examine the effectiveness of professional development of HODs in their role of integration of ICT in instruction and their achievement in roles within the context of high school. The study found out that HODs together with the teachers needed to be equipped with ICT skills to enhance its integration in teaching. The study recommends that policy on Heads of Departments Professional Development should emphasize on ICT to ensure teachers integrate ICT.

To enhance HODs roles in ICT integration, professional development program should emphasize on preparation of digital professional documents and records, coordinating teaching methods and review meetings using ICT. This will go a long way to improve their role performance in ICT integration in teaching and learning for better performance in academics.

## References

- Blessing, A. (2021).** The role of ICT in teaching and student performance improvement among Heads of Departments in Nigerian secondary schools. *Nigerian Journal of Educational Technology*, 15(2), 78-95.
- Cheruiyot, P., & Kibet, J. (2020).** Integration of ICT in teaching and supervision among Heads of Departments in Nandi County, Kenya. *African Journal of Educational Studies*, 10(3), 45-60.
- Dlamini, T. (2018).** Professional development and ICT integration: The role of Heads of Departments in South African schools. *South African Journal of Education*, 38(4), 120-135.
- Dorit, B. (2018).** Impact of professional development in ICT on student performance in Israel. *International Journal of Education and Digital Learning*, 5(1), 99-112.
- Dongpin, Z. (2021).** A systematic review of professional development in ICT integration: Insights from 85 studies (2013-2019). *Journal of Digital Learning Research*, 12(2), 210-230.
- Gulzar, R., & Muhammad, A. (2019).** ICT integration and Heads of Departments' role performance: A case study in Punjab, India. *Asian Journal of Educational Technology*, 7(1), 35-50.
- Li, Y., & Wang, H. (2020).** Technology and student learning: Challenges and opportunities for professional development in China. *Chinese Journal of Educational Research*, 18(3), 112-130.
- Ngeze, L. (2019).** Professional development and ICT adoption among Heads of Departments in Tanzania's secondary schools. *East African Journal of Educational Leadership*, 9(2), 88-105