Positive Deviance Schools in Kenya

Implications for Policy & Practice, 2017
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Insights from 6 focal schools from on-going PD Study commissioned by Twaweza East Africa 2017
The story of the Glass half full ....
A bit of background ....
Scope, methodology & sample size

- Scoping phase
  - Desk analysis
  - Rapid mixed method data collection (14 schools)
- In-depth qualitative inquiry (6 schools)
  - Observations (class, playground, school, community)
  - Interviews (individual, groups)
  - Child friendly methods

- Total Sample: 1930 (F: 46%)
- PD Inquiry Sample: 1675 (F: 49%)
- Scoping Sample: 255 (F: 48%)
PD Criteria

What were the Intentions?

Did they depart from the Norms?

Were the resulting actions Honorable?
**PD practices categorized around themes**

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Practices consistent with existing policies, but not commonly implemented</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Well intended practices, results honorable but manipulates policies &amp; laws</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Practices widely accepted but against laws &amp; regulations, results likely dishonorable</td>
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The Teaching – Learning Environment …
Schools drew pupils from very humble socio-economic backgrounds.
Physical environment -- very “ordinary”
Yet KCPE results are way above the County averages
What makes these schools different?
An institution “Stands or falls by its Head” …
Sessional paper 14, 2012

- Committed – headship not just a job but vocation. Spent long hours, even weekends in school to make up for time lost in attending to competing priorities.

- Clear vision: Where wanted to go, and able to communicate it to school community, and them to act on it; focus on holistic development

- Involvement of all and positive participation integral to success of school.

- Friendly, empathetic, approachable to all; ambience warm & welcoming.

- Instructional leaders, leads by example, active as a classroom teacher.
● Team leaders, gave space to teachers to develop talents, take initiative. Delegation of responsibilities done consultatively.

● Perceived to be fair, impartial and transparent.

● Inclusive, policies and actions so no child left behind or excluded from school.

● Either innovative themselves and/or open to new ideas and innovations that could improve the quality of teaching and learning processes and outcomes.

● Realization that sustained good performance and discipline required positive motivation of teachers & learners, and that extensive punishments, esp. corporal punishments could be counterproductive.
So I pointed him [teacher] to go to head there because he was hardworking and very cooperative. And it is like a tradition that even when other teachers come here and even any teacher who is not performing you find them working hard because I try to mold them & guide & also because of the culture and tradition. Sometimes when they move out they say this is an academy.

Like right now they are five head teachers who were teachers here but when they leave they became head teachers. No deputy head teacher leaves here as a deputy but they get promoted and given a school. So it’s like now the office has recognized this school like a promoting school. (Interview, Head Teacher School #D)
Policies vs. Local Solutions
Theme I: Embedded in policy but uncommon in practice

2.13 (1) All primary schools shall be child-friendly – Policy Framework for Education 2012

---Teaching and Learning Using Locally Available Resources (TALULAR) - Indicator #7/Inclusive Child Friendly Classroom

---Objectives of Primary Ed: 4.7 (ii) & (iii)
• Enjoy learning & develop desire to continue learning
• Develop ability for creative thinking …

Example: School #C – The magic box
2.13 (1) All primary schools shall be child-friendly – Policy Framework for Education 2012

--- Provision of nutrition services (e.g. school feeding –CFS Indicator #3/Health-Nutrition Promoting School)

--- Encourage introduction of sustainable schools meals programs in high/medium potential areas with support of the communities.– NESP 2014

Examples: School #A, #C, #E
Practice 1
Extended school hours – ALL SCHOOLS

Practice 2
Boarding for upper primary (School #D, E, F)

Practice 3
ECD teacher teaching primary classes (School #F)
What do the policies say?

Extended hours: School hours regulated to ensure balance between academic instruction, co-curricular activities, and time at home. (Education Act; Supplementary Regulations)

Boarding: At primary level, day public schooling is encouraged though provision is made for the establishment of community supported low cost boarding in ASALs (NESP 2014)

ECD Teacher: ECD teachers are under county government while primary teachers are the responsibility of national government. (Education Act 2013)
No pupil will be subjected to torture & cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, in any manner, whether physical or psychological. – Basic Education Act 36 (1)

School reinforces policy on prevention of violence & corporal punishment through positive disciplining. – CFS Indicator 5/2 (Safe and Protective Schools)
## Perspectives on corporal punishment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perspective 1</th>
<th>Perspective 2</th>
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<td>Discouraged by Head teacher but still practiced in school</td>
<td>Officially not allowed but happens.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creates awareness among parents on negative effects.</td>
<td>Parents called to discuss problem with child, sometimes administers corporal punishment to children in front school management.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pupil’s view: “Caned fairly” --- not in anger, reason explained</td>
<td>Pupil’s view: “That is not beating … it is correcting”</td>
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## Perspectives on corporal punishment (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perspective 3</th>
<th>Perspective 4</th>
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<tr>
<td>Head admits that it is used</td>
<td>Teacher: Avoid caning.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pupils view: Beaten sometimes, not frequently.</td>
<td>Allow parents to decide on punishment, which may</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>include beating</td>
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Opportunity Costs
Extended Hours
Poor Learning Environment at home
Hunger
Competency Gaps
Teacher Gaps
School Meals
Peer Tutors
Boarding
ECD Teachers
Relevance of PD Practices to Reality on the Ground
Lessons Learnt

- Determination
- Delegation
- Discipline
In conclusion, questions to ask ourselves

**Question 1**
A few public schools have successfully implemented selected policies. What actions can help to expand the pool of such schools?

**Question 2**
Defiance/manipulation of government rules and regulations are prompted by widespread perception that the playing field is not level for children from poor and marginalized homes. Should the rules & regulations be reviewed to make them relevant or should efforts be put into changing the perceptions?

**Question 3**
What is the significance of stakeholder perceptions beating can be “fair” and necessary?
Thank You