



Principals' Post-Observation Conference and Its Influence on Quality of Education among Public Secondary Schools in Machakos County, Kenya

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Abstract

Supervision of instruction by the school principal is a critical practice that enhances teaching and learning for the benefit of the students. Of the supervision practices, post-observation conference is deemed most critical in helping the teacher to understand teaching areas that need to be improved upon. However, studies focusing on student outcomes have hardly paid attention to post-observation conference as a practice for enhancing instruction and quality education as reflected in learner transition and performance. The purpose of this study was therefore to investigate the relationship between principals' classroom observation practices and students' performance in public secondary schools in Machakos County. Instructional Leadership Theory pioneered by Hallinger and which views school principals as leaders who are able to define a clear direction for the school and motivate others to join in the achievement of school mission was used to guide the study. Descriptive survey design was adopted under positivism paradigm, while simple random sampling and stratified sampling were used to select target population of 8 sub county Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (QUASOs) and 370 principals of public secondary schools within Machakos County, Kenya. Yamane's (1967) formula was used to compute a sample size of 192 principals from whom data was collected using questionnaires. All the QUASOs were included for interviewing. Both descriptive (mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (regression analysis) were used in the analysis of quantitative data. Qualitative data was analysed thematically and through narration. The study established that that principals' post-observation conference practices influence quality of education in public secondary schools in the study area ((M=2.936; SD=0.581). The principals' post-observation conference causes .939 significant unit changes in quality of education ($\beta=.939$; $p=.000$), contributing 74.3% ($R^2=.743$) of variations in quality of education. Adequate time for post-observation conference should be allocated so that observed teachers can sufficiently explain the challenges they encounter during instruction.

Keywords: Post-Observation Feedback, Post-Observation Conference, Quality of Education, School Principals

Introduction

A broad consensus exists among educational researchers that the school principal's classroom observation practices are critical in enhancing student learning (Glickman et al, 2024; Gordon & McGhee, 2019). According to Kolako (2024), the attainment of efficient and successful teaching and learning in schools depends on having adequate supervision. The school principal's supervisory practices such as classroom observation have been viewed as a tool to gain in-depth insights into specific teaching practices which in turn promotes teacher professional learning, thereby improving the quality of teaching (Gordon, Paufler & Derrington, 2025). Among the classroom observation practices, Congcong and Caingcoy (2020) consider post-observation conference as the most critical supervisory practice by the school principal. Post-observation conference is a meeting between an observer the principal, administrator, mentor, or peer) and a teacher following a classroom observation (Chaula, Lawrent & Iramba, 2022). Such meetings or conferences are considered to be of paramount importance since they provide the teacher with objective feedback on the current state of their teaching by diagnosing challenges faced and proposing workable remedies (Bencherab & Al Maskari, 2021).

Post-observation conference has been widely documented across the globe as a strategy for providing instant to teachers concerning their effectiveness during lesson instruction. In the United States of America (USA), Pacer and Mullen (2025) revealed that K-5 Principals view post observation conference as benefiting teacher professional development in diverse ways. Another study in the USA by Lavigne, Allen, Shao and Feliz (2023) indicated that teachers were likely or very likely to change their practice based on the feedback they received from post-observation conference. In Indonesia, Rawinda (2024) explored the form and delivery of post-classroom observation feedback given to primary school teachers and found positive outcomes on features of the lessons being observed while also identifying areas for development. A study in the Philippine by Congcong and Caingcoy (2020) also explored the feedback mechanisms employed by school heads in conveying performance evaluation results to teachers and revealed that conversational one-on-one was the most desired approach. Chaula, Lawrent and Iramba (2024) also used a survey data from 94 participants in Tanzania to examine the influence of school heads' post-observation practices on teachers' professional competency development in public secondary schools. They revealed that school heads' post-observation supervision practices positively influenced teachers' professional competency development. In Kenya, Rentilei, Momanyi and Wambiya (2022) analysed how the Principals' instructional supervisory practices influence students' academic achievement and found some of the principals visited classrooms for observations and gave feedback, monitored students' progress to a greater extent while others did not. However, it is evident from the discussed studies that how post-observation conference relates with quality

education remains a continuing debate across different contexts.

Quality of education is envisaged as a learning process that provides all learners with capabilities they require to become economically productive, develop sustainable livelihoods, and enhance individual well-being (Premalatha, 2022). Papanthymou and Darra (2023) associate quality of education with the improvement of the learning process resulting from the implementation of appropriate teaching practices and methods, design of curriculum that meets students' needs, and improvement of services provided by schools. According to Opesemowo, Iwintolu, and Afolabi (2023), quality is an evaluation of the educational process that includes how learning is structured and what is taught, ultimately determining the educational outcomes reached. In order to promote high-quality education, emphasis is placed on teacher preparation through programs including teacher in-service training and seminars that enhance the teaching-learning process (Batra, Pillai & Kaim, 2023). Academic performance in test scores as well as examinations and transition to next levels in education are some of the dimensions relied upon to explain whether a learners has received quality education (Bukhari et al, 2024; Djouhari et al, 2024; Mackatiani et al, 2023). While teaching and learning resources, teaching methods, and school infrastructure have been associated with positive student outcomes (Rodríguez et al, 2022; Mackatiani et al, 2023), how post-observation conference relates with quality of education has so far remained underexplored.

Extant literature document that analysis of information recorded from observed lessons, teacher feedback, and proposal of approaches for filling gaps identified in teaching practices form key discussion areas of post-observation conference (Congcong & Caingcoy, 2020; Fare, 2021; Kolako, 2024; Yee et al, 2019). Analysis of classroom observation information such as lesson plans, student work, and observer notes is crucial for improving teaching practices and enhancing student learning outcomes (Fare, 2021). Similarly, teacher feedback provide opportunities for teachers to talk about themselves and their teaching, enabling them to understand why their classroom instruction appears to be successful (or not) in different contexts (Yasar & Gurbuz, 2023). Additionally, proposing approaches for filling gaps identified in teaching practices as revealed during classroom observation by the school principal provokes teacher reflection and ignites actions aimed at enhancing teaching proficiency and growth, or professional development (Donaghue & Heron, 2024).

Based on the discussions in the foregoing paragraph, the Instructional Leadership theory advanced by Halinger and Murphy in 1985 stands as a suitable lens for understanding how post-observation conference between the school principal and the teacher ignites actions aimed at improving teaching effectiveness and learner performance (He, Guo & Abazie, 2024). The theory identifies three core roles of school principals that impact student outcomes as defining the school's mission, managing the instructional program, and promoting a positive school learning climate (Yaacob & Ishak, 2023).

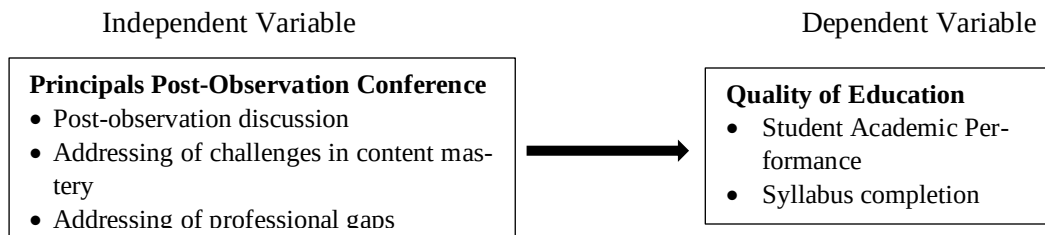
Nevertheless, focus on how these post-observation conference activities translate to quality of education as reflected in students' academic performance, transition to higher learning levels or institutions appears to be scanty. Such intuition is vital especially in contexts that have continued to witness unsatisfactory student outcomes among public secondary schools in Kenya such as Machakos County.

Kenya, like a number of countries across the globe, is implementing 100% transition policy (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology - MOEST, 2015) which articulates that every learner in primary schools advance to secondary education (Wanyonyi, Ogutu & Ouda, 2024). However, a number of recent studies have reported low transition rates across the country (Ndunge, Ogola & Otieno, 2022; Owuor, Ali, Machyo & Nganga, 2025; Wanyonyi et al, 2024). In Machakos County, the transition rate to secondary education remains lower than the national rate at 75% against 80% (Ndunge et al, 2022). In addition, academic performance in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary education has been on the decline from 4.79 to 3.72 between 2015 and 2022 (Njoroge, Mulwa & Kiweu, 2023). While socio-economic challenges, education cost, and school resources have been mentioned as determinants of student learning outcomes in secondary education, factors that determine transition to university or tertiary education have not been accorded adequate attention in Kenya. Moreover, information related to the influence of post-observation conference between the school principal and teachers on quality of education as reflected in academic achievement and transition among learners in secondary schools in Machakos County remains scanty. The current study therefore sought to answer the following research question:

1. What is the relationship between principals' post observation conference and quality of education in public secondary schools in Machakos County, Kenya?
Through inferential statistics, the study tested the hypothesis that:
1. There is no significant relationship between principals' post observation conference and quality of education in public secondary schools in Machakos County, Kenya

Conceptual Framework

This study conceptualizes that quality of education in public secondary schools in Machakos County is dependent upon principals' post observation conference with teachers. The independent variable of the study is therefore the principals' post observation conference denoted by post-observation discussion, addressing of challenges in content mastery, and addressing of professional gaps, among others. The dependent variable is quality of education represented by student academic performance and teacher syllabus completion (see Figure 1).



Theoretical Framework

This research was guided by Instructional Leadership (IL) Theory pioneered by Hallinger (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). According to the theory, defining the school's mission, overseeing the curriculum, and fostering a supportive learning environment are the three fundamental aspects of school leadership that have an impact on student outcomes (Yaacob & Ishak, 2023). Hoy (2012) argues that IL Theory focuses on the organization as much as individuals in the school environment by promoting positive learning conditions for all students, helping teachers and learners in meeting curriculum standards, and supporting teacher development, all the while being mindful of the culture and context of schools to match improvement strategies with changing context over time. The theory therefore assists principals in identifying a school mission, empowering and inspiring teachers, and innovating school classroom-based methods to enhance teaching and learning for teachers and students in the new millennium (Shava, 2022).

In the education landscape, many researchers have utilised Instructional Leaders Theory to provide an understanding of the pivotal role played by the school principals. Derasit and Hamzah (2022) used the theory to explore relationship between the instructional leadership and quality effective teaching practices in Malaysia. In Indonesia, Prestiadi et al (2025) used the theory to analyse principal's instructional leadership. On their part, Yaacob and Ishak (2023) used worldwide literature review to compare different instructional leadership models and their effects on educational outcomes. Using a sample of 340 principals in elementary school and high school in five randomly selected counties in Norway, Skaalvik (2020) also deployed Instructional Leadership Theory to explore the relationship between principal self-efficacy for instructional leadership, emotional exhaustion, engagement, and motivation among teachers. In Nigeria, Bada, Ariffin and Nordin (2020) adopted the theory to investigate teachers' perception of principals' instructional leadership practices. In Kenya, the theory has been used by Kiruma (2025) to investigate the influence of school leaders' instructional practices on students' academic achievement in public schools. Despite large volume of literature utilising this theory in the education landscape, studies focusing on the relationship between principals' post observation conference and quality of education using this theory appear to be scanty.

Instruction Leadership Theory was chosen for the current research because, understandably, the school Principal often plays a pivotal role as an instructional leader aside from managing school administration matters (Abdullah, Hamzah & Nor 2022). While curriculum and other aspects of the educational system are constantly changing, school administrators should always be prepared with creative solutions to deal with these changes (Yaacob & Ishak, 2023). According to Prestiadi, Nurabadi, and Bafadal (2025), instructional leaders are those who are prepared to adapt by influencing and demonstrating the degree of change in a variety of areas, particularly the curriculum in schools. In this study, the IL Theory underscores the need for the school principal to sit together with the class teacher in a post-observation conference to analyse information related to the instructor's teaching practices to enable formulation of the best approaches for instruction, a critical role of the school. Similarly, the theory aligns well with the Kenyan context where principals are expected to supervise curriculum implementation.

Research Methodology

Research Design

This study used descriptive survey design with mixed methods approaches which allowed collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data (Ahmed, Pereira & Kimberly, 2024). Provides a comprehensive understanding by validating findings across both data types (Memarian & Doleck, 2025). Descriptive survey was deemed suitable for this study, given the fact that the study sought to offer a description of matters regarding post-observation conference practices as they relate with quality of education as reflected through student performance and transition. In addition, positivism research paradigm was employed to help in gaining the objective measurement and description of the study phenomena without manipulation.

Study Location

The study was conducted in Machakos County. Machakos County is one of the 47 counties of Kenya. Its capital is Machakos. Its largest town is Machakos, the country's first administrative headquarters. The county borders Nairobi and Kiambu counties to the west, Embu to the north, Kitui to the east, Makueni to the south, Kajiado to the southwest, and Muranga and Kirinyaga to the northwest. The county lies Latitude: $-1^{\circ} 29' 59.99''$ S Longitude: $37^{\circ} 14' 60.00''$ E.

The study location was chosen because recently, low transition rates have been reported across the country (Ndunge et al, 2022; Owuor et al, 2025; Wanyonyi et al, 2024). The transition rate in the study location to secondary education remains lower than the national rate at 75% against 80% (Ndunge et al, 2022). In addition, academic performance

in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary education (KCSE) has been on the decline from 4.79 to 3.72 between 2015 and 2022 (Njoroge, Mulwa & Kiweu, 2023). A deeper understanding on the relationship between principals' post-classroom observation conference with teachers and quality of education inherent in such dwindling education outcomes was therefore necessary in the study location.

Study Population and Sampling Strategy

The study targeted nine Sub-County Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (QUASOs) and the 378 principals of all Public Secondary Schools in Machakos County. The QUASOs were selected because, being officers responsible for ensuring quality and standards in secondary education, were considered to have informed opinion with regards to school administrative factors affecting education outcomes in the area. On the other hand, principals were selected because they are the instructional leaders in care of supervising instructions in the school for purposes of enhancing quality of pedagogy to students by the educators.

Yamane's (1967) formula was used in this study to determine the sample size for principals. Yamane's formula is a simple technique for calculating sample sizes in survey research, especially in social science studies where the population size is known or easily determinable, according to Mohanasundaram and Harsha (2024). When researchers wish to collect a representative sample from a big population, they frequently employ it. In his 1967 book "Statistics: An Introductory Analysis," S. Yamane proposed the following formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where; n is the sample size; N is the target population; e is the margin of error. Using the formula, the sample size was therefore 192

Stratified proportional method was used to sample the schools (represented by the principals) as national, Extra County, county, and sub county schools based on their numbers (Table 1). Simple random technique was used to select the principals from whom data was collected. All the QUAOs were included in the study for interviewing.

Table 1: Distribution of sample size

School Category	Population of Principals	Sample size
National Schools	2	1
Extra County Schools	20	10
County Schools	54	28
Sub County Schools	294	153
Total	370	192

Instrumentation, Validity and Reliability

The researchers administered semi-structured questionnaires consisting of both closed and open-ended questions to collect data from the sampled Principals. Interviews were also done with the QUASOs.

To attain the validity of the research instruments, the questionnaire items were scrutinised by educational administration experts during their construction. Questions were discussed and further adjustments made according to corrections recommended by lecturers from the school of Educational Administration, University of Nairobi. These experts assessed the extent to which the questions contained in the instruments were relevant to the study objective and recommended appropriate adjustments which were fully adopted.

On the other hand, reliability of the instruments was enhanced by subjecting the tools to pre-testing during a pilot study involving randomly selected 37 principals of public secondary schools in the County. This was performed to test whether the questions are clear and easily understood. Participants in the pre-testing exercise were thereafter excluded from the main data collection process. Test-retest method which involve administering the questionnaire twice on the same sampled respondents in same environments during pilot study, was used to collect data used for computing reliability with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 25. An overall reliability coefficient of 0.83 was obtained. The study accepted the instrument as reliable since it surpassed the reliability threshold set by Nunnally (1978).

Data Analysis and Presentation

Quantitative data obtained from closed ended questionnaire was analysed via descriptive and inferential statistics with the aid of SPSS version 25. Descriptive statistics generated mean (M) and standard deviation (SD) which was essential for interpretation of quantitative results, while inferential statistics (regression analysis) was used to compare the relationship between post-observation meeting and quality of education. Regression model tested was:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + e$$

Where:

Y = Quality of education (student academic performance and teacher syllabus completion)

β_1 = Coefficients for post-observation conference

X_1 = Principals classroom post-observation conference

β_0 = Constant representing the fixed quality of education

e = Error term: factors affecting quality of education beyond the study

Similarly, thematic analysis was used to analyse qualitative data obtained from open ended questions in the questionnaire, and interviews with the QUASOs.

Ethical Considerations

The researchers obtained clearance to conduct the study from the University of Nairobi, the County Director of Education, Machakos, and the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). Similarly, a consent form was designed and signed by the sampled respondents to signify their voluntary agreement to participate in the study. Confidentiality was ensured by requesting the study participants not to include their identities in the research instruments. Additionally, data obtained from the field were strictly kept in the custody of the corresponding author, and only results of data analysis and the research report were shared with the University of Nairobi.

Results

The researchers distributed 192 questionnaires to the respondents of which 178 were retrieved, having fully been filled up. This represented 92.7% questionnaire return rate. On the other hand, 16 interviews were conducted out of the expected 21 with selected school principals and the Sub County Quality Assurance and Standards Officers, representing 76.2%. The researchers considered these response rates (for the questionnaire and interviews) to be adequate for performing both descriptive and statistical analyses, as well as deducing conclusions in a research study. This is based on observations of experts who have argued that low response rate is an indication of a poorly conducted survey (Chelghoum, 2024; Mursa, Patterson, McErlean, & Halcomb, 2025; Shiyab, Ferguson, Rolls & Halcomb, 2023). In addition, response rate that exceed 60% easily makes it possible for conclusion to be made from data analysis results (Borgholthaus et al, 2025).

Principals' Post-Observation Conference and Quality of Education

The study sought to establish the relationship between principals' post observation

conference and quality of education. In this regard, the respondents were asked to state their agreement with statements related to how principals' post observation conference practices affect quality of education as: 1 = strongly disagree (mean of 1 to 1.4); 2 = disagree (mean of 1.5 to 2.4); 3 = agree (mean of 2.5 to 3.4), and 4 = strongly agree (mean of 3.5 to 4). The findings are illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2: Principals' post observation conference practices

Post Observation Conference Practices	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Adequate time is allocated for meaningful post-observation discussions.	178	3.039	0.614
Post observation conference allows educators to highlight challenges in teaching skills.	178	3.124	0.588
Post observation conference allows educators to air challenges in content mastery.	178	3.028	0.624
I follow up on post-observation feedback to ensure implementation	178	3.039	0.525
Addressing challenges identified during conferences enables quality teaching	178	2.219	0.613
I am able to address professional gaps identified during the conference	178	2.961	0.525
Quality education can be achieved when professional gaps identified during the conference are addressed	178	2.927	0.582
My concerns during post observation conferences are constructive and actionable	178	3.011	0.552
I use post observation conferences to identify teachers' training needs	178	3.073	0.602
Overall Mean	178	2.936	0.581

Table 2 illustrates that the sampled respondents agreed ($M=2.936$; $SD=0.581$) that principal's post observation conference practices influence quality of education in public secondary schools in the study area. The respondents specifically agreed that post observation conference allows teachers to highlight challenges in teaching skills ($M=3.124$; $SD=0.588$); that post observation conferences are used to identify teachers' training needs ($M=3.073$; $SD=0.602$); that post-observation feedback are followed up to ensure implementation ($M=3.039$; $SD=0.525$) and that post observation conference allows educators to air challenges in content mastery (Mean=3.028; $SD=0.624$), among others. However, the respondents disagreed that addressing challenges identified during post-observation conferences guarantees quality teaching ($M=2.219$; $SD=0.613$).

The interviewees noted that they have been organizing workshops and termly

meetings with principals to stress on importance of post observation conference practices in secondary schools. However, the interviewees also noted that time allocated for post observation conference has been a challenge among most of the principals in public secondary schools. In support, one of the interviewees said:

My office strongly encourages principals' post-observation conference as part of efforts for enhancing instructional supervision and henceforth quality of education. My office continuously highlights the necessity of regular post classroom observation conference since it allows constructive feedback to the teachers and highlights teacher's strengths, areas of improvement, and actions that need to be taken to improve quality of teaching. However, time allocated to such exercises often antagonizes hours for class lessons hence they are normally inadequately conducted (Sub-County QUASO 4).

It is prudent to deduce from the statement attributed to Sub-County QUASO 4 that post-classroom observation conferences between the school principal and teachers are often derailed because of adequate time for the exercise. In another interview, timeliness of feedback generated by post-classroom observation conference was praised for fostering prompt action in areas that need improvement in instruction. An interviewee stated:

There is an often positive outcome in post-classroom observation conference since feedback is timely and teachers promptly initiate measures for improving on areas considered as weak since such areas will be checked in subsequent observations, where change or improvement will be noted by the observer (Sub-County QUASO 1).

The study further sought to establish the relationship between the principals' post observation conference and quality of education through Pearson's moment correlation analysis. Table 3 presents results for correlations analysis.

Table 3: Correlations for post observation conference and quality of education

		Principals' Post Observation Conference	Quality of Education
Principals' post observation conference	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	178	
Quality of education	Pearson Correlation	.862**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	178	178

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 illustrates that principals' post observation conference has a significant and positive relationship with quality of education in public secondary schools in Machakos County, Kenya ($r=0.862$; $p=0.000$). This implies that principals' post observation conference is a significant factor for enhancing quality of education in public secondary

schools.

The study further conducted a regression analysis to ascertain the type and direction of the relationship between principals' post observation conference, and quality of education among the public secondary schools. In order to determine how effectively the model ($Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + e$) could predict the impact of post-observation conference on quality of education among public secondary schools was first conducted. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used for this. Table 4 presents the ANOVA results.

Table 4: Analysis of variance (ANOVA) results

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	12.460	1	12.460	509.799	.000 ^b
	Residual	4.302	176	.024		
	Total	16.762	177			

a. Dependent Variable: Quality of Education

b. Predictors: (Constant), principals' post-observation conference

Table 4 illustrates that principals' post-observation conference is a significant predictor of quality of education among the sampled public secondary schools in the study area $\{F_{(1, 176)} = 509.799, P < 0.05\}$. The significance value of F in this case is 0.000, which is less than 0.05 ($P < 0.05$). The hypothesis that: *There is no significant relationship between principals' post observation conference and quality of education in public secondary schools in Machakos County, Kenya*, is therefore rejected. The study henceforth maintains that there is significant relationship between principals' post observation conference and quality of education in public secondary schools in Machakos County, Kenya. The relative importance of the coefficient of principals' post-observation conference in predicting quality of education is presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Regression analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error		
1	.862 ^a	.743	.742	.15634		
		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.574	.190		8.286	.000
	Principals' post observation conference	.939	.065	.862	14.446	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Quality of Education

b. Predictors: (Constant), Principals' Post Observation Conference

Table 5 indicates that the unstandardized beta for principals' post-observation conference is .939, with a p value of .000. This implies that principals' post-observation conference predicts .939 significant unit changes in quality of education among the public secondary schools. The regression model ($Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + e$), with the constant (β_0) being 1.574, the coefficient can be plugged into the formula to predict quality of education among the public secondary schools as:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + e,$$

$$Y = 1.574 + (.939) X_1 + e$$

With R^2 of .743, it can be deduced that 74.3% of variations in quality of education in public secondary schools in Machakos County are attributed to practices related to principals' post observation conference. The remaining 26.7% variation in quality of education in the study area could be as a result of other factors beyond the scope of the current study.

Discussion

This study has illustrated that principal's post observation practices influence quality of education in public secondary schools in the study area. This implies that the discussion and feedback activities that the principals conduct with the educators are important in fostering quality of education for students. This is the essence of Instructional Leadership (IL) Theory proposed by Hallinger (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). The IL Theory sees the school principal as a leader responsible for empowering and inspiring teachers during post-observation conference, and innovating methods to enhance teaching and learning for them and consequently improving quality of education (Shava, 2022). As highlighted in the findings demonstrating that post observation conference between the school leader (principal) and the teacher allows instructors to highlight challenges in

teaching skills and enables identification of their professional gaps, IL Theory becomes an appropriate lens through which gaps in the teaching profession as well as challenges faced during instruction can be discussed to enable formulation of the best approaches for instruction, a critical step for enhancing quality of education in terms of improved student performance (Hoy, 2012). Theoretically, findings in the current research concur with previous research in other contexts which also revealed the importance of school leadership towards effective teaching by instructors. For instance, Derasit and Hamzah (2022) revealed the significant role of instructional leadership by heads of subjects towards effective teaching practices in Malaysia. In Nigeria, Bada et al (2020) demonstrated the importance of principals' instructional leadership practices towards teacher satisfaction and student performance. In Kenya, Kiruma (2025) illustrated how school leaders' instructional practices influence students' academic achievement. It should therefore be noted that the discussion and feedback activities that the principals conduct with the educators during post-observation conference are better viewed in the light of Instructional Leadership Theory espoused by Halinger and Murphy (1985).

The findings of the study additionally demonstrate that classroom post observation feedback are followed up to ensure implementation and allows educators to air challenges faced in content mastery, among others. In addition, prompt feedback from post-classroom observation conference often lead to rapid actions on areas that need improvement in instruction, ultimately improving teaching effectiveness and student outcomes, as demonstrated in Table 2. These revelations concur with findings by Donaghue (2020) who established that post-observation feedback sessions provide opportunities for teachers to talk about themselves and their teaching. These conferences enable the teacher who has been observed to have a better understanding of why their teaching appears to be successful (or not) in different contexts (Yasar & Gurbuz, 2023). Similarly, a previous study by Yee et al (2019) also indicated that contextually-specific post-observation feedback leads to more observed changes and improvement across multiple teaching domains.

Results also illustrate that principals' post-observation conference predicts .939 ($\beta = .939$) significant unit changes in quality of education among the public secondary schools (Table 5). Further, it can be deduced that 74.3% ($R^2 = .743$) of variations in quality of education in public secondary schools in Machakos County are attributed to practices related to principals' post observation conference. These high percentages of the contribution of post-observation practices on education outcomes are never unique. Past studies such as Lavigne et al (2023) revealed 100 percent of teachers who had participated in a USA survey indicated they were likely or very likely to change their practices based on the feedback they received from post-observation conference. Past studies in Malaysia (Rawinda, 2024), and Philippine (Congcong & Caingcoy, 2020) have also revealed that one-on-one feedback mechanisms with teachers are quite significant in identifying instructional areas to be strengthened among educators. In another previous study, Chaula

et al (2022) showed that teachers positively perceived school heads' post - observation practices as effective in strengthening their teaching practice among Tanzanian schools. A local study in Kenya by Rentilei et al (2022) also revealed that the visitations that principals normally make in classrooms and feedback they provide to teachers are significant in nurturing teacher-teaching effectiveness. It should therefore be deduced that principals' post-observation conferences assist teachers to identify their strength and weakness in regards to their teaching, thereby giving them the opportunity to improve and consequently enhance quality of pedagogy.

Conclusion

The study concludes that principals' post-observation conference practices have significant relationships with quality of education in public secondary schools. Although often derailed due to lack of adequate time for the exercise, such post-observation conferences enable teachers to understand areas where they need to improve for their teaching activities to be effective, consequently resulting into quality of student learning. The study also concludes that post-observation conferences allow teachers to highlight challenges they face in pedagogy, thereby enabling the principals to set up suitable environments where teachers can maximize their potential, subsequently leading to quality education and improved learning outcomes.

Recommendations

It is recommended that principals should allocate adequate time for post-observation conference so that the observed teachers can sufficiently explain the challenges they encounter during instruction. Similarly, feedback from post-observation conferences should inform interventions aimed at improving quality teaching in public secondary schools so that learning outcomes can be enhanced.

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