Community Capacity Development In Universities: Empowering Communities Through Education Management Programmes In Strathmore University (A Pilot Study)

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ABSTRACT

This research examined the issue of community capacity development in a university. The main way communities were empowered was through the education management programmes offered at Strathmore University in Nairobi, Kenya. The research is among the first to examine the issue of community capacity development through university programmes. The research used Chaskin's (2001) framework to examine which issues of community capacity development emerged through the different action research projects students implemented within their communities. Content and map analysis was the analytical technique which was adopted. The outcome of the research was that there were some categories and relations similar to Chaskin's framework and others were different given the nature of students' action research projects. The study provides insights into how universities in developing countries can develop communities' capacities through higher education. A framework for community capacity development in the field of higher education management is proposed. The main categories were: fundamental characteristics of community capacity, social agencies, functions of community capacity, enablers, challenges, strategies, and outcomes.

Keywords: Community; Community Capacity Development; University; Action Research; Developing Countries; Education Management; Strathmore University

INTRODUCTION

The concept of community capacity development is relatively new, especially in the field of higher education management. Community capacity development (CCD) is a process of developing the abilities of individuals, groups and institutions to tackle their developmental challenges and move toward their vision by managing resources efficiently and implementing actions effectively. CCD is a complex and dynamic human process that involves changes in behaviour and attitude, while building fruitful relations between members within and outside the community, always focussing on those capacities that contribute to increasing productivity and quality of life (Dhamotharan, 2009, p. 28).

Various authors like Goodman, Dhamotharan, and Chaskin have tried to define and characterize the concept of community capacity. Community capacity is invested in the elements of community (individuals, leaders, and networks) and is characterized by a sense of community, levels of commitment as well as a community's collective ability to set and achieve objectives, recognize and access resources for productive use (Stenning & Miyoshi, 2008, p. 69). Community capacity represents more than a sense of collective competence; it reflects an active investment by community members in the welfare of the community and its residents. Without active investment, the community may have the competence to solve problems but lack motivation or will to do so.

Community capacity should be considered as a generalized group orientation rather than a belief relative to specific situations or tasks (Bowen, Martin, Mancini, & Nelson, 2000, p. 9).

THE CONCEPT OF COMMUNITY CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

As a notion, community capacity is invested in the elements of community (individuals, leaders, and networks) and is characterized by a sense of community, levels of commitment as well as the community's collective ability to set and achieve objectives, recognize and access resources for productive use (Stenning & Miyoshi, 2008, p. 69).

Chaskin (2001, pp. 295-300) defined community capacity in terms of six dimensions: Dimension one (1) were the fundamental characteristics of community capacity which included a sense of community, level of commitment among community members, the ability to solve problems and access to resources; Dimension two (2) were the levels of social agency through individuals, organisations and networks; Dimension three (3) were the different functions of community capacity which detailed the intent of engaging particular capacities given in Dimension (1) through particular levels of social agency to perform specialized functions like building a local capacity for planning and governance, informing, organizing, and mobilizing residents toward collective action. These functions lead to two outcomes, an increase in sustainable overall community capacity and the achievement of specific outcomes like better services and greater influence on public policy decision making. Dimension four (4) included strategies for building community capacity through informal social processes like voluntary self-help networks and organized community based organisations; Dimension five (5) described the conditioning influences that facilitated or inhibited community capacity and efforts to build it like residential stability that promoted or increased a sense of local cohesion and the existence of informal mechanisms of social control; Dimension six (6) were the outcomes that might be sought in any community building effort. Chaskin (2001) used community capacity in the analysis of Neighbourhood Family Initiatives (NFIs). He used informant interviews, some audio-taped and then analyzed this around a core set of themes. These themes were fundamental characteristics of community capacity; levels of social agency; strategies around which community building efforts seek to build such capacity, functions of community capacity, conditioning influences, and community level outcomes (Chaskin, 2001, p. 295).

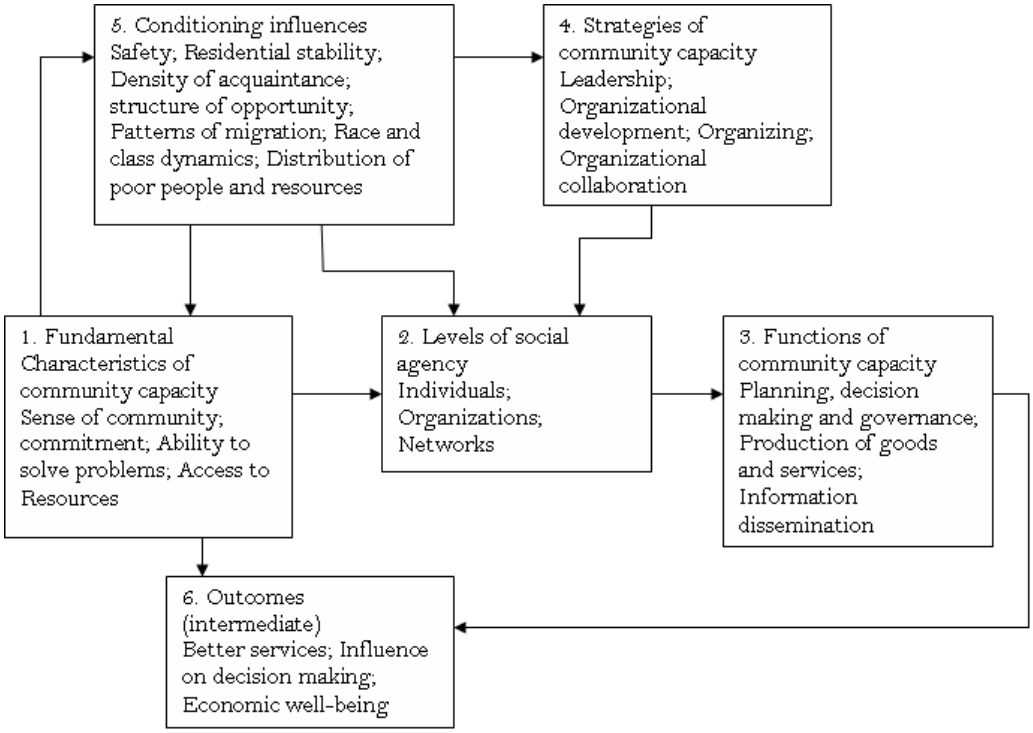

Figure 1: Chaskin's Framework of Community Capacity Development
Source: Salanguit (2011) and Chaskin (2001, p. 296)

Community capacity development is an integrated term consisting of a combination of two words, development and community capacity. A harmonized definition of community capacity development is the process of expanding real freedoms through the interaction of human capital, organizational resources, and social capital existing within a community and that can be leveraged to solve the collective problems to improve and maintain the well-being of a given community.

COMMUNITY CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN EDUCATION

Harris, Jones, and Coutts (2010) explains, "The concept of CCD in schools implied that schools promote collaboration, empowerment and inclusion. 'Individuals need to feel confident in their own capacity, in the capacity of their colleagues and in the capacity of the school to promote professional development.' It therefore necessitates paying careful attention to how collaborative processes in schools are fostered and developed." Smyth (2009) views community capacity from the perspective of community organizing. For her, community capacity is concerned with "democratization of both governance structures and curriculum for schools." The elements which comprise community organizing include: leadership development, community power, social capital, school climate, public accountability, and pushing forward school-community connections.

ROLE OF UNIVERSITIES

Universities are types of institutions under the broad field of higher education management. A university is a community of scholars and masters, not excluding other stakeholders, who work together to achieve certain goals (research, community service, teaching and learning). University education must carry out a higher mission of providing an integral training for the complete human being (Campos & Sotelo, 2001, p. 183).

Some scholars have tried to describe universities; Huisman (2000, p. 2) & Trow (1995) explain that universities differ in terms of their operation, sustainability, mission, and environment; Vorley & Nelles (2008, p. 2) define the functions of a university as teaching and learning, research, and a third mission, which is to realize their broader socio-economic potential through knowledge exchange and partnerships; Martin and Etzkowitz (2000, p. 13) sound a similar voice by explicating that a university, in addition to the two traditional roles of teaching and research, has a third mission - contributing to the economy. We can therefore state, using the functionary approach, that universities are characterised by three essential features: teaching, research, and community service (serving the socio-economic needs). Research is therefore a substantial feature of a university, especially those which regard themselves as research universities.

ROLE OF UNIVERSITIES IN COMMUNITY CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

A university acts as the zenith of learning and is charged with the responsibility of teaching, learning, research, and community service (Kitawi, 2009). Ahmadu Bello gave a similar remark at the opening ceremony of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria in 1962, when he said, "A university must be both national and international, and the first duty of every university, is the search for and the spread of knowledge as well as the established universal truths. It must also serve the needs of the nation in terms of manpower production and the promotion and preservation of local culture and traditional local institutions."

"In terms of the historical emergence and development of universities, widespread university education in Africa is essentially a postcolonial phenomenon. Excluding North Africa with its different history, and South Africa with its special circumstances of both history and resources, only eighteen out of the forty-eight countries of sub-Saharan Africa had universities or university colleges before 1960. With the approach of political independence, or soon thereafter, many African countries regarded the establishment of local universities as a major part of the postcolonial national development project. The new universities were expected to help new nations build up their capacity to develop and manage their resources, alleviate poverty of the majority of their people, and close the gap between them and the developed world. In this sense, the establishment of universities was one element in the various efforts of nation building" (Sawyerr, 2002).

"Universities in Africa were conceived with the aim of being community-oriented in the sense of being relevant to national needs. In the 1960s, it was fairly self-evident that such relevance was achieved by providing high-level manpower to staff, expanding national institutions including the universities themselves, and by conducting research on problems of demonstrable national importance. However, as Court (1977) reiterates, now that the commanding heights of administration and economy are in national hands, the criteria of community relevance have changed from the first order quantitative priority of filling positions to the qualitative emphasis on whether the institution is providing skills, knowledge, understanding and commitments which are most relevant for advancing the welfare of the mass of the population" (Court, 1977, p. 46; Wandira, 1981, p. 257). "International and local programmes in universities serving community development needs have been dubbed as exemplars of community service partnerships. These cases produce knowledge similar to Mode 2 through the integration of teaching, research and community service. They thus provide models for actualizing the social purpose of higher education and for counterbalancing the trend towards the entrepreneurial university" (Subotzky, 1999, pp. 403-404).

Reiterating an earlier point, the importance of the university in newly-independent African countries was underscored by the now-famous 'Accra declaration' that all universities must be 'developmental universities' (Cloete, Bailey, & Maassen, 2011, pp. 1-2). Development depends critically on being able to put to use for development, tasks resources, and capabilities that are hidden, scattered, or underused (Arocena & Sutz, 2006a, p. 46). Universities need to interact with communities for development. Arocena and Sutz (2006b, pp. 6-8) conceptualize an idea of a developmental university. This university is typified by: i) generalization of lifelong education, (ii) research that backs human development, particularly social policies, and iii) cooperation with different collective actors, in order to increase the beneficial use of knowledge (i.e. how universities co-operate with other organisms to set a wide and diversified system of tertiary education that offers learning possibilities to the majority of the population). The focus of this research is within the context of a developing country, Kenya. The research focuses on the effort of one university, Strathmore University, in contributing to community capacity development.

STRATHMORE UNIVERSITY'S APPROACH TO COMMUNITY CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Strathmore University is a fairly young university. It was started in 1961 as an advanced [A] level college. It was the first multi-racial college open to Africans, Asians, and Europeans. It was awarded a Letter of Interim Authority in August, 2002 and a full University Charter in April, 2008. Its mission is to be a centre of academic and professional excellence that provides all-round education in an atmosphere of freedom and responsibility. The vision is the advancement of education through teaching, scholarship, and service to society by providing an all-round education through teaching, scholarship, and service to society in an atmosphere of freedom and responsibility, creating a culture of continuous improvement, fostering high moral standards, and developing a spirit of service and respect for others. The topic of community capacity development aligns itself to the three aspects of providing education through service to society by creating a culture of continuous improvement, developing a spirit of service, and respect for others.

The university has a number of schools, faculties, institutes, and centres. The emphasis of this research, from the perspective of community capacity development, is in the function of a particular unit within Strathmore University, the Centre of Education. The Centre has been running a number of short (Teacher's Enhancement Programme-TEP) and long courses. These courses were specifically designed to address the problems facing the education sector in terms of education management. The courses were offered from the perspective of community capacity development. The direction and method of addressing some of the problems facing Kenya's education sector was to re-empower the teacher and consequently empower communities where schools are located. Devaluation of the teachers' role and consequently their mostly negative impact on the community can be traced to the period which followed the attempted political coup of 1982. Many who became teachers after 1983 did so because they were not able to get admission to other university courses. The university cut-off points for teachers at the secondary level were the lowest (C to C+) to gain admission to any university. The in-service primary teacher education for P1 level teachers (abolished in 2012) was a D+ in the secondary examinations or a minimum of 30 points in the national primary examinations for P3 teachers (MOEST, 2001, p. 23). This is even lower than the minimum academic qualifications required in other professions.

The emergence of Teachers' Enhancement Programmes (TEP) in Strathmore University was during a period when there was negative discourse on situation of teachers in Kenya. There was an ideological mismatch between what is taught in schools and education relevance to society (Bogonko, 1992, p. 117; King, 2007, p. 360; Woolman, 2001, p. 41). In terms of equity, there was a lack of regional equity and capacity to access 'good schools' (Nkinyangi, 1982, p. 117). In terms of public perception, Kenyan teachers were not respected, recognized, and valued as much as the first years after independence. As a result, many teachers had a negative attitude towards the teaching profession.

The first Teacher Enhancement Program was offered in 2002. Its broad objectives were to give the Kenyan teacher back his or her sense of identity as a contributor to the moral fibre of the nation and to give principals and head-teachers the necessary managerial and professional skills to manage schools' resources. The first TEP involved two short courses (normally 1-2 weeks) which were designed as rapid response programs. The first short course, Teacher Self Image (TSI) was offered to classroom teachers and was to enable them manage the whole class-room experience. The second short course was the Art of Leadership (AOL) offered to principals, head-teachers, school managers, and school owners. The aim of AOL was to equip these individuals with skills to manage educational institutions. A total of approximately one thousand two hundred (1,200) teachers were trained in the TSI program and one thousand four hundred (1,400) school managers passed through the AOL program.

In 2004, there was an evaluative follow-up that was conducted on the short courses, and as a consequence, the University established two diploma programs for primary and secondary school teachers. The diploma programs were the Post Experience Diploma in Education Management (PEDEM) for primary teachers and the Post Graduate Diploma in Education Management (PGDEM) for secondary teachers. It later (2009) developed a Master of Science in Education Management. These three courses take more time. The diplomas normally take one year while the Master degree, which is school-based, takes 2½ years. The diploma and the master programmes have within their structures work-based assignments (WBA). These assignments employ, in some cases, action research and engage students in developing solutions for specific community issues. The WBA take a community capacity development perspective. The characteristic features of the education programmes were: to develop skills in all areas of educational leadership and management in order to make the experience of younger men and women coming into the teaching field and their communities more satisfying, to equip teachers with leadership and management skills, and to empower students to meet the dynamic challenges of change in the education sector, with an emphasis on valuing the human person.

The WBAs of interest are those which employ the action research methodology. Action research is applicable in problematic situations or issues that the participants - who may include teachers, students, managers, and administrators, or even parents (in communities) - consider worth looking into more deeply and systematically. Problematic does not mean that the teacher is an incompetent teacher. The central idea of the action part in action research is to intervene in a deliberate way in the problematic situation in order to bring about changes and, even better, improvements in practice (Burns, 2010, p. 2). Some action research projects take a mutual collaborative or practical-deliberative-interpretivist perspective because it is fluid and the aim of the research is to help practitioner teachers to interpret their practice. This type of action research foregrounds the practitioner and her or his way of knowing and understanding (Norton, 2009, p. 53). Action research avails the education specialist with tools to transform and bring about improvements in practice within their communities.

WBAs focus on learning as social participation. Wenger (1998, p. 4) explains that "participation refers not just to local events of engagement in certain activities with certain people, but to a more encompassing process of being active participants in the practices of social communities and constructing identities in relation to these communities." WBAs are practical assignments geared towards positive change in school systems and their communities in line with the Centre of Education's mission. They are carried out by teachers and head-teachers within the context of their schools. The University's CoE lecturers keep in touch with them through regular supervision and encouragement. The theme of WBAs ranges from physical infrastructure, personal development, student development, parent-teacher relation to overall institutional development. In some cases, the neediest schools have been able to approach various funding agencies in order to provide the necessary monetary backing to bring positive change in their schools. In whatever school and with whatever amount of funding, the initiative of the teacher or head-teacher had been vital if any positive change was to take place. Srinivas and Sutz (2008, p. 131)

make a similar observation: "in 'underdevelopment,' or the conditions of so-called developing countries pursuing their own form of industrialization, there is another logic related to innovation: rather than starting with available inputs, innovation often starts facing the lack, weakness, or inadequacy of inputs of various kinds."

The work-based assignments combine theory and practice in education, especially through action research. It is through these projects that students are able to influence and reform their communities. A number of scholars have brought out the need of merging theory with practice. Raelin (2007, p. 504) and Aczel (2002, p. 8) explains: "Through explication of tacit knowledge and exploration of the craftsmanship of masters in the field, we may discern how learning may occur from our practice improvisations…Learning often arises from an interactive contention among a community of inquirers. Indeed, students as co-inquirers with their teachers have the capacity to construct knowledge if given both the learning resources and encouragement to do so…an epistemology that transforms learning from the acquisition of objective rules of wisdom to one that appreciates the wisdom of learning in the midst of action itself." Action is part of the process of the research, as participants apply in an experiment what they have learned through the needs assessment/data gathering portion of the research. The purpose of action is to attempt to change their situation (Curran, 2002, p. 43) in communities. There is need to compare and contrast the issues of community capacity development emerging in universities (specifically Strathmore University) with other relevant theories in the field, especially Chaskin's (2001) framework which has been used as the benchmark of many community capacity development endeavours.

METHODOLOGY

This research article presents the first step (a pilot) in the analysis of community capacity development within the context of TEPs at Strathmore University. The research article gave particular emphasis on qualitative research design, since action research projects, which is the methodology adopted in WBAs, are mainly qualitative.

The research first examined which were the existing frameworks of community capacity development. From the different frameworks available, Chaskin's (2001) framework was used since it provided a fundamental basis for other community capacity development research studies done, for example Miyoshi and Stenning (2008b), Salanguit (2011), and Banyai (2010). The advantage of Chaskin's (2001) framework; i.e. Figure 1, approach was that it provided a broad conceptual framework which can be modified according to varying circumstances or contexts. The framework was used to develop a contextualized framework for community capacity development which emerged from eight pilot WBAs. The contextualized framework was developed through content analysis of descriptive data in these projects. "The aim of content analysis is to attain a condensed and broad description of the phenomenon, and the outcome of the analysis is concepts or categories describing the phenomenon. Usually the purpose of those concepts or categories is to build up a model, conceptual system, conceptual map or categories" (Elo & Kyngas, 2007, p. 108).

This research used a deductive approach of content analysis because it moved from the specific notion of community capacity to general aspects of community capacity evident in action research projects. The deductive approach involves developing a categorization matrix and to code data according to identified categories. In this scenario since there will be other aspects of community capacity which may not have been identified by Chaskin (2001) - Figure 1, an unconstrained matrix was used to enable the development of new categories. The software which was used to enable categorization was NVIVO. Content analysis involves the following steps: decision to use the method, determination of what material should be included in content analysis, selection of units of analysis, development of coding categories, coding material, and analysing and interpreting results. The research will use semantical content analysis because it will be concerned with particular categories and the frequencies of these categories similar to what Janis (1943/1965) performed in his research reliability and validity of findings.

After the categories were formed, the researcher proceeded to conduct a map analysis of the pilot projects. Map analysis compares texts in terms of both concepts/categories and relationships between them (Carley, 1993, p. 91). "The basic idea was to take a list of concepts and a set of texts and then to determine for each text whether these concepts occur in the texts as well as inter-relationships between those concepts that do occur." The general steps that were taken in the research were: to first code the information according to categories, then the researcher analysed and interpreted the results according to categories. Afterwards, as mentioned earlier, there was the

production of a mental map of categories and how these categories inter-relate within the identified pilot research projects. The researcher thereafter compared the emergent model with Chaskin's (2001) framework [Figure 1].

OUTCOMES OF THE PILOT ANALYSIS

The sequence of presentation of the outcomes is as follows: there was a random identification of eight WBAs which employ action research; an examination of the background characteristics of each candidate developing a WBA, the characteristics of their respective education institutions and characteristics specific to action research projects; an investigation into which categories of community capacity development are present in action research projects, using Chaskin's framework as a guide in the process; coding of information according to categories and sub-categories; a determination of relations between different categories; creation of a map of categories and their respective relations; a conclusion of similarities and differences between Chaskin's framework and the mental map of categories.

Background Characteristics

Student Characteristics

Some characteristics were directly related to a student, a school, or a project. Student's characteristics were: student's academic qualification, position in a school (job category), and student's origin (whether a student resides and was originally from the local community). In academic qualification, the eight candidates (100%) had a diploma as the highest academic level attained. 25% (2 cases) were principals in schools and 62.5% (5 cases) were teachers. 12.5% (1 case) did not indicate his position in the institution. It was evident that 25% (2 cases) were working within their own local communities, 37.5% (3 cases) did not originate from the local community where they were working and it was unclear for 37.5% (3 cases).

Education Institution Characteristics

Under this section, it was important to determine whether a school was located in an urban, peri-urban, or rural area. 75% (6) were from an urban area, 12.5% (1) from peri-urban setting, and 12.5% (1) from a rural area.

Project Characteristics

Project characteristic refers to the scope of an action research project; i.e. whether it refers to individual teacher research, collaborative action research, school wide action research, or district action wide research (Ferrance, 2000, p. 6). 87.5% (7) were individual teacher action research while 12.5% (1) was a school wide action research.

What are the Categories of Community Capacity Development?

After identifying student's, institution and action research project characteristics, the next phase was to examine action research data in terms of emergent community capacity development categories. The main (emergent) categories identified were: fundamental characteristics of community capacity, type of problem addressed by an action research project (later grouped under functions of community capacity), strategies employed by individuals undertaking an action research project, challenges experienced by pupils and teachers, social agencies, outcomes of action research projects, and conditioning influences.

In identifying and labelling categories, the researcher compared categories identified by Chaskin (2001) [Figure 1] vis-à-vis emergent categories. Categories which had the same descriptions were labelled in the same way. Categories which had the same names were: fundamental characteristics of community capacity, outcomes, strategies, and social agencies. Other categories were: challenges, context, problem, and bio-data.

What were the Sub-Categories Identified?

After identifying the different categories, the next stage was to identify the possible sub-categories and frequencies of sub-categories. In this step, the total frequencies for a sub-specific category (e.g. teachers) cannot exceed the maximum frequency of eight (8) - the sample used. At the same time, especially in cases where there is more than one sub-category within a category, total frequencies (for all sub-categories within this specific category) may be higher than the number of cases (the total number of WBA sampled). For instance, all eight projects may indicate that teachers were involved in each project, and at the same time there may be one project which presents participation of church groups, government, and families as other social agencies. In this specific case, the total observed frequency will be eleven (eight plus one occurrence for each of the other three sub-categories). Given the aforementioned explanation, it is more meaningful to use frequencies other than absolute percentages since the total (sub-category) frequency for each aspect of community capacity development is not fixed Frequencies are given in brackets ( ).

The category of social agencies had the following sub-categories: teachers (8), church groups (1), families (1), and community and government (1). Teachers were social agencies who directly or indirectly developed solutions to problems in all pilot research projects. Church groups were involved in one case, families in another case, and government and communities were involved in one action research project respectively.

Types of problems addressed presented the following sub-categories: difficulties in languages (2), environmental pollution (2), lack of physical infrastructure in schools (2), students' poor performance in subjects (2), lack of teacher motivation (2), inadequate staff welfare facilities (1), lack of clear job description for teachers (1), lack of commitment from parents (1), students' lack of values (1), inadequate social amenities (1), and lack of team spirit in schools (1).

There were a number of strategies employed to resolve problems. The strategies were: active class participation (2), inter-class or group discussions (2), giving writing and speech exercises (3), preparation of lesson plans (2), use of teaching aids (2), inclusion of extra assessment exercises (1), facilitating set-up of water reservoir facilities (1), creation of team spirit (1), formation of committees (1), and provision of social facilities, e.g. latrines (1).

The research questions identified in action research projects were supposed to resolve specific problems. The specific problems were addressed through activities referred to as strategies. Strategies later produced specific outcomes classified as either intended or unintended.

The above mentioned strategies were grouped into four broad sub-categories: subject and curriculum (pedagogical) strategies, staff-motivation strategies, parent-teacher involvement strategies, and strategies formulated to provide social amenities.

Outcomes identified were creation of value based education, provision of extra language, and literacy materials (3), creation of team spirit (3), improvements in subject performance (1), commitment from teachers and students (1), extension of kitchen and washing areas (1), building of extra eating areas (1), setting up water reservoir facilities (1), building washrooms (1), provision of extra computing facilities (1), and taking extra care of flora and fauna (1). The type of outcome identified was intermediate outcomes [changes of target groups].

Intermediate outcomes had two levels: intended and unintended outcomes. Intended outcomes were final consequences which were foreseen while unintended outcomes were unforeseen consequences. An example of an action research project which reported both intended and unintended outcomes was: "There was a remarkable improvement in English performance (intended outcome), and at the same time there was improvement in other subjects (unintended outcome). This is proof that English is important in other subjects."

Challenges are difficulties experienced when undertaking action research projects. The challenges identified were: students' challenges, project challenges, and environmental challenges. Students' challenges were those problems which came from the secondary school or primary school students; e.g. low self esteem of students

(1) and truancy (1). They do not necessarily emerge because a principal or teacher has decided to undertake an action research project. A project challenge is a difficulty that can be traced to an action research project and which would not appear if a student did not undertake an action research project, for example lack of support from other teachers (2) to support a colleague to complete a project (2) or a critical friend not being available to critique reflections of action research projects (1). Environmental challenges are problems which emerge due to the context (place), either bad weather conditions (1), or clanism (environment) (1). Some challenges may constrain the successful fulfilment of a project, for instance low self esteem may imply that a teacher has to spend extra time and effort to encourage students. Enablers are those circumstances that make it easier to develop aspects of community capacity development.

An example of a challenge that emanated from the environment was when 'clanism' became a big challenge in one school. In this specific school, the new chairman did not belong to the same clan as the previous chairman. This made some students transfer to another school. Harsh weather conditions like drought also affected the economic situation of communities around some schools.

Some project challenges were lack of cooperation from teachers and/or parents, and in some cases, teachers ignored their critical function as role models. In few cases (1 project) students became pregnant and could not continue with their education or some students intentionally missed classes. Low self-esteem was exhibited in one case which meant that it affected the teacher's motivation to complete the action research project. In some cases, due to specific challenges like bad-weather conditions or truancy, social agents came together to address the problems. This may imply there was a sense of commitment (fundamental characteristic), cohesiveness or trust, which acted as a catalyst to resolve problems and at the same time sustained this resolve. A spirit of cohesiveness or working together is therefore an enabler to address problems.

Relations between Different Aspects of Community Capacity

Nine (9) different relations were identified between the various aspects of community capacity development. Some relations were identified as causal one way relations, while others were identified as associative relations.

Causal-One Way Relations

Causal-one way relations are uni-directional relations between certain aspects of community capacity. These relations were between: fundamental characteristics and social agencies (a), fundamental characteristics and enablers (b), enablers and functions of community capacity (c), social agencies and strategies (g), strategies and outcomes (h), and fundamental characteristics and outcomes (i).

Relation between Fundamental Characteristics of Community Capacity and Social Agencies (a)

Fundamental characteristics of community capacity were influenced by different social agencies. Social agencies which had an effect on characteristics of community capacity were families, church groups, parents, and schools. In one scenario, commitment and access to resources was demonstrated when parents raised some amount of money to fund transportation of a water tank from the Ministry of Water to their school. In this case, the fundamental characteristics was ability to solve the problem of lack of water since there were community members who considered themselves as critical stakeholders (e.g. parents and schools) and access to resources since the same stakeholders had financial resources which they were willing to share (transfer) with the school. In another action research project, some families decided to solve the problem of lack of adequate physical infrastructure through raising funds to complete a single room teacher's house (commitment and ability to solve problems). A church group also voluntarily gave its premises to be used as an early childhood development classroom until additional resources were acquired to construct classrooms.

Relation between Fundamental Characteristics of Community Capacity and Enablers (b)

One principal cited the urgent need to mobilize community efforts as part of his project due to drought that had negatively affected a school's community. The principal was from the local community and hence it was easier

to get cooperation from parents and community. A sense of common identity, from a shared community history, acted as an enabler to work together. The same principal had cordial relations with the Ministry of Water and thus was able to get a water tank easily. This was evidence of the principal's commitment and ability to resolve problems. The friendly relation between the Ministry and principal was an enabler to resolve the drought situation and acquire resources (joint effort). Hence fundamental characteristics were linked to enablers, which in this case were shared community history, cohesiveness, ease of access to resources, and cordial relations.

Relation between Functions of Community Capacity and Enablers (c)

Functions of community capacity were expressed through research problems. In one school located in Nyanza province, a principal was concerned with helping her students to speak and write in English ["how do I enable students in my school to understand, speak and write English fluently?"]. In this school, the principal set-up a regulation in the school which emphasized that communication within the school compound was to be in English. The school's regulation is an enabler to address her problem. Teachers in the school also agreed to work together to effect the policy (consensus-another enabler). Hence, the language problem was not addressed only by the English teacher, but also by other teachers. In another situation, a policy framework (enabler) which was created to encourage enrolment of pupils into primary schools, the Free Primary Education (FPE) Policy, was not being implemented according to plan ("my school did not receive the first disbursement of FPE funds"), and hence the problem which one student was trying to address; i.e. improving the poor condition of his school, was being made worse.

Relation between Outcomes and Fundamental Characteristics of Community Capacity (i)

Some outcomes further strengthened fundamental aspects of community capacity like development of community values. Community values were transmitted through English literacy exercises given by teachers to students.

Some teachers forged stronger bonds among themselves and were committed to resolve specific pedagogical and staff motivation issues [ability to solve problems], for instance when a principal noted that one intended effect of the WBA was that "it provided an opportunity to reflect on staff motivation as a way to create a winning team and solve future conflicts." The outcomes were both intended and unintended.

Unintended outcomes were students' improved performance in other subjects and more commitment from the government. In another situation, the Kenyan Government, through the Kenya Education Sector Support Programme (KESSP) approved the disbursement of extra funds to set up water reservoir facilities. The school was therefore able to access extra financial resources, which was an addition to what it normally receives from the government. Access to financial resources is an aspect of fundamental characteristics of community capacity. In terms of improved performance in other subjects, a teacher whose focus was to improve performance in English discovered that her students also performed better in English and other related subjects like social studies.

Relation between Social Agencies and Strategies (g)

Social agencies were critical in the development of specific strategies. The government worked with one school with the assistance of parents to set-up a water reservoir facility. In this scenario, the principal, who was the critical agent in getting support from various parties, identified what parents and the Ministry should do in order to secure the water facility. In other instances, school teachers developed specific pedagogical strategies to address deficiencies in literacy, numeracy skills, and learning needs, for example a teacher mentioned, "I involved a teacher who has abilities in handling students with special needs to identify and help the ones with special learning needs."

Relation between Strategies and Outcomes (g)

Intended and unintended outcomes were linked to specific strategies. An outcome of improved performance in Kiswahili (which is a national language) was linked to change from teacher centred teaching to student centred teaching. In this instance, the teacher explained, "I told my pupils stories and encouraged them to tell

their own stories in Kiswahili. I also bought Kiswahili magazines which were used in specific exercises like cutting out letters, shapes, and words to create a Kiswahili puzzle." The outcome of improved physical facilities was realized through specific strategies that encouraged the repair and maintenance of existing structures and building of new structures. A principal whose WBA was concerned with improving physical facilities mentioned, "I had the male and female washrooms painted. I had also wall tiles fitted and expanded the male urinal." In this case the strategy was to get resources to improve physical facilities.

ASSOCIATIVE RELATIONS

Associative relations are bi-directional relations; i.e. they influence each other. Some of the associative relations identified were between challenges and functions of community capacity (d), challenges and social agencies (e), and social agencies and functions of community capacity (f).

Relation between Functions of Community Capacity and Challenges (d)

Project challenges were directly related to research problems. In one action research project where a teacher was concerned with improving performance in English (which was her research problem), she realized that some of her colleagues did not appreciate and misjudged her concern ("some staff members were not supportive as they viewed it as a way of seeking attention from the administration"). Their lack of cooperation sustained the continuation of the research problem. She also identified other personal factors which were limiting (constraining) her, for instance not having enough time to spend with her students since her young children demanded more of her time and attention at home. Project challenges were therefore both indirect and direct in relation to the problem in class. Indirect challenges were those issues she was experiencing at home and may have an impact on the fulfilment of class project objectives. In the project, the student was not explicit how her motherly duties influenced her in her role as a teacher. Direct challenges were those that could be seen in the school and classroom environment, in the same example the direct challenge was lack of cooperation from teachers. In this situation direct project challenges may have been made worse by indirect challenges. There was a situation where the type of problem selected created its own unique challenge. In a project which focussed on developing a performance appraisal system, the individuals concerned divided themselves into two camps; one camp was loyal to the former head-teacher and the other to a former deputy head-teacher. The lack of unity was a limitation towards the realization of the student's goal. If the student had not developed the action research project, such a split may not have been so evident or strong.

Relation between Social Agencies and Challenges (e)

Some social agencies provided challenges for both the students and the project. The Government of Kenya for instance, through the Free Primary Education programme, forced schools to admit more students than it can accommodate. This had a detrimental effect of high teacher to pupil ratios, which meant that many pupils who had reading problems could not be helped. This consequently led to low self esteem of pupils and lack of confidence. Some community practices like encouraging students to speak only in (tribal) mother tongue in rural areas meant that pupils were not able to read and write easily using the two instructional languages (English and Swahili). Consequently performance in examinable subjects was poor. There was an instance where an environmental challenge affected the involvement of social agents. One principal mentioned that due to drought, which was not expected, the community was forced to depend on well-wishers. This affected the capacity of some parents to provide funds to construct classrooms and build a water storage facility. Another principal whose school was located in a slum area mentioned "because the school was located in a slum area, the infrastructure was not developed and the accessible road was loose surface, with an open sewer that discharged into classrooms and dormitories. This was a health hazard…Many students who were admitted, transferred to other schools. Many teachers attributed low performance to high turn-over due to transfers. Low performance consequently affected teachers' promotion which is normally pegged on performance."

Relation between Functions of Community Capacity and Social Agencies (f)

Teachers and principals, who are social agents, were the main agents in implementing and evaluating action research projects. Due to the nature of such projects, they normally originate from issues and concerns which

individuals face within their own contexts. Practitioners investigate and evaluate their work (Mcniff & Whitehead, 2006, p. 7). This means that they decide which problems they are to resolve and how to resolve it. It was realized that in some cases, other social agents were the cause of problems, for instance families who refused to be involved in resolving students' conflicts, communities that fostered retrogressive practices like female genital mutilation (FGM) and encouraging boys to attend schools, while on the other hand within the same families, preventing girls from attending schools.

The government had a causative relation to problems especially when linked with the Free Primary Education Programme (FPE). The programme brought with it specific challenges like congestion in classrooms and lack of instructional materials. When teachers and principals were determined to address some problems, some were resolved and some remained unresolved. An example was when one principal (social agent) resolved to use local chiefs (social agent) to make sure girls go to school (type of problem), especially in situations where the parents (social agents) were not willing to do so. In this case the directional relation was from social agents to type of problem. The attendance in this school increased. In the aforementioned case, there was need to involve the government official in addressing the problem. In terms of outcome reported by the student, the student did not give the actual (absolute) change in student attendance. In a different action research project which was concerned with improving performance in English, the teacher mentioned that she experienced problem of negative responses from few parents. In addition, her classroom was used as a church over the weekend. Church (social agent) meetings held in her school interfered with teaching aids displayed on the walls. This made it more difficult to attain her objective (problem). In this case the social agent, instead helping to address the problem, did not make it easy for her to resolve the type of problem.

The map in the next page presents the different categories and types of relationships that emerged from analyzing the eight pilot projects.

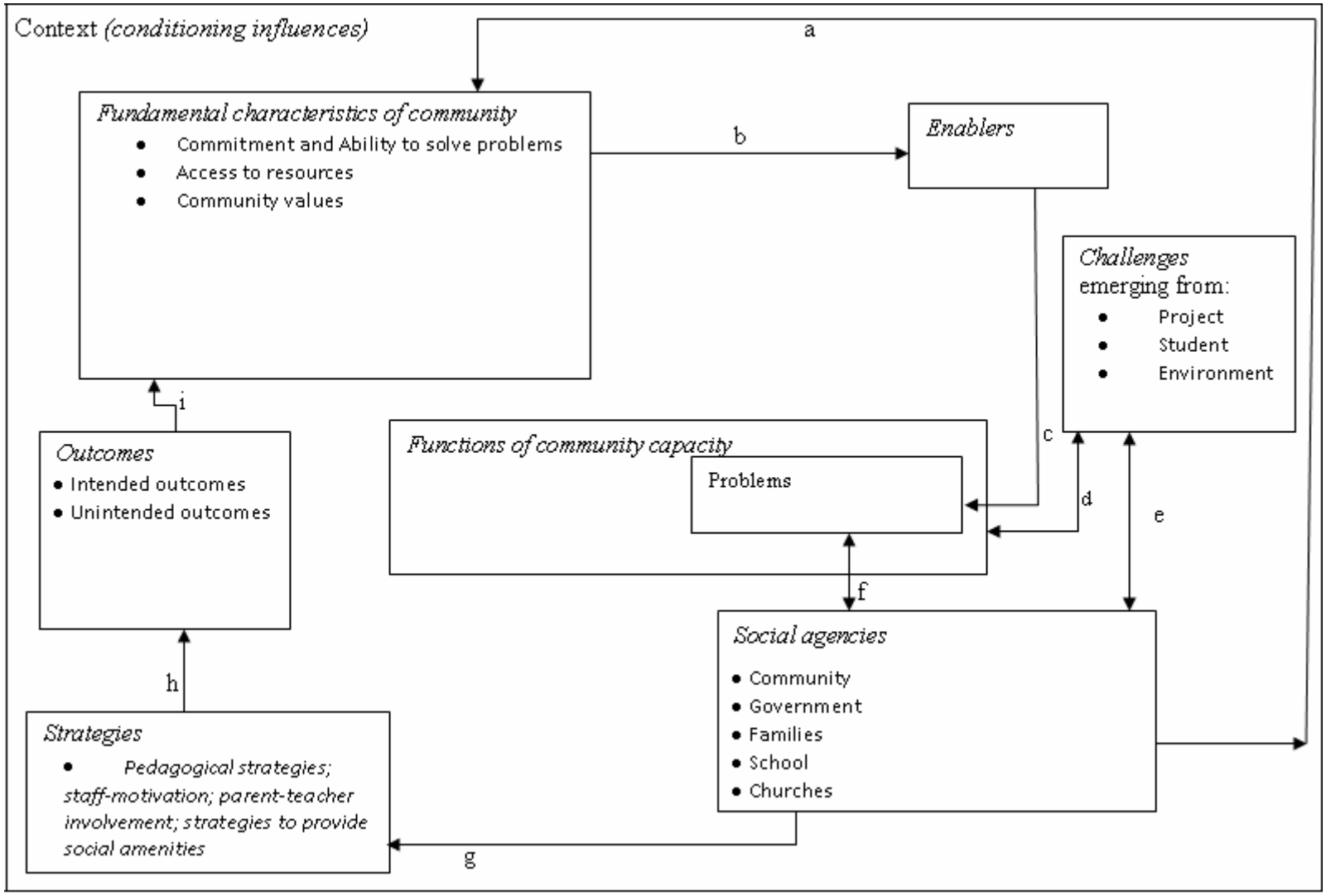

Figure 2: Map of Categories and Types of Relationships of Eight Pilot Cases

Explanations of the Map

Fundamental Characteristics of Community Capacity

Fundamental characteristics can be viewed at three levels: fundamental characteristics arising from community capacity (aspect 1), fundamental characteristics emerging from individual capacity (aspect 2), and fundamental characteristics emanating from other agencies external to the community (aspect 3). Chaskin (2001) included sense of community, commitment, ability to solve problems, and access to resources as fundamental characteristics of community capacity (aspect 1). In order to enable clear comparisons with Chaskin's framework, this section will focus on fundamental characteristics arising from community capacity. In making such comparisons, it is important to note that it is not easy to separate a teacher's or principal's capacity from his/her community since the teacher is an essential part of the community. The examples given in the next paragraph will not therefore separate individual from community's capacity.

Fundamental characteristics of community capacity were: i) access to community resources provided in setting up of physical infrastructure ["I convinced parents to contribute to complete the single room teacher's house. I then decided to personally reside in the school so as to be an example to other teachers - though the place is lonely"]. Access to community resources may be linked to the principals seniority in the school (Berry, 1989; Stets & Cast, 2007); ii) community commitment shown by social agencies working together to provide student and staff welfare facilities, for instance when the Ministry of Water contributed a water tank without availing transportation of the tank, parents of children in the school came together and contributed funds to hire a lorry. Increased sense of commitment by parents meant that the principal's ability to solve the problem was improved. The level of commitment demonstrated that different entities were willing to take responsibility for what happened in the community (Chaskin, 2001); iii) a specific community value like team-work was created. A principal mentioned, "The study gave me the opportunity to reflect on staff motivation as a bridge towards creating a winning team in the school." A similar aspect of sense of community was discovered by Chaskin (1999, p. 5) when he discovered that the neighbourhood communities were reflecting on their values, norms, and needs.

Functions of Community Capacity

Chaskin (1999, p. 9) mentions that this aspect refers to capacity for what? These are the reasons for engaging communities. Capacity for what, in the case of WBAs, refers to what different students were undertaking in their projects, either at the classroom level or school level. These were the problems they were trying to address to bring about change and/or improve practice. Examples include: improve English and Swahili literacy, improve staff motivation, increase student performance, reduce teacher-pupil ratio, reduce over-population in schools, and create extra physical facilities. The need to improve performance in English was noted through a remark made by a principal who stated: "The performance in English was dismal. The environment was not conducive for my students to speak in English since many of them reside in manyattas where they did not speak in English (manyattas in this case are thatched traditional huts made from clay)." A similar reference was made by another teacher when he explained: "My pupils were not able to communicate well in English and were therefore not able to participate fully in class activities that involved speaking and writing in English." An example where lack of staff motivation was the main reason for engaging in an action research project was when a teacher explained, "My school is situated in a hardship zone and had been neglected for some time. Teachers in my school were unwilling to work in the school and there were retrogressive practices like female genital mutilation (FGM) and marrying off young girls." In another project, a student identified the need to make her school more welcoming and conducive to learning because, "The road infrastructure was not developed and there was an open sewer flowing into the school. This presented a health hazard especially when sewage occasionally drained into dormitories and classrooms."

Social Agencies

The social agencies identified in the descriptive analysis were communities, government, families, parents, schools, and churches. Parental involvement was demonstrated when a principal commented that the involvement of parents does not only bring about academic performance, but also works towards creating a holistic development of students (i.e. physical, moral, and intellectual improvement). Another head-teacher noted, "The parents in my school

contributed towards the transport of a water tank from the Ministry of Water to the school." Involvement of church agencies was evident in some situations, for instance when a principal managed to convince members of a church denomination (Dominion Church) to use their church as an Early Childhood Development (ECD) classroom before a long term solution was in place.

Involvement of government officials was shown at least in one instance where a principal explicitly mentioned that local chiefs will be used to force parents who refuse to take their children to school. The government, in some instances, was a cause for community problems for example, where the Free Primary Education (FPE) programme was introduced without having adequate learning facilities. In some situations, FPE created congestion in schools.

The involvement of head-teachers or principals as critical social agents was noted especially when trying to mediate amongst teachers or between the school and the Ministry of Education. A principal mentioned, "I will try as much as possible to liaise with the district education officer to post teachers to my school in order to improve learning." In another situation, a teacher wrote a proposal to the Kenya Education Sector Support Programme to request for funds to construct an ECD classroom.

Strategies

Strategies are steps taken by different social agencies to address problems. The strategies were classified into respective sub-categories. The emergent sub-categories can be grouped into: subject and curriculum (pedagogical) strategies, staff-motivation strategies, parent-teacher involvement strategies, and strategies formulated to provide social amenities [i.e. infrastructure].

Some of the methods used to address subject and curriculum issues were rewarding pupils who had performed well, marking pupils exercises promptly, preparing lesson plans, adopting student-centred teaching techniques, use of group activities, using some students as role models, organizing school workshops, and giving extra reading/writing exercises. Few comments which indicate such strategies were: "I met each pupil individually," "I wrote new words on manila cards and pinned them on the wall," "I encouraged pupils to participate through music, drama, poetry, and organizing public speaking festivals," "I allowed students to write and give comments on the way I teach Kiswahili," and "I divided the pupils into groups of four. I considered their capabilities and ensured the weak ones were well catered for."

Staff motivation strategies were developing team spirit through constant rapport amongst teachers, developing and circulating clear job descriptions of teachers or head-teachers and developing objective job appraisals.

Parent-teacher involvement was illustrated by comments such as: "I could talk to individual parents and give them suggestions on how they can become more involved" and "I invited a mentor experienced in the issue to talk to parents about parental involvement." Generally some of the ways that encouraged parent-teacher involvement was through parents' meetings and explaining to parents their role as important formatters.

Social amenities were provided through building extra eating areas, development of water dispensing facilities, provision of extra computing facilities, extension of kitchen and washing area, setting up water reservoir facilities, purchase of extra crockery and cutlery, and improvement of lavatories.

Enablers and Challenges

The sources of challenges were from environment and, in few cases, project challenges. An example of an environmental challenge was when 'clanism' became a big problem in one school. In the aforementioned school, the new chairman did not belong to the same clan as the previous chairman. This made some students transfer to another school. Some project challenges were lack of cooperation from teachers, and in some cases, teachers ignored their critical function as role models. Harsh weather conditions like drought also affected the economic situation of communities around some schools. This meant that some students did not have adequate money to finance their education.

The main enabler was parents' willingness to be involved in student or school activities, for instance poor students' performance led to the creation of father-son and mother-daughter activities. These activities improved the marks of students and also were a way to bond parents with their children.

Outcomes

Outcomes had two levels, intended and unintended outcomes. Intended outcomes were increased subject performance, creation and promotion of value based education, conflict resolution, development of team spirit, building of physical infrastructure, improved discipline, and increased teacher commitment through formation of committees.

Intended outcomes were reflected through comments such as: "My pupils followed rules," "Job descriptions were issued to the heads of departments which meant that staff knew what they were supposed to do," "Some teachers were encouraged by the WBA project because performance in other classes improved," and "Students were able to train their minds and will through the acquisition and exercise of values expressed in the English language."

The unintended outcomes were improved morale of teachers and students, improvement in performance in other subjects and increased involvement from the government (a form of bridging capital). Improved morale was demonstrated when some pupils who were shy became alert and some acted as role model for other pupils. In one project a teacher was de-motivated and suspicious of the work based assignments.

Conditioning Influences

Conditioning influences are those aspects that have an effect on social agencies, strategies, outcomes, functions, and fundamental characteristics. These influences include the economic situation of a community. For instance, if a school is located in an urban or rural area, the social-economic status of the community around the school will be different and may affect accessibility to the school. If a school is situated in a slum area, it most probably will have fewer financial resources and this may affect the type of research problem. An illustration is in one case where a principal, located in a school within a slum area, decided to address the issue of mistrust and dissatisfaction due to the harsh social conditions around the school. In a different situation, another principal whose school was in a rural setting decided to focus on English literacy because the surrounding community was very traditional and students communicated in the local dialect, and in this case it was Maasai. This school was not close to any recreational facilities and yet was expected to perform well in English exams. The strategies developed by the school's principal was to encourage group work and group assignments, developing role plays, encouraging pupils to tell their stories, and giving English story books. The eventual outcome was that no single lesson went unattended and there was an increase in performance.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION OF PILOT ANALYSIS

This research presented an analysis of eight pilot cases. The purpose of this analysis was to identify which categories, sub-categories, and relations appear within few action research projects [eight action research projects]. The descriptive analysis identified a number of problems affecting primary and secondary schools. These problems were lack of physical infrastructure, poor academic performance (which in some cases was caused by retrogressive cultural practices like female genital mutilation), lack of teacher motivation, inadequate staff welfare facilities, lack of job description, lack of commitment from parents, lack of values, and lack of social amenities and team spirit. The research used Chaskin's framework as a foundation in developing a map of relations and categories (Figure 2). The new map of relations and categories includes categories identified by Chaskin (2001), other new categories and relations between categories. There were few differences which were noted when Chaskin's (2001) framework was compared with emergent map of categories, sub-categories, and relations. In Chaskin's (2001, p. 296) framework, there were six categories: fundamental characteristics of community capacity, levels of social agency, functions of community capacity, strategies of community capacity, conditioning influences, and outcomes. The emergent map identified the following categories: fundamental characteristics of community capacity, functions of community capacity, social agencies, strategies, challenges, enablers, and outcomes. There were also differences in sub-categories. The following paragraphs illustrate the similarities and differences.

The levels of social agencies were not the same since the project identified community, government, families, schools, and churches, while Chaskin's (2001) framework was more concerned with the level of involvement; i.e. the individual, organisational, and network level of involvement. Government, schools, and churches are in their own respect formal and informal organisations. Community is formed through a network of informal organizations. The pilot research did not give an exhaustive analysis of networks and network relations. This is one limitation of the research. In other research work, it may be useful to delve deeper into the degree and size of network relations.

Chaskin's (1999, p. 5) fundamental characteristics of community capacity were similar to those identified by the analysis. The important characteristics were: commitment and ability to solve problems, access to resources, and community values.

Outcomes identified were creation of value based education, improved literacy, provision of extra language and literacy materials, creation of team spirit, improvements in subject performance, commitment from teachers and students, extension of kitchen and washing areas, building of extra eating areas, setting up water reservoir facilities, building washrooms, provision of extra computing facilities, and taking extra care of flora and fauna. The type of outcome identified was intermediate outcomes [changes of target groups]. Intermediate outcomes were at two levels: intended and unintended outcomes. Intended outcomes were final consequences which were foreseen while unintended outcomes were unforeseen consequences. An example of an action research project which reported both intended and unintended outcomes was "There was a remarkable improvement in English performance, and at the same time there was improvement in other subjects. This is proof that English is important in other subjects."

There was a difference in outcomes. Chaskin's framework identified intermediate outcomes as changes of target groups. In the analysis, intermediate outcomes were at two levels: intended and unintended outcomes. Intended outcomes were final consequences which were foreseen while unintended outcomes were unforeseen consequences. Intended outcomes are: improvement in subject and school performance or improved community commitment. An unintended outcome is like an improvement in other subjects. The difference may have arisen due to difference in aims of the analysis e.g. the project analysis focussed on immediate action research project outcomes, while Chaskin's focussed on both intermediate and final outcomes, for instance better services, influence on decision making and economic well-being.

Generally, specific outcomes of the analysis were categorically different from those identified by Chaskin (2001, p. 299), Miyoshi and Stenning (2008a, p. 78), and Salanguit (2011, p. 28). The analysis identified increased subject performance, creation and promotion of value based education, conflict resolution, development of team spirit, building of physical infrastructure, and increased teacher commitment, while the aforementioned scholars identified creation of bridging and bonding capital, increased level of trust, and introduction of new ideas, which were mainly final outcomes (a change of societies). Miyoshi and Stenning (2008a) include increased sense of community commitment as an aspect of bridging and bonding capital. In the case of the pilot projects, increased teacher commitment and development of team spirit were ways towards creating or fostering bridging and bonding capital.

Functions of community capacity were identified through problems formulated by students in schools. Chaskin's framework did not have a similar approach. It focussed on planning, decision making, governance, production of goods and services, and information dissemination within Neighbourhood Family Initiatives (NFIs). The outcome of the analysis revealed similar problems identified by (MOEST, 2004, p. 63, 2005; Ngware, Onsomu, Muthaka, & Manda, 2006, p. 540; Nkinyangi, 1982, p. 117; Ntarangwi, 2003; Oketch & Ngware, 2010, p. 31; USAID, 2008, pp. 24-26).

The relations between categories were different. The analysis revealed a number of associative relations which were not identified by Chaskin for instance, between functions of community capacity and social agencies, challenges and social agencies, enablers and functions of community capacity and functions of community capacity and challenges. Chaskin's (2001) report on NFIs did not provide adequate information on how relations emerged in his framework. Since Chaskin (2001) did not give adequate information in his work, the researcher assumptions about possible reasons for the observable differences. One assumption may be that Chaskin's model was concerned

primarily with observing neighbourhood communities while the action research projects were within the context of the education sector, hence differences in context and research interest may lead to some differences in categories (including sub-categories) and/or relations. This assumption needs to be validated when other research materials which discuss about Chaskin's framework have been made available. Since the map is context specific, the categories and relations may not be applicable to other sectors not related to education, for instance Neighbourhood Family Initiatives. The action research projects have been conducted in a developing country, and as such, the problems and strategies may vary.

In conclusion, the map of categories and relations was guided by Chaskin's framework which provided a starting point in identifying possible relations and categories of community capacity development.

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