

Pedagogical Influences on Students' Academic Achievements in KCSE in Public Secondary Schools in Manga Sub County, Nyamira County- Kenya

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Abstract: This study was carried out in Nyamira South District, Nyamira County in the Republic of Kenya. This study was compelled by the frequent low performances of students in KCSE each year when results are released. The purpose of the study was establish the pedagogical influences on students' academic achievements, teaching learning facilities, teachers' motivation and teachers' professional experience on students' academic performance. The study established curriculum delivery based factors leading to differences exhibited by different secondary schools in the district. Descriptive survey design of the *ex post facto* type was used. The location of the study was Manga in Nyamira County- Kenya where dismally low performance has been perennially exhibited. The Districts Education Officers (DEOs), Head the Education department at the sub county while the county is under the County Director of Education. The population constituted 18 public secondary schools in Nyamira South District with a total 225 teachers and 2800 students. The sample constituted of secondary schools which have presented student for KCSE at any one time that is 18 public secondary schools 23 teachers , 280 students which is 10% the population (Mugenda & Mugenda 2003) and 1 District Education Officer. Simple random sampling was employed to obtain student sample obtained through stratified random sampling. It reveals that pedagogy influences performance, these findings indicate that different pedagogy employed determines the performance outcome. Majority of the respondents prefer that learners centred types of pedagogy are best related to good performance unlike the lecture- teachers centred teaching method which many felt is a factor towards poor performance and High level motivation of teachers increase morale in terms of rewards and remuneration will increase the morale of teachers hence committed to their work reducing absenteeism and changing their altitude which will lead to syllabus coverage and like of profession leading to learners confidence and eventually improved good performance in public secondary school in Manga in Nyamira County.

Keywords: Descriptive survey design of the *ex post facto* type, Nyamira South District, that pedagogy influences performance.

1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The system of education in Kenya is highly selective at all levels, while access to schooling is limited. Advancement is solely based on student's performance in examinations. Examinations are used above all to identify and define those adjudged suitable to proceed to next stage of education. Success in educational institution is measured by the performance of the student in external examinations. Examinations are used among others to measure the level of candidate's achievements and clarify the candidate's level of educations, training and employment. Jonnes (2007) observed that teachers are a key input and a force to reckon with in school. Sweeney (2008) made similar observations about schools in Mississippi, USA that scored better when taught by teachers with more years of teaching, considering the common saying that experience is the best teacher. Kaur (2004) in a study carried out to determine the relationship between teacher quality and student performance found that teacher quality and student performance reveal that there exists a strong relationship.

Studies carried out to determine the relationship between teachers experience and students' performance found out that teachers experience and competencies were prime predictors of student performance in secondary schools in Ondo state in Nigeria (Adeyemi, 2008). They also provide the basis for evaluating the curriculum both at local and national level examinations can, when used properly, improve the quality of teaching and learning and because of this reason when Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) results are released the feedback is sent to schools through a report indicating not only how students have performed but also what teachers and students should do to improve on future examinations.

The government through its policy documents has outlined several strategies to be adopted by all stakeholders to enhance improved students' performance in KCSE examinations. Key among them is the strengthening capacity of school managers and teachers through various trainings and provision of equipment through partnership with development partners, the government has embraced several initiatives such as the SMASSE project to strengthen mathematics and science subjects (CEMASTEIA Newsletter, 2008). Various factors contribute to performance trends based on staffing, teaching /learning materials, motivation and attitude of teachers, pedagogy and other social cultural practices. These factors and sensitisation of all stakeholders impact on student performance in KCSE examination in secondary schools in Manga Sub County which has remained performing poorly in most schools over years.

Mji and Makgato (2006) observed that non-completion of the syllabus is a major determinant to student performance. He noted that students fail in examinations because they do not cover their syllabus and are therefore unprepared for examination (Education Insight, 2005). In the same view Yeya (2002) observes that students in boarding school cover the syllabus in time and are exposed to more remedial exercises because they are ever in school compared to day school which are characterised by absenteeism of both teachers and students which lead to non-completion of the syllabus in a given year. This view was supported by Maundu (2002).

According to Psacharopolous and Woodhall (2003) "...textbooks are the major input for performance in examinations". This view is shared by Chepcheng (2005) who observes that availability of and quality of textbooks in secondary schools is strongly related to achievement among children from lower income families especially those on rural boarding schools. Physical facilities contribute positively to students' academic performance. These indicated that schools lacked physical facilities and the ones existing were poorly used. According to Munda, Tanui and Kabazia (2000) physical facilities contributes positively to students' academic performance.

In South Africa Mji and Makgato (2006) observed that many schools do not offer some subjects and those that offer them have adequate facilities for effective teaching and learning. They identify pupils-textbook ratio has been high in rural and urban whose students do not perform to expectations. A survey conducted by education insight (2005) agree with the above studies that schools with adequate facilities perform better in National Examination especially in core subjects. He however asserted that facilities alone cannot count while other factors should be taken into consideration hence this study to establish the impact of teaching learning resources on KCSE performance in Nyamira South District and to establish whether similar situations are in the region under study.

According to Conger *et al* (2006) low parental social economic status is associated with diminished resources hence contributing to lower academic achievement. In Jamaica, poor attitudes to subjects like mathematics are evidence among many students and teachers as noted by Ministry of Education youth and culture (2003). In south Africa Mji and Makgato (2006) points out that few teachers take the profession and those who take it do not perform well because they are not motivated which ultimately lead to mass failures. Yeya (2002) had similar views that many teachers, students and parents have a negative attitude towards the teaching and learning of certain subjects. Chiriswa (2003) agreed with the above, view and recommended that teachers should be given incentives to raise their morale for better teaching which will lead to better performance.

Study by Kadiri, (2004) in Nigeria indicate that this has not been established a single direction of difference in performance between male and female students. Although most studies have found boys performing better (Fennema and Sherman, 2008) a few, other saw girls out performing boys while others established in significant difference. Fennema and Sherman (2008) asserted that some subjects are of male domain. This view was supported by Alao and Adeleke (2000) that girls recorded low performance than boys in subjects like mathematics and sciences in Nigeria Secondary Schools. Manger (2006), in Norway had the same view, but observed that the difference was small.

Kaur (2004) asserted that in Singapore teaching needed qualified teachers /educators and recommended that Ministry of Education equip teachers with necessary skills through in-service courses. According to Mji and Makgato, (2006) schools are characterised by huge enrolments leading to overcrowding. Odhiambo (2006) pointed out that there is a shortage of teachers in Kenya but in urban schools the problem is not pronounced. He further revealed that the student / teacher ratio in many secondary schools in Kenya is 55 to 1 and proposed that for effective teaching and good performance it should be 25 to 1 hence the need to employ more teachers.

Wanjohi, (2011) in research on “performance determinants of Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education in Mathematics of Secondary schools in Nyamaiya Division, Kenya found out that while poor performance is applicable to most parts of the country, some areas have researched a perennial mass failures in mathematics. According to a report by the Ministry of Education (2008) a teacher in a secondary school is supposed to teach at most 30 lessons in a week. The report established that 27.8 % of the teachers are overloaded in their teaching as they are forced to handle more than the prescribed maximum. This percentage is high and contributory to poor performance. The report recommends an increase of the number of teachers to reduce the number of lessons aimed at improving effectiveness and efficiency hence improve the student performance.

Statement of the Problem:

In Kenya as it is in many other parts of the world high performance has been viewed as key to success. High performances in KCSE examination translate to admission to choicy careers in higher institutions and eventual good living standards. To achieve this all stakeholders take their roles despite the dismal performance realized when the KCSE examination results are announced each year. This is especially so in Manga Sub County.

Even though studies have been carried out to determine the reasons for the general poor performance in the district, teachers' curriculum delivery has not been singled out as a major contributor to the performance trends exhibited in KCSE in the district. This study therefore seeks to establish the impact of curriculum delivery on KCSE performance in Manga Sub County

Objectives:

The study objectives were to establish the impact of teacher's pedagogy, to find out the influence of teaching and learning resources, to identify the impact of teachers' motivation level, to determine relationship between teachers' professional experience and KCSE performance in public secondary schools in Manga Sub County. The research questions were derived from these objectives.

2. METHODOLOGY

The research design used for this study was a descriptive survey design of the *ex post facto* type. The location of the study was Manga Sub County in Nyamira County- Kenya where dismally low performance has been perennially exhibited. The Districts Education Officers (DEOs), head the education department at the sub county while the county is under the County Director of Education. The target population is the total number of subject or total environment of interest to the researcher. The population constitutes 18 public secondary schools in Manga Sub County with a total 225 teachers and 2800 students. The sample constituted of secondary schools which have presented student for KCSE at any one time that is 18 public secondary schools 23 teachers, 280 students which is 10% the population (Mugenda & Mugenda 2003) and 1 District Education Officer.

This study employed simple random sampling to obtain student sample obtained through Stratified random sampling.

	Population	Students	Sample	Teacher	Sample
Mixed day school	14	1031	103	98	19
Boys boarding school	1	304	30	28	3
Girls boarding school	1	425	43	37	4
Mixed day& boarding school	2	1040	104	62	6
Total	18	2800	280	225	23

Stratified sampling technique is a technique that identifies sub-groups in the population and then population and select from each sub group to form a sample. A simple random sampling was used to obtain sample from each category of stratum as they are homogenous. (Oso & Onen 2008) Purposive sampling will be used for the principals, examination masters, district examination officer who total to one each. The study used questionnaires and interview schedules for collecting data. The instruments constituted semi structured items and closed items. Face to-face interview schedules provided the researcher an opportunity to interact with student. Piloting was conducted in one of the sampled schools, 1 principal, 1 deputy principal and district examination officer to validate the research instruments and test the validity and reliability of the instruments. Data was collected using questionnaires which were administered through drop and pick when they had been ascertained fully filled by the respondents. The researcher examined all the questionnaires for completeness and consistency, and categorized all the items before coding that necessitated collected data to be grouped and coded and analyzed through the Scientific Programme for Social Science (SPSS) to generate frequencies and percentages which were used in interpretation, generalisation, inferences and making conclusion on the variables under study.

3. SUMMARIES OF FINDINGS

The summary of the researcher findings presented based on the research objectives and guided by their respective objectives. These has been discussed and presented as summaries below

Pedagogy and students' performance:

The first objective of the study was to establish the impact, of teacher's pedagogy on KCSE performance in public secondary schools in Manga Sub County. Data analysis and interpretation revealed the following major findings under the objective. It reveals that pedagogy influences performance, these findings indicate that different pedagogy employed determines the performance outcome. Majority of the respondents prefer that learners centred types of pedagogy are best related to good performance unlike the lecture- teachers centered teaching method which many felt is a factor towards poor performance in public secondary school in Manga Sub County.

This study established the impact of curriculum delivery on performance in public secondary schools in Nyamira South District. It was intended to establish whether curriculum delivery impacts on performance. This was in performance trends in KCSE in public secondary schools in Nyamira South District. The study revealed those teachers' pedagogy impacts on KCSE performance in public secondary school in Manga Sub County. In consonance to Costello, (2003) the researcher found out that lecture method is the ineffective in that it turns the learners in the passive participants in the learning process. However, despite the disadvantage, lecture methods are useful in covering large contents (SMASSE, 2007). Learner- centred methods; discussing projects and discovery methods creates an enabling environment for the learners and ensures individual difference are taken care of which eventually leads to good performance. Therefore in light of the objective pedagogy influences performance with child- centred methods leading to good performance contrary to lecture method.

Teaching/ Learning Resources on performance:

Information obtained on availability of teaching /learning materials in public secondary schools in Nyamira South District indicate that text books and writing materials are leading with 97.14% followed by laboratory equipment 94.29% library facilities 85.71 % maps and charts 80% and classrooms 74.29% this is in line with Psacharopolous and Woodhall (2005) who identifies textbooks and writing materials as a major input for performance in examinations. This view is shared also by Chepchieng (2004) who observed that availability of and quality of textbooks in secondary schools is strongly related to achievements among children from lower income families especially those in rural schools. Physical facilities like laboratories, libraries and classrooms contribute positively to students' academic performance (Mundu, Tanui and Kabazia, 2000).

The research indicated inadequacy of teaching/ learning resources their effective utilization and state of use contribute negatively or positively to curriculum delivery which eventually impacts on performance. It is revealed that where teaching /learning facilities are adequate, the students perform better than when they are inadequate.

Teachers' motivation level and performance:

Data obtained after analyzing responses on items soliciting teachers motivation level indicate that majority of respondents 23 teachers (100%) and 220 students (62 -85%) agreed that motivation level of teachers impacts on performance. World Bank Report (1986) acknowledges that teachers' satisfaction is generally related to achievement. Satisfied teachers would concentrate hence enhancing academic performance or either students.

In looking for responses for motivation factors the respondents in average (69.57%) agreed that good remuneration, leadership styles used by administrators, rewards, teachers' work-load, personal attitude and government policy impact on performance. The motivation level influence teachers' commitment level in which good performance is as a result of high commitment level by the teacher. This agrees with Ubogu (2004) who asserts that teachers who lack motivation or enthusiasm are unable to teach effectively making learners not to learn well hence a contributing factor to poor performance. Absenteeism and heavy work- load with poor remuneration are results of low motivation and these factors are as cause of poor performance.

High level motivation of teachers increase morale in terms of rewards and remuneration will increase the morale of teachers hence committed to their work reducing absenteeism and changing their altitude which will lead to syllabus coverage and like of profession leading to learners confidence and eventually improved good performance.

Professional experience and performance:

The fourth objective of this study was to determine the relationship between teachers professional experience and KCSE performance in public secondary schools in Manga Sub County. Data analysis and interpretation revealed the following major finding under this objective. It revealed that majority of the respondents 80% agree that experience of the teacher is significant to performance while a lower number 20% said that experience is not significant to performance.

These findings indicate that there is a relationship between teachers professional experience and performance this shows that teachers experience is significant and can be used to predict students' performance. This result is in accordance with the findings of Adeyemi (2008) who said that teachers experience and competence were the prime predictors of students performance agreeing with Sweeney (1998) and Jones (1997) Kaur (2004).

Considering the findings of this study, it was concluded that the lecture method of teaching is ineffective and leads to poor performance. It was also revealed that adoption of teacher centered pedagogy enhanced learning leading to good performance. The research also revealed that lack of basic school needs like learning /teaching resources could not provide a stable mind and conducive environment for learning which eventually lead to poor performance in schools. Availability and adequacy of learning facilities like enough laboratory equipment, better performance in science based subjects, wall maps and charts geography of history, enough well ventilated classrooms well-arranged and stocked library are factors that lead to good performance.

It was evident also from the research findings that well motivated teachers are committed to their professional duty leading to good performance whereas the motivated members lack commitment and are always absent from duty unable to cover their syllabi which lead to poor performance. The study further revealed that all the teachers are professionally trained, they are of different ages with majority will experienced results indicated that many respondents agree that the experienced teachers lead to good performance unlike the young although energetic lack the experience in handling curriculum content. In view of these the study concludes that good pedagogy, adequate teaching / learning resources , motivation, and professional experience are important consideration in curriculum delivery and performance in KCSE in Manga Sub County.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher has argued in this report that good teaching methods embraced by teachers, adequate teaching learning facilities like textbooks, writing materials , library, laboratory equipment and classroom, teachers motivation level and professional experienced impact of performance . The study has also shown that the factors impact on the dependent variable performance. This is against this background that the recommendations below are made.

Despite its limitations this study should be able to have both theoretical and practical implications for the future performance trends in Manga Sub County. The study will enhance improved curriculum delivery strategies towards better

performance in public secondary schools in Manga Sub County. Basing generalizations on the findings of this study the researcher recommends that:

The quality assurance and standards of the ministry of education should regularly visit schools to advice and refresh teachers on the need for employing better teaching methods while handling their subjects in schools.

The employer of teachers should hire enough teachers to curb the short talks to enhance manageable work had and eventual attainment of good performance. The employer should also renew and facilitate teachers' remuneration to motivate them to be committed in their work.

The government through her various organs should make available relevant and enough teaching learning resources. Parents should also supplement by providing adequately to their children necessary learning resources.

The teachers should be ready to enhance their professional achievement by taking extra courses or participating in workshops or seminars to refresh them regularly. The teachers should change their attitudes towards the profession positively that they can be committed to serve as any other profession of choice.

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