

EFFECTS OF THE AVAILABILITY OF TRAINED TEACHERS ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SELECTED PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN MANDERA NORTH SUB COUNTY; A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY.

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Page | 1 **ABSTRACT.**

Background:

This study aims to explore the effects of the availability of trained teachers on students' academic performance in selected public schools in Mandera North Sub County, Mandera County.

Methodology:

The study will adopt a cross-sectional research design because it entails observing two study variables to define a corresponding statistical relationship between the variables. The study area will be public secondary schools in Mandera North Sub County; where the target population will be 9 schools with 2239 students, 104 teachers, and 9 principals. Yamane's formula will be used to determine students' sample size totaling 339, simple random sampling determine teachers' sample size totaling 10, while purposive sampling will be used to identify 3 principals giving a total of 352 respondents. Questionnaires, interviews, and document analysis will be used to collect primary data.

Results:

Regarding the students enrolled in this study, 115 (38.3%) were females while 185 (61.7%) were males. All the teachers (100%) agreed that professional qualification can affect their output in class. There were all indications that the schools did not have enough trained teachers, and most schools had stayed for one year (11.1%), 2-3 years (33.4%), or more than 4 years (44.5%) without enough trained teachers. It was interesting that the principals agreed that qualified teachers are more effective in teaching, lack of trained teachers creates teaching overloads, teacher qualifications affect students' academic output, and lack of trained teachers leads to delays in syllabus coverage

Conclusion:

There were only five to eight trained teachers in the schools surveyed. Out of the 9 teachers interviewed, only 5 attested to have received formal training in teaching.

Recommendation:

More trained teachers should be recruited to improve student's performance in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education.

Keywords: *Trained Teachers, Students' Academic Performance, Public Schools, Mandera North Sub County*

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BACKGROUND.

Teacher training means equipping teachers with practical skills that improve their competency level and instill confidence in classroom delivery. In the course of the training, teachers acquire an academic qualification in an area they decide to specialize in. According to Jane et al., (2018), teacher qualification needs to be evaluated not only on academic qualifications but also on teachers gained skills and knowledge in teaching secondary school curriculum. Classroom nurturing is not enough to instill the teacher figure in students and hence a professional induction is necessary.

Education in Kenya remains an integral factor in development since it increases people's

productivity hence reducing the number of dependents in a single household (Mbugua et al., 2012). Over time there has been a rapid population increase which has triggered a rise in student enrollments in schools. The decision by the government to give free primary education in 2003 enabled access to school among children from different backgrounds. This increased the school population in primary schools and subsequently in secondary schools. The introduction of free secondary education has made the number of public secondary schools grow rapidly (Ndolo & Simatwa, 2016). Despite the rise in enrollments little has been done to meet the increasing numbers. As a result, the increased enrollment has initiated a strain on the resources in schools such as qualified teachers, learning resources such as books, and the existing infrastructure. This has

resulted in to increase in quantity with a decreasing quality of education due to the reduced student-to-teacher ratio. Teachers play a very important role in ensuring that the expected education output is attained. This cannot take place if they are not sufficiently provided with proper existing conditions. School principals have a higher school population to administer with less qualified teachers, strained resources, and poor infrastructure. Previous studies have attributed the success of school performance to the nature of supervision by the school principals (Kosgei et al., 2012). On the other hand, time is a major factor that determines the level of output among students in class. This study aims to explore the effects of the availability of trained teachers on students' academic performance in selected public schools in Mandera North Sub County, Mandera County.

METHODOLOGY.

Research Design.

This study adopted a cross-sectional research design. The design entailed observing two study variables to define a corresponding statistical relationship between the variables. The design aimed at defining how a change in one variable leads to a change in the other (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2009). The research method that was used is quantitative. On the contrary, quantitative research attempted to find out the characteristics of the study population through amounts or measurements as displayed by events (Thomas, 2003).

Study Area.

The study was conducted in public schools in Mandera North Sub County which is located in the Northeast of Kenya. To the South and West, the sub-county borders Wajir County while it borders Somalia to the east and Ethiopia to the North. The sub-county receives an average rainfall of 255 mm (GoK, 2013). The terrain is low-lying and flat except for countable rocky hills that rise to more than 700 m above sea level (Tawane & Wakhungu, 2018). The sub-county's poverty level stands at 89.1% against the country's 46% ranking them among the poorest people in the Country (GoK, 2013). Although the area encounters scanty rainfall amounts majority of the households rely on Agriculture. Out of the 90% population practicing agriculture, 84% do livestock production which accounts for

72% of the livelihood's source of income. Coupled with natural disasters such as droughts and floods the area is characterized by poor infrastructure and a poor communication network.

Target Population.

Target population refers to the sub-section from which the study intended to make statements based on the concerns raised by a theory under a test (Stommel, & Wills 2003). The participants will be principals, teachers, and students from selected public secondary schools in Mandera North which has 9 high schools, 104 teachers, and 2239 students.

Sampling Technique and Sample Size.

Sampling techniques were employed in drawing a sample which is very vital for the estimation of the population's characteristics (Hanif et al., 2018). The study applied diverse sampling techniques to come up with a sample. Since the study population did not exhibit similar features, the study employed three different sampling methods. Due to the distinguishing characteristics among the principals, purposive sampling was used to obtain three principals from the best-performing schools among the 9 secondary schools. Teachers were sampled using simple random sampling while systematic sampling was used to obtain the sample size of students. Simple random sampling eliminates bias and it's simple to use and accurate (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2009). Yamane's (1967) formula was used to calculate the sample size of the students since they are the largest population in the study. Yamane's (1967) formula will used to compute the students' sample.

$$= \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where;

n = the sample size

N = the size of the population

e = the error of 5% points

Using the formula yields a sample size of

$$n = \frac{2239}{1 + 2239(0.05)^2}$$

n = 339 students

Table 1: Sample Size.

	Population	Sample Size	Sample (%)
Principals	9	3	30%
Teachers	104	10	10%
Students	2239	339	15%
Totals	2352	352	

Page | 3 Source, Study (2020)

Data Collection Instruments.

The study used the following tools to gather data on the subject: -

Questionnaires.

Questionnaires were used due to the benefits they have over other methods of data collection. According to Orodho (2008), questionnaires can collect information from a wide geographical locality easily and efficiently. The questionnaires contained both open and closed type of questions. The questionnaires were laid out as per the objectives of the study. The first part contained questions assessing the background of the study participants. The questionnaire was divided into four sections; Section “A” contained questions seeking to explore the effects of the availability of trained teachers on students’ academic performance, “B” contained questions seeking to assess the effects of access to textbooks on learners’ academic output, “C” sought to identify the influence school supervision has on student’s academic performance. Section “D” contained questions seeking to establish the effect of effective time management by learners on students’ academic performance.

Interviews.

The research also included interviews which were conducted among the principals. Interviews are efficient since they maintain face-to-face interaction which may allow unexpected data to emerge that is relevant to the study (Sebyan&Yeschke, 2014). Respondents are also able to emphasize their specific areas of interest during interviews.

Document Analysis.

The study also used relevant documents that influenced the study variables. The research obtained the ratio of textbooks per student data from the class teachers and data on the qualifications of the teachers from the principal’s office.

Pilot Testing of the Instruments.

A preliminary study is important in that it determines the feasibility of research tools (Polit & Beck, 2006). The pilot

test was carried out on 40 respondents obtained from the entire sample size of 352 participants. The research tools were administered twice in two-week intervals. The final results were used by the study to adjust the research instruments to eliminate ambiguity and improve clarity on the questions.

Validity and Reliability of Research Instruments.

Validity and reliability of the research instrument entailed: -

Validity of Research Instruments.

Validity ensures that all the objectives are adequately represented in the research tools. The questionnaires were presented to the pilot study for a test. The selected respondents were allowed to return their questionnaires after a week to ensure they filled them at their convenience. The validity of the research tool can only be obtained from an expert’s judgment (Gall et al., 2003). The study presented the filled questionnaires to the supervisors who gave their expert opinion on the tool.

Reliability of Research Instruments.

Reliability is regarded as the ability of a research tool to show consistency by giving the same results after multiple trials (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2009). The study used a test-retest technique to determine the consistency. Internal consistency was determined using Cronbach’s coefficient Alpha (McNabb, 2009). George’s (2011) guidelines were used to obtain Cronbach’s Alpha which holds that; >0.9 is Excellent, > 0.8 is Good, > 0.7 is Acceptable, > 0.6 is Questionable, > 0.5 is Poor and < 0.5 is Unacceptable. All the variables that did not reach a coefficient of 0.7 using Cronbach’s Coefficient according to Nguyen, (2010) were revised.

Data Collection Procedures.

Data collection was done in three stages. The initial stage was conducting a reconnoiter visit to the study area a month before the actual study. The visit provided an interaction room with the forethought participants which made the study conversant with the area. In addition, the study

acquired credible information which helped in the identification of the shortcomings of the research. This stage helped the study to introduce the problem and also clarify the gap among the participants.

The stage that followed entailed the piloting of the research instruments. The pilot study was carried out in Rhamu Day Secondary School. The pilot study was done to eliminate unclear and ambiguous questions. The responses obtained in the pilot study were useful for adjusting the questions so that they could give the needed output. The success of the second phase allowed the researcher to seek permission to carry on with the study.

The last stage was data collection from the study participants. The research instruments; questionnaires, interviews, and document analysis were used to collect primary data. Secondary data was accessed through the internet, books, journals, and articles.

Data Analysis.

Quantitative data were entered, coded, and analyzed using SPSS version 20. Descriptive statistics was used for the present data as means, percentages, and frequencies.

Ethical Consideration.

Ethical consideration is a confirmation by the study of complying with accepted professional behavior throughout the study (Guthrie, 2010). The study affirmed to the

respondents that the study was not causing any physical or psychological harm to them. The study stated the sole purpose of conducting the research and informing the respondents that the information obtained was kept confidential. The questionnaire was structured in that respondents were not required to write their names. Before participating in the study, respondents were issued with a consent form requesting their participation. The study then got an introductory letter from Mount Kenya University after which it was used to seek ethical clearance from the same institution. A permit to proceed with the study was sought from NACOSTI.

RESULTS.

The response rate of the respondents.

As shown in Table 2, all three principals registered participated in the study (response rate of 100%) whereas teachers registered 90% as the response rate. On the other hand, 300 students participated in the study which indicated a response rate of 88.5%. The overall response rate was 88.6%, which affirmed the assertions that a response rate above 75.0% is adequate and of suitable levels to allow for the generalization of the outcomes to the target population. Moreover, average questionnaire return rates above 80% are considered to be acceptable and can be termed satisfactory for analysis (Adan, 2016; Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

Table 2. The response rate of the respondents in the study.

Respondents	Sampled respondents	Number of participants	Response rate (%)
Principals	03	03	100.0
Teachers	10	09	90.0
Students	339	300	88.5
Total	352	312	88.6

In a similar study on the institutional factors influencing pupils' academic performance at Kenya certificate of primary examination level in public schools in Mandera East sub-county, Kenya, Adan (2016) had an overall response rate of 97.0% which is higher than obtained in this study.

Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents.

Of the three principals who participated in the study, two were males (66.7%) while only one was female (33.3%). Overall, most of them (33.3%) had been teaching for less than 15 years. On the other hand, five (55.6%) were males while the remaining 44.4% were females. Most of these teachers (90%) had taught in their current school for less than 15 years (Table 3). Regarding the students enrolled in this study, 115 (38.3%) were females while 185 (61.7%) were males.

Table 3. Sociodemographic characteristics of teachers in the surveyed schools in Mandera North sub-county, Kenya.

Characteristic	Frequency (n)	Percentage
Gender		
Male	05	55.6
Female	04	44.4
Teaching experience		
<10 years	02	22.3
<15 years	04	44.4
<20 years	03	33.3
Number of years in the current school		
<5 years	00	0.0
<10 years	08	90.0
<15 years	00	0.0
>20 years	01	10.0

Performance of students in the survey secondary schools of Mandera North Sub County.

The results obtained (Table 4) showed that in 2017, the secondary schools in Mandera North Sub-County had mean points ranging between 7.0-11.9 points in KCSE. In 2018, the scores recorded corresponded with Fair and good (7.0-8.9 points). In 2019, all the schools had a fair performance in KCSE, with 5.0-6.9 points.

Table 4. The mean KCSE score of the Secondary Schools in Mandera North Sub-County.

2017	2018	2019
7.0-8.9 points (Good)	5.0-6.9 points (Fair)	5.0-6.9 points (Fair)
9.0-11.9 points (Excellent)	7.0-8.9 points (Good)	5.0-6.9 points (Fair)
7.0-8.9 points (Good)	7.0-8.9 points (Good)	5.0-6.9 points (Fair)

The results of performance in KCSE among the secondary schools indicated that the scores were declining between 2017 and 2019. These results are in agreement with the report of where the scores in KCSE decreased between 2017 and 2021 in secondary schools of Mandera East Sub County where the performance of students in KCSE has taken a downward trend with a progressive decrease in the number of students who scored grade C+ and above.

This study established that there were fewer numbers of teachers in the surveyed schools than that recommended by the Kenyan Ministry of Education. There were only five to eight trained teachers in the schools surveyed (Table 5). Out of the 9 teachers interviewed, only 5 (55.6%) attested to have received formal training in teaching. All the teachers (100%) agreed that professional qualification can affect their output in class. There were all indications that the schools did not have enough trained teachers, and most schools had stayed for one year (11.1%), 2-3 years (33.4%), or more than 4 years (44.5%) without enough trained teachers.

Effects of the availability of trained teachers on students' academic performance in selected public schools in Mandera North Sub County, Mandera County.

Table 5. Availability of trained teachers in schools of Mandera North Sub County, Kenya as per the principals interviewed.

Question	Response
Do you have enough teachers in school as per the ministry's recommendation?	No
How many of the teachers are trained?	05
	08
	06
Is the number of trained teachers enough? If yes for how long has the school stayed without enough trained teachers?	Years

It was interesting that the principals agreed that qualified teachers are more effective in teaching, lack of trained

teachers creates teaching overloads, and teacher qualifications affect students' academic output and lack of

trained teachers leads to delays in syllabus coverage (Table 6).

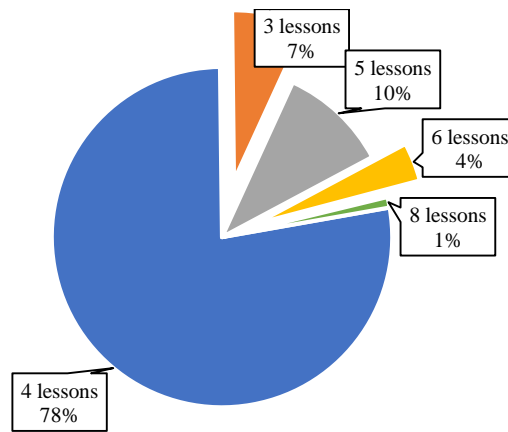
Table 6. Responses of principals and teachers regarding the availability of trained teachers in Mandera North Sub-county secondary schools.

Category	Statement	SA	A	N	SD	D
Principals	Qualified teachers are more effective in teaching	√				
	The lack of trained teachers creates teaching overloads	√				
	Teacher qualifications affect students' academic output	√				
	Lack of trained teachers leads to delays in syllabus coverage		√			
Teachers	Qualified teachers are more effective in teaching	√				
	The lack of trained teachers creates teaching overloads		√			
	Teacher qualifications affect students' academic output			√		
	Lack of trained teachers leads to delays in syllabus coverage		√			

Key: SA-Strongly Agree, SD-Strongly Disagree, A-Agree, N-Neutral, D-Disagree

Students also attested to the attendance of on average 4 lessons (78%, n = 232) out of the recommended 8 lessons. Teachers were teaching more than one subject (100%).

Figure 1. Number of lessons taught at the selected secondary schools in Mandera Sub County, Kenya as per students interviewed.



DISCUSSION.

It was interesting that the principals agreed that qualified teachers are more effective in teaching, lack of trained teachers creates teaching overloads, teacher qualifications affect students' academic output, and lack of trained teachers leads to delays in syllabus coverage (Table 6). Similar arguments were presented by teachers and students, although the teachers were neutral as to whether their qualifications affect students' academic output. Some students tended to disagree, strongly disagree, or remain neutral regarding the delays in syllabus coverage being solely driven by a lack of trained teachers.

It should be emphasized that the availability of trained teachers directly impacts the academic performance of students. Hafeez (2021) positioned that training is a fundamental process that all teachers should undergo to get the required skills for teaching. A trained teacher generally possesses more skills and techniques that can be used to realize better learning and academic achievements of learners (Oliveira et al., 2019; Schütze et al., 2017; Ulla, 2018). In a study done among some selected OECD countries, teachers' skills were found to exert positive effects on student achievement and explain part of the variation between countries in students' achievement (Meroni et al., 2015).

Lack of trained teachers as observed in this study makes a teacher feel pressured to teach everything in an overloaded curriculum, it may also lead them to teach a shallow version of the curriculum or to leave what is supposed to be handled (Boström, 2023). On the other hand, teacher qualification can have an impact on the students' academic performance although other contributions may be attributed to other factors. In Rwanda, teacher qualification was cited to elicit an impact of 36.5% on students' academic performance (Casian et al., 2021).

The results observed in this study are similar to previous reports in Kenya. For example, Kieleko et al. (2017) reported that poor academic performance in KCSE has been reported in other sub-counties such as Lower Yatta Subcounty compared to the neighboring Kitui Central and Mwingi Central Sub-counties. In Mandera East Sub-county, the mean KCSE scores between 2017 and 2021 indicated that there were poor (1-2.9 points) or below average (3-4.9 points) (Hanshi & Mosomi, 2023), which is similar to the results observed in this study.

The results of performance in KCSE among the secondary schools indicated that the scores were declining between 2017 and 2019. These results are in agreement with the report of where the scores in KCSE decreased between 2017 and 2021 in secondary schools of Mandera East sub-county where the performance of students in KCSE has taken a downward trend with a progressive decrease in the number of students who scored grade C+ and above (Hanshi & Mosomi, 2023; Ministry of Education, 2022).

Academic performance is a key indicator of the quality of education being offered in secondary schools, and the outcome indicators can be defined based on the extent to which outcome measures are connected to learning content (Hanshi & Mosomi, 2023). In other words, classroom evaluation through academic performance plays an important role in shaping views of educational quality in secondary schools.

This further implies that academic performance is the outcome of quality education and the extent to which a student or secondary school has achieved their educational goals (Lamas, 2015). Based on the opinion of several scholars, it is generally accepted that academic performance is the result of learning, prompted by the teaching activity by the teacher and produced by the student (Gbollie, & Keamu, 2017; Rubin et al., 2010; Smith et al., 2011). From a humanistic point of view, therefore, academic performance is "the product given by the students and it is usually expressed through school grades" (Chilca, 2017). The current results, therefore, suggest that academic performance among secondary schools in the sub-county has been progressively decreasing.

CONCLUSIONS.

There were only five to eight trained teachers in the schools surveyed. Out of the 9 teachers interviewed, only 5 attested to have received formal training in teaching.

RECOMMENDATION.

Principals should create more time to provide sound instructional leadership by undertaking instructional supervision activities.

In addition, the use of classroom observation as an instructional supervisory tool could be adopted by principals.

More trained teachers should be recruited to improve student's performance in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.

KCSE: Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
NACOSTI: National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
SPSS:
SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST.

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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