

Influence of Teacher Professional Development on Pupils' Academic Performance in Public Primary Schools in Mandera East Sub-County, Mandera County, Kenya

By

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Abstract

Teachers' motivation is one of the important factors in realizing educational objectives and achieving high academic performance. Without teachers' motivation educational institutions will continue to boost poor results since the poor academic performance in most primary schools can be attributed to teacher motivation among other factors. The study objective is to examine influence of teacher professional development on academic performance in public primary schools in Mandera East County. The study was guided by Expectancy Theory of Motivation. This descriptive research design targeted 30 headteachers and 200 teachers. Simple random sampling was used to sample 8 head teachers while stratified sampling was used to sample 60 teachers. The study used questionnaires and interviews guides. Both descriptive analysis and inferential statistics were used for data analysis using SPSS. On the other hand, qualitative data derived from open ended questions was analyzed using content analysis technique. The study findings revealed that pupil's academic achievement was positively and significantly influenced by school administration organizing for teachers' seminars and workshops. The study recommends that the TSC and administrators need to encourage and organize seminars and workshops.

Key Words: Teacher Motivation, Academic Performance, Teacher Professional Development

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Background of the Study

Teachers' motivation is one of the important factors in realizing educational objectives and achieving high academic performance. Without teachers' motivation educational institutions will continue to boost poor results since the poor academic performance in most primary schools can be attributed to teacher motivation among other factors (Matoke, Okibo & Nyamongo, 2015). Education is regarded as a promoter of human development in the world and is seen by many to be in the center of any society's life and concern. Academic performance as the outcome of education constitutes the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has achieved their educational goals. Based on the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), education is a major catalyst for human development. The United Nations 2025 education goal is to ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development including sustainable lifestyle, human rights, gender equality and promoting a culture of peace. Therefore, achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) depends on investment in education and attainment of education goals especially primary and secondary education.

In China teachers tend to perform well when provided with conducive working environment (Wong & Tsui, 2007). They noted that the working environment, not necessarily high pay, if properly improved to satisfaction of a teacher, the teacher gets motivated and the output is high academic performance (Wong & Tsui, 2007). Studies in Canada Schools opined that in order to improve quality of education in Canada, teachers should be paid according to the academic success of their students instead of the number of years they have been teaching. Teachers with more education and more experienced are paid more than teachers with less education and less experience although they are doing the same job and some lower paid teachers are more effective in the classroom (Clifton, 2013).

Emenike (2013) observed that factors influencing teachers' productivity in public institutions in Nigeria included working conditions, availability of working tools and resources, improved knowledge and skills through regular training, accessibility to information and a sense of recognition, superior remuneration and handsome reward system, are the critical ingredients of worker job performance. Usman (2015) lamented that there exists alarming maltreatment of teachers in Nigeria to the extent that many teachers feel ashamed to proclaim the teaching profession. He further reported that teachers are paid meager salaries/wages with almost absence or insignificant welfare packages. Teachers in Nigeria are termed 'natural economists' because their hands are forced to resort to simple living as they could hardly afford luxury. Most teachers live in poorly built houses surrounded with little or no ventilation, unclean water, no electricity, poor road network and mockery by workers from other highly remunerable occupations. Teachers' salaries, pension, allowances and gratuity are mostly delayed, owed and or ceased.

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Nduom (2012) states that the Ghanaian Educational System lacks the quality it deserves because there are many schools who cannot boast of decent teaching and learning environment. There is enormous pressure on facilities as many teachers and pupils compete for limited classroom spaces. Library facilities are hardly found in many of the basic schools which does not allow for better teaching and learning. The poor performance of pupils is characterized by inadequate teacher motivation, low remuneration and poor condition of service. In Tanzania, a study by Aunga and Masare (2017) observed that academic performance has been steadily declining as a result of deteriorating of teachers' motivation. In Uganda according to Aacha (2010), there is growing fear that perhaps the massive number of teachers without commensurate expansion in facilities, learning and teaching materials; teaching morale may have compromised the quality of education.

In Kenya, the Teachers' Service Commission (T.S.C) is mandated to maintain professionalism, integrity and quality teaching standards. It is also the duty of the commission to maintain professionalism, integrity and quality teaching standards in the teaching service. According to the T.S.C Act (Cap 212). The commission has the mandate to formulate policies to achieve its mandate of; providing strategic direction, leadership, and oversight to the Secretariat, ensure that teachers comply with the teaching standards prescribed by the commission, manage the payroll of teachers in its employment, facilitate career progression and professional development for teachers and lastly monitor the conduct and performance of teachers in teaching service among others.

According to Nyakundi (2012), motivated teachers are more likely to motivate pupils to learn in the classroom, to ensure the implementation of educational reforms and feelings of satisfaction and fulfillment. Teachers may be influenced through various factors like timely payment of salary and wage, job satisfaction, fairness in the teacher promotion system, reward system, better working conditions, providing the required physical facilities and verbal encouragements for pupils (Muguongo, Muguna, & Muriithi, 2015).

Table 1.1: Mandera East Sub County KCPE Performance 2017-2020 in relation to 2013-2016

Year.	Candidates.	350 and above	Year.	Candidates.	350 and above
2013	1229	150	2017	1267	100
2014	1246	143	2018	1284	93
2015	1232	172	2019	1301	74
2016	1256	165	2020	1353	67
Total	4963	630		5205	334

Source: Mandera East Sub County Director of Education Office. 2020.

Based on secondary school selection, National and Extra County schools select students with 350 marks and above in KCPE. The above performance would see very few students going to the categories mentioned from the sub-county and thus the situation needs to be investigated. The study therefore seeks to investigate the relationship between teacher's motivation strategies on pupil's academic performance in public schools in Mandera East Sub County Mandera County.

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Statement of the Problem

The free primary education in Kenya has expanded demand for classroom teachers while the supply of new teachers is constantly decreasing. Teachers in Kenya have either gone on strike or severally threatened to go on strike since the year 1997. Teachers' union leaders have also been blamed for poor results in KCPE in several forums. The government and Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) are in a constant and frequent stand-off over better working conditions, a good pay and benefits. Teachers in majority of public primary schools in Kenya are also compelled to cope with teaching-learning environment that are ill-equipped with outdated office fittings, furniture, libraries, basic technology workshops and inadequate sporting arena. Teachers also complain of lack of motivational incentives for them. According to Mandera County QASO Report of 2020 there has been deteriorating standards of professional conduct, poor preparation of teaching materials especially lesson notes and lack of continuous pupils' assessment and high teacher absenteeism in Madera East Sub County.

Research Objective

The objective was to examine the influence of teacher professional development on pupil's academic performance in public primary schools in Mandera East Sub-County, Mandera County.

Review of Related Literature

Teacher Professional Development and Academic Performance

Teacher Professional Development is defined as a process of improving both the teachers' academic standing as well as –acquisition of greater competence and efficiency in discharging her/his professional obligations in and outside the classroom. Teachers' professional development also refers to the opportunities offered to practicing teachers to develop new knowledge, skills, approaches and dispositions to improve their effectiveness in their classrooms. It is advancement/enhancement of teachers' knowledge of the students, the subject matter, teaching practices and education-related legislation. It includes formal and informal means of helping teachers not only to learn new skills but also develop new insight into pedagogy and their own practice and explore new or advanced understanding of content and resources.

Asif, *et.al.* (2016) conducted a study to investigate the relationship between teachers' job satisfaction and student's academic performance in secondary schools in Faisalabad, Pakistan. The study adopted descriptive survey design. The target population consisted of 322 secondary-school teachers and 1200 9th-grade students. Simple random sampling was used to sample 72 teachers and 240 students. Findings established a significant correlation between job satisfaction and students' performance. The study also established that teachers who were offered in-service training and provided study leaves were more satisfied with their work and they worked extra hours to enable students improve their grades.

Nbina (2012) investigated the influence of teacher's competence on students' academic performance in chemistry in senior secondary Nigeria. A random sampling technique was used to select 6 secondary schools out of 10 secondary schools. 200 students, 20 teachers and 6 principals were used in the study. A survey design was adopted. A Questionnaire (TCQ) and Chemistry Achievement Test (CAT) was used to gather data for the study. Results revealed that there is significant relationship between teachers' competence and students' academic

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performance in chemistry (Nbina, 2012). Findings also revealed that Chemistry students taught by qualified teachers performed significantly better than those taught by unqualified teachers. Also, chemistry students taught by experienced teachers performed significantly better than those taught by inexperienced teachers.

Alphonse (2017) study aimed at assessing the role of teachers' motivation on students' academic performance in Ilemela District, Tanzania. Primary data were collected using questionnaires. Simple random sampling was used to sample 50 respondents from five selected secondary schools in Ilemela District. The study used descriptive analysis to analyze data. Findings established that teacher's professional development improves students' academic performance. Nyakundi, *et.al.* (2019) investigated the influence of teacher motivation to the academic performance of pupils in primary schools in Nyamira South Sub-County. A mixed method design was adopted for this study that used qualitative and quantitative approaches in collecting and analyzing data concurrently. The population of study was 147 head teachers and 836 teachers in Nyamira South Sub-County. Stratified sampling was used to get a sample of 84 teachers and 15 head teachers. Questionnaires and interview guides were used for data collection. A questionnaire was used to collect data from the teachers while an interview schedule collected data from head teachers. The study concluded that the teacher professional development had a significant influence on academic performance of standard eight pupils in K.C.P.E.

Methodology

Theoretical Literature

This study was based on the Expectancy Theory of Motivation propounded by Vroom (2005). According to this theory, a worker's behavior is governed by the strength of the desire and the estimated probability of a successful outcome and the strength of the belief that an action will satisfy his needs. Vroom (2005) observed that motivation is a product of three factors which he referred to as the valence, expectancy and instrumentality. Expectancy is the perception that performance will be rewarded appropriately. Valence is the belief that attracting valued rewards are available and it describes anticipated satisfaction derived from an outcome Muguongo et al. (2015). The theory perceives people as rational, logical and cognitive beings who think about what they have to do to be rewarded and how much the rewards mean to them before they perform their job. They are motivated to behave in certain ways in order to receive those rewards they are entitled.

Many experts in the field of organizational behavior hold the view that Expectancy Theory is one of the most acceptable theories of motivation and there is substantial evidence to support the theory. Expectation Theory focuses on how motivation affects performance and describes how people make choices about desired goals. It is generally accepted as the leading theory of motivation and has become an important basis for explaining what motivates people to work towards performance. The Expectancy Theory seems to be intuitively appealing and is based on common sense. It explains the levels of motivation by breaking it down into separately recognizable stages. It brings forward the linkages between efforts and performance, performance and rewards and personal goals. Therefore, the head teachers can create a

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conducive work environment, climate and culture that will increase the motivation levels of teachers by understanding the factors that motivate and demotivate individual teachers.

The theory has some weaknesses in that all employees may not have the time, willingness, favorable situation, resources or even the adequate ability to calculate motivation in the way this theory assumes. Similarly, the managers also may be lacking parameters to take a decision of what motivates a particular employee. The theory is applicable to the study since the Ministry of Education Science and Technology can increase the head teacher's expectancy by clarifying the individual needs, providing desired goals in the work place and supporting them to achieve the expected school performance. The teacher's belief that efforts will lead to performance and can be enhanced by being sponsored to seminars, good lunch in the school and rewarding them appropriately when they achieve high marks in their subject. Pupils' performance can be enhanced by rewarding the most disciplined or most improved in the school. The expectancy theory therefore provides educational manager with a strong theoretical framework, for understanding how motivation and performance can be improved.

Study Design

This study adopted a descriptive research design as it provides pertinent and precise information concerning the current status of a phenomenon. In this case, the use of teacher's motivational strategies on pupil's academic performance produced specific predictions, narrations of facts and characteristics concerning individual, group or situation and so the design was significant in this study. The descriptive research design sought to establish teachers' motivational strategies on pupil's academic performance in public primary schools in Mandera East Sub-County Mandera County.

Study Area

The study was conducted in Mandera East Sub County which borders Ethiopia to the North and Somalia to the East. The main economic activities of the sub-county are livestock keeping and some teachers are also involved in business especially those who are not satisfied with the teaching professional especially in terms of remuneration. Majority of the poor live below the poverty line and are unable to contribute to development projects leading to dilapidated facilities. This might result to teachers' motivation.

Target Population

The target population of the study was 27 public primary schools in Mandera East Sub-county. The target population for this study was 27 head teachers and 200 government teachers from public primary schools and 1 Sub- County Quality Assurance in Mandera East sub-county in 2021. The head teachers are targeted since they are the main teacher supervisors and responsible for motivating teachers in primary schools. The teachers were studied because they are implementers of the curriculum and are the ones involved in the teaching and learning process which if effectively carried out determines pupils' academic performance. The quality assurance officer was essential in provision of information of quality standards in the sub-county. The total target population was 228.

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Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

The 27 public primary schools were used to determine the sample size. Purposive Sampling technique was used to sample the 27 head teachers and 1 quality assurance. 30% of the teachers were sampled using simple random sampling making a total of 60 teachers. This technique was employed to determine the sample size; where 30% of the target population formed the desired precision as an acceptable confidence level for the estimate.

Stratified sampling design was used to sample the teachers who were stratified by gender. 30% of the teachers thus 60 teachers were selected through stratified random. The schools served as stratum whereby the head teachers were requested to provide a list of the male and female teachers. In each of the sampled school, the researcher randomly picked eight names from the list until 60 teachers were selected. This ensured that all teachers had equal chances of participating in the study. The sample size was determined by calculating 30% of the teachers' population (60 teachers). He noted that for a study to give data that ensures representativeness and reliability, 30% of a population can be sampled. The researcher sampled 8 head teachers and 1 quality assurance purposely obtaining a total of 88 respondents.

Data Analysis and Discussion of Findings

Dependent Variable

Table 4.1: Pupils Academic Performance

Rate of pupil's academic performance	Frequency	Percent
Very high	0	0.00
High	7	11.67
Fair	27	45.00
Low	0	0.00
Very Low	26	43.33
Total	60	100.00

Source: Author (Researcher), 2022

The teachers rating of pupils academic performance was done in a five-scale setting in which 1 was very high, 2 high, 3 fair, 4 low, and 5 was very low. Table 4.1 shows that 11.67 per cent of the teachers said that pupils academic performance was high; 45.00 per cent said it was fair; while 43.33 per cent noted that pupils academic performance was very low. On average the rating from the teachers was 3.75, which translates to 4 in the nearest whole number, and this corresponds to low. Hence, the academic performance of the pupils in public primary schools in Mandera East Sub-County, Mandera County was low. Similar sentiments were echoed by one of the headteachers (Teacher 1) that:

...performance mean score for class eight is below average for over ten years"; yet another headteacher explained that "community negative attitude towards education coupled with poor understanding

In the same vein the Sub-County Quality Assurance Officer (SCQA) continued that is due to

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...the parents are not educated; resources are scarce though there is gradual increase in performance.

Influence of Teacher Professional Development on Pupil's Academic Performance

The study sought to examine influence of teacher professional development on pupil's academic performance in public primary schools in Mandera East Sub-County, Mandera County.

Table 4.2: Teacher Professional Development

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. dev
School administration organizes for teachers' seminars, workshops and discussion forums.	60	3.17	1.210
The employer offers assistance to enable teachers to participate in service courses, seminars and workshops.	60	3.63	1.104
TSC organizes in service courses for teachers on a regular basis	60	2.78	1.303
Teachers get time off to attend classes to develop their skills further	60	2.87	1.228
The employer uses fair methods and procedures of teacher promotion.	60	2.95	1.294
The employer offers opportunities and incentives for further studies.	60	2.13	1.081
A career teacher schedule is the best way to provide career advancement opportunities for teachers	60	3.70	0.944

Source: Author (Researcher), 2022

The level of agreement on teacher's professional development was coded in a likert scale with 1 for *strongly disagree* and 5 for *strongly agree*. The teacher's average rating was 4 corresponding to agree, shows that, teachers agreed that the employer offers assistance to enable teachers to participate in service courses, seminars and workshops; and also the teachers agreed that a career teacher schedule is the best way to provide career advancement opportunities for teachers.

The teachers were on average undecided with regard to school administration organizes for teachers' seminars workshops and discussion forums; TSC organizes in service courses for teachers on a regular basis; teachers get time off to attend classes to develop their skills further; and the employer uses fair methods and procedures of teacher promotion since the average rating was 3. However, the average rating for the employer offers opportunities and incentives for further studies, was 2 corresponding to disagree. Hence, the teachers disagreed that the employer offers opportunities and incentives for further studies.

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Table 4.3: Pearson Correlation test for Teacher Professional Development on Pupil's Academic Performance

Variable	Pearson Correlation	P-value
School administration organizes for teachers' seminars workshops and discussion forums.	0.227***	0.082
The employer offers assistance to enable teachers to participate in service courses, seminars and workshops.	-0.195	0.136
TSC organizes in service courses for teachers on a regular basis	-0.043	0.746
Teachers get time off to attend classes to develop their skills further	0.097	0.463
The employer uses fair methods and procedures of teacher promotion.	0.146	0.266
The employer offers opportunities and incentives for further studies.	-0.233***	0.073
A career teacher schedule is the best way to provide career advancement opportunities for teachers	0.042	0.756

Note: *, ** and *** indicates 1%, 5% and 10% levels of significance respectively

Source: Author (Researcher), 2022

In determining the influence of teacher's professional development on pupil's academic performance in public primary schools in Mandera East Sub-County of Mandera County, the researcher carried out a bivariate Pearson correlation test. Table 4.3 shows that where school administration organizes for teachers' seminars workshops and discussion forums ($r = 0.227^{***}$ $P = 0.082 < 0.10$), and the employer offers opportunities and incentives for further studies ($r = -0.233^{***}$ $P = 0.073 < 0.10$). This shows that pupil's academic achievement was positively and significantly influenced by school administration organizing for teachers' seminars workshops and discussion forums at the 10 per cent level. However, pupil's academic achievement is negatively and significantly influenced by when the employer offers opportunities and incentives for further studies at the 10 per cent level of significance.

On the same note, one of the headteachers (Teacher 2) said that:

...participating in seminars and workshops helps teacher's hairs some new knowledge and skills to help their professional developments towards pupil's performance

The SCQA similarly noted that:

...teachers' seminars/ workshops enhance their knowledge, skills and more creativity on modern methods of teaching and other contemporary issues hence improved in areas of weaknesses.

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The study findings are similar to those by Asif, et.al. (2016) in Faisalabad, Pakistan established that teachers who were offered in-service training were more satisfied with their work and they worked extra hours to enable students improve their grades. Alphonse (2017) in Ilemela District, Tanzania also established that teacher's professional development improves students' academic performance. Nyakundi, et.al. (2019) in Nyamira South Sub-County concluded that the teacher professional development had a significant influence on academic performance of standard eight pupils in K.C.P.E.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusions

From the study findings we conclude that pupil's academic achievement was positively and significantly influenced by school administration organizing for teachers' seminars, workshops and discussion forums. Participating in seminars and workshops helps teacher's gain some new knowledge and skills to help their professional developments towards pupil's performance. In addition, teachers' seminars/ workshops enhance their knowledge, skills and more creativity on modern methods of teaching and other contemporary issues hence improved in areas of weaknesses.

Recommendations

Emanating from the study findings and the conclusions thereof, this study recommends that the TSC and administrators need to encourage and organize seminars and workshops for the teachers more often to enhance their knowledge, skills and more creativity on modern methods of teaching and help their professional developments towards pupil's performance.

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