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Editorial

The idea of starting ‘Msingi’ is an old one in the history of the Department of Educational Foundations at Kenyatta University. In early 1980s, members felt there was a need to provide a platform through which they could present, publish research findings, debate issues, communicate with the audience beyond the confines of the department and the then University College at large. Meetings were held to discuss ways and means of starting a forum for such discussion. The end result of the meetings was the birth of a journal. They named it ‘Msingi’ Kiswahili for Foundations. Since they had little financial support from the College authorities, members of staff with a lot of determination, enthusiasm, and passion mobilized their own resources. These efforts culminated in the production of the first issue of ‘Msingi’ in 1985. Among the founders of ‘Msingi’ were Prof. R.J. Njoroge and the late Prof. G. Bennars, its first editor. The journal was well received in academic circles. It gave hope to many scholars in the department and beyond who had been yearning for such a forum in which to publish. After a few issues, however, ‘Msingi’ went out of production mainly due to many financial challenges that faced the editorial team. Despite this set back, the dream of having a departmental journal did not die. The need for ‘Msingi’ that was identified in 1985 is still relevant today as it was in the days of the founders. In 2014, members of the department mobilized
their own resources to revive the journal. The November 2014 issue put the department back on the journey that was started in 1985. Members of the editorial committee were excited and happy to present a new reborn ‘Msingi’ whose articles focused on the theme, Education and Development in the Context of vision 2030.

Despite the success of the first issue, it was a challenge to produce a second one, on time, due to financial constraints. The then Vice chancellor of Kenyatta Kenyatta University, Prof. Olive Mugenda came to our assistance. She facilitated financial support from the university for the production of the second issue. The theme for this issue is taken from the Kenyatta university motto “Enhancing lives through Education.” The steering committee would like to thank the former Vice Chancellor of Kenyatta university, Prof. Olive Mugenda, all members of the Department of Education Foundations, the authors, reviewers, the publisher and all those who in one way or other have contributed in the production of this issue.

Prof. Mambo Karugu
Editor
Teachers’ views Towards Academic Assessment for Learners with Autism: A Case Study of City Primary School in Nairobi County, Kenya.
Wambugu Dorcas Wanjiru and Munala Christine Mwendo Matasio
Catholic University of Eastern Africa

ABSTRACT
Research has demonstrated that academic assessment is crucial for all, although there is limited information on academic assessment for learners with autism. The purpose of this study was to establish the views of teachers towards academic assessment for learners with autism at City Primary School in Nairobi County. The study adopted a qualitative paradigm with a case study approach where social constructivists’ epistemology was applied. Respondents were twenty, comprising of; one head teacher, one deputy head teacher, six teachers for special needs education and twelve teachers from the regular program but teaching in the inclusive class rooms. Non-probability sampling technique specifically using; unique case, snowball and convenient sampling techniques were used to select participants in the study. Data were collected through interview guides and focus group discussion guide. The data collected were transcribed and analysed qualitatively through open, axial and selective coding. Data were also categorized in relation to research questions of the study. The analysis involved developing a coding system based on samples of collected data and classifying major
issues or themes that emerged. All the coded information was put together for summarization of the report. From the findings, two types of academic assessments were identified namely; authentic and standardized academic assessments. The findings also showed that teachers faced challenges when assessing learners with autism. Some of these challenges included; large amount of content in examinations, lack of policy guidelines for examining learners with autism and high parental expectation. The solutions to these challenges were that, teachers, government and parents had a role to play to enhance assessment of learners with autism.

Key words: academic assessment, authentic, standardized, autism

INTRODUCTION

Autism is a diverse and complex developmental disorder in all racial, ethnic and social groups (Perko & McLaughlin, 2002). It is a developmental disorder which is characterized by challenges in communication and social behavior, the presence of restricted and repetitive behaviors as well as interests (Mash and Wolfe, 2002). According to Hart and Whalon (2011), individuals with autism have a problem comprehending verbal and nonverbal communication which is social conversation, interpreting the emotional states of others, forming and maintaining friendships with peers. They are therefore extremely unresponsive to other people. They show poor skills in communication, have few skills in imaginative play and often show self-stimulatory or self-
injurious behaviors. In contrast to their normal peers, students with autism are apt to display signs of uneven development of skills that are usually the precursors to reading (Lanter & Watson, 2008). These children are therefore different from other children and thus teaching and assessing these children is a hard task for teachers (Perko & McLaughlin, 2002).

Educational inclusion of learners with autism and other disabilities has been uphill task. Recently however, there has been an increased trend to include students with autism and other various disabilities in general education classrooms for them to learn along with their normally developing peers (Segall & Campbell, 2012). This trend has developed from arguments related to social development and civil rights movement (Harrower, 1999). However, for inclusive placements to be successful, educators must have knowledge of access to empirically validated strategies that will assist them in this process.

In Kenya, autism is a disorder that is not well understood. It has been seen as a psychiatric disorder, a curse or a consequence of witchcraft. Most children with autism have stayed hidden away in homes, locked behind doors, or even chained (Matasio, 2011). The Kenyan National Special Needs Education Policy in March 2010 however made a prime move towards the attainment of the Education for All goals. The policy advocated for provision of education for children
with special needs through regular schools as opposed to the prevailing practice of using special schools and special units (Ministry of Education, 2009).

This saw a number of children with autism being placed in regular schools through inclusion, City primary being one of them. A question however remains on how these students have been progressing in these schools academically and how the teachers view academic assessment for these learners. Assessment is a key aspect of learning as it helps the teachers to obtain information about the knowledge, attitudes, or skills the learner has obtained in the learning process. It is therefore important that all students participate in the assessment process designed and implemented by the teachers. There is however limited information on teachers’ views on the academic assessment of learners with autism as experienced in schools and hence the need for this study.

**Statement of the Problem**
Autism is a disorder that knows no boundaries in terms of racial, ethnic, economic, educational or social background. It can affect any family and any child (Autism Society of America, 2009). Currently most of the children with autism have been enrolled in inclusive classes and as more and more students with special needs are being mainstreamed into general education classrooms, teachers are faced with the difficult task of meeting their specialized needs while still
providing a challenging experience for all students in the class. Because of this, effective instruction and assessment to these learners is uniquely challenging (Maurice, 2004). Assessment in particular is a very important aspect of learning as it evaluates how much has been achieved in a learning process. It is for this reason that the researcher carried out this study to establish the views of teachers towards academic assessment for learners with autism at City Primary school to improve learning.

Research Questions

The study sought answers to the following questions:

1. What are the types of academic assessments for learners with autism used by teachers in City Primary School?
2. What are the teachers’ views on academic assessments for learners with autism?
3. What are the challenges experienced by teachers while assessing learners with autism?
4. What are the solutions to the challenges identified by the teachers?

Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by Social cultural theory by Vygotsky. This theory explains that the actual level of what a child has achieved or developed can be defined by the functions that are matured (Mwakalinga, 2012). These functions that are already matured can only be determined through assessment.
If a child does something without help that means that the function of that activity is matured and the zone of proximal development (ZPD) is determined through problems that the child cannot solve independently (Vygotsky, 1978).

The zone of proximal development concept of Vygotsky discusses two levels of development which are the actual developmental level and the development which is reached when a child is helped by more capable people. The difference between these two levels or the distance between these two levels is what is called zone of proximal development. Put differently, this is the difference between what a learner can do without help and what he or she can do with help. Central to this theory is that interaction with others more experienced adults such as teachers and peers helps to reduce the ZPD. The aim of adults is therefore gradually to remove the support they provide and pass over the responsibility for the task to the child (Greig, Taylor and Mackay, 2008). This theory thus proposes that the social interaction influence cognitive development of an individual (Vygotsky, 1978).

This theory is applicable in this study because learners with autism learn from their interactions with their teachers and the teacher assistants. When the teachers assess the learners with autism they try to determine what the learners have achieved from their interactions and obtain a zone of proximal development where improvement is required. To work on this
zone of proximal development the teachers’ views on academic for learners with autism are a necessity.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Definition of Assessment

Assessment is the systematic collection, review and use of information about educational programs undertaken for the purpose of improving learning and development (Palomba & Bantu, 1999). According to Linn and Miller (2005), assessment refers to a variety of procedures used to obtain information about a student’s performance. It may include the use of traditional paper and pencil tests as well as extended responses for example essays, performances of tasks, teacher observations and students self reports.

Assessments answer the question “How well does an individual perform?” This is supported by Higher Learning Commission (2006) which defines assessment as a participative process that gives data or information on students’ progress in learning. Assessment engages the teacher and others in analyzing and using the data or information to confirm and improve teaching and learning.

Assessment of student achievement in any subject is therefore an integral part of the total learning process and to ensure that the integration of assessment in the learning process is successful, Brown (2004) proposes that it should be learner
centered and should reflect learner-centered curriculum. From these definitions of assessment, it is important to note that assessment for learners with autism may not comprise of paper and pencil assessment but may also involve performance of certain tasks and thus may take any of the approaches described below.

**Approaches to Assessment**

It is worth noting that a thorough and comprehensive assessment, including both formal and informal assessment procedures, is crucial to understanding and appropriately assisting individuals with Autism. Formal assessments are generally used to compare a student’s performance in some domain with that of his or her peers on skills related to language, academics, intellectual ability, and memory. These are also referred to as norm referenced tests and they have specific standards that outline the basis of comparison and administration guidelines. This helps all students including those with disabilities not only to access the general education curriculum but also helps those students to achieve the academic standards specified in that curriculum (Lanter & Watson, 2008).

Informal assessment approaches on the other hand are centered on content and individual performance rather than on comparisons to other students. As such, these approaches do not necessarily require a defined reference group, but
rather compare the child’s performance to the expected skills and abilities as set forth by developmental standards and/or the curriculum. Some of the informal assessment procedures include authentic assessment, assessment of the affective domain and psychomotor domain and portfolio assessment which are commonly used to assess learners with autism.

**Portfolio Assessment**

Portfolio assessment is an ideal choice for students with autism spectrum disorders (Gelfer & Perkins, 1998). This is because it is difficult to use traditional assessment procedures which provide a snapshot of performance on a given date. A student portfolio is a meaningful collection of student work that exemplifies the student’s interests, attitudes, ranges of skills, and development over a period of time and should reflect the student’s growth and change. This portfolio may contain items such as photos, drawings, audiotapes, collages, self-expression projects, videotapes, and student self-reports. Examples of portfolios are where the learners with autism can be photographed as they practice skills such as doing laundry, dining, cooking, making a bed, or setting a table.

According to Carothers and Taylor (2003), a portfolio can also be taken to demonstrate a student’s abilities to write, take messages, and communicate effectively with others. For students with gross motor impairments requiring physical therapy, a log of physical therapy goals, activities, and
accomplishments could be kept, along with a description of how these activities can be used at home.

**Authentic Assessment**
Authentic assessments put emphasis on ‘real world’ tasks relevant outside the classroom and performance assessment stresses the actual doing of a task rather than merely recognizing the answer (Linn & Miller, 2005). They further add that, this approach moves beyond learning by rote and memorization of traditional methods and allows learners to construct responses. Learners with autism can be assessed in real world tasks such as rabbit keeping, ornaments making, bed making and even cooking.

**Psychomotor Domain**
The psychomotor domain is a collection of educational outcomes and learning targets that focus on motor skills and perceptual process (Linn & Miller, 2005; Nitko & Brookhart, 2007). This domain focuses on manual and physical skills that are concerned with doing an activity and require the manipulation of objects and physical activities (Salim, Puteh & Daud, 2012). Some of those activities include muscular or motor behaviours for example running, speaking or writing (Sax, 1996). This assessment can be very helpful for learners with autism as some of the learners have challenges in their motor skills.
Assessment of Affective domain

Education objectives play a crucial role in assessment. Objectives are conveniently categorized as cognitive, affective or psychomotor (Sax, 1996). According to Sax (1996), the cognitive domain emphasizes the attainment, retention and development of knowledge and intellect. The cognitive domain focuses on knowledge outcomes and intellectual abilities and skills (Linn & Miller, 2005). Thus acquisition of subject matter—whether it is very simple or complex in nature is primarily a cognitive function. The affective domain encompasses those behaviors characterized by feelings, emotions or values. Affect may be positive (directed toward some goal object) or negative (directed against a goal object). The affective domain is concerned with the development of or changes of values, attitudes, interests, appreciations and modes of adjustment (Linn & Miller, 2005).

Challenges Experienced by Teachers while Assessing Learners with Autism

Teachers and administrators have an active role in supporting learners with autism to achieve classroom literacy instruction, achieve curriculum standards, prepare for standardized tests and ultimately help the learners to achieve higher levels of success in academics, employment, and other life skills (Catts, Adolf & Weismer, 2006). They are however faced by a number of challenges in their endeavor to make this a success as explained in the section that follows.
Students with Autism are a cohort of students with diverse learning needs that require the attention of both the teachers and the teaching assistants (TAs) (Levy, Mandell, & Schultz, 2009). However, research indicates that not all teachers and TAs are sufficiently trained to provide these learners with the required level of support whether during instruction or during assessment. This makes them to have a feeling of inadequacy with regard to their training to meet the needs of the learners (Lohrmann & Bambara, 2006). Consequently, this affects their methods of instruction and even effective assessment because, these people are left to explore trial and error methods where they make decisions which are based on their own experience rather than knowledge from external sources such as training and professional development courses.

Lack of Practice guidelines for children with autism at different classes is also a challenge to teachers. This leaves them with little support for guiding them on which strategies to choose from while assessing learners with autism. The lack of relevant and accessible policy information inevitably impacts on the teacher’s ability to make appropriate classroom and assessment accommodation for pupils on the autism spectrum (Wilkinson & Twist, 2010). Watkin (2007) advises that in countries that have clearly defined national curricula, national guidelines for assessment may state what is to be assessed but developing and implementing assessment should
be the responsibility of schools and class teachers.

Further, because individuals with autism differ in terms of learning style and profile, no single intervention is appropriate for all (Jordan, 2006; Jones et al., 2009; Parsons et al., 2009). In the same way, assessment strategies should not be the same for all but varied according to specific individual needs of the learners. This has been supported by Humphrey (2008) who suggests that it is impractical to try to reduce inclusive practice to a simple series of strategies and then expect that they will work with every student especially the ones diagnosed with autism. This therefore poses a challenge to the teachers who are supposed to set a similar test for all learners.

Parents also play a vital role in the education and assessment of their children. As partners in the process, parents provide perspectives and information that will broaden educators’ understanding of the student. Their participation enhances program planning and assist in the determination of educational goals, methods of instruction and even methods of assessment. It is therefore necessary that a consultative partnership between home and school is developed through regular, frequent opportunities for discussions about the student’s unique learning needs, evidence of progress, and any adjustments to the educational program that may need to be considered (Perry & Condillac, 2003). Although this has been a long program feature of many comprehensive intervention
models, researchers are documenting that some of the parents do not cooperate to give teachers information to help in the instruction and assessment of the learners as required.

**Strategies to Solve Challenges Experienced by Teachers while Assessing Learners with Autism**

The parents of learners who have been diagnosed with autism require to get trained. According to Ingersoll and Dvortcsak, (2006), few public school programs include parent training as part of special education curriculum despite its well-established benefits. These benefits of parent training include increased skills, renewed confidence and reduced stress for parents and children. This has been identified from the fact that, group training in new skills for parents has been demonstrated to facilitate mutual support between parents and educators (McConachie & Diggle, 2007). Earlier studies have indicated that although parents attend their child’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings, they often have no involvement in developing objectives, interventions, or methods of evaluation (Goldstein, Strocland, Turnbull & Curry, 1980).

The curricula, teaching methods and materials, assessment and examination systems, all need to be accessible and flexible to support differences in learning patterns. Assessment procedures should promote learning for all students. The assessment procedures should complement each other
and thus alternative forms of assessments are needed to accommodate learners who have special needs such as learners who have autism.

For decisions regarding summative assessment to accommodate pupils with autism, it is recommended that appropriate, up-to-date guidance should be published by the relevant authorities and be made easily accessible to all schools. Published teacher guidance is necessary in order to provide pupils with the opportunity to succeed in school in a fair and equitable way and this would ensure that learners with autism are not disadvantaged while being assessed.

**Research Design**

The study used a case study approach using social constructivist epistemology from qualitative paradigm. This research paradigm strives for in-depth understanding of a phenomenon in its natural setting. This research design was chosen to allow the researchers to get teachers’ views on academic assessments of learners with autism from their natural settings (their classrooms) in City primary School, Nairobi County. A case study approach also enabled the researchers to bring out all the details of study situation in totality. The study used interview guides and focussed group discussions to give descriptive accounts. Social constructivist’s epistemology was applied to allow the researchers to understand how individuals (teachers) seek to understand the world in which they work.
This epistemology allowed the researchers to understand the views of teachers towards academic assessment of learners with autism at City Primary School.

**Location of the Study**
The study was carried out at City Primary School in Ngara West Ward, Juja Road Zone, Starehe Sub-county in Nairobi County. City Primary is a Public primary School and has a high enrolment of one hundred and thirty five learners with autism, and it is also practising inclusive education.

**Sampling Techniques**
City Primary school was purposively sampled specifically using unique case sampling because it was the first school to practice inclusive education for learners with autism in Kenya when autism was identified and classified as a separate category of disability by the Ministry of Education in 2003. The teachers in inclusive classes were purposively sampled through snowball sampling technique while the teachers in special needs education units were purposively sampled through convenient sampling.

**Sample Size**
The study sample was made up of twenty respondents who comprised of one head-teacher, one deputy head teacher, six teachers in special needs education, and twelve regular class teachers in inclusive classes.
Research Instruments
The data collection instruments included semi-structured interview guides which were developed for the headteacher and regular teachers in inclusive classes, while the focus group discussion guide (FGD) was developed for teachers in special needs education.

Data Collection Technique
The interviews for the head teacher and the regular teachers in inclusive classes were conducted individually. The teachers were requested for their consent to participate in the study and those who were willing to participate, were given consent forms to fill before the interviews started. The interviewer and note taker also counter signed all the consent forms. The interviews lasted one hour each. The focus group discussion was conducted with the help of six teachers who consented to participate in the study by signing the consent forms. The focus group discussion also lasted for one hour.

Data Analysis
Data analysis was ongoing throughout data collection process, Miles and Huberman (1994) recommends early and continuous data analysis arguing that it helps cycle back and forth between thinking about existing data. This was done by coding the data immediately after its collection to ease categorization and ensure necessary clarifications were made where necessary.
Ethical Considerations
The researchers sought clearance from the Head teacher of the school in which the study was conducted. The researchers explained to the respondents the purpose of the study and requested for their willingness to participate in the study. They also assured them of confidentiality for the information that they would provide.

Trustworthiness of the Data
The researchers ensured trustworthiness through prolonged engagement with the data during analysis through reading and rereading. They also used member checking, triangulation of data from the interviews with that from the focus group discussion and gave full rich descriptions of the findings.

DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Demographic Information
Demographic information from the regular teachers in inclusive classes was sought through an interview guide. Most of the teachers had over twenty four years experience in teaching and the teacher with least experience had four years with two years in teaching learners with autism. Teachers in the inclusive classes also had a lot of teaching experience though they did not have any specialised training in special needs education. They had attended several seminars on
teaching learners with autism which equipped them with skills to handle learners with autism though not sufficiently.

**Types of Academic Assessments for Learners with Autism**

The study findings revealed two types of assessments for learners with autism namely; standardized exams and authentic assessment. Using the standardized examinations which are objective oriented; the learners were assessed for the purpose of grading, ranking and progression. Authentic assessment on the other hand involved learners being taught, toileting, fine motor skills, communication skills, eye contact, gross motor skills and application of number work among others. These findings were in line with Linn and Miller (2005) who says that, authentic assessment emphasizes the practical application of the task in the “real world” outside the classroom. Authentic assessment in City primary School also involved application of number work in measuring food and water in poultry and rabbit keeping, beadwork, tailoring and cookery where this assessment was used to determine learners’ ability in the performance of a task.

The teachers also assessed independence levels of the learners. This involved assessing learner’s ability to do things on their own. Communication skills were also assessed which involved receptive, expressive and non expressive language, speech and body language. Perceptual training was also assessed, and this involved eye to hand and body coordination through the use
of Velcro boards, pegging, fine motor skills and cross motor skills. Authentic assessment at City Primary School was therefore found to be holistic as it moved beyond learning by rote and memorization.

**Teachers’ Views and Challenges Faced in Academic Assessment for Learners with Autism**

The following were identified as the challenges from the findings of the study; curriculum related challenges, parents related challenges, and lack of policy guidelines. The curriculum related challenges included, examinations content, ranking for learners, teaching personnel, diversity among learners, retrogression of the learners, and certification. The parent related challenges included high expectation and choice of educational intervention for their children. Lack of guidelines and textbooks were also identified as major challenges facing the teachers while assessing learners with autism.

Examination content for learners with autism was relatively much as one participant indicated “An autistic child to do ninety questions exam in social studies paper is not fair for them” (Participant two interview, October 29th 2014) while another participant concluded “I believe there should be a certain curriculum for children with autism, the regular curriculum is too hard for them” (Participant three interview, October 29th 2014).

The curriculum challenges also involved lack of assessment
guidelines, this was a challenge, because in the regular classes, the examinations were standardized and objective oriented. However, the time for sitting the examinations varied as some teachers added the learners with autism an extra hour, others relied on the teachers in the special needs education to give directions because they considered them as specialists while they (teachers in special needs education) used their discretion on how to assess.

From the findings of the study it was also noted that since 2003 when the unit admitted learners with autism, the learners have not sat for any summative examination and no certificates have been awarded to facilitate exit from the school. This has resulted into the school having learners up to thirty five years of age. Another challenge was the teacher: pupil ratio (1:8) which was considered high in the units for learners with autism. This ratio reflected on the problem of personnel in the school and was clearly articulated by the participants who explained that “another challenge is personnel; teachers need assistant teachers because sometimes you cannot work alone especially during exams” (Focused group discussion, October 29th, 2014).

The parents also posed a challenge to the teachers as they had very high expectations on the teachers and their children. The study found out that some of the parents were not cooperating with the teachers as one participant posed “Some parents are
not cooperative and do not want to understand when you have assessed and given feedback, mzazi anataka asikie mototo anajua kufanya hesabu but this may not be possible for some” (Focused group discussion, October 29th, 2014).

**Suggested Strategies to Solve the Challenges Faced by Teachers at City Primary School**

From this study, teachers, government and the parents had a role to play in enhancing assessment for learners with autism. The government needed to train more teachers in the area of autism so that the teachers could be effective in instruction and assessment for learners with autism. It was also necessary for the government to provide relevant guidelines on assessment of learners who had special needs. This needed to be done in consultation with Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development and Kenya National Examinations Council.

The school should also have trained the parents on their supportive role during assessment of their children for improved learning. Teachers could also encourage parents and talk to them about their children and the challenges they experience. The Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development and Kenya National Examinations Council should also have looked into the content of the exams which seemed to be a big challenge for the learners with autism. They should have considered coming up with varied assessment strategies because individual learners have specific learning problems.
Summary of the Findings
This case study was carried out at City Primary School. The focus of the study was to establish the teachers’ views on academic assessment for learners with autism and suggest strategies to solve the solutions to those challenges. The following is a summary of what was established from the findings:

Types of Academic Assessments for Learners with Autism
Academic assessments used in City Primary School for learners with autism were mainly two; standardized exams and authentic assessment.

Teachers Views and Challenges Faced by Teachers in Academic Assessment of Learners with Autism
The study found out that issues such as exam content, ranking of learners using assessments, similar assessment for learners with diverse needs were posing great challenges to teachers. Lack of enough personnel and guidelines on assessment of learners with autism also challenged the teachers. The parents were also found to be unaware of their role in supporting learning and assessment of their children.

Suggested Strategies to Solve the Challenges Faced by Teachers in Academic Assessments for Learners with Autism
The Government through the ministry needed to consider
exam content, ranking and certification of learners with autism due to their diverse learning needs. The guidelines for assessing these learners needed to be made available for teachers for better assessment practice. Training of parents on their supportive role during learning and assessment of their children was also found to be important.

**Suggested Areas for Further Research**

From the study findings, gaps still existed in areas of assessing learners with autism and there was need for further research in the following:-

i) The transition of learners with autism from primary schools to secondary schools

ii) Parental views on academic assessment for learners with autism

iii) Parental views on authentic assessment of learners with autism in the special units and vocational classes.
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Relationship between Academic Emotions, Self-efficacy and mathematics achievement of secondary school students in Central Division, Machakos County, Kenya

Authors

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between academic emotions and self-efficacy in predicting mathematics achievement of secondary school students. A random sample of 300 form three students (150 males, 150 females) was selected from public secondary schools in Central Division, Machakos County, Kenya. Correlation research design was adopted and data collected using a self report questionnaire. Analysis of examination records was done to obtain data on mathematics achievement. Relationships were determined using Pearson product-moment correlation method while t-test for independent samples was used to determine gender differences between students’ academic emotions, self-efficacy and mathematics achievement. Results revealed a significant relationship between students academic emotions, self-efficacy and mathematics achievement. Significant gender differences were found in students’ academic emotions and self-efficacy. The findings are useful in helping students to develop control over the process of learning mathematics and attach high
value to the subject, which lead to development of positive emotions which have a positive correlation to academic achievement.

Key words: Academic emotions, Self-efficacy, Mathematics achievement

Introduction
Good performance in mathematics is emphasized in education because mathematics is perceived as the foundation for scientific and technological knowledge (Githua & Mwangi, 2003). Mathematics subject is considered significant for social and economic development and, for this, it is a compulsory subject in many education curricula. For example, in South Africa, it is compulsory in standard 1 to 7 (Kulubya & Glencross 1997). In Kenya, it is compulsory in primary and secondary levels of education (KIE, 2002). Mathematics is externally examined twice in the Kenyan curriculum; at the end of primary education cycle in the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE), and in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) at the end of the secondary education cycle. Secondary education is used for placement into further training and career choice. It is, therefore, an important sub-sector of education in the preparation of human capital for development and provision of life opportunities (Onsomu, Muthaka, Ngware & Kosimbei 2006).

Good performance in mathematics is a requirement for selection into competitive courses such as medicine,
engineering, architecture and technology (Manoah, Indoshi & Othuon, 2011). Despite the importance of the subject in the society, there has been a concern about student’s poor performance in public examinations. Statistics obtained from Machakos District Education Office reveal that in 2009, 2010 and 2011 mathematics was poorly performed, with approximately 70% of candidates each year scoring D+ and below. This implies that more than half of total candidates fail in the subject hence missing courses that consider performance in mathematics in higher institutions of learning.

Due to the declining performance in the subject, many studies have attributed its poor performance to both student and teacher factors. These include: teachers subject knowledge (APHRC, 2010), students negative attitude towards the subject (Mbugua, Kibet, Muthaa & Nkonke, 2012; Manoah, Indoshi & Othuon, 2011) and students lack of motivation to learn the subject (Githua & Mwangi, 2003). The current study took a different direction and looked into students academic emotions which have so far received little attention from researchers in Kenya. The main purpose of the study was to determine the relationship between students’ academic emotions, self-efficacy and mathematics achievement.

Academic emotions have been reported to influence academic achievement (Pekrun, Goetz, Titz & Perry 2002a). Emotions are reactions to significant events and objects (Pekrun and Stephens, 2010). Academic emotions thus, refer to students’
reactions to activities that take place in an academic setting, and which are directly linked to the learning process and its outcome. Emotions can generally be categorized in two: positive emotions and negative emotions (Pekrun, et al., 2002a). Positive emotions include joy, hope and pride while negative emotions are anger, hopelessness, boredom and shame. In an academic setting, emotions can further be classified based on the object of focus, into activity emotions and outcome emotions (Pekrun, et al., 2002a). Activity emotions are emotions experienced during the ongoing learning process. Examples include enjoyment of a mathematics lesson, boredom experienced in a lesson, frustrations and anger experienced when solving difficult mathematical problems. Outcome emotions are determined by the kind of results the student expects to achieve. For example, pride from success or shame from failure. Thus based on this classification, emotions experienced in academic settings are directly linked to the process of learning and the success or failure in academic achievement (Pekrun, 2006). The control-value of emotions theory explains that the perceived control over and value of an activity are central to the arousal of academic emotions and that emotions play an important role in the learning process. The theory further notes that there is a reciprocal causal relationship between emotions and achievement which can create either positive or negative feedback. That is, positive emotions of enjoyment and hope will have positive impact on academic achievement while negative emotions of shame and
boredom will negatively predict academic achievement. For example, a student who enjoys mathematics lessons will score good grades in mathematics while a student who experiences boredom in mathematics lessons has little interest in the subject hence gets low scores.

The control-value theory also proposes that students can organize and direct their own learning process upon becoming aware of their own competencies and abilities. The control appraisal suggests that student’s are able to judge their own competence, expectations and perception of the cause of success or failure in academic work. The value appraisals refer to the importance attached to the learning activity and also the value attached to achievement outcomes such as the perceived importance of attaining success and avoiding failure (Pekrun, 2006; Pekrun, et al., 2002a).

Thus, this theory postulate that a student who experience positive emotions, and highly values learning activities and outcomes tend to be in control of her learning and is more likely to perform better. On the contrary, a student with negative academic emotions and attach low value to learning activities and outcome, has little control over his learning and thus low achievement. Therefore, for a student to perform well in mathematics he or she should be aware of his/her competence in the subject so as to exercise control over it. In addition, the student should attach high positive values on the process of learning the subject and on the expected
Another important student factor that influences academic achievement is self-efficacy. Academic self-efficacy indicates the student’s belief in their ability to accomplish various school activities. Bandura (1986) expressed that the higher the sense of efficacy, the greater the effort and perseverance in a task. Therefore, students with high self-efficacy beliefs in mathematics are likely to put a lot of efforts even when faced with challenging mathematics tasks. Bandura and Schunk (1991) explored the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and emotional reactions. Students with low self-efficacy that a task is difficult becomes stressed and develop a narrow vision on how to solve the problem while students with high self-efficacy belief would be more relaxed in solving difficult task because they are confident of their ability to succeed.

Self-efficacy has also been related to a students’ interest in school subjects. This interest in specific subjects enables students to put more efforts and become competent in the subjects hence raising their self-efficacy (Hidi & Ainley 2008). Reports show that self-efficacy is task-specific and varies between subjects. For example, Pajares & Miller (1997) reported that mathematics self-efficacy is a good predictor of mathematics interest and choice of mathematics related courses. Rahil, Elias, Cheong, Muhamad, Noordin and Abdullah (2006) revealed that academic self-efficacy influences performance in English performance among
secondary school students. Studies conducted on science and engineering college students (Lent, Brown and Hackett 1994) reported that high self-efficacy influence academic persistence necessary to maintain high academic achievement. Momanyi, Ogoma and Misigo (2011) reported significant relationship between self-efficacy and performance in science subjects while Simiyu (2010) found that students’ self-efficacy was significant in influencing performance in mathematics. Based on the findings of previous research it is evident that self-efficacy is pertinent to academic achievement in different subjects. The current study examined the relationship between students’ academic emotions and self-efficacy in influencing performance in mathematics. Students’ academic emotions and self-efficacy have received little attention from educational researchers as student factors that can influence performance in the subject.

The study objectives were to determine the relationship between students’ academic emotions and mathematics achievement, to determine the relationship between students’ self-efficacy and achievement in mathematics, establish whether there are gender differences in students’ academic emotions and mathematics achievements and finally find out whether there are gender differences in students’ self-efficacy and mathematics achievement.

The findings of this study may be significant to students,
parents and teachers. Students may be able to understand better the role of emotions in the process of learning and be able to manage their emotions so that they can positively influence their performance in mathematics. Students may also realize the need for taking control over their learning process and develop positive value towards mathematics in order to perform well. Parents and teachers may be able to understand better the effects of emotions on students’ academic achievement therefore, create stimulating school and home environments that facilitate effective learning. They may also recognize the importance of being good role models to help build students’ self-efficacy so as to take active control of their learning. Findings from this study can also serve the purpose of enabling parents and teachers to realize the need to enhance self-efficacy in students to enable them approach mathematics and other school subjects with confidence. In addition, the findings may add new knowledge on factors that influence academic achievement in mathematics.
Method

Participants

The study adopted a correlation research design to determine the relationship between the independent variables (student’s academic emotions and self-efficacy) with the dependent variable mathematics achievement. The sample size of the study was 300 form three students (150 males, 150 females) selected from five public secondary schools in Central Division, Machakos county, Kenya. The school categories were girls boarding, boys boarding, co-educational boarding, co-educational day / boarding and co-educational day school. In each school a random sample of 60 participants was obtained.

Instruments

Data was collected using two instruments, a self-report questionnaire and document analysis.

Students’ questionnaire

A self-report questionnaire was used to collect data on students’ academic emotions and academic self-efficacy. The questionnaire consisted of three parts. Part I contained items seeking to gather students’ personal information comprising of class, admission number, age, gender, school name, school type and residential status. Part II contained the Academic Emotions scale while part III was made of the Academic Self-Efficacy scale.
a. **Academic Emotions Questionnaire (AEQ)**

Students’ academic emotions were measured using the Academic Emotions Questionnaire (AEQ) developed by Pekrun, Goetz, Titz, and Perry (2002a). The instrument was adapted to suit the study and was further revised using information obtained from the pilot study to make it applicable to a secondary school situation. The items were also modified to specifically test academic emotions related to mathematics. The scale consisted of 28 items divided into four sub-scales for each of the emotions investigated (joy, hope, boredom and shame). The items on each sub-scale were on a four point scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 4= strongly agree. Each sub scale consisted of seven items, therefore sub-scale score ranged from 7 to 28. The score for the entire AEQ scale range from 28 to 112. Content validity of Academic Emotions Scale was ensured through peer review to include only items that represent the emotions of joy, hope, boredom and shame. The internal reliability of the Academic emotions scale from the pilot study was found to be \( \alpha = 0.67 \) suggesting that the items had relatively high internal consistency; this is so since a reliability coefficient of about 0.70 is considered to be acceptable.
b. **Academic Self-Efficacy Scale (ASES)**

Student’s self-efficacy was measured using a 16 item Academic Self-Efficacy Scale adapted from the academic self-efficacy scales developed by Chemers, Hu, & Garcia (2001) and Zajacova, Lynch, & Espanshade (2005). Participants responded to a four-point scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 4= strongly agree in rating their agreement with statements reflecting their academic confidence and ability to perform well and succeed in mathematics. The scores of Academic Self-Efficacy Scale (ASES) range from 16 to 64. The scores were categorized into two with scores ranging from 41 to 64 representing high academic self-efficacy and scores from 16 to 40 representing low academic self-efficacy. The content validity was ascertained through peer review to ensure all the items included in the instrument measure self-efficacy. The instrument was found to be reliable with the pilot data reporting a reliability coefficient of $\alpha=0.90$, which was higher than the internal reliability of $\alpha=0.81$ reported by Chemers, Hu & Garcia (2001) and $\alpha=0.85$ by Zajacova, Lynch & Espenshade (2005). Thus the reliability coefficient obtained in the pilot study was considered satisfactory to justify the use of the Academic Self-efficacy scale in this study.

c. **Document analysis**

Students’ mathematics achievement was determined by obtaining mathematics scores for end of term II, 2013
examination from the sampled schools. Scores were obtained in percentage and categorized as low, average and high. Scores ranging from 0 to 33 percent were classified as low, scores ranging from 34 to 66 percent were average while scores 67 to 100 percent were categorized as high achievement.

**Procedure**

A research permit was obtained from the National Council for Science and Technology and presented to the Machakos County Director of Education for authorization to collect data in public secondary schools in Central division, Machakos district. A pre-visit to the sampled schools was made to familiarize with the school principals and organize appropriate date and time when the researcher would revisit to sample participants and collect data.

During data collection the researcher ensured that ethical considerations were observed by first explaining the purpose of the study to the participants. Their willingness to participate in the study was obtained through the signing of the consent form. In addition, participants were assured that their responses would be confidential and will only be used for the purpose intended in the study. Data was collected by the researcher alone, by distributing questionnaires and allowing participants 30 minutes to complete and hand back the questionnaires. Mathematics scores for end of term II, 2013
examination were obtained from the form three mathematics teachers.

Results of the study consist of descriptive statistics of means and standard deviations and inferential statistics of correlation coefficients and t-tests for independent samples. Analysis was done in sequence to the objectives of the study.

**Relationship between students’ academic emotions and mathematics achievement.**

Students’ academic emotions were analyzed based on two types the positive emotions of joy and hope and the negative emotions of boredom and shame that students may experience in mathematics. Descriptive statistics of the different domains of academic emotions are presented in table 1.

**Table 1**

*Descriptive statistics of domains of academic emotions*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joy</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>22.07</td>
<td>4.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boredom</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>12.27</td>
<td>4.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23.10</td>
<td>3.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shame</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>12.52</td>
<td>4.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results show that the mean for positive emotions of joy and hope was high compared to the mean for the negative emotions of boredom and shame. This implies that generally, majority of the students’ found mathematics enjoyable and had hope in doing well in the subject despite the low scores they attained.

Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was used to test the hypothesis $H_{01}$: there is no significant difference between students’ academic emotions and mathematics achievement. Table 2 presents the results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variable</th>
<th>Test Variable</th>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic emotions score</td>
<td>Mathematics achievement score(s)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>220</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results show that there is a positive and significant relationship between academic emotions and mathematics achievement ($r = 0.32, p<0.05$). The null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

**Relationship between academic self-efficacy and mathematics achievement**

Students’ academic self-efficacy was measured using a 16 item scale. The responses were used to categorize self-efficacy as high or low pertaining to performance in mathematics. Table 3 shows the levels of academic self-efficacy obtained.

**Table 3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of Academic Self-Efficacy</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>70.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students found to have high self-efficacy had scores ranging from 41 to 64 while low self-efficacy was assigned scores ranging from 16 to 40. Results show that majority of the students reported that they had high self-efficacy beliefs in mathematics achievement while few students represented by 29.7 % reported low self-efficacy in the subject. These results differ with the levels of performance in mathematics where
many students 76.6% had low achievement in the subject hence contradicting the believe that high self-efficacy levels correspond to high achievement. The students’ high self efficacy can be explained by their perseverance in the subject and efforts puts to score good grades. Mathematics being a compulsory subject in the Kenyan education curriculum, a student is likely to have high hopes in performing well and put effort into attaining a better grade.

A co-variation of the independent variable academic self-efficacy and the dependent variable mathematics achievement was done. Table 4 presents the results.

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variable</th>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic self-efficacy score</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>Mathematics achievement score(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.202</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>259</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results show that that there is a positive and significant relationship between academic self-efficacy and mathematics achievement ($r = 0.20, p<0.05$), thus the null hypothesis was rejected.
Gender differences in students’ academic emotions and mathematics achievement

To determine whether gender differences exist in students’ academic emotions and mathematics achievement, data obtained was used to get the mean differences in types of academic emotions between male and female students. The descriptive statistics of range, mean and standard deviation are presented and compared between male and female participants. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Mean differences in types of Academic Emotions between male and female students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Type of AE</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Joy</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>21.45</td>
<td>4.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boredom</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>13.05</td>
<td>4.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hope</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>22.63</td>
<td>3.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shame</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>13.21</td>
<td>4.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Joy</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>22.63</td>
<td>3.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boredom</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11.51</td>
<td>4.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hope</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23.53</td>
<td>3.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shame</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11.84</td>
<td>3.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: AE- Academic Emotions

The mean differences by type of emotion show that mean
was highest for male participants on the positive emotions of joy and hope than of the female counterparts. The means for negative emotions of boredom and shame were higher for female participants than of the male participants. Standard deviations by type of academic emotions were high for all four types of emotions among the female participants and slightly lower for the male participants.

Using t-tests for independent samples to test the hypothesis that there are no gender differences between students' academic emotions and mathematics achievement, results confirmed there were significant gender differences in academic emotions (t = -2.91, df 218, p<0.05). The difference noted was in favour of male students, an indication that male students enjoyed mathematics more than female students who reported more boredom and shame in the subject. The finding agrees with the observations of Pekrun, Frenzel, Goetz, & Perry (2007) that perceived control and academic values differ between boys and girls resulting into different emotional experiences. They reported that even though girls and boys had received similar grades in mathematics, girls reported significantly less enjoyment and pride than boys, but more anxiety, hopelessness and shame. The current study found that girls had higher means in the negative emotions of boredom and shame while boys had higher means in the positive emotions of joy and hope.
Data was further analyzed to determine whether gender differences existed in the domains of academic emotions. Four types of students’ emotions were investigated. These were the positive emotions of joy and hope, and the negative emotions of shame and boredom.

Table 6

*T-test for independent samples for gender differences in types of academic emotions*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of emotions</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Sig.(2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joy</td>
<td>-1.97</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boredom</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>0.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope</td>
<td>-2.09</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>0.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shame</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>0.005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results on Table 6 reveal that all four types of academic emotions were found to have significant gender differences; joy (t = -1.97, df = 250, p = 0.05), boredom (t = 3.02, df = 255, p < 0.05), hope (t = -2.09, df 277, p< 0.05), shame ( t = 2.81, df = 267, p< 0.05). The gender differences noted were in favour of male participants who reported greater enjoyment and hope in mathematics achievement. Girls scored higher in boredom and indication that they experienced little enjoyment in the subject.
Gender differences in students’ self-efficacy and mathematics achievement

A cross tabulation of students' level of academic self-efficacy and gender was done and the following results obtained.

Table 7

Cross tabulation of levels of academic self-efficacy by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of academic self-efficacy</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>F 18.5</td>
<td>F 11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>F 31.3</td>
<td>F 39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>49.8</td>
<td>50.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results show that 29.7 percent of participants reported low academic self-efficacy while majority of the participants represented by 70.3% reported high academic self-efficacy. Representation of low self-efficacy by gender shows that female students had lower academic self-efficacy than the male students. It is also clear that more male students reported higher self-efficacy than their female counterparts in the same category. The hypothesis tested to determine gender differences between students academic self-efficacy and mathematics achievement gave results that there are
significant gender differences in students' academic self-efficacy ($t = -2.71$, $df = 257$, $p < 0.05$). The null hypothesis is rejected implying that there are gender differences in students’ academic self-efficacy. The difference noted is in favor of the male students, who majority reported high self-efficacy than the female students.

**Discussion**

The current study was conducted to determine the relationship between students’ academic emotions, self-efficacy and mathematics achievement. Mathematics achievement was found to be low for most of the students in all the schools studied with only few students achieving average and high scores.

Results of the study reveal that there is a significant and positive relationship between students’ academic emotions and mathematics achievement. Generally, the positive emotions of joy and hope were found to have higher means than the negative emotions of boredom and shame. This means that majority of the students’ found mathematics enjoyable and had hope in doing well in the subject despite the low scores they attain. This can further be explained by a situation where though a student has positive emotions they lack control in learning mathematics. The lack of control may be attributed to inability to use appropriate revision strategies and poor time management skills, such that the student hopes to perform
well in the subject but is not adequately prepared. Another contributing factor results when the learning process and the learning environment are not stimulating enough for effective learning to take place. Though a student may enjoy mathematics and have hope in performing well, these emotions are negatively affected by the non-stimulating environment and the student ends up bored (Pekrun, 2006). Learning in a non-stimulating environment affects a students’ perception of the subject and eventually poor performance results.

With regard to the relationship between self-efficacy and mathematics achievement, a significant and positive relationship was found. A higher percentage of participants reported high academic self-efficacy belief and a fewer number agreed to have low academic self-efficacy. The findings disagree with the studies of Pajares and Graham (1998) and Adem (2011) who reported that there are no gender differences in self-efficacy in mathematics achievement. Since male students were found to perform better in mathematics than females students, this difference can be attributed to the differences in self-efficacy beliefs. A student with high self-efficacy belief on competence in mathematics is likely to perform well than a student who experience low self-efficacy in the subject. High self-efficacy enables the student to persevere more in mathematics tasks, put more effort and have confidence in doing well. On the other hand, a student with low self-efficacy is likely to feel incompetent and can easily lose interest in the
subject hence poor performance. Thus due to the low academic self-efficacy reported by girls, they are less likely to persevere in difficult mathematical tasks hence poor performance in the subject. The low academic self-efficacy and negative emotions towards mathematics negatively influence mathematics achievement among girls. To bridge the gap in gender differences in academic emotions girls need to be encouraged to develop more control on how they learn mathematics and also attach high positive values to the subject. Perceived high control and positive value attachment on mathematics results to positive academic emotions which are associated with good performance.

The results of the present study revealed that although students had higher academic self-efficacy it was found that they had below average or low academic performance. The most probable reason for low academic achievement of the students could be attributed to personal factors such as negative attitude towards mathematics subject and school factors such as poor teaching methods and non stimulating learning environment. The results also show that good performance in mathematics is not determined by the level of students’ self-efficacy alone; other factors such as teachers’ competence level and learning strategies used by the students may also be useful.

Significant gender differences were noted in students’ academic emotions. Both positive emotions of joy and hope were found to have positive and significant gender differences.
Similarly the negative emotions of boredom and shame had positive and significant gender differences. All the differences noted were in favor of the male students. Male students attained higher mean scores in the positive emotions of joy and hope than the females. On the other hand female students recorded higher means in the negative emotions of boredom and shame than the male students. The control value theory of emotions assumes that relations between control and value appraisal and academic emotions should be equivalent for males and females. However, perceived control and academic values differ between genders resulting to different emotional experiences (Frenzel, et al. 2007). To confirm this assumption it was found that the relationships between girls’ and boys’ control and value appraisal in mathematics, on one hand, and their mathematics emotions, on the other, were structurally equivalent across genders (Frenzel, Pekrun, Goetz, & vom Hofe, 2006). However, mean scores for perceived control were substantially lower in girls. As a consequence, they reported less enjoyment in mathematics as well as more anxiety and shame. In regard to this finding girls require improvement in control strategies to enable them be in charge of their mathematics learning process so as to obtain good results. In addition to being in control their self-efficacy will also increase. Students need high value attachment to mathematics since it is a compulsory subject which is considered in career choice. Significant gender differences were also found in students’
academic self-efficacy. T –test for independent samples indicated that there were positive and significant gender differences in students’ academic self-efficacy. The difference was in favor of male students who were found to have higher academic self-efficacy than the female students. This can be explained by stereotype that boys do well in mathematics and sciences and girls in art subjects. Girls can do equally better by taking charge and being in control of their learning and develop positive value attachment to mathematics as a subject and careers associated with it.

Considering the two independent variables, academic emotions and self-efficacy, students’ academic emotions was found to be a better predictor of mathematics achievement. Analysis shows all four types of academic emotions to be significantly related to mathematics achievement despite the gender differences noted. These gender differences can be harmonized by encouraging all students and especially girls to acquire better control strategies in learning mathematics and in addition develop high positive values towards the subject. Perceived high control and high positive value attachment to mathematics result to positive academic emotions which are associated with good performance.
References


The Implementation of New Religious and Moral Education Curriculum in Post-Independent Namibia: A Case Study

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Abstract

This paper investigated the perceptions of Religious and Moral Education (RME) teachers with regard to the implementation of RME syllabus in Namibia. The paper engages a crucial global debate on paradigms for teaching religion and moral values while contributing to the literature through research in the Ompundja Circuit of Oshana Region, Namibia. Contrary to the previous colonial era when Christianity was the only recognized religion, the Republic of Namibia adopted a new constitution making it a secular state upon independence in 1990. This new constitution, however, brought new challenges to teachers who were previously trained only to teach Biblical Studies as a school subject. With this new constitution, Namibia adopted a policy of teaching a multicultural religious and moral education curriculum. The teaching of RME replaced Biblical Studies in the Namibian curriculum. Teachers are now required to make their learners aware of the different religious and moral values of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, African traditional religions, Bahai and others inextricably.

This paper, therefore, presents findings from a case study research conducted at Ompundja Circuit of Oshana Region in Namibia that examined the perceptions of Religious and Moral Education (RME) teachers with regard to the implementation of RME syllabus. Fourteen teachers from selected schools participated in this study. Teachers were interviewed, observed and later completed a set of questionnaire. Findings indicated that teachers’
individual religious and moral values shaped the teaching and learning process; teachers’ individual religious and moral values played a major role regarding conflicting concerns over RME; and as most RME teachers were Christian, they felt a commitment to share their personal Christian religious beliefs and moral values. The paper recommends that teachers be provided with the necessary teaching resources and be trained to develop more confidence and broad understanding of RME as a subject.

Key words: Religious and Moral Education, curriculum, Namibia, Biblical Studies, teacher training, secular state.

Introduction

This pioneering research investigated the perceptions of Religious and Moral Education (RME) teachers with regard to the implementation of Namibia’s new RME syllabus. The study helps to inform the crucial global debate on paradigms for teaching RME values, while contributing to a growing canon of literature through research conducted in the Ompundja Circuit of Oshana Region, Namibia. This region was selected because the schools involved in this study, which follow the national curriculum, were within a 10 km radius from the University of Namibia Hifikepunye Pohamba Campus, where the researchers were based. Moreover, with the adoption of the new Republic of Namibia Constitution after independence was obtained in 1990, Namibia became
a secular state. This new secular identity was in stark contrast with the previous colonial eras when Christianity was the only recognized religion, and provided a significant challenge for teachers who were previously trained to teach only Christian Biblical Studies.

When European Christian missionaries first arrived in Namibia in 1806, their mission schools aimed to convert Namibians to Christianity, and Biblical Studies became a core school subject in the education system. From then on Christianity remained an integral part of the national school curriculum (Other religions were allowed, but not recognized or included in the curriculum). This tradition remained when Germany began to colonise Namibia (formally known then as South West Africa) in 1884, and later when South Africa was granted a mandate over Namibia in 1920. However, when Namibia became independent in 1990 RME was introduced as a replacement for Christian Biblical Studies in the new curriculum. Currently, teachers are required to teach their learners to be aware of various religious and moral values incorporated within Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, African traditional religions, Bahai and other faiths. In grades five to seven, learners explore Judaism, African Traditional Religions and Christianity; while in grades eight to ten learners are to study Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and other belief systems relevant to the
Namibian society. Moreover, in grades five to ten all learners are expected to work together by using their knowledge about faith in a local context to explore and integrate what is new and unfamiliar. Learners are to use what has been discovered about other faiths to reflect on and deepen their own religious experience and understanding. At all grade levels, the teacher’s approach must not be to impose religious doctrine, but to be ecumenical; academically embracing all religions and moral values (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2005, p. 2; Ministry of Education and Culture, 2007, p. 2).

Against this backdrop, this paper investigated teachers’ perceptions toward RME as a subject and evaluated the implementation of RME in selected schools in Namibia. The study further assessed the constraints that hinder the effective teaching and learning within the RME context. To address these research objectives, this paper begins by giving a brief review of significant contextual literature followed by research methodology, results and discussion, and ends with conclusion and recommendations of the study.
Objectives
The objectives of this qualitative single case study were to assess RME teachers’ perceptions of the subject, evaluate how the RME syllabus is being implemented in grades five to ten; and to investigate the constraints that hinder effective teaching and learning within RME.

A Review of Significant Contextual Literature
Before the colonial government of Germany controlled education in Namibia (formally known as South West Africa), religious education was in the hands of missionaries. In fact, both forms of education, religious and secular, were provided by missionary centres during the German era, and also initially during the South African regime. During these times missionaries promoted their religious beliefs in exchange for providing education, health care and jobs. In fact, in order to work for the missionaries and to benefit from their “civil” work, it was necessary to be converted to Christianity. Most of those recruited were teachers, nurses and police officers (Katsao & Mbumba, 1992, p. 25). During the period of South African rule, Christian Biblical Studies was part of the teacher education curriculum and the basic education curriculum (grades one to 12) and was usually restricted to reading of the Holy Scriptures and understanding church history from a Protestant perspective.
However, when Namibia gained independence in 1990, a new subject, Religious and Moral Education (RME), was introduced into the school curriculum (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1991). This subject (with a focus on Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and African traditional religions) replaced Biblical Studies, which only allowed the study of Christianity. Unlike the former Biblical Studies curriculum, RME embraced the study of many different religions and forms of morality. In this way, RME teachers were now responsible for guiding their learners in how to live in a society characterised by religious and cultural diversity (Knitter, 1985, p. 206). To achieve this end result, RME teachers needed to be aware of diverse religions/worldviews and to accommodate them in their daily RME lesson plans. Moreover, within modern Namibia, it is quite likely that teachers in government schools may have learners from religious backgrounds very different from their own, or learners that belong to no particular religion. In every case, however, it is still the teacher’s duty to introduce all learners to the RME curriculum regarding morals and values. Moreover, regardless of learners’ religious affiliations, it was now the responsibility of the RME teacher to help all learners accept individuals with different value systems, and to help each learner to better understand their own personal value system.
According to the Namibian constitution, it is the right and responsibility of teachers and learners to exercise their religious freedom, while being tolerant of the religious views of others (Iita, 2012a; Iita, 2012b). “All people are equal before the law and each individual’s morality, religion and value system is respected according to the Namibian Constitution. And, according to Namibia’s Ministry of Education and Culture (1991), every Namibian is challenged to turn this country into an example of morality, spirituality and tolerance to the rest of the world” (p. 1). Clearly, with their new constitution, Namibia adopted a policy of teaching a multi-cultural religious and moral education to all learners (Lubbe, 1997, p. 17).

Although Namibia is a secular state with 90% of the population currently claiming to be Christian, Article 19 of the Constitution clearly provides for the right of religious and non-religious freedom (Republic of Namibia, 1990). Therefore, the aim of the RME curriculum is to enable learners to understand their religious beliefs and practices, and to accept other groups whose values and traditions may be different from their own. In such a context it should be understood that the aims of RME are to enable learners to better understand themselves and their changing multicultural world; to understand the diversity of religious beliefs and practices in the wider community; and to explore and value traditional African religions. Thus, the RME syllabus covers
a variety of religions and includes central themes on family and community life, worship, rules and laws, and the personal values of self and others (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2005; Ministry of Education and Culture, 2007). To better understand this educational agenda, a carefully circumscribed case study was carried to assess the implementation of RME in 21st century Namibia.

**Methodology**

In this methodology section, we discussed the research design that we followed, sampling procedures, research instruments and data analysis procedures.

*Research Design.* The researchers used a single case study based on a qualitative approach, as the purpose of the study was to gain a deeper understanding of the implementation of RME by teachers in instructional and learning situations. Our main reason to select a single case study was to have an in-depth and contextual understanding of the subject under investigation, in this case, teachers’ perceptions toward RME as a subject and the overall implementation of RME in schools. Yin (2009, p. 14) defines a case study as “an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident”.

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Sampling the population. The population comprised all government schools with RME teachers in the Ompundja Circuit of Oshana Region, Namibia. Purposive sampling was used for this study in order to select seven government schools in the Oshana Region, four urban and three rural, that reflected a Christian philosophy (a trait common to government schools in Namibia). According to Maxwell, (2004), purposive sampling relies on the judgment of the researcher when it comes to the phenomenon that is to be studied (Maxwell, 2004). The criteria for selecting schools were as follows: (a) the school must be in the Ompundja Circuit, and must be within a 10 km radius from the University of Namibia-Hifikepunye Pohamba Campus, where the researchers were based; (b) the school must be a government school and should follow a Namibian school curriculum; and (c) the school must have been in existence for a minimum period of three years. Purposive sampling was also used to select the sample of 14 RME teachers from the pool of other teachers who could represent the population of RME teacher in Namibia in terms of background, training, qualifications and experience (Best & Khan, 1998, p. 186). The teachers were selected using the following criteria: (a) the teacher must be teaching RME as a school subject; (b) the teacher must have taught RME for a minimum of one year; and (c) the teacher must have a minimum qualification of a Basic Education Teachers’ Diploma.
With regard to the demographic details of the sample, a total of 14 teachers participated in this study – 10 females and 4 males. The majority of teachers were in the 19-25 and 34-43 age groups. All participants were professionally qualified in the field of teaching and their years of teaching experience ranged from 1 to 20 years. As part of research ethics, participants were assured of their right to participate or withdraw if they so desired and confidentiality was also guaranteed throughout the study. All participating schools and teachers were allocated *pseudo-names*, for example, School A, B, C, or Teacher 1, 2, or 3.

**Research instruments.** The researchers used three instruments to collect data, namely, questionnaire, interview and observation. Each teacher in the sample completed a questionnaire. The questionnaire used in this research asked for biographical information, such as age, sex and years of teaching experience. The questionnaire further elicited responses that directly answered the research questions regarding the RME teachers’ perceptions of Religious and Moral Education in teaching and learning situations, as well as their perceptions regarding the constraints hindering the teaching and learning of RME. The other reason why we used the questionnaire was to increase the trustworthiness and reliability of the data collected by using several sources of data gathering (Boundah, 2011).
The second instrument we used was interview. Interview questions solicited information with regards to teachers’ perceptions of RME as a school subject, their application of the RME syllabus in various teaching and learning situations, and any constraints they perceived as hindering the RME teaching and learning process. Each interview lasted between 40 and 45 minutes and was audio recorded. The interviews were later transcribed for data analysis.

The third instrument used for data collection was observation. Each participating teacher was observed teaching a RME lesson at least once in his/her own classroom. An observation checklist was used to clarify what the RME teachers had said during the interviews and recorded in their questionnaires, and to ascertain if what the teachers said they did in their classrooms corresponded to what was actually observed. During observation periods, the researchers recorded how the teachers interacted with the learners, noting any observed barriers to effective teaching and learning and how they were handled; various teaching styles; and the intended content/learning objectives. The main purpose of the classroom observations was to complement the questionnaires and interviews, as well as to see how the teachers interacted with their learners, as suggested by Patton (1990). Thus, this method helped the researchers to have more confidence in making appropriate analysis and conclusions about the teaching and implementation of RME.
Data Analysis. The data collected from the interviews, questionnaires, and classroom observations were analysed through triangulation in order to discover emerging and consistent themes. Data organization and analysis were based on the works of Bogdan and Biklin (1992) and Miles and Huberman (1994). The first phase of data analysis was to transcribe all the interview recordings. Data were then later broken down into manageable units and then categorized and synthesized to identify significant patterns using headings and tables. This data analysis procedure helped us as researchers to draw insightful conclusions.

Following a common practice in writing up qualitative reports, this study also included the voice of participants within the text. For example, to better highlight findings on the challenges to effective instruction, a teacher quotation such as the following would be included: “When I do my preparations is when I face problems due to lack of materials. It will be better if I can go for in-service training.”

Permission to conduct this study was given by the Ministry of Education. Confidentiality was guaranteed throughout the study, and participants were assured of their right to participate or withdraw if they so desired. All participating schools and teachers were allocated pseudo-names, for example, School A, B, C, or Teacher 1, 2, or 3.
Results and Discussion

Data analysis generated two comprehensive themes: teachers’ general perceptions of RME and teachers’ perceptions of constraints for teaching RME.

Teachers’ general perceptions of RME. RME teachers were asked to express their perceptions regarding RME, and in most cases they simply described their own religious beliefs and moral understandings. The sample of 14 RME teachers described their understanding of RME as a school subject and their teaching experiences, which they perceived as involving religious beliefs and moral values which closely paralleled their own. What emerged was a general perception that RME played a major role in the education and development of the learners socially, morally and spiritually (see Table 1 for teachers’ perceptions about RME).
Table 1: Teachers’ Perceptions of RME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Response</th>
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</table>
| Teacher 2   | “Religious and Moral Education is very important in schools because learners will be exposed to various things in the world. It must be taken very seriously so that learners should sort out what is right and what is wrong.”
<p>|             | “Learners respond in the way that they show interest in the content of the subject. They also wish to compare stories in the Christian Bible with stories they learn in the Religious and Moral Education subject; stories such as that of Stephen in the Christian Bible with modern martyrs like Archbishop Oscar Romero, Martin Luther King, Archbishop Janani Luwum, Manche Masemola of South Africa. Learners question why they are not mentioned in the Bible. They only hear about Judas and others. However, I tried to explain to them that the modern martyrs came after the Bible was written.” |
| Teacher 3   | “Religious and Moral Education is a very good subject that enriches the knowledge of learners about different religions and helps learners to make correct decisions. Learners also get a chance to be educated about [their] morals.” |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 4</td>
<td>“Religious and Moral Education is a good subject because it is an eye opener so that learners should know different religions and moral values. The subject helps learners to differentiate between various religious beliefs and helps them to stick to their own religious beliefs because each religion has its own doctrine.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 7</td>
<td>“In Religious and Moral Education, learners learn morals, values and acceptable behaviours.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 11</td>
<td>“It is a subject that helps to guide learners towards culture and religious beliefs, values and norms.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“It deals with many of social problems in our society. The subject helps learners to respect God in relation to how they perceive him. Learners take the subject to enhance their Christianity.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 12</td>
<td>“When talking about Religious and Moral Education, I refer to Christianity. It helps learners to respect their parents, elders and teachers at school. For example, one day a learner came to me and said, “Madam, I did something wrong because I went out with a boy”. I read something from the Bible. We talked a little bit and I advised the learner not to do it again, then we prayed. Now I am realising that the learner has changed for the good.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 13</td>
<td>“In general, I did not recognise Religious and Moral Education as part of social life. Even when you visit different families you will find out that people do not take time to pray. Again, Religious and Moral Education is a good subject because learners need to learn about Christianity. Nowadays pastors are not enough and learners need to be encouraged to become the pastors of tomorrow. Since the learners have no more respect, when the teachers are teaching the subject, they (learners) will change their mind and behave according to the Ten Commandments.”</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Three key findings.** Key findings from this specific theme indicated that: (1) teachers’ individual religious and moral values shaped the teaching and learning process; (2) teachers’
individual religious and moral values played a major role regarding conflicting concerns over RME; and (3) as most RME teachers were Christian, they felt a commitment to share their personal Christian religious beliefs and moral values. We will now discuss each of these key findings in detail.

Finding #1: Teachers’ individual religious and moral values shaped the teaching and learning process. Participants’ views about religious beliefs and moral values, such as discipline, respect for others and responsibility, reflected the main aims of RME, as stated in the curriculum. However, there were some differences in the participants’ interpretation of religious beliefs and moral values. Some participants interpreted RME in terms of individual religious beliefs and moral values, while others interpreted RME in terms of multi-religious and cultural beliefs. However, all teachers sampled were concerned about the personal growth and development of their learners, while some indicated that teachers should act as role models when teaching RME. For example, Teacher 3 noted that “It was necessary to promote RME in schools, as schooling was not only for knowledge delivery but also for the moral development of the learners. The teacher added that learners learned from teachers how to behave as human beings,” while Teach 11 argued that “It is a subject that helps to guide learners towards culture and religious beliefs, values and norms. It deals with many of social problems in our society. The subject helps learners to respect God
Finding #2: Teachers’ individual religious and moral values played a major role regarding conflicting concerns over RME. Most of the participants interpreted RME in terms of Christianity. It was clear that most of them did not understand RME as comprising a study of different religions. In the main, it appeared that the participants interpreted RME according to their own Christian teaching experiences.

While every observed teacher used the same RME syllabus, it appeared to the researchers that they only taught a few carefully selected and preferred topics. All teachers prepared lessons from the syllabus, but these lessons generally reflected only the sections on Christianity. The sampled teachers were not following all topics as listed in the syllabus, and thus most non-Christian topics played a very minor role in their lessons.

Finding #3: As most RME teachers were Christian, they felt a commitment to share their personal Christian religious beliefs and moral values. The majority of the participants agreed on the importance of teaching moral values and attitudes in school, even though they had different opinions regarding the selection of lesson topics from the syllabus. Every teacher appeared to emphasize respect for others, responsibility, discipline, distinguishing between right and wrong, and commitment
within their school and classrooms. For example, Teacher 4 emphasized that “Religious and Moral Education is a good subject because it is an eye opener so that learners should know different religions and moral values. The subject helps learners to differentiate between various religious beliefs and helps them to stick to their own religious beliefs because each religion has its own doctrine,” while Teacher 12 viewed the importance of RME in terms of Christian education and counselling when stating that “One day a learner came to me and said, Madam, I did something wrong because I went out with a boy. I read something from the Bible. We talked a little bit and I advised the learner not to do it again, then we prayed. Now I am realising that the learner has changed for the good.”

**Discussion of major findings.** In some teachers’ views, the RME subject was a great help in counseling learners, regardless of their religious backgrounds. They felt it encouraged learners by telling them about God’s loving care, and by helping to boost their faith. They also mentioned that the subject helped learners know how to behave towards their teachers, parents and members of the community. Also, as the teachers believed that God’s commandments closely paralleled school rules and regulations, RME was viewed as teaching learners to obey both God’s commandments and the school’s regulations. The teachers also mentioned that there were some topics, like “belonging,” whereby the learner would learn to feel accepted and to develop a sense of belonging, as well as other topics
that reflected other aspects of life. For example, learners were taught about prayer, forgiveness and reconciliation, as well as the concept of equality in the eyes of God and men. From the teachers’ perspective, RME strengthened the minds of learners to study and to cope with life’s situations. As Teacher 4 mentioned, “In my teaching, I am not specific on one subject but I link subjects through my teaching experiences.”

Thus far, these findings suggest that teachers are able to articulate the breadth of RME and to recognize the importance of knowing about different religions and moral values. Moreover, teachers in the interviews talked about how RME can help learners study about different religions, cultures and moral values. They were also able to provide clear responses to the question, “What are your perceptions as a Religious and Moral Education teacher with regard to Religious Education?” However, when observing classrooms and talking with teachers about their pedagogy, it was evident that while they included the moral aspects of RME, they did so only through a Christian perspective. Though the teachers knew the syllabus was designed to provide a comprehensive approach to religion, they focused on Christianity because, as Teacher 1 stated, “Since the learners were Christians, I put more emphasis on those morals.” Storytelling came from the Bible and thus most classroom applications of RME had a Christian focus. And though generalizations must be limited,
given the sample size, the study did show that instructors were teaching RME only from a Christian perspective. In spite of attempts to develop curriculum that provided information about multiple religions, values, morals and ethics, teachers continued to teach what they knew best about RME, and thus they continued to teach through a Christian lens.

**Teachers’ Perceptions of Constraints**

When asked to reflect upon constraints that impeded the effective teaching of RME, some of the major problems underscored included a lack of teaching materials/teaching aids, lack of pre-service and in-service training, and insufficient periods allocated to RME (see Table 2). And while teacher interviews revealed a concern about the constraints they faced when teaching RME, they also remained relatively optimistic. For example, though teachers lacked sufficient instructional materials to teach RME effectively, they remained confident in what they were able to do with their limited supplies which included the use of posters, overhead projectors and textbooks to meet the needs of the learners. As one teacher mentioned, “We do not have learning and teaching materials, but the office is trying all the best to provide us with what we need to make use in the class to meet the needs of the learners, for example, posters and overhead projectors. Currently, it is good that the textbook has come. Sometimes we go overboard, it is not bad, but when you have the guideline, like text books, you will know how to utilize time
and to set a target to cover the syllabus”.

### Table 2: Teachers’ Perceptions of Constraints

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constraint</th>
<th># of Respondents</th>
<th>% of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Resources/Materials</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>92.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Appropriate Training</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>64.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient Period Allocations</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Lack of teaching resource materials.** The data clearly show that the RME teachers perceived the major constraint to be a lack of teaching resource materials, for when appropriate resources were not available, they felt seriously hindered in delivery effective teaching. Thirteen of 14 participants (92.9%) involved in this study agreed that lack of resources/materials was a serious problem, as they felt these resources were necessary for continuous improvement of the teaching and learning processes. Both the literature and this study’s results agree that appropriate teaching materials are helpful for achieving prescribed educational objectives, to improve teaching skills, and to reduce unnecessary problems in the
teaching and learning process (Jacobs, Vakalisa & Gawe, 2011, p. 244). This study also revealed that a lack of resource materials in schools contributed to ineffective teaching of RME, a conclusion also reflected in Adeyemi’s (2004) position that a lack of teaching resource materials prevents the teacher from achieving the objectives of the lesson.

**Lack of appropriate training.** Only five of the 14 teachers (35.7%) who participated in this study indicated that they had received appropriate professional training regarding the teaching of RME. The majority of the teachers sampled (nine, or 64.3%) reported that they had not received any appropriate training. In other words, about two-thirds of the RME teachers sampled were teaching the subject without appropriate training (either pre-service or in-service).

From the teacher quotations in Table 2, we become aware of key issues causing many RME teachers to lack appropriate training. For example, the teachers sampled indicated a myriad of reasons for not receiving appropriate training which included: (1) lack of available training institution or subject advisor; (2) lack of ministry support (or serious commitment) for training in this new subject; (3) being assigned RME classes though this was not their major or specialization; and (4) never received an invitation to attend RME training. In summing up this dilemma Teacher 2 mentioned that “We need in-service training for Religious and Moral Education, like the
training we receive in Life Skills,” and Teacher 3 believed that “Most teachers are not trained at all to teach Religious and Moral Education. Many teachers did not get any opportunity to attend any of the training workshops…I think there are no workshops prepared for RME teachers.”

In sum, the researchers found that those assigned to teach RME received little or no appropriate training. Moreover, even at designated teacher training institutions within Namibia, only a few teachers chose to study RME, which further contributes to the shortage of trained RME teachers in the schools. It is the researchers perspective that religious and moral topics need to be taught by teachers who are both confident and competent, and that those teachers need to see their instruction valued by learners, colleagues and the community.

**Limited periods allocated to the subject.** Eight of the 14 teachers sampled (57.1%) indicated that the limited number of periods allocated to RME was a definite constraint on effective instruction. For example, Teacher 2 lamented that teachers needed more time for RME because teachers covered very little in the allocated time of only one 40 minute period per week. Moreover, this RME teacher also suggested that teachers can neither cover the syllabus nor any particular issue in-depth, given this minimal amount of instructional time. Another teacher added that she would have loved
to teach RME to her learners because of its special nature, but unfortunately she would not be able to do so, given the limited amount of instructional time per week. To resolve this problem, the researchers suggest the need for schools to consider more flexible timetables which might include both single period and double period lessons, or the addition of tutorial sessions that cater to learners’ developmental needs. The researchers concluded that the subject could not serve its purpose due to insufficient periods allocated to the subject. To be effective, RME teachers need more time to teach the subject in greater depth. Although some RME teaching kits are available in staff rooms, they are of little use if there is not enough instructional time available to apply the suggested lesson plans.

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

This study not only highlights the problems incurred when a new subject, such as RME, is implemented without sufficient support and training. Moreover, it contributes to the debate regarding both the lack of research on religious education from a comparative perspective, as well as the appropriate place for religious and moral instruction within nations who have clearly articulated a constitutional policy of religious neutrality, such as Namibia. The curriculum design of RME reflects the stated goals of Namibia’s new constitution, as well as the current religious and moral values articulated
in curricula guides for grades one to ten - which include human rights, respect for others, freedom and responsibility, discipline, population, love, sex and marriage (Iita, 2012[a]; Iita, 2012 [b]). Unfortunately, due to the limited training and experiences of most RME teachers sampled (in addition to insufficient educational materials and instructional time), observed instruction did not necessarily reflect the diversity of faiths represented in the new curriculum, nor the secular nature of the Republic of Namibia’s Constitution.

In conclusion, the researchers found that Religious and Moral Education as a subject played a very significant role in the personal, moral and spiritual development of the learners, as well as instilling positive attitudes in the lives of the learners in a multi-religious and culturally diverse society. However, while the researchers believe that RME was designed to address the needs of Namibia’s learners, it will not be able to fulfill its goals due to a lack of resources, insufficient periods allocated to the subject, and the lack of appropriate pre-service and in-service training workshops. Moreover, as most RME lessons observed by the researchers focused on Christian Biblical Studies, as opposed to a broader and more diverse focus on multiple religious and moral perspectives as prescribed by the new curricular guides, this course will continue to fail to reflect Namibia’s new constitution which has departed from its colonial past and state supported religions to a new era that
respects diversity and religious freedom.

Based on this study’s findings, the researchers recommend the following: (1) The Ministry of Education should address the lack of RME teaching resource materials in schools as a matter of urgency; (2) The Ministry of Education and University of Namibia (UNAM) should design and offer pre-service and in-service training programs for RME teachers; (3) The Ministry of Education should monitor and evaluate all schools to ensure that the teaching and assessment of RME is taking place at all levels as spelt out in the syllabus; and (4) No specific religious formation (for instance Biblical Studies) or proslytization should be promoted or tolerated.

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Developing Research Partnerships in Emerging Nations: Bridging the “North-South” Divide

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Developing Research Partnerships in Emerging Nations: Bridging the “North-South” Divide

Abstract

This article, which was built upon research linked to the development of sustainable study abroad programs in emerging nations, focuses on key challenges to true partnerships between universities in the “North” and “South.” The article begins with an analysis of challenges frequently experienced by universities from the “North” and “South” when attempting to develop an equitable partnership based on joint grants and/or research projects. It also includes a discussion of struggles experienced by faculty (also known as “academic staff”) at both universities who desire a more equitable relationship that will enhance the missions of both institutions.

Following this theoretical analysis, the study focused on one particular partnership between two universities from the “North” and the “South” (The University of Central Florida, USA, and the University of Botswana), during study abroad programs spanning five years and funded by the U.S. State Department (2012-2015) and the Fulbright-Hays Groups Project Abroad (2011). An analysis of this partnership is particularly relevant as it focuses on the initial steps, dialogues, perspectives and actions of both institutions as they worked through a host of preconceived notions on neocolonialism and the challenges of successfully operating by another’s “rules of engagement” within a dynamic
geopolitical platform.

**Key Words:** University Partnerships; Study Abroad Programs; “North”-“South” Collaboration

**Introduction**

As the process of globalization expands, collaborative relationships between institutions of higher learning worldwide cannot be ignored. Moreover, the goals of globalization and international partnerships can be valuable to home and host institutions alike. In most instances, the development of international partnerships are motivated by institutions in the “North” (a reference to developed nations) and “South” (a reference to emerging nations) to advance their academic interests and goals, and thus seek to develop the strongest, and most advantageous strategic alliances that support both globalization and the commodification of education (Nuffic, 2008). To this end, equitable and effective collaborative partnerships may be the best means to enhance quality research while improving educational standards across the “North-South” divide. Moreover, equitable and collaborative research programs enhance both the academic outputs and visibility of partners in the “South,” while building the capacity of the “North” to conduct relevant research in emerging nations (Gaillard, 1994). Moreover, as Angeles and Gurstein (2000) observe, while there are daunting pressures and demands on global economies in the “North,” these
pressures and demands are more extreme in the “South” due to deepening poverty, decay of public institutions, and less than efficient governance. These challenges make “North-South” relations both fragile and complex.

Within the advent of neoliberalism and globalization, Baker (2007) noted that there was a developing trend of skewed relationships within the “North” and the “South,” as evidenced by dispossession and negative distribution of resources which verifies the contention that globalization occurs from above. Moreover, Hurell and Sengupta (2012) have argued that as globalization becomes real and more transformational, it is vital that we anticipate a shift in the power dynamics between the “North” and the “South” and within the doctrine of global capitalism whereby all partners are supposed to have an equal voice in the socio-economic and political discourse. Within this changing framework “South-South” collaborative relationships are encouraged as it is expected that they are likely to yield more positive and balanced socio-economic and political returns. Of course, globalization advances the concept of the knowledge economy, which is essential to the academy and to institutions of higher learning in both the “North” and the “South.” To this end institutions should collaboratively join forces to develop mutually beneficial partnerships.

Moreover, Biraimah and Jotia (2015) have observed that collaborative study abroad programs between institutions in
the “North” and “South,” while often faced with a plethora of challenges, should be encouraged as they can produce very positive inter-cultural learning experiences which transform participants’ worldview. Clearly, today’s global civil society has entered an era where even the spread of global liberal democracy cannot have boundaries as people are being mobilized worldwide to engage a transformative and diverse global economy (Mansbach and Taylor, 2012).

This article, which focuses on key challenges to true partnerships between universities in the “North” and “South,” applies these theoretical notions to actual field research on the development of sustainable study abroad programs in emerging nations for pre-service education students. The article begins with an analysis of challenges frequently experienced by universities from the “North” and “South” when attempting to develop an equitable partnership based on joint grants and/or research projects, including the struggles experienced by faculty (also known as “academic staff”) at both universities who desire a more equitable relationship that will enhance the missions of both institutions.

Following this theoretical analysis, the article focuses on one particular partnership between two universities from the “North” and the “South” (The University of Central Florida, USA, and the University of Botswana), during study abroad programs spanning five years and funded by the U.S. State Department (2012-2015) and the Fulbright-Hays Groups
Project Abroad (2011). The article analyzes the development of this partnership, including the struggles experienced by faculty at both universities who are working toward a more equitable relationship capable of enhancing the mission of both institutions. The first phase of this project is particularly relevant as it focuses on the initial steps, dialogues, perspectives and actions of both institutions as they work through a host of preconceived notions on neocolonialism and the challenges of successfully operating by another’s “rules of engagement” within a dynamic geopolitical platform. Based on experiences and data collected during multiple study abroad programs in Botswana (2011-2015), this article examines the challenges facing universities from the North and South who wish to create collaborative partnerships linked to grants, research and publications.

**Issues Linked to Equitable Partnerships between Institutions in the “North” and in the “South”**

Unfortunately, even when universities from the North and South are cognizant of the challenges embedded within partnership, the path to developing a sustainable, quality programs, grants and the like that have the capacity to positively impact both partner universities is often obstructed by varying expectations and miscommunications. For example, Mihyo (2008) suggested that “North-South” institutional partnerships are often interpreted differently by those involved.
Drawing upon a partnership between a European university and universities in Namibia and Zimbabwe, Mihyo observed that the European counterparts were ready and eager to learn from their local African counterparts, yet these colleagues often took leave from their universities to pursue individual consultancies, and only participated in partnership activities when they knew they would receive additional pay funded by the project. While in this case the differentiated pattern of partnership participation may have been exacerbated by drastically different levels of faculty remuneration in Europe and Africa, other factors stemming from the host university’s need to meet increasing demands for access to higher education with limited infrastructure, insufficient funding, and a shortage of qualified faculty have added to this conundrum (Woolf, 2006). The socio-economic disparity of the universities obviously exacerbates these challenges.

In order to overcome these challenges, Wohlgemuth and Olsson (2003) advise that dialogue, rather than domination, be promoted among the partners, and that such an approach encourage the development of shared values. Moreover, the rationale behind “North-South” partnerships according to King (2008) should not only focus on capacity shortfalls in the “South,” but should also be seen as promoting learning and capacity building in the “North.” Moreover, if partnership programs focus on capacity building and the development of mutual trust, Angeles and Gurstein
(2000) posit that “capacity development would benefit immensely from the use of a participatory development approach which entails investing time in trust-building activities, and the dissemination of good and complete information to guide participation” (p. 58). However, while “capacity building” is often taunted as a key outcome of international partnerships, including study abroad programs, the “power relationships (based on inequitable wealth) may become a significant barrier to communication and immersion,” and may inhibit positive outcomes normally expected of SAPs (Woolf, 2006, p. 142).

While shared programs and courses, such as study abroad projects at emerging universities may provide a limited number of host institution faculty members with extra income and opportunities to engage in research/publication activities with faculty from the “North,” it is questionable whether they provide a sustained, positive impact focused on the professional development of host university faculty or programs. Moreover, to attract hard currency revenues from abroad, emerging universities may find themselves functioning as little more than travel agents, requiring their academic and clerical staff to meet the needs of international colleagues and participants before attending to their own programmatic and student issues; all in hopes of attaining new, sustainable revenue sources. Such a scenario reflects the challenge posed when two partners wish to move forward
with a symbiotic relationship, yet have significantly different economic resources.

**Do No Harm.** A review of the literature also reveals additional negative outcomes that may occur when international partnership programs are based in emerging host communities and institutions. Schroeder et al (2009) explored these challenges more deeply in an aptly named article, *First, do no harm: Ideas for mitigating negative community impacts of short-term study abroad.* While focused on study abroad programs in emerging nations, they implored all participants in international partnerships to reflect upon a myriad of “unexamined and unintended consequences for host communities” in emerging nations (p. 141). For example, there is always the risk that Northerners will flaunt their “first world” wealth and dominance over local communities and institutions, though this potential threat pales in view of even greater threats to a host nation’s environment, economy and cultures. Moreover, Schroeder et al suggest that 1) limited local resources may be allocated to support international programs while imposing hardships on local inhabitants; 2) the financial impact on local economies may be to extend economic inequalities if only the local “elites” benefit; and 3) international programs based in emerging nations may contribute to increased dependency as local economies begin to depend on outside funding.

Interestingly, we often find that these issues have
been explored in depth, not in education literature, but rather in publications focused on the tourism industry. This is unfortunate as the envisioned programs, in partnership with an emerging host institution, may have an even greater potential for damaging the host’s economy, society, and culture. (See Archer, Cooper, and Ruhanen, 2005; McLaren, 2006). In particular, when focusing on partnerships designed to promote study abroad programs, it is possible “…that even more than most tourism, study abroad is by its very nature…attracted to unique and fragile environments and societies and…in some cases the economic benefits [to host communities] may be offset by adverse and previously unmeasured environmental and social consequences” (Archer, Cooper and Ruhanen, p. 79).

To further examine these theoretical notions about the development of equitable partnerships between institutions in the “North” and “South,” this article now shifts to focus on one particular partnership between an institution in the “North,” (the University of Central Florida, Orlando, Florida, USA) and an institution in the “South,” (the University of Botswana, Gaborone, Botswana). And while the authors of this study are convinced of the overall value of these partnerships, they are also cognizant of the significant challenges that impede progress towards this end.
Methodology and Data Sources.

This study is based on a comprehensive and extended review of pertinent literature focused on the development of equitable partnerships between institutions in the developed and emerging worlds, and an analysis of the sustained partnership between the University of Botswana (UB) and the University of Central Florida (UCF). It is based on shared experiences within a 2011 Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad in Botswana and a three-year U.S. Department of State Grant, Capacity Building Program for U.S. Undergraduate Study Abroad, awarded to UCF and UB in August 2012 and continuing through 2015. Data were collected from agendas, meeting notes, budgets, and interviews designed to measure collaborative planning efforts, and tested using qualitative analyses of the content of participant responses, program documents, and interview transcripts. As this was not a quantitative analysis, it was not appropriate to apply univariate statistics such as frequency distributions or percentage analyses. It is anticipated that the results of this longitudinal study will help program leadership more clearly understand factors that mediate the successful outcomes of this and future collaborative projects between the “North” and “South,” while helping to develop and nurture mutual partnerships.
The Partnership between the University of Central Florida (UCF) and the University of Botswana (UB): An Analysis of a “One-Way” Study Abroad Program

The remainder of this study will focus specifically on the partnership between UCF and UB, and the various challenges and financial hurdles that participants from both institutions addressed in order to ensure that this potentially enriching partnership might continue and flourish.

Two Initial Challenges

Strain on the Local Infrastructure. While short-term study abroad programs are normally scheduled during vacation periods at host institutions (which may help to reduce the strain on limited infrastructure, including dormitory and classroom space), greater consideration is needed when these programs occur during normal academic sessions. For example: 1) Are the university’s broadband capabilities stressed by these added students; and 2) Are local students denied suitable accommodation if administrators prioritize housing for study abroad students in order to obtain higher fees? (Refer to Schroeder et al, 2009.)

Distracting Host University Faculty from Primary Academic Responsibilities. Often the desire by host institution faculty participating in international partnerships and programs to earn additional salary can effectively limit their expected involvement in teaching and academic duties at
home. And, given the usually high faculty/student ratios in many emerging universities, this can negatively impact the quality of programs and instruction. Moreover, even when these programs occur during vacation periods, host institution faculty often come to the challenging realization that they have insufficient time left to devote to career advancement activities including research, publications, and grant proposal writing.

Addressing the Challenges of Infrastructure Strain and Academic Responsibilities: Fortunately, these challenges can be mediated in two ways. First, whenever possible, study abroad programs should be scheduled during a host university’s long vacation periods. Second, these programs should offer meaningful opportunities for both home and host institution faculty to engage in collaborative research and publication activities. For example, the 2011, 2013, 2014 and 2015 projects in Botswana were scheduled during May, June and/or July, months when most the University of Botswana students were on vacation. Moreover, faculty from both partnership institutions successfully engaged in numerous scholarly activities, resulting in joint conference paper presentations [Comparative and International Society Annual Conference in San Juan (2012), New Orleans (2013), and Toronto (2014); the Southern Africa Comparative and History of Education Annual Conference in Durban, South Africa (2014); the International Symposium on Comparative

**Additional Challenges to Equitable and Collaborative Partnerships between Institutions in the “North” and “South”**

Beyond the above logistical impediments, however, remain numerous challenges to establishing a truly collegial, collaborative and reciprocal partnership between institutions in the “North” and “South.” And while multiple grants and study abroad projects such as those in Botswana provide enticing possibilities for “capacity building” (as defined from a “Northern” perspective), the final impact may vary from original expectations due to a plethora of issues linked to the “human condition.”

**Challenges to Building a Consensus Document.** While grant Requests for Proposals (RFPs) may appear to provide clear direction and definition, proposal development and program implementation can produce an alternate reality. Due to heavy teaching and service loads, and a perceived lack of project ownership, faculty from the “South” may not identify initial proposal development as a key responsibility, as do their colleagues from the “North.” For example, the UB faculty team did not engage in systematic critical
editing of a grant narrative linked to proposed study abroad programs (2012-2015), though they did provide succinct edits related to a description of their institution. Moreover, voiced disappointments regarding the lack of reciprocity once the proposal was funded suggested that the UB team had envisioned a program which varied significantly from the final proposal, which strictly observed RFP guidelines.

The *Capacity Building Program for U.S. Undergraduate Study Abroad* RFP clearly focused on the development of a study abroad program for American undergraduates, leaving no possibility for funding a reciprocal study abroad program for UB students. Though planning activities for a future reciprocal program were built into the final year of the grant, disappointment that UB students were not included in a significant and equitable manner remained. When UCF received notification from the U.S. State Department that the proposal was funded, it was necessary to resend the official RFP to the UB faculty to further clarify grant guidelines. It should be noted, however, that the UB team, under the leadership of the Faculty of Education’s Dean, agreed to fully honor the grant’s guidelines and their institutional responsibilities. Clearly, in hindsight it would have been advisable to remove the word “reciprocal” from the proposal’s title to avoid such misunderstandings.

Moving beyond initial grant guidelines focusing on the development of programs for U.S. students in Botswana,
UCF and UB faculty amended the program to include two UB education majors (selected by the UB team), who would receive stipends to serve as “cultural informants” for UCF program participants. These UB cultural informants were responsible for mediating the experiences of UCF participants, both during orientation sessions held at UB, and later in extended service-learning experiences in Remote Area Dwellers’ Schools (RADs) and villages.

To further ameliorate this lack of true reciprocity, a member of UCF’s team offered his home to two UB education majors once they arrived in the U.S. (assuming UCF’s student social service clubs could cover the cost of the students’ airline tickets through numerous fund-raising events). While the UCF team realized that this was not equitable reciprocity, they did hope that it would serve to demonstrate “good faith” with regard to a desire to develop a truly reciprocal program. It should be noted that both teams continue to search for grants and foundation funding opportunities that might help provide a more balanced and reciprocal study abroad program, though they acknowledge that most nationally funded grants focus on programs designed to enrich study abroad experiences for their own citizens/students. The above scenario reveals a thorny reality that global “North-South” relationships, even in institutions of higher learning, will remain skewed due to unequal economic bases. In the case of the UCF/UBs partnership, the University of Botswana staff concluded that
they were again being awarded a grant which did not benefit them to the same degree as their “Northern” partner.

**Different Perceptions of “Adequate” Pre-Planning.**

In October 2012 (at the beginning of the State Department grant), the UCF team arrived in Botswana with an extensive agenda for the first formal planning session (previously shared with UB faculty for editing and input). Nonetheless, conceptualizations regarding key issues to be discussed remained varied. While extensive planning time had been identified well before UCF faculty arrived in Botswana, the actually “time on task” shrunk from an anticipated week of detailed discussions to more infrequent and briefer sessions where only basic program implementation was addressed. While key program decisions were reached during these initial meetings, more “detail oriented issues” such as orientation schedules, academic agendas, and the future development of a team-taught online course were neglected.

Clearly, the “agenda,” as envisioned by UCF’s team had been transformed and minimalized, with only the most essential decisions reached during their on-sight planning trip. In reflection, UCF probably expected too much too soon, while the UB team appeared to believe that all necessary key decisions had been reached. It must be added, however, that at times the UCF team simply did not understand the cultural ramifications and approaches necessary to secure desired end results and a workable partnership with multiple
Remote Area Dwellers (RAD) schools. For example, what was later explained to the UCF team by their Botswana counterparts (who were cognizant of the American desires for rapid results), negotiations of this nature required the personal touch – which translated into multiple, long and relatively uncomfortable road trips to these remote sites by their UB colleagues in order to secure the desired agreements. A clear “lesson learned” by UCF team members that cultural accommodations were necessary at all levels to create successful study abroad programs. There is no doubt that this key element was ignored during the initial planning stages of the program, even though it was a fundamentally crucial aspect in building an equitable partnership.

**Varying Perspectives on Timeliness and Detailed Planning.** While a neutral middle-ground with regard to priorities and timeliness would have facilitated planning, this was perhaps an unattainable goal given the differing perspectives on what constituted prioritized issues and appropriate time lines. And even though many faculty members from emerging universities have extensive experiences in, and often terminal degrees from institutions in the “North,” their American counterparts should not assume that faculty teams from the “North” and “South” necessarily share their values and perspectives.

Unfortunately, this difference in acceptable levels of detailed planning persisted after the UCF team returned
to Florida, and continued to cause misunderstandings and angst on both sides of the Atlantic. For example, logistical issues surrounding the development of plans for extended immersion experiences in RAD communities continued to demonstrate the divergent perceptions and expectations of faculty from UCF and UB. During initial planning sessions held at UB in October 2012, it was agreed that students and faculty would be divided between two RAD schools. However, UB expanded these two sites to three, without consultation with their American colleagues. The UCF team found out about this change through a brief email listing the names of three schools. When UCF’s project manager pressed her UB counterparts for the schools’ locations, she was informed that a school’s name was also the community’s name (which turned out to be perfectly true, though UCF’s search engines could not locate two of the three communities). Pleas for additional information regarding the size of the communities and their capacity to house participants in homestays and/or public lodging (key data that would drive a final budget), remained unanswered well into the new year. Clearly, until all locations were identified, it would be impossible to develop a final budget – which in turn would dictate the length of the final study abroad program, itineraries, and international airline reservations. Unfortunately, the high level of angst felt by UCF team members may have occurred through misperceptions regarding acceptable patterns of communications.
In retrospect, the UB team perceived their UCF partners as demanding information “at the speed of thunder” (UB’s term), without taking into account the communication problems that existed with the three remote localities; especially at the primary school sites. Search engine technology, so easily accessible in the “North,” was not as effective in Botswana’s marginalized rural communities. Moreover, key logistical information often required UB faculty members to undertake extended travel on rough gravel roads while their UCF counterparts waited impatiently for their unanswered phone calls to be returned.

Financial Hurdles

US Government Grants and Perceived Status Differentiation. Though universities in the “South” may receive a share of the budget, U.S. federal grant requirements usually stipulate that an American institution “will control” the budget, clearly leaving their “partners” in dependent roles. In our case, UB was included in the development of grant narratives and budgets, but UCF remained the “lead institution.” Moreover, as substantial amounts of funding came directly from participant fees, financial controls fell even more solidly into UCF’s hands. While UB was allocated funds through a mutually agreed upon sub-contract (covering local expenses such as dormitories, guides, and faculty honorariums), the reimbursable nature of this grant precluded
UB from managing substantial portions of the grant’s budget (and from the benefits of lucrative overhead revenues). For example, the current grant from the U.S. State Department was initially designed for most expenditures, except international airfares, to occur within Botswana. Yet UB’s current subcontract accounts for only 11% of total federal funds, as a lack of sufficient cash reserves kept them from a greater share of the grant’s 26% overhead rate, a significant revenue which will now go to UCF. The old adage, “it takes money to make money” appears to apply in this instance.

**Dueling Accountants.** Even when grant funds have been allocated in an equitable manner, other factors may keep “partner” universities on unequal terms, or mired in complex and competing accounting procedures. In most cases, universities from both the “North” and “South” have well established, yet often very different accounting and auditing procedures, and are rarely allowed by their institutions to deviate from these established guidelines. For example, there were often significant differences regarding what constituted sufficient “due diligence” with regard to receipts, currency conversions and auditors’ expectations. And these varied accounting procedures easily translated into thousands of U.S. dollars gained or lost by the respective institutions. For example, the designation of exchange rates, as well as the official day for the exchange rate to be calculated, significantly impacted our budget’s “bottom line” by several thousand U.S.
dollars.

It should be noted that these accounting challenges led to a substantial delay before UB finally received funds from UCF, as designated in their mutually agreed upon sub-contract. For example, though UCF students departed Botswana in early June, it was not until mid-September of that same year that funds were finally received by UB, a full three months “after the fact,” (a delay involving endless email exchanges, invoicing, disagreements on exchange rates and inaccurate banking information). Given the fact that host institutions in the “South” often have limited resources, such delays and frustrations may place these institutions in a dire financial position. Bradley (2008) contends that asymmetrical relationships between “North-South” partners are key obstacles to productive and collaborative research, and that this asymmetry manifests itself in terms of inequitable access to information, training, funding, conferences, publishing opportunities, and the disproportionate influence of “Northern” partners in project administration, budget management, and the development of research agendas (p. 27).
Concluding Comments

While it was not the purpose of this study to systematically judge the effectiveness of a particular partnership (in this case that of UCF and UB), its primary goals remain the identification of critical attitudes and perspectives that have the potential to significantly damage even the most carefully designed programs to successfully bridge the "North-South" divide. Clearly, to develop equitable and productive relationships that endure this study underscores the need to operationalize the most effective approaches to identify and analyze key opportunities, challenges and dilemmas directly linked to quality partnerships which include programs based in emerging nations. To develop a workable consensus and long-term commitments between institutions and communities, as well as enhancing a program's end products, there is a critical need for all partners to maintain continuous formal institutional reviews that include all stakeholders. Moreover, "North-South" collaborative partnerships could also be enhanced by designing programs that are not only more beneficial to the host institutions and communities, but include them as meaningful stakeholders; thus providing an effective platform for transformative-learning experiences for all involved.

In addition, programs should also encourage more effective communication and coping skills for all participants. To this end, there is a need for institutions from the "North"
to eradicate any “missionary zeal” embedded within their programs, as they are not messiahs who can liberate the “South” from its assumed miseries. For example, the shared design of study abroad programs should include meaningful service-learning projects where all stakeholders gain from the experience. Such service-learning initiatives should be continuously documented through journals, daily reflections and frequent debriefings (Schroeder et al, 2009).

In conclusion, there must be transparent and mutually agreed upon “terms of engagement” regarding the development, management and evaluation of project proposals, budgets, and Memorandums of Understanding (MOU). This will (hopefully) avoid situations where institutions from the “South” are cast in dependent roles, while their partners from the “North” maintain control of most, if not all of the project funding. Such apparent (if not real) inequities compromise the goal of mutual capacity building, a key element in “North-South” collaborative partnerships.

Clearly, the goal of developing and enriching human resources, while providing opportunities to reap the rewards of a strong, equitable, and truly collaborative partnership, cannot be compromised by perceived (or real) inequitable relationships. Moreover, if we are to conceptualize and operationalize a form of globalization capable of enriching all stakeholders worldwide, it is imperative that we begin by reaffirming partnerships between the “North” and “South”
that are truly equitable and collaborative, while recognizing the unique and invaluable qualities and strengths of all stakeholders.

**Recommendations**

Based on the experiences encountered as UCF and UB struggled to establish a meaningful and equitable partnership over the past few years, the following suggestions are provided for institutions in the “North” and “South” who are considering the development of a successful and mutually rewarding partnership:

1) **Effective approaches for analyzing the opportunities, challenges, and dilemmas of developing partnerships and programs include:**

   a) The need to acknowledge and address potential problems by both institutions;

   b) The provision for continuous and formal institutional reviews of all partnership programs;

   c) The involvement of faculty who are knowledgeable of their partner’s institution, community and country;

   d) The development of long-term commitments to the
partner institution and country; and

e) The shared development of meaningful program objectives and activities.

2) **Suggested guidelines for establishing a more collaborative, reciprocal and equitable partnership between universities from the “North” and “South” include:**

a) A clear understanding by all stakeholders of the limited focus of most grants, such as those designed to support study abroad programs;

b) The involvement of team members from both institutions in the meaningful development, management and evaluation of project proposals, budgets, Memorandums of Understand and the like;
References


Pedagogy of Sagacity: An African Approach to Philosophy of Education

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Abstract
Philosophy of education is a compulsory course in teacher education in Africa. African scholars have observed that this course is predominantly approached from Western pedagogical perspective hence alienating African students of education. There is lack of African pedagogy responsive to the African context of education as noted by a national commission on education in Kenya. This calls for a search for African pedagogy to instigate paradigm shift from Western pedagogy to Afrocentric pedagogy. Sage Philosophy, a trend in African Philosophy is analyzed in this study in attempt to develop African pedagogy. The method used is philosophical argument based on critical conceptual analysis. The study findings result in an African pedagogy described as ‘pedagogy of sagacity’ which is proposed as an African approach to philosophy of education. The thesis of this essay is that trends in African philosophy should influence pedagogical theorizing of education in Africa.

Key notes: Sage philosophy, Pedagogy, African philosophy, Philosophy of education
Introduction

Philosophy of education is a compulsory course in teacher education in Africa. African scholars have observed that this course is predominantly approached from Western pedagogical perspective hence alienating African students of education. There is lack of African pedagogy responsive to the African context of education as noted by Bennaars (1998) and Koech (1999) commission on education in Kenya. This calls for a search for African pedagogy to instigate paradigm shift from Western pedagogy to Afrocentric pedagogy. The essay first describes the problem of dominance of Western philosophy and pedagogy in Africa as basis of search for African pedagogy, then an analysis and assessment of the model proposed by Njoroge and Bennaars (1986) is undertaken to examine its appropriateness for developing African pedagogy. Sage philosophy, a trend in African philosophy is described and its pedagogical principles are deduced by method of critical conceptual analysis. The result from this analysis is an African pedagogy described as ‘pedagogy of sagacity.’ The thesis of this essay is that trends in African philosophy should influence pedagogical theorizing in Africa.
Objectives

The general objective of this study is to find an African pedagogy to overcome predominance of Western pedagogy in Africa.

The specific objective of this study is to develop African pedagogy from Sage philosophy.

Method

The study employed philosophical method of argument and critical conceptual analysis to analyze Sage philosophy in terms of its African pedagogical implications. The model proposed by Njoroge and Bennaars (1986) as a means to develop African philosophy is adopted. This model itself is subjected to critical review which reveals some weaknesses in spite of its usefulness.

Dominance of Western Philosophy and its Pedagogy in Africa

According to Nyasani (2010) there is ‘a modern argument’ that ‘African development is not possible unless it borrows and relies heavily’ on ‘the Western model of general development’ (pp. 2, 3). This view is reflected in education where Anglophone Africa has heavily borrowed from Anglo-American philosophies of education (Okrah, 2003). Students of education in Africa are introduced to smorgasbord of Western philosophical systems including idealism, realism, naturalism, progressivism, pragmatism, perennialism,
essentialism, behaviorism, postmodernism, feminism, amongst other isms. These systems of philosophy are often taught without pedagogical contextualization in African experience. Students receive them as petrified essences or fossilized inert ideas (Whitehead, 2008, p. 2). In addition reference materials and bibliographies are largely based on American and British educational resources. This led Njoroge and Bennaars (1986) to observe that ‘judging by textbooks on Educational Philosophy, there is no such thing as the African Philosophy of Education’ (p.59). Consequently Koech (1999) commission challenged Kenyan scholars to revisit African ‘historical and philosophical roots with a new vision’ of developing an African philosophy ‘to guide both the content and methods of the entire Kenyan curriculum design and practice’ (par., 1.3.5). This is reminiscent of Du Bois (1973) who argues that African historicity and culture should form the basis of African philosophy of education.

The situation is no different in Post-Apartheid South Africa where ‘often western curricula, labels and methods, which are unfit for the majority of South African children, are still being used in schools’ (Venter, 2004, p. 155), (Waghid, 2008). This Western pedagogy alienates African learners from local experience. This is akin to what Paulo Freire (1972) ‘the inaugural philosopher of critical pedagogy’ (Groenke, 2009, p. 3) referred to as “banking concept of education’ characterized as ‘suffering from narration sickness’ (p.64). Freire (1972)
illustrates an alienating pedagogy as follows:

The teacher … expounds on a topic completely alien to the existential experience of the students. His task is to “fill” the students with the contents of his narration - contents which are detached from reality, disconnected from the totality that engendered them and could give them significance. Words are emptied of their concreteness and become a hollow, alienated, and alienating verbosity. (p. 57).

In this situation students are spectators-learners rather than critical inquirers (Dewey 1916) they are analogous to the condition of education of prisoners depicted by Plato in his allegory of the cave. Guy is critical of ‘the British tradition of education (which) brought Africans…into the company of the Western-educated world. It gave them the new horizons…for direct entry into Western institutions…. But it took them very little of the way to their next task … of reforming radically’ (1963, p.8). Okrah (2003) laments that: ‘It is appalling that, there has not been found the need to address the issue of the content of the curriculum in African schools in tune with African philosophies’ (p. 18). However, Waghid (2008) has explored implications of African(a) philosophy of education for university teachers. He argues that ‘university teaching ought to be framed within an African(a) philosophy of
education’ thereby ‘responding to the needs and circumstances of African students (learners) (p. 34).

Venter (2004) advocates for a ‘more definite African philosophy of education which is more relevant and meaningful to African students of education is needed’ (p.156). Such a philosophy should ‘reconstruct African culture to fit and facilitate modern learning in an African setting’ (Venter, 2004, p.156). Venter views African philosophy of education along its pedagogical relevance in African context. Merry and William (2008) point out that ‘African-centered pedagogy aims to cultivate a positive and productive culturally based identity for Black children, and African-centered schools endeavor to supply that cultural base, placing the history, culture, and life experiences of individuals of African descent at the center of everything that they do’ (p.35).

**Pedagogy: Broad and Narrow Meaning**

The concept of pedagogy has restricted and broad meaning. In the former sense pedagogy is reduced to mere methods of instruction understood within limits of educational empirical sciences such as educational psychology but in the latter meaning pedagogy is ‘a philosophical-normative’ term “we refer to pedagogy in the broader sense of the word, which … includes both instruction and social vision” (1998;3). It is a theoretical guide of education based on a normative social vision on
what education ought to be. This essay is about African pedagogy as a social vision, a guide to education responsive or relevant to African situation. African pedagogy must rise from critical reflection on African experience and not from foreign or Western philosophies. According to Okrah (2003) ‘we must seek an African view to the problems of Africa. However, this does not mean that Western techniques and methods are not applicable to Africa’(p.18). What is required is an African perspective which ‘affirms how both general and particular messages of education would be conveyed to learners, who will use such information for their livelihoods’ (Abdi, 2012, p. 83). Borrowing from Tejeda and Espinoza we argue that African pedagogy has to address ‘both the means and the end of schooling’ (p. 6). It must challenge ‘forms, content, and intent of other pedagogies and their antecedent, but also require a complete reconceptualization of learning in classroom’ (p. 8). Waghid (2008) argued that university teaching ought to be framed within an African(a) philosophy of education’ and deliberative inquiry thereby making university teachers to be learning mediators (p. 42). Abdi (2012) called for decolonizing philosophies of education which revalue indigenous knowledge and contributes to non-alienating schemes of learning (p. 5). African pedagogy has to be both a social vision of education carried out by deliberative inquiry predicated upon African experience and situations.
Analysis of Models for African Pedagogy

Njoroge and Bennaars (1986) worked out a model for African approach to philosophy of education ‘a MODEL that brings out the specific features of a truly African Philosophy of Education’ (p. 88). This model postulates twofold criteria or conditions for an African approach to philosophy of education namely technical and African. Thus like Waghid (2008), Njoroge and Bennaars (1986) locate African pedagogy on African philosophy. Technical methods of philosophy are critical, rational, phenomenological and speculative (pp. 23-24). With regard to the second criterion philosophy is African if ‘it reflects the trends characteristic of philosophical thinking in Africa’ (p. 89). The four trends in African philosophy are ethno-philosophy, cultural philosophy, political philosophy and formal philosophy. Njoroge and Bennaars (1986) in their set of trends in African philosophy failed to acknowledge Oruka’s ‘four trends in current African philosophy’ (Ochieng, 1995, p. 95). On his part Oruka (1990) identified four trends in African philosophy but also failed to acknowledge the four trends identified by Njoroge and Bennaars (1986). There seem to be an ‘External Dialogue Problem (EDP)’ between Kenyan philosophers and Kenyan philosophers of education. EDP refers to ‘lack of stable reciprocal exchange of ideas between those within a field of study and those in another but related discipline’ (Stanford, 2013). This essay hopes to overcome
EDP between African philosophy and African philosophy of education by use of Sage Philosophy to develop African pedagogy.

In writing on African pedagogy Bennaars (1998) stated that ‘in view of current theorizing about educational practice in Africa, we must seek to reconstruct an African pedagogy that is responsive to the African condition’ (pp. 2-3). In spite of this, Bennaars (1998) fails to use the four trends of African philosophy in his ‘search for an African pedagogy’ (p. 30). Koech commission (1999) required that: ‘To understand and accept ourselves as Kenyans demand that we revisit our historical and philosophical roots with a new vision’ (paragraph 1.3.5) which is African and not foreign. Only then can we remedy ‘lack of a well-defined vision and … apparent lack of direction in educational theorizing in Africa’ (Bennaars, 1998, p. 3). We need ‘a normative stance or a social vision of teaching’ which Bennaars explains as ‘theoretical vision to guide one’s critical reading of the world and of the educational situation. The same vision proposes guidelines for educational practice and for an appropriate methodology’ (1998, p. 2). This is similar to the view expressed by Koech (1999) Commission which stated that

As the nation enters the new millennium, it is imperative that a coherent Afrocentric philosophy of education be formulated to guide both the content and methods of the
entire curriculum design and practice. Time has now come for us to define ourselves in our own Kenyan way. To understand and accept ourselves as Kenyans demand that we revisit our historical and philosophical roots with a new vision. (paragraph 1.3.5).

Thus the search for African pedagogy denotes the broader meaning of pedagogy which guides both content and methods of curricular design and practice. It ‘will not be merely concerned with pedagogic measures or pedagogic skills, but will also carry a vision of teaching that is both liberating and empowering’ (1998, p. 8). Liberative role of African pedagogy is based on Afrocentric roots of African history and philosophy.

In adopting the model by Njoroge and Bennaars (1986) for an African approach to philosophy of education we shall use a trend in African philosophy namely Sage Philosophy to work out an African pedagogy. Since Sage philosophy is a trend in African philosophy we guided by Dewey in bringing Sage philosophy to bear upon education in Africa. According to Dewey (1916, p. 331) philosophy is ‘general theory of education.’ He explains that “education is a touchstone…of all philosophy. If we were always to apply the touchstone of education to our academic philosophy, the latter would gain much in vital force; it would yield better
fruit and it would be better adapted to the mind of the student” (p. 328). In quoting G. Stanley Hall, Hovre (1930) asserts that true philosophy is philosophy of education i.e.: ‘The only true, ripe, or finished philosophy...is that of education’ (p. xxxii). Both Dewey and Hall are instructive in this essay in that Sage Philosophy a trend in African Philosophy could be better utilized when analyzed in context of education in Africa. Sage Philosophy has possibility of ripening into finished philosophy when analyzed in terms of African pedagogy. As earlier observed this will remedy lack of EDP between African philosophy and African philosophy of education.

**Sage Philosophy: Its Objective**

Research on Sage Philosophy was meant to debunk ‘the well-known claim that real philosophical thought had no place in traditional Africa’ (Oruka 1991, 34). Odhiambo (1995) elaborates that:

The objective of this research was to identify individuals of traditional Kenya who are wise in the philosophic didactic sense, and thereafter write their thoughts on paper, as proof of the existence of genuine African philosophy in the proper and technical sense of the word. Today the product of this research project is termed ‘Philosophic
Sagacity” and is one of the approaches to the debate on African philosophy. (p. 81).

This was the European conventional view on African mentality which is well documented and illustrated by Odhiambo (1995). From pedagogical perspective this Western prejudice against African rationality is evident in Mullin (1965) who in an effort “to lay down guide-lines for the … Christian apostolate in modern Africa” (p. 3) declared that:

The African’s reasoning methods are not discursive; he knows nothing of the syllogism, he thinks inductively rather than deductively; nor is his thinking analytic: it is intuitive and synthetic …. This is a mentality different from the European, and to be respected as such …. One consequence of it is a circular manner of thinking, a collecting of impressions, a feeling of the way before coming to the kernel of a problem …. A more important consequence is the primacy in his thought of the concrete over the abstract; and the human over the institutional …. European teachers, trained in deductive thought, pass on ideas in a way impossible for the African to assimilate. They do not square with his reasoning. (p. 3).

It is on basis of this Western prejudice that Western philosophy became dominant in Africa. This claim implies that “existence of philosophy in modern Africa is due wholly to the introduction of western thought to Africa” (Oruka, p. 41), (Wainaina, 2006). Oruka undertook his research on
Sage Philosophy in the hope that if ‘sages of the second order type were found in traditional Africa…then this fact should amount to a proof for the invalidity of the claim in question’ (p. 34). The findings of the Sage research is as follows (1991, p.34)

Findings in Kenya show that there are two main divisions of sage philosophy. One is that of the sage whose thought, though well informed and educative, fails to go beyond the celebrated folk-wisdom. Such a sage may not have the ability or inclination to apply his own independent critical objection to folk beliefs. He is, therefore, a folk sage in contrast to the second type of the sage, the philosophic sage. The former is a master of popular wisdom while the latter is an expert in didactic wisdom.

The philosophic sage may know, as the folk sage does, what the cardinal beliefs and wisdoms of his community are, but he makes an independent, critical assessment to what the people take for granted. Thus, while the sagacity of the folk sage remains at the first order level of philosophy, that of the philosophic sage is a second-order philosophy, that is a reflection on and a rationalized evaluation of what is given in the first order. What is given in the first order is a mixture of conventional-cum-customary beliefs and practices.

Armed with evidence of existence of philosophic
sages in Africa, Sage Philosophy succeeded in debunking Western prejudice against existence of philosophical thought in Africa. As Oruka stated, Sage philosophy ‘demonstrates the fact that traditional Africa had…critical personalized philosophical discourse’ (p. 43). However, scholars interested in Sage Philosophy are concerned about its future. Gail Presby suggests as follows

I suggest that the original impetus for starting the sage philosophy project - the defense against Euro-American skeptics who thought Africans incapable of philosophizing - has been outgrown. The present need for studies of African sages is to benefit from their wisdom, both in Africa and around the world. I also suggest that the title ‘sage’ has to be problematized. While there were good reasons to focus earlier on rural elders as overlooked wise philosophers, the emphasis now should be on admiring philosophical thought wherever it may be found—in women, youth, and urban Africans as well. In such a way, philosophy will be further relevant to people’s lives, and further light will be shed and shared regarding the lived experience in Africa.

This essay goes beyond the debate on African philosophy in attempt to tease out pedagogical principles in Sage Philosophy. We build on success of Sage Philosophy
in shifting from Western to African pedagogy. This essay interrogates Sage Philosophy in terms of its pedagogical potential for education in Africa.

**Pedagogical Analysis of Sage Philosophy: Results and Discussions**

This study hopes to make findings which will show that African pedagogy will enable students to think critically and creatively in solving African problems. The study hopes to show how Sage philosophy can shift pedagogy from Western domination to African context. Dewey (1916) in his magnus opus, *Democracy and Education* asserts that

“Philosophy of education” is not an external application of ready-made ideas to a system of practice having a radically different origin and purpose: it is only an explicit formulation of the problems of the formation of right mental and moral habits in respect to the difficulties of contemporary social life. The most penetrating definition of philosophy which can be given is, then, that it is the theory of education in its most general phases. (p. 331).

We can borrow from Dewey the idea that pedagogy in Africa must not be external application of foreign
philosophies but rather it must develop from African experience. African pedagogy should relate to “the problems of the formation of right mental and moral habitudes in respect to the difficulties of contemporary social life” in Africa (Dewey, 1916, p. 328). This is because ‘pedagogy from the start has always been strongly associated with the social and moral upbringing…as the education of youth … in the full realization of human abilities’ (Bennaars, 1998, p. 4). But with the success of Sage Philosophy why should an external ‘system of practice’ continue to dominate pedagogy in Africa? Riding on the back of success of Sage Philosophy we can answer that: African pedagogy cannot be external application of ready-made alien ideas. Since the aim of Oruka was “to look for philosophy or traces of philosophy in traditional Africa” (1991, p. 41). This essay attempts an explicit formulation of African pedagogy from Sage philosophy. Sage philosophy has proven that based on thoughts of African sages there is philosophizing in African culture. According to Erny (1981) there is ‘an extremely intimate connection between a given pedagogy and the type of society to which it corresponds’ (p. 7). We need an African pedagogy corresponding to sagacity of modern African society.

**Pedagogy of Sagacity**

According to Njoroje and Bennaars (1986) two conditions are required for African approach to philosophy
of education namely African Philosophy and Technical method of philosophy. These conditions are adopted to work out African pedagogy from Sage philosophy. The aim is to bring out pedagogical implications of Sage Philosophy, a trend in African philosophy. The method used is critical conceptual analysis of the two kind of sages in Sage philosophy. There are two kinds of sages in Sage philosophy, the folk and the philosophic sage. The two represent two levels of thinking in African culture. Folk sage practices first order thinking while philosophic sage is second order thinking. What pedagogical inferences can be derived from these two levels of sagacity? Conceptual analysis of these two levels of sagacity from pedagogical perspective will result in pedagogy of sagacity. Pedagogy of sagacity will have two levels namely first order of pedagogy of folk sagacity and second order pedagogy of philosophic sagacity.

Conceptual analysis of folk sagacity leads to Pedagogy of folk sagacity. It is practice of education where the main focus is transmission of established bodies of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes. The tendency is to conserve and disseminate stock of knowledge as available in textbooks. Folk pedagogy preserves practices and beliefs in education as conventional wisdom for maintenance of status quo. It takes comfort in the traditional view which is polemically defended as the familiar and normal or customary practice. Folk pedagogy is responsible for the
continued dominance of Western approaches to philosophy of education in Africa. Educators schooled in Western education when teaching in Africa require that Western practices be imposed in Africa. It propagates assumption that Western tradition is the only way that Africa should imitate for its education.

Pedagogical analysis of the concept of philosophic sage leads to Pedagogy of philosophic sagacity. It implies pedagogical practice which is of second order activity of teaching and learning. It is critical of first order thinking and practice of education. It is critically reflective of prevalent practice of education. It abhors uncritical acceptance of conventional practices in education. It advocates for interrogation of educational assumptions and beliefs for their relevance in African situation. Pedagogy of philosophic sagacity views education within a broad perspective of what is taught, how it is taught and why it is taught. This perspective makes educators to become reflective practitioners or what Waghid called learning mediators.

Summary

This essay is philosophical analysis of Sage Philosophy to develop an African pedagogy. The aim of the essay was to propose an African pedagogy as alternative to the dominance of western pedagogy in Africa. Example was cited from philosophy of education which heavily
relies on Western philosophies of education. This alienates African students of education from philosophizing about education in African context. The model of developing African approach to philosophy of education by Njoroge and Bennaars is appropriated here to work out an African pedagogy. Based on the two levels of sagacity in Sage philosophy by conceptual analysis an African pedagogy described as pedagogy of sagacity is arrived at. Pedagogy of sagacity has two levels that of folk and philosophic pedagogy. The two levels of pedagogy can be instrumental in aiding African teachers to self-examine their assumptions in educational practice. This essay advocates for philosophic pedagogy for it is critical of established educational beliefs and practices.

Conclusion

In conclusion the model proposed by Njoroge and Bennaars (1986) is useful in developing African pedagogy. Such pedagogy is predicated upon Sage Philosophy which is a trend in African Philosophy, and philosophical method of critical conceptual analysis. Using the attributes of both folk sage and Philosophic sage pedagogical implications are deduced from both types of sages leading to pedagogy of sagacity. The predominant reliance on Western approach to philosophy of education in Kenya can now be mitigated by African pedagogy based on African philosophic sagacity.
This is a paradigm shift towards pedagogy of philosophic sagacity which is critical and reflective based on situation-specific to African experience. It seeks to ground approach to education based on African conditions. Philosophic sagacity furnishes a productive conceptual framework for educational philosophizing for critical emancipation from alienating Western pedagogies. This is a proposal of one possible direction among others where pedagogy of sagacity can be relevant as a theory of social vision in philosophy of education in Africa, Kenya in particular.

**Bibliography**


Relationship between Parental Marital Status and Students’ Academic Performance in Day Secondary Schools of Dagoretti Sub District of Nairobi County, Kenya.

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Abstract

Academic performance is one of the important aspects of a student’s life and therefore it is important to understand the factors that hinder or promote it. Various researches on factors affecting performance have been done, however there is little local research on how family structure affects academic performance. This study examined students’ academic performance vis-à-vis single and two parent family structures. It also investigated if there were any gender differences in academic performance as determined by parental marital status. The target population was form three students in day secondary schools of Dagoretti Sub District, Nairobi County, Kenya. The sample of the study consisted of 196 students drawn from five day secondary schools. The study used descriptive survey and ex post facto methodology. Simple random and purposive sampling techniques were used to select the schools and classes for the study respectively. Questionnaires and class achievement records
were used to collect data. The data was analyzed using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), t-test and Chi-square test at significance level of 0.05. The study found no relationship between parental marital status and students’ academic performance as majority of students, regardless of family structure, performed equally poorly with a mean grade of less than ‘C’. The results showed that there was no difference in the academic performance of students from single and two parent families (P=0.776). Additionally, the results indicated that there was no significant difference in the academic performance of male and female students from single and two parent families (P=0.348) and altogether these outcomes established that there was no bearing between parental marital status and students’ academic performance (P=0.873). On the basis of this finding, it was recommended that parents and schools/teachers should provide necessary conduciveness to all learners to deal with the challenges they face at home and school, in order to obtain desired academic performance.

Keywords: Intact family, Non Intact family

Introduction
Academic performance is one of the most important aspects of a student’s life. Secondary education comes between primary and tertiary levels and its programs have had a functional role of giving students access to higher education, preparing students for lifelong education and work (World Bank,
2002). According to Lewin (2004) access to and success in secondary schooling will continue to be highly correlated with subsequent employment and income distribution patterns. It is important to understand the factors that promote or hinder students’ academic performance in order to effect changes necessary to bring about success. Researches on various factors affecting academic performance have been carried out. Some of the major factors found affecting day secondary schools in developing countries are domestic chores, biased upbringing that portrays boys as superior to girls in all aspects of maturation, poor school environments and insensitive teaching methods that disregard the student’s needs (FAWE, 2003b).

Most parents want their children to succeed in school but are often unaware that family life itself has a significant impact on their child’s academic capacity (Fagan, Have & Chen, 2011). Previous research has found a direct link between academic achievement and the family with regard to family size, socioeconomic status, educational environment at home and parental marital status. Conly and Glauber (2005) argued that unplanned families put a strain on the monetary and nonmonetary resources of the guardians thereby hampering school achievement of the children. Orr (2003) found that in America the presence of educational resources was positively correlated with academic achievement. A study by Downey (1995) in America found that the more the children, the more thinly spread the interpersonal time and economic resources
were from the parents. According to a research by Ajila and Olutola (2007) on the impact of socio-economic status on university students’ academic performance in Nigeria, the state of the home affects the individual since the parents are the first socializing agents in an individual’s life. This is because the family background and context of a child affect his reaction to life situations and his level of performance.

According to Center for Marriage and Families (CMF, 2005) in America, family structure affects preschool readiness. It affects educational achievement at the elementary, secondary, and college levels. Family structure affects a range of child behaviours that can bear directly on educational success, such as school misbehaviour, drug and alcohol consumption, sexual activity and teen pregnancy, and psychological distress. Other studies show that the level of family cohesion and family relationships (Buote, 2001) prove themselves capable of predicting performance.

Parental marital status has been found to have an impact on academic performance of students. Compared to children who live with both parents until adulthood, children from divorced families were found to have lower educational expectations, poorer school attendance and lower grades in America (Amato 2001, Sun & Li 2001). They were also less likely to graduate from high school or to attend college (Ploeg 2002, Bilblarz & Gottainer 2000, Pong et al. 2002). A research in America on
family structure and child well-being found out that children and adolescents in intact married families were more likely to care about doing well in school, to do schoolwork without being forced, to do more than “just enough to get by,” and to do their homework (Brown, 2004).

A research carried out by Uwaifo (2008) on the effect of family structure and parenthood on the academic achievement of Nigerian university students found that a significant difference existed between the academic performance of students from single parent family and students from two-parent family structures. Also there was a significant difference in academic performance of male and female students compared on the two types of family structures (Uwaifo, 2008).

A study by Omenge and Nasongo (2010) on the effects of socialization with regard to gender roles on students’ academic achievement in secondary schools in Kenya found that students’ participation in domestic chores was linked to low academic achievement. They also found that in both boys and girls, academic achievement was equally affected by engagement in domestic duties. Jagero (2011) found that lack of discipline during study time, lack of adequate reading facilities and inadequate boarding facilities affected academic achievement of boarding secondary schools in Kenya. He also found that parental support and economic status affect academic performance of students.
Dagoretti Sub District of Nairobi County has many secondary school-going students from both single and two parent families whose good academic performance or lack of it could not be attributed to factors related to either of the two family structures. This study investigated relationships between single/two parent families and academic performance with the purpose of enriching the research pool concerned with their associations.

**Objectives of the Study**

a) To assess the relationship between single parent families and the academic performance of their children in day secondary schools

b) To assess the relationship between two parent families and the academic performance of their children in day secondary schools

c) To establish if there was a difference in the academic performance of students from single and two parent families

d) To establish whether there were gender differences in academic performance of students from single and two parent families
Methodology

Target Population, Sampling Techniques, Sample Size and Data Collection Technique

The study targeted all form three students attending day secondary schools and their class teachers in Dagoretti Sub District of Nairobi County. Using probability and non-probability sampling techniques, a total of 196 students from five secondary schools were sampled for the study, 53.1% of whom were females and 46.9% males. Data on the independent variables (parental marital status) was gathered by use of questionnaires whereas data on the dependent variable (students’ academic performance) was obtained from the students’ achievement records.
Data Analysis

Descriptive and inferential analysis was done according to the study objectives and data presented in the most appropriate forms. Demographic data is provided below.

Table 3.1. Demographic information of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Frequency (n=192)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15-17</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>72.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>27.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency (n=192)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>46.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>53.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Type of family of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of family of respondents</th>
<th>Frequency (n=192)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two parent family</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>66.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single parent family</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>30.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orphan</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Whom they live with

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Whom they live with</th>
<th>Frequency (n=192)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Both biological parents</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>42.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One biological &amp; one step parent</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father only</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother only</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>27.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other*</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Of the 190 respondents who had living parents, 120 (63.2%) reported that their parents were currently married while the rest had parents who were divorced (18.4%), never married (10.5%) or widowed (7.9%) as presented in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1 Marital Status of the Parents of the respondents
Results

Relationship between Single Parent Families and Academic Performance of their Children

Based on the first study objective, “To assess the relationship between single parent families and the academic performance of their children in day secondary schools” data collected was analyzed to show the academic performance of the respondents. Table 4.1 presents a summary of distribution of the academic performance of the students from single parent families based on the results of Form III, term II, 2012. Most students scored below C+.

Table 4.1: Academic Performance Results of Students from Single Parent Families

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Frequency(n=57)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the analysis, students who had reportedly scored a mean grade of above C+ were rated as ‘good’ while their counterparts who had reportedly scored less than a mean grade of a C+ were classified as ‘poor’. This rating was based on the minimum entry requirements for Kenyan universities.

To find out if there was any relationship between single parent families and academic performance of their children, the student’s response on various questions that were hypothesized to have contributed to the student’s academic performance were rated on a five-point Likert scale (Never, rarely, sometimes, many times and always). For analytical purposes, these responses were dichotomized into yes (many times and always) and no (Never, rarely and sometimes). Table 4.2 outlines the relationship between single parent family settings, and academic performance of their children. Students from single parent families were found not to miss school although the relationship between missing school and performance was not significant ($\chi^2 = 0.97$). On the other hand, often doing studies at home was associated significantly with improved student’s academic performance ($\chi^2 = 3.980$, df = 1, p=0.046) for single parent families. A significantly higher proportion of students who affirmed that they often did their studies at home were found to have performed better than those who responded to the contrary (35.3% versus 12.5%) for single parent families. The participating students were also asked whether they participated in the learning process or
answered questions in class. There were more students who responded in the affirmative and had their performance rated as good than those who responded in the negative. However, the difference in proportions was not statistically significant (27.6% versus 10.7%, $\chi^2=2.604$, df = 1, p=0.107) for students from single parent families. Significant association was found between finishing homework and academic performance on the students from single parent families ($\chi^2= 2.556$, df = 1, p=0.110; Table 4.2).

**Table 4.2** Academic Performance of Students from Single Parent Families

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Performance</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do you often miss school in a week? (n=57)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>0(0.0%)</td>
<td>0(0.0%)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>11(80.7%)</td>
<td>46(80.7%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>11(80.7%)</td>
<td>46(80.7%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do you often do your studies at home? (n=57)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>6(35.3%)</td>
<td>11(64.7%)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>5(12.5%)</td>
<td>35(87.5%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>11(19.3%)</td>
<td>46(80.7%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do you participate/answer questions in class? (n=57)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>8(27.6%)</td>
<td>21(72.4%)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>3(10.7%)</td>
<td>25(89.3%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>11(19.3%)</td>
<td>46(80.7%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do you often finish your homework? (n=57)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>11(22.9%)</td>
<td>37(77.1%)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0(0.0%)</td>
<td>9(100.0%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>11(19.3%)</td>
<td>46(80.7%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Though the proportion of students whose academic performance was good was higher for those who cared about doing well in school, this difference was not statistically significant as shown in Table 4.3. In addition, whether a student
often got satisfied with his/her academic performance, or not, was not significantly related with academic performance. Students who viewed school rules as strict tended to perform poorly as opposed to those who were of the opinion that school rules were either moderate or not strict. The academic performance of students, who often discussed their academic performance with someone, was not statistically different from their colleagues who had no one to discuss their performance with. Limiting the amount of time a student spent in pass time activities e.g. watching TV was not related statistically with academic performance as Table 4.3 shows.
Table 4.3 Academic Performance of Students from Single Parent Families

**SingleParent**

**Family Student Performance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you care about doing well in school? (n=57)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>11(20.4%)</td>
<td>43(79.6%)</td>
<td>0.757</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0(0.0%)</td>
<td>3(100.0%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>11(19.3%)</td>
<td>46(80.7%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you often get satisfied with your performance? (n=56)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>4(33.3%)</td>
<td>8(66.7%)</td>
<td>1.814</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>7(15.9%)</td>
<td>37(84.1%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>11(19.6%)</td>
<td>45(80.4%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How do you view your school rules? (n=57)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strict</td>
<td>2(16.7%)</td>
<td>10(83.3%)</td>
<td>0.068</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate/Not strict</td>
<td>9(20.0%)</td>
<td>36(80.0%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>11(19.3%)</td>
<td>46(80.7%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you discuss your performance with anybody? (n=57)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>10(19.2%)</td>
<td>42(80.8%)</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>1(20.0%)</td>
<td>4(80.0%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>11(19.3%)</td>
<td>46(80.7%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Whom do you discuss your performance with? (n=52)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>1(16.7%)</td>
<td>5(83.3%)</td>
<td>0.117</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>7(20.6%)</td>
<td>27(79.4%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatives/Other</td>
<td>2(16.7%)</td>
<td>10(83.3%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>10(19.2%)</td>
<td>42(80.8%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do your parent(s)/guardian(s) limit amount of time you spend on pass time activities e.g. watching TV? (n=55)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>6(24.0%)</td>
<td>19(76.0%)</td>
<td>0.458</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>5(16.7%)</td>
<td>25(83.3%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>11(20.0%)</td>
<td>44(80.0%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Single parents who contacted their children’s schools to enquire about their academic performance and/or behavior contributed to improved academic performance of the children significantly (35.7% versus 11.9%, $\chi^2= 4.058$, df=1, p=0.044). Attending school meetings or even taking part in the school activities by the parent was not found to contribute in a significant way to the student’s academic performance (Table 4.4). Provision of the student with the parental love/warmth
did not show any association with student’s performance. This was also the case for the student getting advice about general life issues (Table 4.4). Generally, students who reported that they often got assigned domestic duties at home performed poorly than those who reported the opposite regardless of their family background as shown in Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4 Single Parent Family and Academic Performance of their Children**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Single Parent Family Students performance</th>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent contact school about student performance/behavior? (n=56)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5(35.7%)</td>
<td>9(64.3%)</td>
<td>4.058</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>5 (11.9%)</td>
<td>37(88.1%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>10(17.9%)</td>
<td>46(82.1%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend school meetings/take part in the school activities? (n=123)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5(13.9%)</td>
<td>31(86.1%)</td>
<td>1.082</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>5(25.0%)</td>
<td>15(75.0%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>10(17.9%)</td>
<td>46(82.1%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides student with the love/warmth (s)he requires? (n=123)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5(13.2%)</td>
<td>33(86.8%)</td>
<td>1.780</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>5(27.8%)</td>
<td>13(72.2%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>10(17.9%)</td>
<td>46(82.1%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student gets advice from parent about general life issues? (n=123)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>7(16.3%)</td>
<td>36(83.7%)</td>
<td>0.314</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>3(23.1%)</td>
<td>10(76.9%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>10(17.9%)</td>
<td>46(82.1%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students gets assigned domestic duties/ n=122)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>4(12.1%)</td>
<td>29(87.9%)</td>
<td>1.802</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>6(26.1%)</td>
<td>17(73.9%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overall 10(17.9%) 46(82.1%)

**Relationship between Two Parent Families and Academic Performance of their Children**

Based on the second study objective, “To assess the relationship between two parent families and the academic performance of their children in day secondary schools” results indicated that most of the students in two parent families attained a mean grade of below C+ which was rated as poor (Table 4.5)

**Table 4.5: Academic Performance Results of Students from Two Parent Families**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average Grade</th>
<th>Corresponding Points</th>
<th>Frequency(n=123)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>18.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In two parent families, better performance was observed amongst students who reported that they did not often miss
school although the relationship between missing school and performance was not significant in both cases. Doing studies at home was associated significantly with improved student’s academic performance in two parent families ($\chi^2 = 5.013$, df = 1, p=0.025). A significantly higher proportion of students who affirmed that they often did their studies at home were found to have performed better than those who responded to the contrary (30.8% versus 14.1%). The participating students were also asked whether they participated in the learning process or answered questions in class. There were more students who responded in the affirmative and had their performance rated as good than those who responded in the negative and this was statistically significant for students from two parent families (30.8% against 14.1% respectively, $\chi^2 = 4.672$, df = 1, p=0.031). Finishing homework was not significantly associated with academic performance of students from two parent families ($\chi^2 = 0.006$, df = 1, p=0.937)) as in Table 4.6.
Table 4.6 Academic Performance of Students from Two Parent Families

Two Parent Family
Student Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you often miss school in a week? (n=122)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1(20.0%)</td>
<td>4(80.0%)</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>25(21.4%)</td>
<td>92(78.6%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>26(21.3%)</td>
<td>96(78.7%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you often do your studies at home? (n=123)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>16(30.8%)</td>
<td>36(69.2%)</td>
<td>5.013</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>10(14.1%)</td>
<td>61(85.9%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>26(21.1%)</td>
<td>97(78.9%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you participate/answer questions in class? (n=120)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>17(30.4%)</td>
<td>39(69.6%)</td>
<td>4.672</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>9(14.1%)</td>
<td>55(85.9%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>26(21.7%)</td>
<td>94(78.3%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you often finish your homework? (n=120)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>20(21.5%)</td>
<td>73(78.5%)</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>6(22.2%)</td>
<td>21(77.8%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>26(21.7%)</td>
<td>94(78.3%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportion of students whose academic performance was good was higher for those who cared about doing well in school though this difference was not statistically significant as shown in Table 4.7. In addition, whether a student often got satisfied with his/her academic performance, or not, was not significantly related with academic performance. Students who viewed school rules as strict tended to perform poorly as opposed to those who were of the opinion that school rules were either moderate or not strict (Table 4.7). The academic performance of students, who often discussed their academic
performance with someone, was not statistically different from their colleagues who had no one to discuss their performance with. Academic performance of students from two parent families was strongly associated with the individuals with whom he/she discussed the performance with ($\chi^2 = 11.177$, df = 3, p=0.011). Students who discussed with their fathers as well as those who discussed with relatives and others (teachers, friends, classmates, etc.) performed better as compared to those who discussed with mothers or both parents. Limiting the amount of time a student spent in pass time activities e.g. watching TV was not related statistically with academic performance as Table 4.7 shows.
### Table 4.7 Academic Performance of Students from Two Parent Families

**Two Parent Families**

**Student Performance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parent contact school about student performance/behavior? (n=120)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>26(23.6%)</td>
<td>84(76.4%)</td>
<td>3.017</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0(0.0%)</td>
<td>10(100.0%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>26(21.7%)</td>
<td>94(78.3%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do you often get satisfied with your performance? n=122</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>7(21.2%)</td>
<td>26(78.8%)</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>19(21.3%)</td>
<td>70(78.7%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>26(21.3%)</td>
<td>96(78.3%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How do you view your school rules? (n=120)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strict</td>
<td>5(12.8%)</td>
<td>34(87.2%)</td>
<td>2.664</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate/Not strict</td>
<td>21(25.9%)</td>
<td>60(74.1%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>26(21.7%)</td>
<td>94(78.3%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do you discuss your performance with anybody? n=122</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>23(21.9%)</td>
<td>82(78.1%)</td>
<td>0.158</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>3(17.6%)</td>
<td>14(82.4%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>26(21.3%)</td>
<td>96(78.7%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Whom do you discuss your performance with? (n=105)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>14(32.6%)</td>
<td>29(67.4%)</td>
<td>11.177</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>2(5.3%)</td>
<td>36(94.7%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both parents</td>
<td>2(18.2%)</td>
<td>9(81.8%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatives/others</td>
<td>5(40.0%)</td>
<td>8(60.0%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>23(38.5%)</td>
<td>82(61.5%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do your parent(s)/guardian(s) limit the amount of time you spend on pass time activities e.g. watching TV? n=118</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>8(21.6%)</td>
<td>29(78.4%)</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>18(22.2%)</td>
<td>63(77.8%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>26(22.0%)</td>
<td>92(78.0%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In two parent families, students whose parents often contacted the school to enquire about their academic performance and/or behaviour performed equally well as those whose parents never or rarely did so ($\chi^2 = 0.100$, df = 1, p=0.752). Attending school meetings or even taking part in the school activities by the parent was not found to contribute in a significant way to the student’s academic performance (Table 4.8). Provision of the student with parental love/warmth did not show any association with student’s performance in both types of families. This was also the case for the student getting advice about general life issues. Generally, students who reported that they often got assigned domestic duties at home performed poorly than those who reported the opposite.
The results presented in Table 4.9 show there was no relationship between parental marital status and academic performance. There was statistically no significant difference between the performance of students who hailed from single parent families and those from two parent families ($\chi^2 = 0.081$, df = 1, p=0.776). The marital status of the parents were not associated significantly with the academic performance of the students ($\chi^2 = 0.702$, df = 3, p=0.873) as shown in Table 4.9.
Table 4.9: Relationship between Parental Marital Status and students’ Academic Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Good (n=37)</th>
<th>Poor (n=143)</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family student hails from</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two parent family</td>
<td>26(21.1%)</td>
<td>97(78.9%)</td>
<td>0.081</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single parent family</td>
<td>11(19.3%)</td>
<td>46(80.7%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital status of parents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>23(20.2%)</td>
<td>91(79.8%)</td>
<td>0.702</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>6(18.2%)</td>
<td>27(81.8%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never married</td>
<td>5(27.8%)</td>
<td>13(72.2%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>3(20.0%)</td>
<td>12(80.0%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Differences in Academic Performance of Students from Single and Two Parent Families

Based on the third study objective, “To establish if there is a difference in the academic performance of students from single and two parent families” results suggest that there is no significant difference in the academic performance of students from the two family structures (p=0.835) as shown in table 4.10, though the mean performance of students from two parent families is slightly higher.
Table 4.10: Differences in Academic Performance of Students from Single and Two Parent Families.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single parent family</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>0.2076</td>
<td>0.8358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two parent family</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4 Gender Differences in Academic Performance
Based on the fourth study objective, “To establish whether there are gender differences in academic performance of students from single and two parent families” analysis of variance in academic performance between male and female respondents revealed that male students had a higher mean than female students as shown in table 4.11.

Table 4.11: Gender Differences in Academic Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>5.63</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>2.529</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>5.32</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>2.502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5.47</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>2.513</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There was no statistically significant difference between the two groups (p=0.403) as shown in Table 4.12.
Table 4.12: Analysis of Variance in Academic Performance by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sum of squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean squares</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between groups (Combined)</td>
<td>4.450</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.450</td>
<td>0.703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>1163.857</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>6.325</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1168.306</td>
<td>185</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Male students from single parent families had a higher mean than males from two parent families while female students from two parent families had a higher mean than those from single parent families (Table 4.13).

Analysis of variance showed no statistically significant difference between gender and type of family (p=0.348) as shown in table 4.14.
**Table 4.13:** Differences in Academic Performance with Student’s Gender and Type of Family

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Type of family one hails from</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Two parent family</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>2.583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Single parent family</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2.517</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5.66</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>2.551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Two parent family</td>
<td>5.41</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>2.493</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Single parent family</td>
<td>5.09</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>2.532</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>2.497</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Two parent family</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>2.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Single parent family</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>2.527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5.47</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>2.522</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.14:** ANOVA: [Variation of performance with student’s gender and type of family]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum squares</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between groups (combined)</td>
<td>5.636</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.636</td>
<td>0.885</td>
<td>0.348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>1133.225</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>6.366</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1138.861</td>
<td>179</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion

Based on university’s admission criteria in Kenya, most students from both family structures can be said to be unqualified for university admission; majority (79.6%) of the students got an average grade of C and below which was rated as below minimum entry requirement for university and only 20.4% attained an average grade of C+ and above which was rated as satisfactory for entry to university. These findings support a previous study carried out by Misoy (2011) in Nandi District which found that majority of secondary day students perform below the university entry grade C+.

The study found there was no relationship between single parent families and the academic performance of their children. Students from divorced, never married and widowed parents were grouped as from single parent families though students from divorced families were found to perform poorly than the rest. This agrees with the finding of CMF (2005) that found divorce to have negative effects on children which have a bearing on performance. Students from families whose parents never got married were found to perform better than the rest. There was also no relationship between two parent families and the academic performance of their children. Most parents from both families showed lack of involvement in their children’s academic and extracurricular activities and did not control the amount of time their children spent in
pass time activities or with friends. They also did not contact school about their children’s performance. These were found to be contributory factors of the poor performance in both cases, agreeing with the finding of Crowe (2003). Although there was no significant relationship between assignment of duties and academic performance of students in the two types of families, majority of students reported that they often got assigned domestic duties at home and performed poorly than those who were not assigned. This confirms the results of Omenge and Nasongo (2010) that student’s low achievement could be attributed to involvement in domestic chores.

Students from the two types of families who cared about doing well in school had a higher performance than those who did not. This agrees with the finding of Brown (2002) which found that students who cared about doing well in school obtained a higher performance index. Those who viewed school rules as strict tended to perform poorly as opposed to the ones who opined that rules were either moderate or not strict agreeing with the finding of Crowe (2005). From these findings, parental marital status does not determine the performance of the student. Therefore the study fails to reject hypotheses 1 and 2 which are stated as follows respectively: there is no significant relationship between single parent families and academic performance of their children in day secondary schools; and there is no significant relationship between two parent families and the academic performance
of their children in day secondary schools. There was no statistically significant difference between the academic performance of students from single and two parent families. The students from two parent families had a slightly higher mean than those from single parent families, though this difference was not statistically significant. These findings are consistent with similar findings of the research carried out in Nigeria by Edun and Oguntola (2011) who found that there was no significant difference in the academic achievement of pupils from families with two parents, single parents or no parents. It also supports the findings of Heyneman and Lomey (1983) that the portion of the variance in achievement related to family background was much smaller than that attributed to school quality in developing countries compared to developed countries. These findings also agree with that of Ushie, Emeka and Owolabi (2012) which found that family structure did not determine student’s academic performance in Nigeria. Therefore the study fails to reject hypothesis 3 which states that there is no difference in academic performance of students from single and two parent families in day secondary schools.

The general mean performance of the boys was higher than that of the girls though there was no significant difference between the academic performances of the two groups. Also comparing the males and females from single parent families showed no significant difference with their counterparts from
the two parent families. The male students from two parent families had lower mean point as compared to those from single parent families where as the female students from two parent families had a higher mean compared to those from single parent families though in both cases there was no significant difference. Therefore the study fails to reject the fourth hypothesis that there are no significant gender differences in academic performance of students from single and two parent families.

Based on the findings of the study, the academic performance of students from both two and single parent families can be said to be generally the same and therefore parental marital status did not determine the students’ academic performance. The study found that poor performance can be associated with factors outside the family structure like not doing studies at home and being assigned home chores. Doing studies at home was significantly associated with improved academic performance, connectedly, those who studied at home performed better than those who didn’t. The study found that majority of students from both families did not do their studies at home which could be a contributory factor of the general poor performance. Other contributing factors to academic performance included missing school, non participation in class, not caring about doing well and negative view of students on school rules and regulations. The age of the students was also found to affect the academic performance with those
aged 16 years or less performing better than the older students though there was no significant association between age and academic performance.

The students also stated additional factors which affected their performance; on top is poverty which made the parents from both the single and two parent families not provide the necessary school materials for their children. These findings were similar with the findings of Agba et al (2009), that even when a child lives with both parents, extreme poverty can affect the student’s performance due to lack of school material. It also agrees with the finding of Eamon (2005) and Jeynes (2002) that low social-economic status has significant negative effects on the academic achievement of students because it is an obstruction to vital resources and creates additional stress at home. Some students from two parent families also stated that conflicts and misunderstanding between their parents affected their academic performance hence presence of two parent families does not necessarily lead to high performance. These confirmed the findings of the studies carried out by CMF (2005) and Boute (2001) who found that the level of family cohesion and family relationships predict students’ performance. These findings agree with that of Ushie et al (2012) that although parental marital status is not significantly related to academic performance of students other family characteristics are a major source of student’s educational performance.
The family system theory states that individuals are best understood within the context of relationships within the family and if there are dysfunctions it may lead to inability of the members to operate productively (Goldenberg and Goldenberg, 2008). In the study some students indicated unhealthy relationships within the family which lead to psychological problems lowering their academic performance. A combination of other factors which were not catered for in this study like school factors, personal factors relating to the individual’s intelligence and social factors may also have affected the student’s performance as found out by a research carried out by Crowe (2005) and Suleman et al, (2012). Therefore, there is a combination of various factors that affect a student’s academic performance. The findings of the study may make an important contribution to the knowledge pool concerned with the relationships between family structures and academic performance.

**Conclusion**

The results of this study indicate that parental marital status does not determine the academic performance of students in day secondary schools of Dagoretti Sub District of Nairobi County. However, home environment was observed to be playing an important role in students’ academic performance. This was because irrespective of parental marital status, other family characteristics like assignment of domestic duties,
poverty, parent’s participation and home environment were found to affect academic performance. It is therefore important to provide healthy home/family and school environments to enhance academic performance in both single and two parent families.

The study recommends the following: Parental participation in children’s education to be encouraged and caregivers to consider assigning learners minimal domestic chores so as to have enough time for studies. Additionally, enriching home/family environments should be provided for effective learning to happen and finally, counselors to step in and provide much needed psychosocial support to the growing and developing teenagers/young adults. More research is needed on the contribution of the home/family environment on academic performance.
References


Jeynes, W.H. (2002). Examining the effect of parental absence on the academic achievement of adolescents: The challenge of controlling for family income. Journal of family and economic issues 23(2)


Omenge, B. N. (2010). Effects of socialization with regard to gender roles on students’ academic achievement in


Sexuality Education: Promoting Safer Sexual Behaviour Among University Students In Kenya.

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ABSTRACT

Sex education has become a major concern in our universities that needs redress. Regardless of this, only few studies have been done on it. This paper seeks to review various studies done by researchers on safer sexual behaviour amongst university students and the impacts of risky sexual behaviour amongst the same. It majors on abstinence, condom utilization, contraception, students’ lawlessness and other contributing factors to sexual moral decadence. To mitigate problems related to risky sexual behaviour, it will require a holistic approach from relevant stakeholders as well as implementing new policies in these institutions. This would entail pre-hand orientation of new students, curriculum review and integration of university dons and staff in the health education as a way of alleviating sexual abuse. In addition to policies, a policy action environment is necessary to address sexual and reproductive health rights among university students. This can be achieved through skill building programs such as sex education, peer counseling, and sensitization on contraceptive use.

Key words: Sexual behaviour, university students, abstinence, pre-disposing factors, contraception.
Introduction

Reproductive health is a crucial component in education yet it receives minimal attention from many institutions of higher learning in our country. This is due to cultural sensitivity and political influences. Sexual and reproductive health education is a basic right for all students in an attempt to instill responsible and rightful beings. It is crucial in helping university students to make informed choices. It is of paramount importance in order to make correct choices against premarital sex, homosexuality, unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections.

Safer sex behavior in universities cannot be overlooked. It entails sexual abstinence, proper and consistent use of condoms and other family planning methods. Barriers to safer sex behavior such as myths, alcoholism, peer pressure and religiosity among university students should be considered. Several studies have found that pregnancy prevention rather than disease prevention is the impetus for condom use while alcohol is strongly related to risky sexual behavior. Students with strong religious convictions are less likely to engage in risky sexual practices (Amar et al, 2010).

Apparently, it is quite debatable whether the prominence of the abstinence-only approach still dominates. This is because it has chronic unintended effects that deny university students access to the information they need to protect
themselves. It risks alienating them at highest risk of negative health outcomes by promoting a “one size fits all” vision of university students that matches the true experiences of only a minority of a few. Sexual abstinence and reproduction education provide the relevant context and meaning of sex. All institutions should embrace teamwork with the health sector and acknowledge that majority of the students are sexually active. This will enhance consistent provision of information on abstinence, contraception and condom use, and sexually transmitted diseases (Chris, et al 2002).

Previously done case-control studies have proved that sex and HIV education programs don’t hasten the onset of sex, don’t increase the frequency of sex and also do not increase the number of sexual partners but to the contrary they delay the onset of sex, reduce the frequency of sex and reduce the number of sexual partners (Kirby et al, 2001).

Predisposing factors to risky sexual behavior

Drug and substance abuse

Previously done studies have shown that students who abuse alcohol and other drugs are at a higher risk of engaging in high risky behavior. This is worsened by peer pressure and lack of maturity by some students (CDC, 1995).

Alcohol myopia theory explains it as the restriction of
cognitive capacity where the person focuses on the salient situational cues of sexual initiation and ignores the peripheral ones. This suggests that alcohol consumption in an initiate situation, when the arousal is high it may limit a person’s ability to identify potential dangers, including the risk of STI, unwanted pregnancy, or sexual coercion (Steele et al, 1990).

Such students engage in unsafe sexual behavior and may contact sexually transmitted infections or have unwanted pregnancies resulting to abortions.

**Out of campus living lifestyle**

This has been seen to encourage cohabiting amongst students as well as vulnerability to risky sexual behavior. Universities need to adopt the guardianship of parents in order to ensure safe completion of studies by students and reduce the prevalence of diseases like HIV/AIDS. It would be very favourable and attractive if universities provided enough accommodation for majority of the students or liaised with the external hostel providers to lay down rules and policies to avoid cohabiting.

**Lawlessness of the students**

Some students have moral decadence and need guidance. They have sexual intercourse in the university hostels, poor time management, drugs intoxication and male students staying in girls hostels overnight. This indicates that the rules
and regulations of the university are loose and this needs reassessment of how the university manages the students. Failure to take action strengthens lawlessness of the students.

According to Goyette et al (2000), few lecturers approach female students for sex in exchange for improved grades, which is unethical as well as unprofessional behavior. The students may also succumb due to lack of finances and hence it is for the university to adopt ways of helping such vulnerable students so as to mitigate sexual abuse. A good way is offering work study to the needy students, getting in touch with donors for funding or coming up with activities that generate revenue and run by the students like tuck shops within hostels.

Lawlessness by students will result to poor academic grades and misfortunes to them (Oyelere, 2010). In addition, lecturers should be ethical and mind the objectives of the student and institution while as students need to be focused and realize that they are protected and guided by the rules and policies of the university.

**Low self esteem**

Low self-esteem or totally lack of self-esteem may be considered as predisposing factors to risky sexual behaviour. Therefore, this may cause students to lose their self reliance and become dependent on others, which could expose them to dependency, rape, dangerous sexual harassment and other
related risky behaviors. Such students will mostly feel rejected and hence develop a compensatory self-defense mechanism to prove they are lovable. It is for this reason they get multiple sexual partners or older partners ‘sugar daddies and mummies’ to take care of their needs (Gurmesa et al, 2012). This can mainly be attributed to effects of poor parenting or developmental hiccups. University counselors are hence essential in dealing with such students for them to lead a normal healthy life.

**Impacts of risky sexual behaviour amongst university students**

**Unwanted pregnancies and unsafe abortions**
Unprotected sex results to unwanted pregnancies amongst students. It is such a time that students realize that they can’t handle the pregnancy and are in a dilemma of keeping or terminating it. As a result, cases of unsafe and criminal abortion become rampant and hence threatening the health status of the students. Some students lose their lives in the process of abortion due to various complications or are rendered infertile. This comes along with other effects like psychological trauma and posttraumatic stress disorder.

**HIV/AIDS**
A study carried out by Magu et al 2012 in Kenya on Sexual Risky Behaviours among the Youth in Kenya, indicates that
the youth account for 50% of new HIV infections globally. This is due to lack or improper use of condoms. It is essential to reinforce condom use not only during vaginal sex but also during oral and anal sex. It is therefore necessary to involve various partners in making informed sexual decisions so as to broaden the students’ clinical and educational efforts. University students need information on condom accessibility, use of clean needles and accessibility to health services. University students are the basis of the future and represent the hope for an HIV/AIDS free generation.

**Poor academic grades and school drop out**

Discipline and excellent academic performance are directly proportional. Risky sexual behaviour propagated by alcoholism and other vices keeps students away from class attendance and hence poor performance. Students who cohabit tend to play wifely and husband roles other than concentrating on their studies. Risky sexual behaviour may lead to a life of prostitution. A study conducted in Ethiopia reveals that many adolescents continue to engage in risky sexual behaviors associated with low academic achievement and lack of parental communication; while, individual and family-level protective factors appear to moderate the impact of risk (Land, 2004).
Importance of sexual and reproductive health education on university students

Reproductive health education is received either formally or informally. Formal means include schools and other organizations while as informal means are from parents, relatives and peers. Somers, 2005 findings indicate that adolescents who get information from formal sources engage in fewer risky sexual behaviors and hold more cautious attitudes about sex than adolescents receiving information from peer and popular media sources.

Sexual education should be comprehensive enough to take care of the needs of all students and not ignoring the different parenting styles they underwent as an influence to their morals. There should be no condemnation or stigmatization from the providers in order to facilitate openness from the students. Studies have shown that access to comprehensive sexual education delays sex initiation, less sexual partners and increases contraceptive use (Kirby et al, 2007).

A rift has always existed on whether to be exclusive on abstinence only or also have information on non-abstinence. Reproductive health education should not seek to promote abstinence only since dwelling only on abstinence until marriage as the expected behaviour ignores sexuality amongst students. Students who choose to be active in premarital sex are as a result left out with no information guide (Herz and Reis, 1987).
Abstinence programs should be part of the reproductive health education information since students who have undergone this training convey a greater factual understanding on sexual health, and more cautious attitude and behaviour than those ones who have not (Hoff and Greene 2000).

**Barriers of sexual and reproductive health education to university students**

According to Schueller et al, 2000, there has been a public negative attitude towards reproductive health which has constrained inhibiting students from receiving accurate, unbiased and complete information. In our own country, introduction of reproductive health education in our schools faces vehement resistance and protest from the public. This is due to the deep-rooted cultural and social beliefs held by the public regarding reproductive health ignoring the reproductive needs of these students. Students are therefore on the receiving end of the unspoken resulting to further moral corruption.

The attitude of providers should not be overlooked. Some are too inquisitive, unfriendly, judgmental and can’t be trusted with such sensitive information. They also demonstrate a level of expected values from the students who seek their services and hence appearing unapproachable to the students’ reproductive health issues. This is because open discussion on reproductive health education or sex remains a taboo in majority of societies.
Reproductive health education programs may also be lacking in some universities or are not offered consistently since they may need to outsource the expertise. It is therefore necessary to follow the requirements set by The Commission for Higher Education on the need to have a health facility as well as a guidance and counseling department working closely together. In addition, reproductive health education is a crucial matter requiring collaboration with external providers in order to boost the privacy and confidentiality of students on these sensitive issues.

Other barriers include dominant masculinity ideologies that prevent boys from asking questions about their sexual health to avoid looking unmanly. Ideologies on the feminist may make girls fear that their reputation may be at stake when they appear to know too much about their reproduction. This therefore makes them not seek information and services on reproductive health education (WHO, 2002).

Findings of a study done by (MOH, 2004) show that students also fear that privacy may lack if they share their issues with the sexual health education providers. They fear that the information may leak out and are hence hesitant to seek these services. They therefore need reassurance in confidentiality and privacy from the providers.
Conclusion

University students continue to make unhealthy decisions about their sexual health, a circumstance that can result in both short- and long-term negative consequences at on them and the society. Social influence or peer pressure is an important factor to consider in instilling positive sexual behaviour during reproductive health education. University environment needs to promote safer sex norms in nurturing students.

Reproductive health education programs have been one of the more widespread and effective means of promoting healthy sexual behaviors and attitudes, but students do not receive equal access to such programs and information. There is a need of additional research identifying determinants specific to university students at risk as a result of behaviors they adopt or rather forced to adopt due to social, economic or cultural factors (WHO, 2006).
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