

Teacher Qualification as a Determinant of Enrolment in Home Science Subject: A Case of Elgeyo Marakwet County

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Abstract

Studies globally have shown that several factors affect student enrolment in a given subject. This study sought to identify how teacher qualification affects students' enrolment in Home Science subject in selected secondary schools in Elgeyo Marakwet County (EMC). This study adopted the descriptive survey design. Purposive sampling technique was used to select all the six (6) county secondary schools offering the Home Science subject up to form four and six (6) Home Science teachers. Data was collected by use of questionnaires that were self-administered to the Home Science teachers then analyzed descriptively. The results were presented using frequency and percentage distribution table and a chart. The study established that majority (83.3%) of the teachers had attained formal training and were qualified to teach Home Science subject. On the experience of Home Science teachers, the study established that 50% of them had taught between 0 and 5 years. Findings from this study further revealed that the presence of qualified and experienced teachers played a critical role in the teaching and learning of Home Science in secondary schools. This is because they positively influenced students' performance and enrolment in the Home Science subject. Based on the findings of this study, secondary schools should employ trained and qualified, and retain experienced teachers because they positively affect performance and enrolment of students.

Key words: Teacher qualification, Education level, experience, Home Science subject, Home Science teachers

INTRODUCTION

For one to attain skills so as to be effective at the work place, he/she needs to be educated. According to Usman (2012), a qualified teacher is one who has a teaching certificate and a bachelor's degree. Also, Dial (2008) also notes that the presence of a highly-qualified teacher forms a key component of a successful classroom experience. Further, Onguti (1987) asserts that a trained teacher is a source of strength to an institution that one renders his/her service. Such a teacher would be able to handle learners' differences in the course of the learning process and will ensure that effective learning takes place. Douglas (1964) affirms that a teacher is considered not to have taught until a pupil has learnt the particular skill. Douglas further remarks that a teacher's quality is assessed in reference to his/her level of education and training.

Over the years, experience has been said to be the best teacher. Therefore, the teachers' education and experience significantly have effect on the academic achievement of learners in Home Science (Ofem, Iyam, & Bassey, 2015). The teaching experience of a teacher is of

high importance and the promotions of teachers should be based on proven merit and their experience (GoK, 1999). In fact, Kabugi (2013) remarks that it is of high importance to have a qualified and highly motivated teaching force that is able to understand learners' needs and the curriculum for effective implementation. With such a qualified and motivated teacher, one will be better placed to deliver the relevant content in Home Science and the learners will be inspired to choose the subject and learn. To this end, the reviewed studies have revealed that trained and qualified teachers have a positive input into the teaching and learning process.

Furthermore, other studies have indicated that there is a major difference between performance of learners taught by qualified teachers and those taught by unqualified ones (Colfater, Ladd, & Vidgor, 2006; Adeniji, 2004). Also, Adaramola and Obomanu (2011), and Buddin and Zamarro (2009) established that absence of qualified teachers led to consistent poor performance of learners and teachers' long experience had a positive effect on students' achievement in high performing schools whereas less experienced teachers produced low performing students. In addition, Nyangi, (2012) attests that good results from previous examinations by students have a motivating factor on students to enroll in Home Science subject.

According to a World Bank Report (1997), the total number of teachers experienced in the field was the most consistently positive contributor to academic achievement of a learner. Just as well, Goliath (2008) attests that the teachers' formative experiences are both historical and concurrent. Furthermore, these factors influence their professional roles and their growth once they get into work environment. In addition, Goliath (2008) further argues that a good academic and proficient component of teacher education programs forms the abilities of the teachers to act in a manner that encourages pupil teaching. On teaching experience, Kabugi (2013) records that teaching experience and teaching qualification are certainly linked with student achievement. The learning upshots of schoolchildren are strongly related with teacher aspects like teacher qualification and teacher experience (Mkumbo, 2014). Researchers Ladd and Sorensen (2015) report that the term experienced teachers is meant for those teachers who taught for not less than five years. However, most research suggests that teachers are considerably more effective after two years of being in the job (Peske & Haycock, 2006). As reported by Ofem et al., (2015) the more number of years a worker stays in the job makes them more productive.

The experience of teachers normally has a positive effect on the academic performance of a learner and the longer the teaching experience of the teacher, the more effective and productive they become (Onuoha, 1999; Ofem et al., 2015; & Iheanacho, 2002). However, Zuzovsky (2003) attests that it is challenging to interpret teachers' experience and the achievement of students because the variable is affected by market situations or motivation to work. The experience of a teacher may have a positive or negative influence on students to enroll in a given subject (Kirima & Kinyua 2016). In addition, they further attest that a highly motivated and well-prepared teacher plays a critical role in influencing a student to enroll in the subject. Another scholar, Nyangi (2012) found that one of the factors that deterred students from choosing Home Science subject in Nairobi Secondary schools was presence of unqualified Home Science teachers. The reviewed literature has further revealed that teacher's experience has an influence on student's performance and enrolment in a given subject. The more the years of teaching, the better the performance, and vice versa. Therefore, this study sought to establish the influence of qualification of Home Science teachers on enrolment of students in the Home science subject in Elgeyo Marakwet County.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study used the descriptive survey design. It involves the identification of the characteristics of observed phenomena (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). This study was conducted in Elgeyo Marakwet County which is found in the Rift Valley region of Kenya. The study population comprised eight (8) County schools offering the Home Science subject in Elgeyo Marakwet County. The criteria for selecting the county schools were based on the fact that county schools were many. In particular, Home Science teachers in the County schools were included in the study as they held valuable information.

Non-probability sampling method was utilized to obtain the sample. Purposive sampling was used to select all county secondary schools taking the Home Science subject in EMC. Purposive sampling involves selecting a sample on the basis of knowledge of the population, its elements, and the nature of research aims (Babbie, 1990; Voicu, 2011). The sample narrowed down to six schools since they offered Home Science up to form four. Therefore, a total of six Home Science teachers were also purposively selected to participate in this study.

This study used self-administered questionnaires as they were preferred because they are capable of eliciting the required information. According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), questionnaires can be used to cover a wide area and there is no bias on the side of the researcher and respondents. The questionnaire comprised closed-ended items. Questionnaires were used because they were able to measure many variables (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2005). Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics whereby frequencies and percentages were used to present data that was obtained from closed-ended items in the questionnaire. According to Kothari (2004), descriptive statistics provides meaningful distribution of scores using statistical measures of central tendencies, dispersion, and distribution.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Education Level of Home Science Teachers

The study established that majority (5) of the teachers had attained formal training to teach the Home Science subject whereas (1) had not undergone any professional training as the teacher was a form four leaver and had been requested to assist the candidates. Similar sentiments echoed by Kirima and Kinyua (2016) absence of skilled teachers in secondary schools compels parents to engage services of untrained teachers could contribute to fewer students choosing a subject. This study further established that of the six respondents, 5 (83.3%) were graduates while 1 (16.7%) had not received any professional training (Table 1).

The findings of the present study agrees with those of Nyangi (2012) who established that majority (80%) of her respondents were qualified to teach Home Economics. Another researcher, Kabugi (2013) had closely similar results where she established that majority of teachers taking students in Agriculture formed 60% of her respondents who were qualified to take the subject. Also, Mkumbo (2014) attested that the high performance in schools in Tanzania was as a result of the presence of high proportion of highly-qualified teachers. Further, an earlier study by Dial (2008) observed that a highly-qualified teacher influenced a successful teaching and learning process in classroom. Therefore, these studies have demonstrated that qualified teachers have a positive influence on students' performance.

Table 1: Home Science Teachers' Training and Highest Academic Qualification

Teachers' Training			Highest Academic Qualification		
	Frequency	Percent		Frequency	Percent
Yes	5	83.3	Graduate	5	83.3
No	1	16.7	Form 4 Leaver	1	16.7
Total	6	100	Total	6	100

Experience of Home Science Teachers

The present study categorized work experience into four different levels of Home Science teachers from 0 to 20 years. Those who had taught between 0 and 5 years were 3 (50%), 6 and 10 years were 2 (33.3%), 11 and 15 years were 0 and 16 and 20 years was 1 (16.7%) (Figure 1). This implied that majority of the Home Science teachers in this study had experience. Closely related to these results are results documented by Nyangara, Indoshi, and Othuon (2010) who found that majority of their respondents had an experience of above 10 years and similar to Musau and Migosi (2015) who found a greater percentage (51.7%) of the respondents had served more than five years in their stations. However, Musau and Migosi (2015) argued that teacher qualification and experience had no significance in low academic achievement of students just like Nyangi (2012) who confirmed that 85% of the respondents had experience of more than three years. Similarly, Dial (2008) established that students taught by teachers with an experience of 5 to 19 years performed better compared to those taught by teachers below five years and those above twenty years. Further, Mkumbo (2014) in his report established that the high performing schools had a higher percentage of experienced teachers who had taught for a period of more than 10 years.

Murage and Kibera (2014) concluded in their study that years of experience and age for teachers were significantly related and therefore could be used to predict job satisfaction. Ofem et al (2015) concluded that qualification and experience of teachers play a very important role in the lives of students. In fact, Kirima & Kinyua (2016) established that 40% of experienced teachers influence students to enroll in Biology. Further, Kabugi (2013) found that 60% of the respondents in her study had an experience of more than 10 years. Therefore, the cited literature has shown that teachers with many years of teaching performed better than those who had taught for a shorter period.

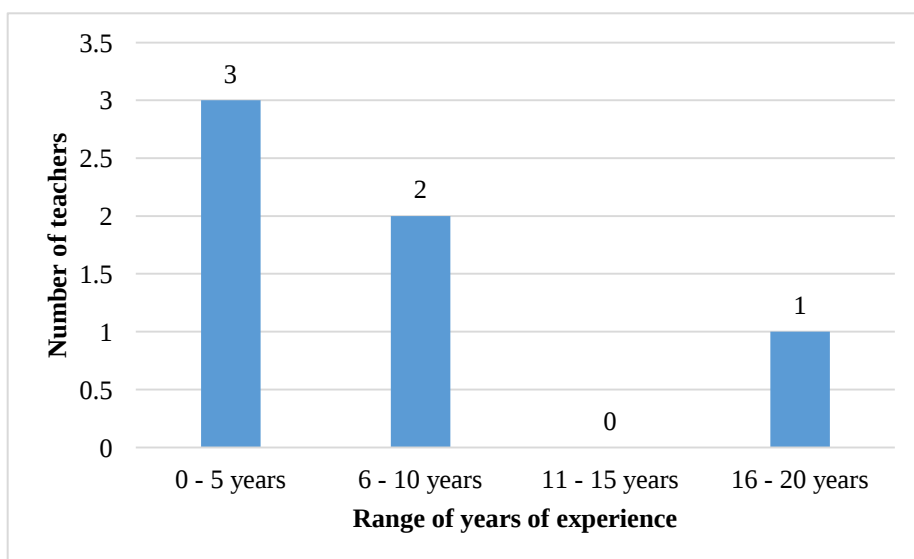


Figure 1: Experience of Home Science teachers

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings from this study revealed that presence of trained, qualified and experienced teachers play a crucial role in the teaching and learning of Home Science subject in secondary schools. Their presence also affects enrolment of students in a particular subject. Majority of Home Science teachers in this study had received formal training and were experienced. Secondary schools should employ qualified and retain experienced teachers because they positively affect enrolment of students. This is because qualified and experienced teachers influence good performance, thus encouraging prospective students to enroll in Home Science subject.

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Bio-data

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